



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

P.O. Box 2117

St. Augustine, FL 32085

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From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

February 2024

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Fellow Veterans,

Our Veterans Council had another very busy year during 2023 helping veterans. Our focus during the year was helping to find housing and shelter for our homeless veterans. We were successful in many cases to help find permanent housing for several but for the most part we were compelled to house them in motels. But help is on the way.

The Veterans Council has teamed with Home Again St. Johns to purchase a motel on Anastasia Blvd in St. Augustine to be repurposed into a homeless facility for our veterans. A Fla. State grant has made the purchase of the motel possible. An agreed price has been negotiated with a closing date for the purchase set for mid-February. There are a few modifications that will have to be completed before we can begin accepting veterans into the newly named Veterans Village facility but for the most

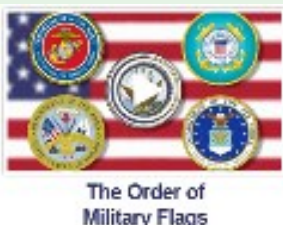
part it will be ready by early March. This has been a real blessing for the Veterans Council as we will no longer have to place homeless veterans in local motels for short periods to get them off the streets.

The Executive Board of the Veterans Council met recently and determined the need to establish a scholarship fund in the name of our recently deceased Vice Chairman. The scholarship will be named for Sgt. Major Ray Quinn and will be awarded to selected cadets at St. Augustine and Nease High Schools. The scholarship will be for \$1000 and will be awarded to one cadet from each JROTC unit chosen by the unit Commander. The Veterans Council is very honored to carry on the legacy of Sgt. Major Quinn through our youth programs. Anyone wanting to make a donation can make a check to the Veterans Council and in the memo line write Sgt. Major scholarship. The Veterans Council recently participated in a celebration to honor Valeria Ryan, a



WW II veteran on her 101st birthday at Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home. When Valeria was asked by the staff at Lassen what she wanted for her birthday, she replied "a parade". And a parade is exactly what she got. Over 200 people attended with motorcycle units from the St. Johns Sheriff's Office, as well as many Sheriff's vehicles, fire trucks from St. Johns Fire Dept, local veterans motorcycle clubs, classic and antique cars from local car clubs, local citizens in a drive by holding birthday greetings and many others stopping by to wish her birthday wishes. It was a spectacular event for a deserving veteran. Thank you for your service.

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



**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 Health &
Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View, at
7 pm in the Muscovy room.**

Upcoming Speakers

February 29

**Ramona Rood, Soldiers Angels
Carey Picklesimer, CorpsStrength**

March 28

**Capt. Ed Turner, USN, Ret., Exec Dir.
POW/MIA Memorial & Museum
and Brandon Patty, St Johns County Clerk of Courts**

April 25

**Trish Doran, Military Liaison, Wekiva Springs Center
Debbie Johnson, K9s United**

May 30

**Wendy Layton, Chapter Dir., Blue Star Families
Dennis Graves, CJ 3 Foundation**

The Riverwood Mens Club held its Golf Tournament at the WGV Slammer & Squire on November 13th and donated \$ 28,500 to the Veterans Council of St Johns County, Inc.

Pictured below is the check presentation with Club members and Veterans Council Treasurer John Mountcastle.



Fire Chief Aviles recognized by the Jaguars

After being recognized last month as a recipient of Hyundai's "Unsung Heroes" Award, today our Fire Chief Carlos Aviles was officially honored at the @jaguars home game finale. Chief Aviles has consistently exemplified service above self throughout his time in, both, the U.S. Army and the fire service, and he continues to work tirelessly everyday to advocate for first responders and make our community a safer place. Thank you for your service, Chief, and congratulations on your well-deserved recognition.



Operation New Uniform helps active-duty servicemembers transition into new careers

Operation New Uniform empowers active-duty servicemembers, veterans and military spouses to transition from military life into new careers. Here's how.

Author: Rich Donnelly, First Coast News (On Your Side)



JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — There are more than 1,000,000 active-duty military members protecting our freedom in the armed forces, but most of them won't make the military their career.

In this week's Stories of Service, First Coast News focuses on the work the organization, 'Operation New Uniform' (ONU) does to help members of the military transition to their second career.

Last fall, a classroom full of active-duty servicemembers and veterans gathered to celebrate their transition to the business world through Operation New Uniform's transition training program. Operation New Uniform, a 501c3 nonprofit, was founded in 2013 to serve the needs of transitioning servicemembers from all branches of service, with the goal of helping them find their "new uniform," their new career in the business world.

The Jacksonville-based company, Swisher, committed \$50,000 to sponsor the training of 14 Jacksonville-area military members. In 2023, Swisher launched the Veterans of Valor Employee Resource Group, which develops programming, supports community causes and provides opportunities to raise awareness for veteran issues throughout the year.

More information about Operation New Uniform can be found on their website.

If you have a Story of Service that you would like First Coast News to profile, send an email to storiesofservice@firstcoastnews.com.

Join us February 3, 2024, at the Chapel of The High-speed Pass, Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial Site for the 2024 Four Chaplains Interfaith Memorial Service. Our Keynote Speaker will be Bill Kaemmer, Executive Director of The Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation. We will also have a special presentation of the Legion of Honor Humanitarian Award to Four Individuals from the Jacksonville Community for “Selfless Service to Others”. We hope you can join us!





**Over 62 veteran organizations with over
400 veterans in attendance**



*Pictures submitted by COL Adelhelm, Tony D'Aleo, Lynn Geiser,
Kristle Helmuth & the Clay County Veterans Council*





From the Palm Coast Observer

Flagler County Veteran of the Week: Ty Miller

Thank you for your example of service and bravery.

By David Lydon, Flagler County Veterans Services Officer

Ty Miller

Branch of Military: U.S. Marine Corps

Dates of Service: 2003-2007

Rank / Occupation: Sergeant / Rifleman, Supply

Hometown: Dade City, Florida



Ty Miller has lived in Palm Coast since 1998 and graduated from Flagler Palm Coast High School in 1999. He enlisted in the Marine Corps at the height of the war in Iraq and went to boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina before being sent to supply school at Camp Geiger, North Carolina.

Following his training, he was assigned to the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, Camp Pendleton, California. Miller is a combat veteran with three active-duty deployments to the Middle East in a four-year period, where he performed dangerous convoy duty. On his first tour in 2004, his unit was positioned in the Ambar Province, Iraq, to relieve the U.S. Army 82nd Airborne.

In 2007 he was honorably discharged for his service to his country. Among his awards and decorations are the Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Sea Service Deployment ribbon with one star, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and National Defense Service Medal.

Miller returned to the Middle East in 2009, Afghanistan 2010-2011, as a civilian defense contractor. After years of serving in combat zones, he returned to the U.S. and lived in various places until his return to Palm Coast in 2021, where he now works from home.

Castillo de San Marcos National Monument

The oldest masonry fort in the continental United States, the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument is a large Spanish stone fortress built to protect and defend Spain's claims in the New World.

It's a National Monument, and at over 327 years old, it's the oldest structure in St. Augustine. It's also one of the main attractions visitors to St. Augustine come to see.

Regular daily programs and ranger-led tours are free with admission, as are cannon firings and weaponry demonstrations, which are offered (weather and staffing permitting) on Saturdays, and Sundays at 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

The Castillo is open every day of the year except Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.



St. Johns Housing Partnership

It's an excellent day for Veterans in St. Johns County! We are delighted to announce that our first Veteran moved into Patriot Place Wednesday, January 3!

He's excited to finally be in his own place. Patriot Place has six new low-income 630-square-foot apartments, and Veterans will receive individualized case management from their UF Health St. Johns Care Connect caseworker for the duration of their time at Patriot Place.

We are grateful for the efforts of the staff from UF Health St. Johns, St. Johns Housing Partnership, and Changing Homelessness, who helped to make this happen.

The critical housing project was made possible by MountainStar Partners, St. Johns Housing Partnership (SJHP), St. Johns County, the City of St. Augustine - Government, and UF Health St. Johns.



Event at Chapel of The High-Speed Pass

6112 POW-MIA Memorial
Parkway JAX FL

This very special event on 3 Feb 2024 commemorates the four WW2 chaplains (Methodist Minister George Fox; Rabbi Alexander Goode; Catholic Priest John Washington; and Reformed Church Minister Clark Poling) who died at sea while rescuing civilian & military personnel as the American troop ship SS Dorchester sank on February 3rd, 1943. The Dorchester was a civilian liner converted for military service as a War Shipping Administration troop transport and was torpedoed in the North Atlantic by the German submarine U-223 off the coast of Newfoundland. The chaplains joined arms, said prayers, and sang hymns as they went down with the ship.



SAVE THE DATE

Four Chaplains Memorial Service

Saturday, February 3, 2024 - 10 AM

Chapel of The High-speed Pass
Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial Site
Keynote Speaker

Bill Kaemmer
Executive Director
The Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation



Legion of Honor Humanitarian Award to be presented to Four Individuals from the Jacksonville Community for "Selfless Service to Others"

The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial
6112 POW-MIA Memorial Parkway Jacksonville, FL

Jaguars Recognize Deloris Quaranta with Northeast Florida Women Veterans

Deloris Quaranta, Founder and CEO of Northeast Florida Women Veterans, was selected as the Florida Blue Community Champion of the game at the Jaguars vs Titans game for her leadership and commitment to assist women veterans transition back into civilian community with the tools and resources needed.

Learn more: <https://forwomenvets.org/>



**The former Chairman of the Veterans Council of St Johns County,
Tom Waskovich was a MACVSOG Green Beret**

MACV-SOG: The Secretive Vietnam-Era Unit That Had a 100 Percent Casualty Rate

You're probably well-acquainted with the esteemed US Navy SEALs and the US Army's Green Berets, who are celebrated for their proficiency in guerrilla and counter-guerrilla operations, training local forces and suppressing insurgencies during the Vietnam War. However, the lesser-known MACV-SOG deserves attention as a unit seamlessly integrating members from both of these elite forces and the CIA. Together, they formed a covert group unmatched in its clandestine operations throughout the conflict.

