



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

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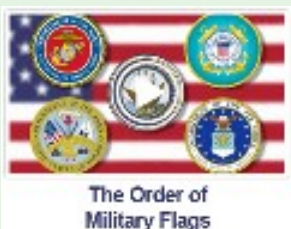
Volume 7, Issue 1

Message from the Chairman

Newsletter Date: January, 2018

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Fellow Veterans:

I trust everyone had an enjoyable Christmas spent with family and friends. I'm sure many of us remember Christmas' past when we were far away from home on this special day in the service of our country and longing to be with our family. I must admit this thought crossed my mind several times during the Holiday as I prayed for our men and women serving our country.

As I reflect back over this past year, I see another highly successful year for our Veterans Council. The many projects that we undertook kept our Council fully engaged during the year as we moved from one program to the next. Feeding the homeless, the Ken Burns documentary at the Corazon Cinema, the Homeless Stand-down, the Veterans Day Parade, and the Wreaths Across America just to name a few of the programs that kept us all busy honoring our veterans throughout the year.

This year's Wreaths Across America was by any measure the most successful we have had since the Veterans Council undertook supporting this program several years ago. The attendance was nearly double last years and the contributions for wreaths has placed us in a very good position for 2018 with the amount of carryover we have for 2018. An enviable position I must say and all thanks to a very generous community that is very supportive of our veterans. Thank you St. Johns County. A big shout out to Sgt. Major Ray Quinn and Judy Davis for their hard work and making this year's program a huge success.

As many will remember, last January we stood up our Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) with Judge Howard McGillin as the presiding judge. The program has grown throughout the year as more qualified veterans have opted to transfer into the program. On January 18, 2018, the VTC will have its first graduate's. Judge McGillin will honor these veterans by extolling their performance in the program dur-



ing the year, exemplifying them as role models for the others currently in the program and presenting them with a challenge coin specifically minted for graduates of the Veterans Treatment Court. I'm sure these veterans are anxiously looking forward to having the charges vacated against them giving them a clean record. The Veterans Council is very proud of these veterans and we are pleased to have been a part of the program that has made this life changing alteration possible for these veterans.

On behalf of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, I would like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Bill Dudley, Chairman

Veterans Council
of St. Johns County

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



The Vietnam Vets/Legacy Vets MC-USA Chapter N as well as Millcreek Elementary School provided our veterans a FABULOUS Christmas! The party was attended by the veterans with many, many family members also attending. Some of the family members were brought to tears by the generosity of both of these wonderful groups. There are not enough "Thank You's" in this world to express our gratitude!





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



The Support Committee invites everyone to attend its **next scheduled meeting, on Monday January 15, 2018**. The meeting will be at **7:00pm**. The meeting will take place at Community Hospice, **4266 Sunbeam Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32257 in Conference Room A.**

- Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee Meetings for 2018
- March 19th, 2018 Planning for Memorial Day Ceremony
 - April 16th, Memorial Day Planning
 - May 14th, Final Memorial Day Planning
 - Sept 17th, Begin Planning for WAA 2018
 - Oct. 15th
 - Nov 5th
 - Dec 3rd

+++++2016/2017 Officers of the SCJNC+++++

Chairman: Steve Spickelmier

Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley, Treasurer: John Mountcastle

Assistant Treasurer: Michael Rothfeld, Secretary: Kathy Church

Chaplain: Michael Halyard, Master-At-Arms: Joe McDermott

Historian: Kathy Cayton

*Picture below is from the Florida
Veterans Hall of Fame.*

*Veterans Council of St Johns County
Vice Chairman, SGM Ray Quinn is
standing on the right, and our good
friend SSG Rod Phillips, 2nd VP VVA
FL State Council, is standing in the
middle of the back row.*



Congratulations to all inductees!

POLICY of Veterans Council of St. Johns County
Written and approved by the EXCOMM of VC of SJC

ALL: Please read. We are instituting these guidelines because we have been allowing posts that are not veterans related, political in nature and for profit postings. I will remove postings that do not comply with the above, if it happens a second time I will be forced to prohibit you from using this site.

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc., is an IRC§501(c)(3) exempt organization, FEIN 27-1971825, registered (# CH31930) with the Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Contributions are deductible from taxable federal income as charitable donations under IRC§170 and/or IRC§6115. The Council does not use professional solicitors. 100% of funds received benefit the missions of the Council: supporting, advising, advocating, recommending and assisting the various commissions, organizations and citizens of St. Johns County.

Please visit our website: [http:// StJohnsVetsCouncil.org](http://StJohnsVetsCouncil.org) for more information.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. The toll-free number of the Department is 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) — calling from within the State of Florida, or (850) 488-2221 — calling from outside Florida.

It is the policy of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. not to endorse or advertise any product(s) or service(s) that would promote personal gain for any individual or group, or otherwise violate the provisions of §501(c) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. The Veterans Council reserves the right to remove any advertising or promotional postings or links thereto, which are not in compliance with the aims and ideals of our organization, or, directly or indirectly, are political in nature, at the sole discretion of the website administrator (with or without notice to those making the deleted posting). We appreciate your support and appreciate your compliance.

Four VVA Members Inducted into the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame

Four members of VVA chapters throughout Florida were recently inducted into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame by Governor Rick Scott.

The 20-member Class of 2017 was inducted on Nov. 27 in a ceremony at the Governor's Mansion attended by numerous state officials, veterans, and supporters.

Established five years ago, the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame recognizes veterans that have impacted their communities positively through civic, business or public service. The Veterans' Hall of Fame distinction focuses on post-military contributions to the State of Florida.

VVA Chapter 1048 member Rodney L. Phillips, who served in the Army, has worked on veterans homelessness and with veterans in the justice system. He is currently President of Chapter 1048 in Daytona Beach and second Vice President of the VVA Florida State Council. He is active in the Veterans Court in Volusia County and serves as Chairman of the VVA Florida State Council's Agent Orange and PTSD committees. He has coordinated five Agent Orange Town Halls across the state.

Naval Aviator and VVA Chapter 96 Life Member Captain Dale W. Doss was a prisoner of war who would later become the Leon County Director of Veterans' Affairs.

Retired Army Brig. Gen. Albin F. Irzyk is a Life Member of VVA Chapter 25. He is a 100-year-old World War II and Vietnam War veteran who has authored many books and magazine articles.

VVA Chapter 1046 member Retired Marine Corps Col. Francis (Len) Loving has mentored fellow veterans by providing food, housing, assistance securing veterans benefits, and financial and mental health counseling as they worked to improve their lives with his non-profit, the Five Star Veterans Center.

Other Vietnam veterans that were inducted into the Class of 2017 include John P. Folsom, Thomas G. Gates, Retired Air Force Col. Bruce J. Host, Richard R. Hunt, Retired Air Force Master Sgt. James L. Lamb, Retired Army Maj. Albert H. Linden Jr., John E. Thrasher, Donald L. Van Beck, Robert N. White, and the late Army Lt. Col. Earle L. Denton.

PHOTO: Len Loving (left) and Rod Phillips. Photo by Jane Verkouteren



**FORWARD MARCH, INC. TO HONOR SERGEANT MAJOR RAY A. QUINN, UNITED STATES ARMY
NATIONAL GUARD AT ITS ANNUAL MILITARY BALL**

Sergeant Major Ray A. Quinn, a tireless hero to the military men and women of St Johns County, is the 2018 honoree for the Fourth Annual Military Ball, to be held January 13 at the Mark Lance Armory in St. Augustine.

The Ball is the cornerstone fundraising event for Forward March, Inc., an organization dedicated to aiding Veterans, their activities, organizations, and support groups in Northeast Florida.

Each year Forward March selects a representative from the Military, who has, through their actions or service, significantly aided the Veteran Community of Florida.



Previous honorees are Major General Emmett Titshaw, Jr., Major General K.C. Bullard, and Air Force Lt. Colonel Bill Dudley.

Quinn comes from the ranks of those that truly do the “heavy lifting” in the Military: our enlisted men and women.

Voluntarily signing up in 1965 in Company C, 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry at Eustis, Florida, Quinn embarked on a military career that, to date, has spanned fifty-two years.