MACV-SOG's mission spanned a wide array of unconventional warfare activities in Vietnam, ranging from reconnaissance and daring rescue missions to psychological warfare and the capture of enemy prisoners. Their undercover operations exerted great influence on the overall outcome of the war.



©Photo Credit: United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC)

The PLAYERS Championship unveils military appreciation plans for 50th-anniversary tournament

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. — In commemoration of its 50th Anniversary, THE PLAYERS Championship has revealed its military appreciation plans, aiming to pay tribute to the active-duty service members and veterans in Northeast Florida. Partnering with CSX, THE PLAYERS is set to host thousands of service members and their families during the 2024 tournament.

Lee Smith, Executive Director of THE PLAYERS, expressed the organization's pride in honoring those who have made significant sacrifices for both the local community and the nation. "We are so



excited to honor and thank our brave active-duty service members and veterans with these special initiatives throughout the tournament," said Smith.

This year's program includes the return of Military Appreciation Day festivities on Tuesday, March 12th, featuring a performance of the Star-Spangled Banner by Matthew Johnson and a concert by multi-platinum country star Cole Swindell.

One of the highlights is the partnership with CSX to present the Patriots' Outpost, a private venue exclusively for the military, offering complimentary snacks and nonalcoholic beverages for all patrons.

Military and veteran ticket offerings for THE PLAYERS 2024 include complimentary admission for active duty, retired, reserve, and National Guard members on specific days, with accompanying digital vouchers for on-site purchases. Veterans and one dependent can also avail of discounted admission on designated days, with similar digital vouchers.



THE PLAYERS is proud of its longstanding tradition of honoring service members, veterans and their families.

Military Appreciation Day | Tuesday, March 12, 2024
Ceremony & Concert
4:30 p.m. | TPC Sawgrass | 17th Hole

Military Tickets

Complimentary admission will be provided to active-duty, retired, reserve and National Guard members and one dependent on Tuesday, March 12, and Wednesday, March 13, and one competition day (Thursday, March 14, to Sunday, March 17), while supplies last. Valid identification and credentials are required. All tickets also include a \$20 digital voucher that can be used for food and nonalcoholic beverages on-site.

Veteran Tickets

Discounted admission will be provided to veterans and one dependent on Tuesday, March 12, and Wednesday, March 13, and one competition day (Thursday, March 14, to Sunday, March 17), while supplies last. Valid identification and credentials are required. All tickets also include a \$20 digital voucher that can be used for food and nonalcoholic beverages on-site.

Patriots' Outpost presented by CSX

Service members, veterans and their families will receive complimentary access to the Patriots' Outpost presented by CSX, an exclusive military lounge with complimentary snacks and beverages.

Fan Shop Discount

On Tuesday, March 12, active-duty, retired and reserve service members will receive a 20% discount in the PGA TOUR Fan Shop in Stadium Village. Valid Tuesday, March 12 only. Must show a valid military I.D.



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***** PARTNER



In addition to ticket offerings, THE PLAYERS is set to host a Military Job Fair on Saturday, March 9, in collaboration with the Jacksonville Military Veterans Coalition. Approximately 25 companies with job opportunities will participate in the event.

On Military Appreciation Day, March 12, a ceremony will take place at the Island Green 17th hole, followed by a concert featuring country artist Cole Swindell.

Active duty, retired, reserve, and National Guard members will receive a 20% discount in the PGA TOUR Fan Shop on Tuesday, March 12.

For more information on THE PLAYERS' military appreciation offerings, visit their website [HERE](#).

To obtain military and veteran tickets, follow these steps:

1. Go to THEPLAYERS.com/tickets and click on CLAIM TICKETS in the Military Admission section.
2. Choose your preferred tournament day(s).
3. Confirm your military designation through GovX by clicking on the link provided on the checkout page.
4. After verification, finalize the transaction and retrieve your tickets on THE PLAYERS' digital portal.
5. Prior to arrival, add your ticket(s) to your mobile wallet.

Please note that parking passes are not included in ticket purchases. A separate parking pass is necessary for each day of the tournament week (Tuesday through Sunday) and should be bought online in advance via THEPLAYERS.com/parking.



National League of POW/MIA Families

Hello everyone!

The League is always seeking out photos of POW/MIA flags, monuments, Missing Man Honors Tables, POW/MIA empty chairs, etc. from your community to feature on our social media pages and website.

Sharing with us is easy, just message your photos to our email -

nationalleague@pow-miafamilies.org

With your full name as well as a brief description of when & where the photo was taken.



Join Our Team of Volunteers

We're currently looking for individuals who would be committed to restoring, maintaining, and being a docent on the USS Orleck.



Requirements

- Veteran, Active Duty, Retired
- Minimum of 18 Years Old
- Healthy physically and mentally
- Youth groups with advisors
- Willing to volunteer where and when needed

Registration On

www.jaxnavalmuseum.org/volunteer

Skills Needed

- Welders & Electricians
- Docents & Office
- Painting, Cleaning, Events

For More Info

volunteer@jaxnavalmuseum.org

USS Orleck's Address

610 East Bay Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Gift cards delivered to Jenkins Veterans Domiciliary Home



Chapter 1046 past president Tony D'Aleo delivered \$300 in gifts cards and supplies for Veterans at the Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans Domiciliary Home in Lake City Christmas Party on December 19. He was joined by his wife Sharon, Richard and Beverly Mayo and activity director Ed DeSilva. Over 60 Veterans attended two parties.

Submitted by Tony D'Aleo

From Military Times

New military child care benefit to kick in starting January 1

By Karen Jowers

A new flexible benefit kicks in Jan. 1 to help military parents defray the cost of child care. (Scott T. Sturkol/Army)

The Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account benefit will officially go into effect in 2024 for active duty personnel, as well as members of the Active Guard Reserve on Title 10 orders.

The deadline for enrolling for the plan each year is during the federal benefits open season, which generally runs from mid-November to mid-December. The 2024 benefit's deadline was Dec. 11, 2023.

But beyond open enrollment season, many service members may have a qualifying life event, such as birth or adoption of a child, that will allow them to enroll or change their enrollment into the new account. Those entering the military during the year can also enroll.

If service members have enrolled for the new benefit, they are encouraged to stay on top of requirements for reimbursement, take full advantage of financial benefits, and avoid forfeiting money left in the account after the benefit period ends.

The new flexible spending account helps defray the cost of child care (up to age 13) and other dependent care by providing tax savings. Accounts are funded through pre-tax deductions from a service member's paycheck. Documented claims can then be filed to receive reim

bursement for eligible expenses.

Such costs include child or adult day care, preschool, summer day camps, and before- or after-school programs.

Families can contribute as much as \$5,000 to the account in 2024. The Federal Flexible Spending Account Program, known as FSAFEDS, is sponsored by the Office of Personnel Management.

The Internal Revenue Service has final say in determining what counts as a qualifying event for making changes outside the open enrollment period. In addition to the birth or adoption of a child, or the death of a dependent, qualifying event examples include:

Change in employment status for you, your spouse, or dependent

Change in legal marital status

Change in your dependent's eligibility (e.g., your child reaches age 13 and is no longer eligible)

Complete information about filing a claim is available at fsafeds.com/file.

Be sure to mind the deadlines, however. The last day for incurring expenses for the 2024 claim year is March 15, 2025. The deadline to submit claims for the 2024 claim year is April 30, 2025. Any amount left over in one's account after that is forfeited.



Retired Activities Office NAS Jacksonville

"Assisting the Military Retiree Community"

The Retired Activities Office at NAS Jacksonville is Moving!

As of Tuesday, January 16, 2024 the Jacksonville Retired Activities Office (RAO) will be re-located in Room 120 in Building 13, the two-story yellow building with blue shutters just outside the Yorktown Gate of NAS Jacksonville (across from the USO).

The Office Hours and Contact Information remain the same:

- ❖ **Office Hours:** Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday 1000-1400. Or,
- ❖ **Call 24/7: 904-542-5790** - speak to a staff member or leave a message.
- ❖ **EMAIL Contact:** NASJAXRAO@navy.mil

Trained volunteers at NAS Jacksonville Retired Activities Office (RAO JAX) assist the NE Florida and SE Georgia military retiree community with problems and questions as well as Federal and Local benefits, programs and resources. ALL retiree families are eligible for assistance, regardless of military branch.

RAO staff provide direct assistance and information on Navy or other DoD programs. Referrals are made to Local, County or State agencies like the City of Jacksonville Military Affairs and Veterans Department, private organizations like Red Cross or Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society or other Federal Government agencies like Social Security, Tricare or the Veterans Administration.

For further information, contact Jacksonville Retired Activities Office – 904-542-5790

Clay County Center for Veterans: A New Beginning

In a world where veterans have sacrificed so much for their countries, the Clay County community is taking a monumental step to ensure they receive the support and recognition they deserve. The upcoming Clay County Center for Veterans is not just a building; it's a promise—a promise of solidarity, unity, and a brighter future for those who have served.

Clay County Center for Veterans website ClayVeterans.com/

A New Beginning in Clay County

Located in the heart of Clay County, this soon-to-be-established center aims to be a beacon for veterans and their families. With a comprehensive range of services and facilities, the center is set to become a central hub for those who have served, offering them a space to connect, seek assistance, and rebuild their lives.

Relocating Veterans and Their Families: A Holistic Approach

Relocating is often a daunting task, especially for veterans transitioning from active duty to civilian life. The Clay County Center for Veterans recognizes these challenges and is committed to providing comprehensive support for relocating veterans and their families.

A Central Hub for Community Engagement

The Clay County Center for Veterans aims to be a central hub for community engagement and collaboration. The center will host various events, workshops, and programs designed to foster camaraderie, promote understanding, and celebrate the contributions of veterans.

Educational Workshops: From financial planning to educational opportunities, the center will host workshops aimed at empowering veterans and their families with

the knowledge and skills to thrive in their new environment.