His official service of thirty years was spent as a traditional Florida National Guardsman and as an active duty guardsman. Not done, he logged another twelve years as Director of Executive Services and Protocol Officer for the Florida National Guard and the Florida Department of Military Affairs. Add to this, nine years on the Fort Steward Retiree Council.

In 2002, Quinn, known for his candor and persuasiveness, was selected to serve on the Retiree Council of the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, representing our nation’s retired soldiers and their dependents. He currently serves as the Vice Chairman of the Veterans Council of St Johns County.

Quinn’s local resume includes an alphabet of Clubs, Associations, Committees, and yet another Chairmanship, that of the Florida Veteran’s Hall of Fame. Most significantly, his work chairing the “Wreaths Across America” campaign, sponsored by the Veterans Council of St Johns County, recognizes veterans interred in our own St Augustine National Cemetery and provides our citizens an opportunity to participate by placing a wreath on each headstone in the cemetery.

In an interesting turn of career, Governor Scott appointed the Sergeant Major as interim County Commissioner for District 3 acting in place of the then deployed Mark Miner.

When asked if anyone in particular may have influenced him over the years, his answer is: “All are heroes to me.” He does, however, hold a soft spot for the late Colonel Ed. Taylor, recipient of two Silver Stars and four Purple Hearts, all earned in Vietnam. Ray calls him “the ultimate Vet advocate of St Johns County.”

In the midst of all his efforts to help others, Quinn and his wife of 51 years, Addrenne, managed to raise two daughters, Cindy and Susan, and now oversee a family of six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

For information or reservations for the Ball, call Dan Sullivan at 904-824-6060.

Please join Forward March in honoring St Augustine’s top advocate for our men and women in uniform.

Message from VA Secretary David Shulkin

VA Accomplishments in 2017



Today, Secretary Shulkin provided a year-end statement focused on VA accomplishments for 2017.

The text is below and there is a link here to see his accompanying video message: <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=3991>

Happy Holidays!

2017 has been a year of accomplishments for the Department of Veterans Affairs and this is a perfect time to reflect on, acknowledge, and thank all of those who have enabled our many accomplishments for Veterans during this past year. We owe so much to our Nation's leaders and others in and outside of government for supporting and enabling improvements to the ways in which we serve Veterans:

First and foremost, let me express my gratitude to President Trump. His leadership and vision have driven and inspired VA to better care for Veterans and their families. Among his many supportive acts and leadership initiatives, he has signed 9 bills to improve our ability to serve Veterans, as well as one Executive Order and three Presidential Proclamations; he has personally participated in and led six events honoring Veterans, and he has kept their interests foremost in the minds of all Americans by mentioning their service and sacrifices in 25 of his public speeches. He was the driving force behind the White House Hotline for Veterans, which opened for 24-7 service in October and has served more than 16,000 callers.

Vice President Pence has also been critical to every initiative involving Veterans. He personally led our Veterans Day ceremony at Arlington and demonstrated his concern for Veterans by supporting and attending Honor Flight ceremonies and events such as the Wounded Warrior bicycle ride.

Thanks to all the Members of Congress for making 2017 a legislative success for Veterans. With the unwavering support and leadership of our VA committees, Congress supported and passed groundbreaking legislation on VA Accountability, Appeals Reform, the Forever GI Bill, Veterans Choice Improvements, and Personnel Improvements and Extension of Choice funding.

Thanks also to my fellow Cabinet Secretaries and leaders of Administrations for their departments and agencies support:

Department of Defense: We are partnering on a new Electronic Medical Record and shared purchasing to better serve both Veterans and Service Members and best use taxpayer resources. Housing and Urban Development: Together, VA and HUD helped house over 61,000 homeless Veterans last year alone.

Department of Energy: With DoE assistance, we've launched an important Veterans Brain Health Initiative and Big Data Super Computing to expand dramatically our research into Veterans' health.

Department of Labor: Working together, the unemployment rate for Veterans has dropped to 2.6%, the lowest in 17 years.

Department of Education: With DoE's support, VA helped enable more than 1 million Veterans to use the GI Bill in 2017.

Health and Human Services: Our collaborations have led 620,000 Veterans to participate in precision medicine initiatives, achieve a reduction of 36% in the use of opioids, and produce over 10,000 research papers that will help us better serve Veterans and all Americans.

Department of State: Thanks to DoS for coordinating the visits of dignitaries from 16 countries to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Department of Justice has assisted with revising and coordinating new Telehealth regulations and regulations for prescriptions to improve Veterans' access to care and medications.

The Department of Interior helped provide employment opportunities for Veterans through the Park Ranger Internship Program. The Small Business Administration almost doubled the goal of 10 percent of federal contracts with Service Disabled Veteran Owned Business by achieving 19 percent.

And thanks to our partners in the private sector for helping provide Veterans' care. In 2017, VA authorized 6.1 million community care appointments, a 42 percent increase over 2016.

These and other collaborations have helped VA make significant progress in serving Veterans and their families. We have become more transparent by posting wait times for Veterans' appointments, Veterans' satisfaction with VA care and services, facility quality scores and accountability actions.

We've reduced dropped calls to our Veterans Crisis Line from 35% percent to less than 1 percent, ensured Veterans have same-day access to primary and mental health care at all our care facilities, identified 430 unused and under-utilized facilities for disposal, and improved claims processing times by 18 percent in 2017.

All of these accomplishments have resulted in raising Veteran "Trust" Scores from a low of 46% in 2014 to 70% today. But we still have much work to do, and we at VA look forward to the continued support and leadership of President Trump, Members of Congress, Veterans Service Organizations, and all Americans as we fulfill Lincoln's famous words "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan."

As the year comes to a close, may God bless each and every one of you, and may God continue to bless this wonderful country of ours.

St. Augustine Record By Colleen Michele Jones colleen.jones@staugustine.com

Baron inspires St. Johns woman to step up for K-9 cops

What began as a grassroots effort to help local police canine units has turned into a full-fledged charitable organization with far greater reach.

St. Johns resident Debbie Johnson founded K9s United after hearing about Baron, a St. Johns County Sheriff's Office K-9 dog which died in 2014 while in pursuit of a fugitive.



“His story just captured my heart, so I knew I had to do something,” Johnson said of the German shepherd.

Johnson learned more about what police dogs do and the dangers they face on the job. K-9 teams assist deputies in a variety of law enforcement situations, including conducting building and area searches, tracking suspects, finding missing persons and many other capacities.

She also learned about many of the hidden costs associated with canine units. Many handlers and other law enforcement officers go into their own pockets in order to pay for things like equipment and veterinary services that are not in the agency's budget.

“We just want to supply a need that is not being met,” said Johnson.

Johnson, who is a financial adviser, began reaching out to friends, colleagues and other associates to begin the effort. Many were willing to donate to the cause. Johnson then began negotiating deals with vendors that provide K-9 training and supplies such as muzzles, kennels, canine first-aid kits and high-heat alarms that allow police dogs to exit a patrol car when an officer is unable to return.

In 2015, Johnson filed for nonprofit status. In just two years, the organization has grown quite a bit.

“We've just continued to evolve and build upon our mission,” said Johnson.

After kicking off its first fundraiser in the fall of 2015 with a charity golf tournament, K9s United has followed that up with regular events throughout the year including an annual 5K. Last April's run brought in more than \$38,000 to the organization, which has allowed the group to expand its distribution efforts.

Over the last two years, K9s United has helped a dozen law enforcement agencies across Northeast and Central Florida, as well as Georgia.

Johnson has also been able to expand her team, hiring Eric Heineman as executive director who had previous experience in veteran nonprofits.

And the group has continued to focus on building partnerships with other like-minded community and corporate groups such as the Jacksonville Jaguars, Firehouse Subs and the Jacksonville Armada.

It's the second year St. Augustine's Spanish Wine Festival, which supports local charities through its ticket sales, has made K9s United a beneficiary. All proceeds earned from the event on Saturday will go to Johnson's organization. K9s United will also have several dogs from local law enforcement agencies and perform a demonstration of some of the work they do.