Community Events: The center will organize and host community events, such as veterans' appreciation days, networking gatherings, and cultural celebrations, to strengthen bonds and foster a sense of belonging.

Collaborative Partnerships: The success of the center relies heavily on collaboration. By partnering with local businesses, organizations, and educational institutions, the center aims to create a supportive network that facilitates the seamless integration of veterans and their families into the community.

A Promise of Support and Unity

The Clay County Center for Veterans is more than just a facility; it's a testament to the unwavering commitment of the community to honor, support, and uplift those who have served. As the center prepares to open its doors, it sends a clear message: veterans and their families are not alone, and Clay County stands ready to embrace them with open arms.

In the journey ahead, the Clay County Center for Veterans promises to be a steadfast ally and advocate for veterans and their families, ensuring that they have the resources, support, and opportunities needed to thrive in their new chapter of life.





MILITARY

APPRECIATION DAY

Hosted by the Clay County Board of County Commissioners

SATURDAY
MARCH 16
9 A.M. - 3 P.M.

Clay County Fairgrounds
2463 SR 16 West
Green Cove Springs

Join us in honoring our active duty, veteran, and military families. This free event is open to the public and features Food Trucks, vendors, resources for veterans and their families, entertainment, guest speakers, and a kids' zone.



Woman WWII veteran living in St. Augustine turns 101

Valeria Ryan was honored Jan. 20 at the Clyde Lassen Nursing Home with a parade.

Author: First Coast News Staff

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. — A World War II veteran living in St. Augustine who served in the U.S. Navy is 101.

There was a parade for Valeria Ryan 11 a.m. Saturday at Clyde Lassen Nursing Home.

Ryan was a welder prior to entering the Navy in 1942 when a steak dinner was \$1.50, according to a press release. Ryan was asked to be on a team of a few selected women to teach the men how to land a bomb while being up in a blimp she was sent to Banana River, now Cocoa Beach, to do her training.

Ryan was born Jan. 22, 1923, in Albion, Michigan. She later raised seven children prior to entering nursing school at 48. She worked in nursing for 20 years. Ryan said that in the Navy were some of her best times in her life.



St. Johns County's Parks & Recreation receives \$54,000+ for disabled veterans' adaptive sports programs



Funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will offer three, monthly veteran-exclusive, kayaking, fishing and art programs.

According to Ryan Kane, the county's Parks & Recreation director, monies will fund programs uniquely designed for disabled military veterans.

"These men and women will compete in activities in parks that display the American flag," he said. "And they'll know that the county cares about their physical, mental, and spiritual health."

"This phenomenal program enriches the quality of life for military veterans injured in their service in protecting our freedoms," continued Joseph McDermott, the county's veterans service director.

County commissioners authorized the Parks & Recreation Department to apply for the grant last April.

"Our slogan in Parks & Recreation is 'Play Your Way.'" Kane concluded.

"That's what we're offering – opportunities for these brave men and women of our military forces to play their way."

The Veterans Programs include archery, pickleball, art, fishing, and kayaking.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Military Museum of North Florida

Wednesday-Saturday

10am-3pm

1 Bunker Ave
Green Cove Springs FL,
32043

Call or email the Military
Museum @
(904) 863-3527
militarymuseumnf@ol.com



Made with PosterMyWall.com



The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

Sumter Veteran ensures others final resting place is a tribute

Roberto Pizarro, assistant director of the Florida National Cemetery and U.S. Army Veteran, ensures the dignified final resting places of Veterans at the second-busiest national cemetery. His role involves maintaining over 137,000 grave sites. Pizarro's commitment stems from his connection as a Veteran, and he sees his work as an extension of the purpose he felt during his military service.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3RmboG2>



Burials and Memorials

VA honors the service and sacrifice of Veterans and their family members.

How to Apply

To find out in advance if a Veteran or family member is eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery, click “Apply for Pre-Need Burial Eligibility” to fill out and submit the application.

Apply for Pre-Need Burial Eligibility

If pre-need eligibility has not been determined, upon the death of the Veteran or his or her spouse or dependent (also called the time of need), family members should locate the Veteran’s DD-214 or other discharge papers if readily available and click “Schedule a Burial” to begin the process. Then make arrangements with a funeral home, National Cemetery Scheduling Office, or directly with a VA national cemetery.

VA Memorial Benefits

VA takes special care to pay lasting tribute to the memory of Veterans who served and sacrificed and that of their families. VA meticulously maintains 155 VA national cemeteries in 44 states and Puerto Rico and is working to increase access to accommodate Veterans and eligible family members close to home. Currently, more than 94 percent of Veterans have a burial option in an open VA, state or tribal veterans cemetery located within 75 miles of their home.

Note that most if not all of these benefits may be provided for Veterans who are interred in a State, Territorial or Tribal Veterans cemetery. Check with the cemetery to ensure coverage. Some benefits are also available for Veterans who choose burial in a private cemetery.

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

The following burial benefits may be provided:

Burial in a VA national cemetery

Opening and closing of the grave for burial of casketed or cremated remains, or placement of cremated remains in an above-ground vault, also called a columbarium

A government furnished grave liner

Perpetual care of the gravesite

A headstone or marker with an inscription

A burial flag

A Presidential Memorial Certificate

A dedicated memorial page on the Veterans Legacy Memorial site where friends and family can upload photos and remembrances

Burial in a private cemetery

A government headstone, marker, or medallion

A burial flag

A Presidential Memorial Certificate

Some survivors may also be entitled to VA burial allowances as partial reimbursement for the costs of funerals and burials for eligible Veterans

Please note that gravesites in a VA national cemetery cannot be reserved in advance. To prepare for a private cemetery burial, VA suggests families review these questions and complete required forms in advance.

VA Requirements

Discharge papers to establish your eligibility for burial services

**VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**



DECEMBER 28, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dudley

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS: Chairman Dudley

PLEDGE: Chairman Dudley

INVOCATION: Bill Jefferson

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKERS/GUESTS: Chairman Dudley

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Minutes of last meeting conducted November 30, 2023, were presented by Chairman Dudley. Copies of the Minutes and Agenda are available on the sign-in table and were sent to members electronically by the Secretary. The minutes were approved by voice vote with no changes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Mountcastle stated he was sorry he missed last month's meeting: he was collecting a donation made to the Council from the Riverwoods Men's Club in the amount of \$28,430.60.

Treasurer Mountcastle presented the Treasurer's Report to the Council. As of November 29, 2023, the cash balance was \$166,336.07. Currently the cash balance is \$167,146.48. Treasurer Mountcastle then went over the expenses of the Treasurer's Report in detail. The Treasurer asked if there were any questions regarding the Treasurer's Report. The Report was approved by voice vote.

SPEAKER:

JOSEPH PEARCE, DIRECTOR, WISH FOR OUR HEROES

Mr. Pearce provided the history of how Wish For Our Heroes was started by Jeff Wells after losing his father in Vietnam. The first income came from standing on street corners with milk cartons collecting funds for the organization.

Wish For Our Heroes provides financial assistance to military families in need for varied reasons and Mr. Pearce provided examples and a handout that explains the organization and what they accomplish. In 2022, there were 122 wishes granted and assistance to local military families in the amount of \$130,000. Mr. Pearce opened the floor for any questions regarding the Wish For Our Heroes organization.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE UPDATE, JOSEPH MCDERMOTT

Mr. McDermott spoke of the turnover and update of new hires in the Veterans Service Office. The two new service officers have graduated from their classes and are getting certification through all the necessary organizations. It is taking time, and the Service Office has backup until the second week in January. On January 2, 2024, there will be a new office specialist that will manage the front desk and all the phone calls that come into the Veterans Service Office. Hopefully by the end of January the office will be functioning as needed to assist local Veterans.

As of the new year, the VA is looking at a 3.2 increase in the COLA and the increase will take effect in December and continues throughout the year of 2024.

Mr. McDermott opened the floor to any questions regarding the Veterans Service Office.

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT, JOHN LESLIE

Mr. Leslie introduced himself, Mentor Coordinator for the St. Johns, and Putnam County Veterans Treatment Court. This month ended the seventh year of operation of the Veterans Treatment Court and a couple of years ago, Putnam County was added to the process. Since starting, the Veterans Treatment Court has engaged 143 people in the court system, ninety of them have graduated. There has been a termination of twenty-one for failure to meet the goals. Currently there are 32 Veterans inflow in the court system. Mr. Leslie has invited all that are interested in the Veterans Treatment Court to attend the court sessions to see how they operate. There will be two court sessions in January, the first one is January 5th and the second one is on the 19th. The court sessions are held at 10:00 am in Courtroom 355. Mr. Leslie opened the floor to any questions.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Dudley discussed the success of this year's Wreaths Across America Program in spite of the harsh weather on December 16th. The estimated turnout was over four hundred attendees. At the Jacksonville National Cemetery, over 3,000 people attended and over 20,000 wreaths were placed in that cemetery. Wreaths Across America has started a campaign for 2024, it started December 16th and continues through January 15, 2024. For donations that are made for Wreaths Across America, National will match the donation. Forms were provided for all interested in this campaign.

Chairman Dudley spoke of the services for Sgt. Major Ray Quinn and the exceptionally large turnout for his memorial service here in St. Augustine and the turnout for his burial in Bushnell National Cemetery the next day. The Veterans Council is talking about creating a scholarship fund and naming it in honor of Sgt. Major Ray Quinn.

The Veterans Council, in cooperation with Home Again St. Johns, has been looking for places to house Veterans and has purchased a hotel on Anastasia Island. The current name is Old Town Inn but will be changed to Veteran's Village. It is currently a functioning hotel and will be able to house Veterans immediately once the acquisition is complete. An operational grant has already been applied for through the state to keep the hotel in complete operation. Even with the new facility being built on SR16 additional space is needed and this hotel is available right now for occupancy. Questions and answers were addressed concerning the occupancy of the hotel.

The floor was open to all others that had information to share with the Veterans Council.

Next Veterans Council meeting will be held on Thursday, January 25th beginning at 7:00pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William Dudley, Chairman

Two new monuments at National Cemetery

A Braille Flag and First Patriot monument have been placed on site Florida National Cemetery in **Bushnell**. The monuments were dedicated in December, their placement dedication hosted by local DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) chapters on Thursday, Dec. 14.



In 2019 the John Bartram DAR chapter proposed placing the Braille monument at the cemetery to provide visually impaired veterans the ability to feel and “read” the Pledge of Allegiance, embedded in the flag’s stripes and “see” the American Flag that they love, honor and respect, according to chapter representatives.

They note there are more than 158,000 blind or visually impaired veterans in the United States. The monument design and placement was approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution in 2020.

Due to Covid, the placement and dedication of the monument had to be postponed.

In 2022 the chapter also proposed placing the Revolutionary War monument “Honoring Our First Patriots” at the Florida National Cemetery. The monument has images of the nation’s fight for independence etched into black granite.

The chapter invited the other five DAR chapters in our area to add a side pan-

el image of “Forgotten Patriots” to the monument. Since Florida was not one of the original thirteen colonies, the state has very few Revolutionary War gravesites.

Chapter research located two cenotaph headstones placed in the Florida National Cemetery of Revolutionary War soldiers - Pvt. Benjamin Latimer of the Maryland Militia and Sgt. Benjamin Shirley of the Continental Army.

Again, the monument design and placement were approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

The chapters that took part in the event were the John Bartram Chapter of the Villages, the Lake-Sumter Regents Council of DAR chapters, Mary Ellen Robertson chapter from Leesburg, Ocklawaha from Mount Dora, Puc Puggy from The Villages/Lady Lake, Tomoka from Clermont and the now disbanded Bertha Hereford Hall from Leesburg.

Florida State Regent Cindy Addison was their honored guest, along with World War II veteran Irving Locker, Korean War veteran Major Gen. John McWaters, Ret., Staff Sgt. Walter Peters, Ret. - a Vietnam War veteran and president of the American Braille Flag Project.

Gulf War Marine veteran Dex Conrad, vice president of Cole Engineering Services, Inc. (Orlando) was also on hand as a guest. The company was the major donor for the patriot monument.

The United States Marine Corps. League South Lake Detachment 1120 led the color guard procession. Other groups attending included the Sons of the American Revolution, multiple veteran organizations, Lions Clubs and several other special organizations from around the Tri-county area.

Skip the trip: More military ID cardholders can now renew online

By Karen Jowers, from the *Military Times*

Most retirees and family members living within the United States are now eligible for online renewal of their Uniformed Services Identification card. Pictured here, the ID Card office at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. (Wesley Farnsworth/ Air Force)



About 1 million people with Uniformed Services Identification cards are now eligible to renew their ID cards online, rather than visiting an office in person.

Most USID cardholders — including military retirees, reservists, spouses and dependents of U.S. service members — can file their requests online and receive new IDs by mail, defense officials said Jan. 16. The move expands a pilot program that began in February 2023 to allow uniformed sponsors with a common access card to request online renewals of USID cards.

The IDs are used to enter Defense Department facilities and to access benefits like health care.

DOD issues about 4.5 million ID cards each year, about 2.5 million of which are USID cards. Of those, around 1 million USIDs are eligible for online renewal.

For now, online renewal is limited to those who live in the United States, but officials are working to expand it to non-U.S. addresses as well. People whose IDs have expired and those seeking their first ID card are also ineligible for online services.

Allowing more beneficiaries to renew their IDs online frees up the pass and ID offices for active duty military and civilian government employees who need to apply for or

renew a CAC, officials said.

To request an online renewal, the sponsor must be able to log into the ID Card Office Online as a CAC holder or have a DOD Self-Service Logon username and password. Make sure to read the instructions on how to set up a DS Logon account when creating a new profile. Sponsors will request the renewal by clicking the “Family ID Cards” tab on the ID Card Office Online landing page.

According to DOD, other requirements include:

The USID card being renewed must be active, not expired. Children are eligible for online USID renewal if they have an active USID card.

The sponsor and the cardholder must have email addresses listed in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). You can check your data in DEERS to make sure it’s up to date.

The cardholder must have a photo saved in DEERS that was taken within the last 12 years.

The cardholder must have a current U.S. address in DEERS. Cards can’t be mailed to P.O. boxes.

Once the request is processed, a new card will be created and mailed to the card recipient at the address listed in DEERS. The sponsor and the cardholder will receive an email once the card is shipped, directing the sponsor to acknowledge when they’ve received the card. Once the sponsor acknowledges receipt, the new USID card will be activated and the old one will be deactivated.

The deactivated card should be returned to the government, to the nearest Real-Time Automated Personnel Identification System (RAPIDS) site, or mailed to: DMDC-DSC, Attn: USID Card Returns, 2102 E. 21st Street N, Wichita, KS 67214.

Did you know Castillo de San Marcos National Monument was previously named Fort Marion?

In 1924 Fort Marion was established as a National Monument. This was a little more than 100 years after Spain signed the Adams–Onís Treaty, ceding Florida to the United States. Now referred to as Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, this site contains the oldest remaining masonry fortification in the United States. It dates back to the 17th century when it was constructed by the Spanish engineer Ignacio Daza. Head over to [nps.gov/casa](https://www.nps.gov/casa) to learn more and plan your visit!



Marine Corps Times

Marine Corps' top devil dog fetches another promotion

By Irene Loewenson

MARINE BARRACKS WASHINGTON — Chesty XVI has been working hard for a promotion.



The Marine has followed orders to sit at seven of Marine Barracks Washington's parades in 2023, even if he has disobeyed those orders at the other half of the parades, according to his commanding officer, Col. Robert Sucher.

He has maintained his trim build by chasing after shadows, even if he refuses to attend the Marines' physical fitness test without being coaxed with food.

He has served as the public face of the Marine Corps at the White House, in Congress and at a Naval Academy baseball game, even if attempts to train him to carry the first pitch to home plate had nothing to show for themselves besides several chewed-up baseballs.

Chesty's dogged efforts finally paid off on Wednesday, when the Marine Corps mascot was promoted to lance corporal after 13 months as a private first class.

"It's because of his proven discipline," Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro said in remarks at the ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington.

Sgt. Maj. Jesse Dorsey reads the promotion warrant for Chesty XVI during a ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington, Jan. 17, 2024. (Lance Cpl. Chloe McAfee/Marine Corps)

Del Toro personally changed Chesty, who is 2 years old, into a dress-blues onesie bearing the insignia of a lance corporal. At first, the Navy secretary had some diffi-



culty fitting the uniform over the English bulldog's neck.

“Chesty’s been working out — his neck size has grown,” Del Toro said.

As Chesty took his first few steps as a lance corporal, he shook himself vigorously. The bulldog now outranked about a quarter of the Marines in attendance at the standing-room-only event, Del Toro observed.

The mascot enlisted in the Marine Corps in February 2022 and was promoted to private first class that December. He wears two medals on his uniform: the National Defense Service Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

Chesty is in a long line of bulldogs to serve as the official mascot of the service whose members are sometimes referred to as Devil Dogs. The first, Jiggs, enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1922 and attained the rank of sergeant major in two years.

Chesty is the 16th Marine mascot to bear the name in honor of the legendary Lt. Gen. Lewis “Chesty” Puller.

Sgt. Scott Rogers, in whose home Chesty resides, said the lance corporal “personifies” the mission of Marine Barracks Washington: to interact with the public and bring joy to people. When Rogers brings Chesty to work, he said, the other Marines’ faces light up.

“Chesty’s going to have a high burden for mentoring and leading his junior Marines going forward, so a lot of responsibility is on Chesty’s shoulders now,” Rogers said.

Outside of work, Chesty — whom Rogers characterized as a “mostly good boy” — likes pizza, belly rubs and playing with the two other dogs in Rogers’ family.

When Marine Corps Times asked Chesty for comment, he gave the microphone a few sniffs.



NOTE: This flyer is for information purposes only and should not be considered as a government endorsement for any of the following organizations. It is also recommended to create a separate email address for your search since you may be inundated with responses.



Scholarships/Grants for Service Members and Veterans

| | |
|---|---|
| AAPA Veterans Caucus Scholarships | http://www.veteranscaucus.org/index.php/services/scholarships/available-scholarships |
| AMVETS Natl Scholarship for Veterans | http://www.amvets.org/programs/scholarships/ |
| Chapter Scholarships - AFCEA | http://www.afcea.org/site/?q=foundation/scholarships/chapter-programs |
| DAV Auxiliary Natl Educ Scholarship | https://auxiliary.dav.org/membership/programs/ |
| Dolphin Scholarship Foundation | http://www.dolphinscholarship.org/ |
| Fort Meade Officers Spouse's Club Scholarships (members and dependents) | https://fortmeadecosc.wordpress.com/scholarships/ |
| FRA Education Foundation Scholarship (<i>Navy, Marine, Coast Guard</i>) | http://www.fra.org/fra/Web/Events_and_Programs/Fra_Education_Foundation_Scholarships/Web/Content/FRA_Education_Foundation.aspx |
| Heroes Tribute Scholarship Program | https://www.mcsf.org/get-involved/invest-scholarships/heroes-tribute-scholarship/ |
| Imagine America Military Award Program | http://www.imagine-america.org/grantsformilitary |
| Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant | https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/iraq-afghanistan-service |
| Leave No Veteran Behind | https://www.leavenoveteranbehind.org/retroactive-scholarship |
| MCA Chaplain Candidate Scholarship | http://mea-usa.org/scholarships/ |
| Military Commanders Scholarship Fund | https://sms.scholarshipamerica.org/militarycommanders/ |
| Military Order of the Purple Heart | https://www.purpleheart.org/military-order-of-the-purple-heart-scholarship-program/ |
| Nat Board Cert Counselors Foundation Scholarships | http://www.nbecf.org/programs/scholarships |
| Navy Seal Foundation (<i>NSW personnel</i>) | https://www.navysealfoundation.org/what-we-do/educational-opportunities/#1471371189919-2e69ad32-8dda |
| Paralyzed Veterans of America | http://www.pva.org/find-support/membership/scholarship-program |
| Pat Tillman Education Scholarship | http://pattillmanfoundation.org/apply-to-be-a-scholar/ |
| Purple Heart Foundation | https://purpleheartfoundation.org/services/scholarships-2/ |
| ROTC Scholarship – AFCEA | https://www.afcea.org/site/?q=foundation/scholarships/rote-scholarships |
| Student Financial Aid Guide for Veterans | https://www.moneygeek.com/education/college/resources/financial-aid-guide-for-veterans/ |
| Segal AmeriCorps Education Award | https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/amicorps/segal-amicorps-education-award |
| Sons and Daughters Pearl Harbor Survivor Scholarship | http://www.sdphs.org/index.php/about/scholarships |
| Student Veterans of America | http://studentveterans.org/programs/scholarships |
| Troops to Teachers Program | http://www.proudtoserveagain.com/Participants/FinancialAssistance |
| VFW Help A Hero Scholarship | https://www.vfw.org/assistance/student-veterans-support |
| War Veterans Scholarship - AFCEA | http://www.afcea.org/site/?q=foundation/scholarships/war-veterans |

Scholarships for Dependents (Spouses and Children)

| | |
|---|---|
| American Legion Legacy Scholarship | https://www.legion.org/scholarships/legacy |
| AMVETS | http://www.amvets.org/programs/scholarships/ |
| Children's Scholarship Fund (Elementary School) | http://www.scholarshipfund.org/apply/faq/ |

TRI-BASE



CAREER EXPO

NS Mayport, NSB Kings Bay, NAS Jacksonville

Date

March 12, 2024

Time

0900 - 1400

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- Bring your Military ID, Military Affiliated ID, Veteran ID, or DD-214

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dominique.m.grier.ctr@us.navy.mil
david.j.ferguson1.ctr@us.navy.mil



If you are unable to attend, please visit your local Fleet and Family Support Center and speak with their Employment Specialist!

The crew of the USS Langley (CV 1), the U.S. Navy's 1st aircraft carrier, created a host of innovations, including the use of various colored jerseys for the flight deck teams. Their initiative in the early 1920's established a lasting system. In today's Navy Sailors still use color-coded jerseys to ensure order and safety are maintained on the flight deck.

RAINBOW JERSEYS
A GUIDE TO THE COLOR-CODED UNIFORMS ON A U.S. NAVY FLIGHT DECK

THE CREW OF USS LANGLEY (CV 1), THE U.S. NAVY'S FIRST AIRCRAFT CARRIER, CREATED A HOST OF INNOVATIONS, INCLUDING THE USE OF VARIOUS COLORED JERSEYS FOR THE FLIGHT DECK TEAMS. THEIR INITIATIVE IN THE EARLY 1920'S ESTABLISHED A LASTING SYSTEM. IN TODAY'S NAVY, SAILORS STILL USE COLOR-CODED JERSEYS TO ENSURE ORDER AND SAFETY ARE MAINTAINED ON THE FLIGHT DECK.

BLUE

- FLAME TENDERS
- AIRCRAFT ELEVATOR OPERATORS
- TAXIING DRIVERS
- FRINGE SALVERS

Blue shirts are the most prominent color on the flight deck. They operate motorized gear carts and tractors and handle, track and chain aircraft to the flight deck, and operate aircraft elevators.

PURPLE

- AIRCRAFT TILLS

Articulated, referred to as "Boppers," or "toggles," purple shirts adjust an aircraft and monitor all fuel onboard.

GREEN

- CATERPILLAR AND AIRCRAFT REAR PERSONNEL
- AIR WING MAINTENANCE
- GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT
- MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALISTS
- HELICOPTER LAUNCHING SIGNALS
- ENLISTED SAILORS

Mostly maintenance personnel, green shirts operate gear, materials and maintain all aircraft launch and recovery equipment and perform all support equipment and aircraft related maintenance.

YELLOW

- AIRCRAFT DIRECTORS
- CATERPILLAR AND AIRCRAFT REAR OFFICERS
- RR OPER
- MAN-DESS

Aircraft directors are known as yellow shirts and responsible for the safe movement of aircraft on the flight deck and to the hangar bay.

RED

- TRUCKMEN
- CASH FOR GUNNERS
- EXPLOSIVE REMOVAL

Operations crew aircraft with all bombs, missiles, mines and ammunition. They also make up the rough and salvage teams responsible for aircraft firefighting, rescue, and salvage operations.

BROWN

- NO HANG FLAME SAFETY

Responsible for the safety and integrity of aircraft, including the pre- and post-flight preparation. Also known as "broke riders," they man the cockpit during repositioning on the flight deck and hangar deck.

WHITE

- QUALITY CONTROL
- LANDING SIGNAL OFFICERS
- AIR TRANSFER OFFICERS
- LIQUID OXYGEN CROW
- SAFETY
- MITCHELL ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

White shirts consist of safety and medical personnel, cockpit line checkers and catapult and arresting gear quality assurance inspectors, and administrative personnel.

New payment amounts in January, after the 3.2% COLA increase.

Disability Compensation - Basic Rates 2024

3.20%

| Dep Status | 10% | 20% | 30% | 40% | 50% | 60% | 70% | 80% | 90% | 100% |
|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Veteran | \$171.23 | \$338.50 | \$524.32 | \$755.28 | \$1,075.16 | \$1,361.88 | \$1,716.28 | \$1,995.01 | \$2,241.91 | \$3,737.85 |
| V-SP | | | \$585.20 | \$838.87 | \$1,178.36 | \$1,486.75 | \$1,861.79 | \$2,161.16 | \$2,428.70 | \$3,946.25 |
| V-SP-1C | V=Veteran | | \$631.64 | \$898.73 | \$1,254.73 | \$1,578.60 | \$1,968.09 | \$2,282.94 | \$2,565.95 | \$4,098.88 |
| V-SP-2C | | | SP=Spouse | \$661.56 | \$938.98 | \$1,306.33 | \$1,639.49 | \$2,039.29 | \$2,364.47 | \$2,658.83 |
| V-SP-3C | C=Child | | \$691.49 | \$979.22 | \$1,357.93 | \$1,700.37 | \$2,110.50 | \$2,445.99 | \$2,751.71 | \$4,305.98 |
| V-SP-4C | | | \$721.42 | \$1,019.47 | \$1,409.53 | \$1,761.26 | \$2,181.71 | \$2,527.52 | \$2,844.59 | \$4,409.53 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|--|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Additional Child | | \$29.93 | \$40.25 | \$51.60 | \$60.89 | \$71.21 | \$81.53 | \$92.88 | \$103.55 |
| 18 y/o School Child | | \$99.07 | \$133.13 | \$166.15 | \$199.18 | \$233.23 | \$266.26 | \$300.31 | \$334.49 |
| A/A Spouse | | \$56.76 | \$75.34 | \$95.98 | \$113.52 | \$133.13 | \$151.70 | \$171.31 | \$190.92 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------|--|----------|----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| V-1C | | \$565.59 | \$811.01 | \$1,145.33 | \$1,445.47 | \$1,821.54 | \$2,105.43 | \$2,366.78 | \$3,877.21 |
| V-2C | | \$595.52 | \$851.26 | \$1,196.93 | \$1,506.36 | \$1,892.75 | \$2,186.96 | \$2,459.66 | \$3,980.76 |
| V-3C | | \$625.44 | \$891.50 | \$1,248.53 | \$1,567.25 | \$1,963.96 | | \$2,552.54 | \$4,084.32 |
| V-4C | | \$655.37 | \$931.75 | \$1,300.13 | \$1,628.13 | \$2,035.17 | \$2,350.02 | \$2,645.42 | \$4,187.87 |

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Auto Allow | \$25,603.02 |
| Clothing Allow | \$968.52 |
| Medal of Honor | \$1,619.34 |
| Burial S/C | \$2,000 At VAMC |
| Burial Non S/C | \$300 ← 796 |
| Plot Allowance | \$893 |

| Dependent Indemnity Comp (DIC) | Single | Spouse 1 Child | Spouse 2 child | Spouse A & A | Spouse HB | Married 8 yrs |
|--------------------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| | \$1,612.75 | \$2,012.28 | \$2,411.81 | \$2,012.27 | \$1,799.91 | Add \$341.76 |

| Special Monthly Comp (SMC)-Added to current comp | ED/FSAD/ETC. | LOU/A&A | Housebound |
|--|--------------|---------|------------|
| SMC-K | \$132.74 | | |
| SMC-L | \$913.21 | | |
| SMC-M | \$1,395.07 | | |
| SMC-N | \$2,101.23 | | |
| SMC-O | \$2,788.79 | | |
| SMC-R1 | \$5,588.22 | | |
| SMC-R2/T | \$6,959.38 | | |
| SMC-S | \$446.00 | | |

| Chapter 35 | Monthly |
|------------|---------|
| Full Time | \$1,488 |
| 3/4 Time | \$1,176 |
| 1/2 Time | \$862 |
| 1/4 Time | \$372 |

| PENSION | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|----------|
| Your income must be less than: | | Income Limits | Survivor's Pension | |
| | Pension | \$16,476 | Surviving Sp | \$10,876 |
| | Pension Dep | \$16,077 | Surviving Dep | \$14,234 |
| | HouseBound | \$20,133 | HouseB | \$13,292 |
| | HouseB Dep | \$25,234 | HouseB Dep | \$16,644 |
| | A/A No Dep | \$27,482 | A/A No Dep | \$17,382 |
| | A/A Dep | \$32,581 | A/A Dep | \$20,737 |
| * Both | HouseBound | \$28,890 | | |
| * 1 A & A | 1 HouseBd | \$36,230 | | |
| * Both | A & A | \$43,593 | | |

Based on 3.2% COLA (Cost of Living Allowance)
Will be reflected on the Dec 29, 2023 pay

NOTE: You may also multiply your current VA pay by 1.032 to get the new rates.

* Two Married Veterans



Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation provides college scholarships and educational counseling to military children, from all branches, who lost a parent in the line of duty.

We cover all college-related costs and there is a big need for our services as the VA does not cover the full cost of college. There is a \$25,000 average gap to cover one student for four years and we need your help.



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of Brevard**

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PUBLIC INVITED TO ATTEND**

May 9th – 12th, 2024

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall on display **May 5th – May 12th, 2024**

**LIVE MUSIC
FOOD & DRINKS
MILITARY VENDORS
MILITARY DISPLAYS**



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Eastern Florida State College Cocoa Campus
Reunion Web Page at:**

floridaveteransreunion.com

Wickham Park
321-255-4307 - 2500 Parkway Dr
Melbourne, FL

No Coolers, Glass or Pets allowed
in the Reunion Area

Per Wickham Park: Golf Carts Permitted
For the Handicapped Only And Must
Abide By FL Highway Laws

Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall
<http://travelingwall.us>



Call For Info

321-690-0805
321-652-4185

Vendors call 321-652-4185
RaRusso1962@gmail.com
VVBSecretary@gmail.com
Club Escort Lineup Info
vvbreunionescort@gmail.com

Find old service friends fast!

Stars and Stripes has partnered with Togetherweserved.com (TWS), the largest online community of U.S Military Veterans, with over 2.2 million members, and a significant archive of personal military histories, to help you find and reconnect with people you served with in your units, squadrons, ships, or military bases.

Together We Served has just launched a brand new portal page to help you find old service friends more easily! Simply click on the button below to access TWS's "Buddy Finder" where you simply enter a unit you were in, and associated timeframe, to see how many TWS Members served with you, ready for you to make contact.

<https://togetherweserved.com/findpeople>





You've made our country
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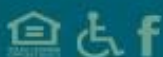
Thank you veterans for your service and sacrifice! At Silver Creek, you can live life as you choose with greater freedom, comfort and independence through the unique living options at our community - including independent concierge living, assisted living, enhanced assisted living and memory care.

Discover first-class amenities, holistic wellness programming, gourmet all-day dining and vibrant activities while enjoying camaraderie and friendship at our close-knit community.

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Memory Care – Short-Term Stays

Assisted Living Facility #12928

Explore VA benefits and health care, <https://www.va.gov>

Health care

Apply for VA health care, find out how to access services, and manage your health and benefits online.



Disability

File a claim for disability compensation for conditions related to your military service, and manage your benefits over time.

Education and training

Apply for and manage your GI Bill and other education benefits to help pay for college and training programs.

Careers and employment

Apply for vocational rehabilitation services, get support for your Veteran-owned small business, and access other career resources.

Pension

Apply for monthly payments for wartime Veterans and survivors with limited or no income who meet certain age and disability requirements.

Housing assistance

Find out if you're eligible for a VA-backed home loan. If you have a service-connected disability, see if you qualify for a housing grant to help you live more independently.

Life insurance

Explore VA life insurance options for Veterans, service members, and families. Manage your policy online, file claims for benefits, and access helpful resources.

Burials and memorials

Get help planning a burial in a VA national cemetery, order a headstone or other memorial item to honor a Veteran's service, and apply for survivor and dependent benefits.

Records

Apply for a printed Veteran ID card, get your VA benefit letters and medical records, and learn how to apply for a discharge upgrade.

Service member benefits

Find out what benefits you may be eligible for during service and which time-sensitive benefits to consider when separating or retiring.

Family member benefits

Learn about the benefits you may qualify for as a spouse, dependent, or survivor. And find out what you're eligible for as a family member caring for a Veteran with disabilities.

VA department information

Learn more about the VA departments that manage our benefit and health care

The Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW)

Northeast Florida MOWW #250

Massing of Colors – 17 February 2024

Invitation to Participate and/or Attend



Massing of Colors Ceremony

You are Cordially Invited to a Massing of Colors Ceremony
on February 17, 2024 10 AM at
Ridgeview High School Cafetorium
466 Madison Avenue, Orange Park, FL 32065

The Massing of the Colors is a patriotic ceremony to rededicate our faith in the Colors of the United States, to honor those servicemembers who serve our country, and to memorialize those who sacrificed their lives to preserve our country's freedom.

Massing of Colors (MOC) is an inspiring ceremony and parade of the National and Organizational Colors by various color guard units from the Jacksonville area. It combines the colors and color guards of Active and Reserve Component military units, veterans' organizations, civic and patriotic organizations. Additional information is available at <https://moww.org/outreach-programs/>.

The Massing of Colors (MOC) Ceremony is hosted by the **Northeast Florida Chapter #250** of The Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW), a Veterans Service Organization serving ROTC/JROTC Units, Scouting, Public Service and Law & Order, Youth Leadership Conferences and Seminars, National Security and Homeland Security. See www.neflmo250.com for more information.

Our guest speaker will be Honorable Thomas Hall, former Asst. Secretary of Defense for Reserve Forces, and a graduate of The United States Naval Academy.



Color Guards can be a regular 4-Person Unit w/U.S. Flag and Organizational Flag, a 3-Person Unit w/U. S. Flag, and if necessary just one person representing an organization carrying a U. S. Flag. Contact me for other options. Guests without a Color Guard are encouraged to attend this patriotic event.

Uniform: Military Dress Uniform; Organizational Uniform; Coat and Tie or business casual. Call if you have questions.

Please RSVP NLT 15 December 2023 to Chapter Commander, CWO David McCuiston via email at davidmcc44@outlook.com, or by telephone at 423-402-1643.



DELIVER
the Dream



FAMILY RETREAT

For Veterans and their family



FEBRUARY 9-11, 2024
Florida FFA Leadership Training Center
Haines City, Florida

Activities

- Team building
- Interactive games
- Discussion groups
- Creative workshops

Apply Here



More Information

@deliverthedream
 888-OUR DREAM
www.deliverthedream.org
contact@deliverthedream.org



From the St. Johns County Parks & Recreation Dept.

Do you know a Military Veteran with a *Blank Space* on their calendar? Check out our upcoming Veteran Programs (SJC Parks and Recreation's Version).

Veteran Fishing: Don't be overwhelmed by fishing regulations, *Shake It Off* and learn all about Keeping It Legal in September. Then join us to explore the *Wonderland* of Surf Fishing in October!

Veteran Art: Discover your artistic *Style* and try out a different art medium every month. Upcoming programs include Print Making and Pumpkin Painting!

Veteran Kayaking: *I Know Places* for some great wildlife viewing in and *Out Of The Woods* around Hallows Cove and in Deep Creek this fall.

All You Had To Do Was Stay until the end of this post and you'd find the link for more information and program registration here: <https://bit.ly/46HMhEt>





VOLUSIA VALOR DAYS

A WEEKEND HONORING OUR NATION'S HEROES

**MAY 4 - 5, 2024
VOLUSIA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
DELAND, FL**

**AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE OF WWII TANK & ARTILLERY
DEMONSTRATIONS, WWII HISTORIC BATTLE
REENACTMENTS, LIVING HISTORY CAMPS & DISPLAYS,
AND MEMORABLE DISPLAYS OF FIRST RESPONDER
VEHICLES AND MILITARY VEHICLES OF ALL ERAS.**

FREE EVENT



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WW2ARMOR.ORG

The Jacksonville Naval Museum Needs You!

SKILLS NEEDED:

Docents
Cleaning
Welders
Metal Workers
Painters
Cashiers
Electricians
& More

JACKSONVILLE NAVAL MUSEUM

We need

YOU!



Volunteers are the backbone of every museum!

Step up to help out today!

Please don't wait for someone else to do it.

*Email our Volunteer Coordinator at
volunteer@jaxnavalmuseum.org*



WHAT TO DO:

Submit your name & contact information along with your skills using the above email.

HOW DISABILITY RATINGS WORK

| SERVICE CONNECTED PERCENTAGE | DESCRIPTION |
|--|---|
| 0% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 point Veteran preference in federal hiring *Compensable & Non-Compensable* No cost health care and prescription drugs for service connected disabilities (if income limits are met) *Compensable & Non-Compensable* Travel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facility *Compensable & Non-Compensable* Commissary and Exchange Privileges *Compensable & Non-Compensable* Use of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) retail facilities, in-person and online. *Compensable & Non-Compensable* Waiver of VA funding fee for VA home loan *Compensable* Burial and plot allowance *Compensable* |
| 10% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cost health care and prescription medications for service connected disabilities Travel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facility Waiver of VA funding fee for home loan 10 point Veteran preference in federal hiring Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (with a serious employment handicap) Burial and plot allowance Commissary and Exchange Privileges Use of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) retail facilities, in-person and online. |
| 20% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cost health care and prescription medications for service connected disabilities Travel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facility Waiver of VA funding fee for home loan 10 point Veteran preference in federal hiring Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Burial and plot allowance Commissary and Exchange Privileges Use of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) retail facilities, in-person and online. |
| 30-40% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cost health care and prescription medications for service connected disabilities Travel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facility Waiver of VA funding fee for home loan 10 point Veteran preference in federal hiring - Direct hire authority Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Additional compensation for eligible dependents (may include aid and attendance for eligible spouse) Burial and plot allowance Commissary and Exchange Privileges Use of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) retail facilities, in-person and online. |
| 50% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cost health care and prescription medications Travel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facility Waiver of VA funding fee for home loan 10 point Veteran preference in federal hiring - Direct hire authority Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Additional compensation for eligible dependents (may include aid and attendance for eligible spouses) Concurrent receipt of military retired pay Burial and plot allowance Commissary and Exchange Privileges Use of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) retail facilities, in-person and online. |
| 60-90% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cost health care and prescription medications Travel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facility Waiver of VA funding fee for home loan 10 point Veteran preference in federal hiring - Direct hire authority Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Additional compensation for eligible dependents (may include aid and attendance for eligible spouses) Concurrent receipt of military retired pay Individual Unemployability (must be unemployable due to service connected disabilities) - Dependents Educational Assistance (unemployable condition must be considered permanent) : Special restorative training, CHAMPVA-Civilian Health and Medical Program (unemployable condition must be considered permanent), Dental care (if rated unemployable) Burial and plot allowance Commissary and Exchange Privileges Use of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) retail facilities, in-person and online. |
| 100% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cost health care and prescription medications Travel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facility No cost dental care Waiver of VA funding fee for home loan 10 point Veteran preference in federal hiring - Direct hire authority Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Additional compensation for eligible dependents (may include aid and attendance for eligible spouses) Concurrent receipt of military retired pay Dependents Education Assistance (must be considered permanent) - Special restorative training CHAMPVA-Civilian Health and Medical Program (must be considered permanent) Burial and plot allowance Uniformed Services ID card |
| 100% with an additional separate 60% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Housebound Commissary and Exchange Privileges Use of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) retail facilities, in-person and online. |

This matrix is the creation of former and current members of the Veterans Benefits Administration Web Communications Office.
VA Derivative Benefits Eligibility Service-Connected Matrix: https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/derivative_sc.asp





Stories of Service

St. Johns County Veterans Oral History Project



Stories of Service is an oral history project focused on the veterans of St. Johns County. The goal of this project was to collect, document, and preserve the memories of local veterans for future generations.

Materials collected by the Society for this project have allowed for the creation of two exhibits, one physical at the Oldest House Museum Complex at 14 St. Francis Street on display until January, one digital, accessible below and through our main website under the LEARN tab.

Items on display in both the digital and physical exhibits tell the stories of our local veterans, placing them proudly within the long and storied histories of St. Augustine and St. Johns County.

A sincere thanks to them all.



View the Digital Exhibit:

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



Main: 904-824-2872

Research Library: 904-825-2333

271 Charlotte Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084

Research Library located at 6 Artillery Lane, St. Augustine FL 32084

From the VFW Aux-National Organization

Spread patriotism through song!



Youth are encouraged to enter the VFW Auxiliary's national anthem singing contest, Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue! Contestants may sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" in the arrangement and genre of their choice: rock, pop, reggae, R&B, hip-hop, country, classical and other genres are accepted. But they can't change the words!

The contest consists of two grade divisions: K-8 and 9-12. Entries are due to a local VFW Auxiliary by March 31, 2024.

Visit <https://vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities/> for contest eligibility, rules, an entry form, to see the 2023 winners' videos and more.



WOMEN SURVIVORS: BREAKING STIGMA RESOURCES AND PREVENTION

Women telling their stories
about breaking the stigma and
showing how they survived



MARINE FOR LIFE NETWORK

MARINE FOR LIFE NETWORK

Connecting transitioning Marines and their family members to education resources, employment opportunities, and other Veterans services that aid in their career and life goals outside of military service.

ONCE A MARINE,
ALWAYS A MARINE!

Marine for Life Network can guide your search for:



Career & Technical Opportunities



Educational Opportunities



Entrepreneurial Endeavors

NETWORKING IS KEY

Linked in



Our online network utilizes LinkedIn to help Marines network with one another and connect with employers who want to hire Marines.

Face to Face Network



We focus on connecting Marine Veterans to local and national resources, as well as encouraging networking through Marine For Life events and meet ups.

[company/marine-for-life-network](https://www.linkedin.com/company/marine-for-life-network)

marineforlife.org

866-645-8762

[/MarineForLifeNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/MarineForLifeNetwork)



CATHOLIC CHARITIES

www.ccbjax.org

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

In an effort to assist children and families of Anchor Academy Elementary School and the Mayport Area, We are partnering with Feeding Northeast Florida and Humana Military to provide fresh produce, protein, and pantry staples.

This is a touchless, drive-through food giveaway. Please follow typical school pickup line procedures and remain in your car with windows up. You will pop your trunk for volunteers to place the food inside.

**Every 4th Saturday of the month
Starts at 9:00 a.m.**

555 Wonderwood Dr.
Jacksonville, FL, 32233



dcps.duvalschools.org/anchoracademy



**800-MyVA411
(800) 698-2411**

- LIVE ASSISTANCE**
General information, directory assistance and technical support for VA.gov
- VA HEALTH CARE**
Eligibility, enrollment, locations and COVID-19
- COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE**
MISSION Act eligibility, copayments
- NATIONAL CEMETERIES**
Burial benefits, interment scheduling and headstone/Veteran marker
- VETERANS CRISIS LINE**
Immediate connection to caring, qualified responders
- DEBT MANAGEMENT**
Debt details, payment options and debtor rights
- FACILITY LOCATOR**
Locations of medical centers, benefits offices or cemeteries
- BENEFITS ASSISTANCE**
Information about a variety of VA benefits
- HOMELESS VETERANS LINE**
Information and support for homeless and at-risk callers
- COVID-19 INFORMATION**
Frequently asked questions and live assistance for COVID-related questions

VETERANS CRISIS LINE 988

As of July 16, 2022 the United States transitioned to using the three digit dialing code of 988 press 1 in addition to the existing Veterans Crisis Line of 1-800-273-8255 press 1

FACTS ABOUT 988

ACCESSIBLE - It serves as a universal entry point so that no matter where you live, you can reach a trained crisis counselor who can help people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the U.S.

COMPREHENSIVE - 988 is a direct connection to compassionate care and support for anyone experiencing mental health related distress whether that is thoughts of suicide mental health or substance use crisis or any other kind of emotional distress

FOR EVERYONE - People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one or someone who may need crisis support



988

Call **988**, press 1 for Free, Confidential, 24/7
Mental Health Support



VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
North Florida / South Georgia Veterans Health System

71822_1988_304

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS VETERAN HOMEOWNERS SAINT JOHNS COUNTY

FREE HOME REHAB

We believe everyone deserves to live in a healthy home. At Operation Lifeline Inc., we feel particularly indebted to those who served in the Armed Forces and have committed to helping as many struggling veterans as possible. Our program provides home rehabilitation services at no charge to eligible veterans to address accessibility and HUD's Eight Healthy Homes Principles.

QUALIFICATIONS

Participant Eligibility:

- Verifiable veteran status
- Gross income below 80% of the area's median income
- Occupy the property as a principal residence and have proof of ownership
- Be in compliance with any existing mortgage on the property
- Be current with utility accounts and property taxes

Property Eligibility:

- Must be a single-family residence
- Must be the applicant's homestead
- Applicant must own the property by fee simple title
- Must be free of any encumbrances other than a first mortgage
- Located within the unincorporated portion of Saint Johns County or the City of Saint Augustine Beach

* Please review full eligibility criteria on our website *

CONTACT US TODAY

*Funding is Limited and Restricted
to Saint Johns County Homes*

Please visit our website to fill
out an application

WWW.OPLIFELINE.ORG



LIFELINE INC.

RESERVE COMPONENT TRANSITION ASSISTANCE ADVISORS



Are you a member of a Reserve Component? Have you served 180 or more consecutive days on Title 10? Do you have a service-related injury or health care issue? Perhaps you're about to retire from service and need someone to show you how to get back into the swing of civilian life. Getting to know your Reserve Component Transition Assistance Advisor (RCTAA) means you'll have reliable, professional support when you need it.

I am here to help with the following benefits:

- State and Local Benefits
- VA Assistance for Physical and Mental Health
- Disabled Veterans Program Assistance
- Education and Training Assistance
- Employment Assistance
- Health and Life Insurance
- Financial Assistance
- Legal Assistance
- Relocation Assistance
- Effects of a Career Change

Since 2005, RCTAAs have assisted Reserve Component service members with 180 days or more T-10 AD service obtain their federal benefits and entitlements. You could save an average of:

- Employment Counseling (\$75/hour)
- Health Insurance (\$1430/Service Member)
- Legal Assistance (\$255/hour)
- VHA DAV Benefit Received (\$15,034/Service Member)
- VA Benefit Received (\$5786/Service Member)
- Education Benefits Received (\$15,285/Service Member)

Average benefit per eligible Reserve Component service member across all benefits areas=\$11,970.

If you or someone you know needs assistance with federal benefits and entitlements, don't hesitate to contact me. You can either scan this QR code and fill out the attached form or contact me directly using the information below.



Thank you for serving, now let me serve you.

According to the National Defense Authorization Act 2013, [Reserve Component] transition assistance advisors "serve as points of contact to assist eligible members of the reserve components in accessing benefits and health care furnished under laws administered by the Secretary of Defense and benefits and health care furnished under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs" (Sec. 513).

David "Dave" Kennett

Reserve Component
Transition Assistance Advisor

Federal Contractor

202-987-3864

DKennett@gapsi.com

DIRECTION | BENEFITS | COMPASSION



RESERVE COMPONENT SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS

Do you need direction to your benefits?

RCTAAs provide **DIRECTION** through the maze of programs available to the Reserve Component and connection to earned **BENEFITS** with the **COMPASSION** of someone who knows what it's like to transition.



*Ask your Reserve Component
Transition Assistance Advisor (RCTAA)
to show you the way!*



BENEFITS:

- » State and Local Benefits
- » VA Assistance for Physical and Mental Health
- » Disabled Veterans Program Assistance
- » Education and Training Assistance
- » Employment Assistance
- » Health and Life Insurance
- » Financial Assistance
- » Legal Assistance
- » Relocation Assistance
- » Effects of a Career Change



*This picture might be worth
\$1000 or more in federal
benefits and entitlements!
Enter your contact
information to receive a call
from a RCTAA.*



*Locate your
closest RCTAA
here!*



By law, Transition Assistance Advisors "serve as points of contact to assist eligible members of the Reserve Components in accessing benefits and health care furnished under laws administered by the Secretary of Defense and benefits and health care furnished in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs" (NDAA, 2013, Sec. 513).

From American Legion 5th District FL

IMPORTANT VETERAN INFORMATION

Every spouse of a veteran should have in his/her personal file the following:

Veteran's Birth Certificate - 3 copies
Spouse's Birth Certificate - 3 copies
Children's Birth Certificate - 3 copies
Certificate of Marriage - 3 copies
Wills (for veteran & spouse) - 2 copies
Spouse's Social Security number
Veteran's Social Security number
Discharge papers - 2 copies
Separation records - 2 copies
V.A. "C" number
G.I. Insurance Policy Number
All Insurance Policies with addresses and numbers. (Originals needed)
Cemetery plot or vault locations and numbers
Death Certificates and divorce decree of all prior marriages (if applicable)

Copies of the following are needed to file a Claim for Death Benefit:

Certificate of Marriage
Birth Certificate of minor children
Death Certificates or divorce decrees of all prior marriages on either side
Service discharge papers
Service separation papers
V.A. "C" number
Social Security number of both parties
V.A. insurance papers
Proof of Death Certificate (minimum 4 copies)
Bills from Funeral Home

ALL originals should be kept in a safety deposit box or equivalent.

NEVER release an ORIGINAL copy.

APPOINT an administrator for minor children.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE: contact your County Veterans' Service Officer

KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION



CALLING ALL KOREAN WAR AND KOREAN DEFENSE VETERANS

We invite you to join the KWVA Brotherhood. There are KWVA Chapters throughout America. Go to our KWVA Facebook Page, our KWVA Website at kwva.us or call the KWVA National Office to join the KWVA at **217-345-4414**



VA SURVIVOR BENEFITS & THE PACT ACT

ESGR4U

You may be eligible for VA benefits and services after your loved one has passed.



The PACT Act makes it easier for many survivors to receive Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC).

VA will be contacting survivors who were previously denied DIC benefits and may be newly eligible under the PACT Act. You do not need to wait for VA to contact you to submit a claim.

How to Apply for DIC and/or Accrued Benefits

Surviving family members may apply for these benefits using the appropriate VA form on va.gov/family-member-benefits.



Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

Monthly payment for the eligible surviving spouse, dependent children or parent(s) of the Veteran or service member IF Veteran or service member died in the line of duty or due to a service-related injury or illness.



Accrued Benefits

A one-time payment to a surviving spouse, dependent child(ren) or dependent parent(s) of a deceased Veteran based on relationship when the record shows additional benefits (such as VA compensation or pension) due to the Veteran prior to passing.

Additional Survivor Benefits Available:



Burials and Burial Allowance

Burial benefits available include a gravesite in any of our National cemeteries with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a government headstone, marker, or medallion, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost. Some survivors may also be eligible for a plot allowance, transportation allowance, and burial allowances based on the service connected disability status of the deceased Veteran.



Final Monthly Payment

If a Veteran who is receiving VA compensation or pension benefits passes away, their last month of benefits can be paid to their surviving spouse.



Home Loan Guaranty

Certificate of Eligibility is available for surviving spouses receiving DIC.



Education and Training

Chapter 35 benefits and Fry Scholarship are the two main GI Bill programs offering educational assistance to survivors and dependents of Veterans who died in the line of duty or as a result of service-related disabilities.



Health Care

Survivors and dependents of Veterans may qualify for health care benefits, such as CHAMPVA.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Learn more and sign up at [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT)
Download the [VA Health and Benefits App](#)
Call us at 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411)
Find a VA at [VA.gov/find-locations/](https://va.gov/find-locations/)

Surviving Spouse Milestones

Not all milestones apply to every persons situation

One Year Mark:

- Moving out of quarters (if applicable)
- Storage at government expense expires
- Apply for Home of Selection (HOS) extension
- HEART Act (one year from date SGLI/DG received)

Two Year Mark:

- Loss of Spouse's VA Transitional DIC Benefits (\$250 per family per month)

only applies to spouse with one or more minor children in household

- Apply for Home of Selection (HOS) extension

Three Year Mark:

- TRICARE Healthcare and Dental benefits transitions to retiree rate for spouse
- Home of Selection (HOS) entitlement expires

Spouse Turns 52:

- If disabled, can remain and retain SSA Survivor Benefits

Spouse Turns 55:

- Can remarry and not lose SBP eligibility

Spouse Turns 57:

- Can remarry not lose DIC eligibility

Spouse Turns 60:

- Can remarry and retain SSA Survivor Benefits

Surviving Youth Milestones

Not all milestones apply to every persons situation

Child Turns 16:

- Elimination of SSA entitlement for adult receiving Child in Care benefits

Child Turns 18:

- College - Fry Scholarship *Line of Duty Cases only*
- College - Dependence Education Assistance *VA Service Connected Death*
- Loss of annuities (SSA, DIC, SBP) unless enrolled in school full time. SSA depends on age when graduating High School
- Loss of annual benefit report
- If DG/SGLI beneficiary - if not already received

Child Turns 21:

- Loss of DFFRS/TRICARE unless enrolled in school full time
- Enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult

Child Turns 22:

- Loss of Child-Only SBP regardless of school enrollment

Child Turns 23:

- Loss of DFFRS/TRICARE transitional Survivor unless incapacitated
- Enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult

Child Turns 26:

- Loss of TRICARE Young Adult

Child Turns 33:

- Loss of Fry Scholarship eligibility

FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



Are You eligible to file for benefits based on Presumptive Exposure?

Were you exposed to hazardous materials while serving in the military, such as from Agent Orange or burn pits? Did you serve in Vietnam, Thailand or Southwest Asia? If so, you may be eligible to file for service-connected benefits based on presumptive exposure.

Over the course of the last six months, VA has begun processing service-connected disability claims for six new presumptive conditions related to exposure to hazardous materials.

In May 2021, VA started implementing provisions of the William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (NDAA), adding bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism to the list of medical conditions presumptively associated with exposure to Agent Orange. A few months later, VA added asthma, rhinitis and sinusitis (to include rhinosinusitis) on a presumptive basis based on particulate matter exposures during military service in Southwest Asia and certain other areas.

Any Veteran who was previously denied service-connection for any of these six conditions but had symptoms manifest within 10 years of military service would need to file another claim. Be sure to use VA Form 20-0995, "Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim" when filing. The claim form should include the name of the medical condition and also specify that the medical condition is being claimed due to in-service exposure to environmental hazards.

VA is committed to assisting Veterans who may have been exposed to hazardous materials during their military service.

Be sure to stay plugged in to www.va.gov for the most recent developments around environmental hazards; VA is constantly conducting research and surveillance, as well as reviewing scientific literature for conditions that may be related to exposure during military service.

If you feel you have a chronic condition attributed to an in-service exposure, we highly encourage you to file a claim. For more information about VA benefits and eligibility, or how to file a claim, Veterans and survivors can visit VA's website at www.va.gov or call toll-free at 1-800-827-1000.



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 to learn more.

Thanks!

Nick Howland

Executive Director, The Fire Watch

www.thefirewatch.org

904.525.1761



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 | Albert White | |
| 1048 | Bob Adkins | adk123robert@outlook.com |
| 1059 | Dave Treffinger | dtreffinger433@msn.com |
| 1084 | Bill Jefferson | bill_jefferson@comcast.net |
| 1088 | Roy (Corky) Rudd | corkstopper50@yahoo.com; Nassau |
| 1092 | Forest Hope | foresthope@usa.net; Gainesville |
| 1134 | Marvin Lagle | mdlagle@gmail.com; Baker |



REMEMBER WHAT OUR MEDAL STANDS FOR:

- RED:** REPRESENTS THE THREE ANCIENT VIETNAMESE EMPIRES OF TONKIN, ANNAM AND COCHIN.
- YELLOW:** THE IMPERIAL COLOR OF VIET NAM.
- GREEN:** SURROUNDED BY EXPANSIVE JUNGLE.
- TED PIECKO, The NAM.

Veterans Council of Clay County:

President: Ansil Lewis

Meeting day is the same, first Wednesday of the month, but the location is changed to Clay County Administration Building, 1st floor conference room, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. Meeting start at 11 a.m.

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

..... Confidential chat at 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 or text 838255



Legal Aid for Veterans

The Florida Veterans Legal Helpline is a project of the Major General Ernest A. and Marilyn Bedke Veterans Law Center at Bay Area Legal Services, Inc. The helpline is a free service for eligible Florida veterans and their family members.

When you call, you will speak to a screener who will determine your eligibility and set your appointment with an attorney.

1.866.486.6161

Call Today!

Hours: Monday – Friday
9 AM to 4:30 PM



We Can Help With

- Landlord-Tenant Matters
- Consumer Credit Issues
- Foreclosure
- Divorce + Child Support
- Drivers Licenses/ID cards
- Social Security + Public Benefits
- Discharge Upgrades
- VA Benefits
- And Other Civil Legal Matters
(No Criminal or Traffic Matters)

Supported by the: **FDVA**
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL SERVICES
ESTABLISHED BY PUBLIC LAW 101-508

Become a Watch Stander with The Fire Watch

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

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37
Main Building
San Juan Avenue

Time: 1900 (7 pm)

NASSAU COUNTY

President: Mike Doran

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

St. Johns County

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

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



We are inviting all veterans to visit our website at:

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

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

Please join our group on Facebook at:

<http://veteranscouncilsjc.org>

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

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

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

You may have noticed the Veterans Council's new logo, it was created by Roy Havekost.

He can be contacted at webmaster@veteranscouncilsjc.org

*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 County
Health & Human Services Building,
200 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, VSO
Travis Neidig, Assistant VSO
Angela McKenzie, Assistant VSO
Lori Chapman, Assistant VSO
Anna Marie Scott, Office Specialist*

The views expressed in The Patriot Reader Newsletter articles, submissions and spotlights are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County or the editors of The Patriot Reader. It is the purpose of this periodical to share a variety of information that pertain to local veterans and their organizations.