Another purpose of Johnson's organization is to memorialize other K-9s who have died in the line of duty with "end of watch" tributes on her website, as well as retirement celebrations for those police dogs which have finished their tours of duty.

In the future, Johnson hopes to expand the list of agencies she can help to other regions of Florida and, eventually, nationwide.

"There's a lot of need out there," said Johnson.

She is also devoted to advocating for stronger penalties for those who harm K-9 dogs.

"They're our hidden heroes," said Johnson, "and the only time they're on the news is when something [bad] happens."



Our Mission

HONOR ALL FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR; REMEMBER AND NEVER FORGET THOSE QUIET, MISSING IN ACTION HEROES AND THE FAMILIES THAT WAIT FOR THEIR RETURN.

The only known POW/MIA Memorial in Jacksonville, Florida is located at the former NAS Cecil Field (now Cecil Commerce Center). The memorial is dedicated to those Naval Aviators stationed at NAS Cecil Field during the Vietnam and Desert Storm War eras. The site consists of markers and associated planted trees for each of the 16 POW/MIA pilots (known as Hero's Walk and Freedom Trees), pavilion, stage area, starburst (metal display of aircraft), and a granite base seal of NAS Cecil Field. The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial was dedicated in 1973 by the families and service members who wanted to ensure these brave men would never be forgotten. A driving force behind the Memorial was Mary Hoff, the wife of MIA LCDR Michael G. Hoff. Mary, along with other spouses and family members, helped underwrite the Memorial. Mary was also very instrumental in developing the POW/MIA Flag. This flag has become an important symbol for the POW/MIAs, and the enduring cause that they will never be forgotten.

According to the US Department of Veterans Affairs, Florida is home to over 1.5 million veterans with over 1 million of those veterans of the Desert Storm (Gulf War) and Vietnam War. Northeast Florida (Duval, Clay, and St. Johns Counties) is home to over 150,000 veterans, making Jacksonville a key location for this Memorial and Center.

Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has been formed to restore and establish a national memorial that will serve as a historic and destination site for Jacksonville and to serve as an educational resource for generations to come.

The memorial site, located at the former Naval Air Station Cecil Field, was originally dedicated on September 11, 1973 and consisted of markers and associated trees for each of the 16 POW/MIA pilots (an area known as Hero's Walk and Freedom Trees), a pavilion, a stage area, a starburst metal display of aircraft, a granite base seal of NAS Cecil Field and a chapel. This property was given to the City of Jacksonville when Cecil Field was decommissioned in 1999. As a result, the existing memorial has been neglected.

However, the non-profit organization was given a lease by the Jacksonville City Council and the Mayor's office, and given the rights to develop, expand and maintain the 26 acre memorial.

We would like to invite all of you to visit our Website -
www.powmiamemorial.org



MISSION BACKGROUND

Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has been formed to restore and establish a national memorial that will serve as a historic and destination site for Jacksonville and to serve as an educational resource for generations to come.

The memorial site, located at the former Naval Air Station Cecil Field, was originally dedicated on September 11, 1973 and consisted of markers and associated trees for each of the 36 POW/MIA pilots [an area known as Hero's Walk and Freedom Trees], a pavilion, a stage area, a starburst metal display of aircraft, a granite base seal of NAS Cecil Field and a chapel. This property was given to the City of Jacksonville when Cecil Field was decommissioned in 1999. As a result, the existing memorial has been forgotten.

However, the non-profit organization was given a lease by the Jacksonville City Council and the Mayor's office, and given the rights to develop, expand and maintain the 26-acre memorial.



A FEW QUOTES SUBMITTED BY OUR NATIONAL LEADERS



"Your proposal to use part of the former Naval Air Station Cecil Field for a POW/MIA Memorial is a fitting location to pay tribute to this very special group. Given that Mary Hoff, the creator of the POW/MIA flag, is a long-time resident of Jacksonville, and that her husband, Lieutenant Commander Michael G. Hoff, is memorialized at Cecil Field, there could not be a more appropriate site for the POW/MIA Memorial."

U.S. Congressman
John Rutherford

"The proposal to build the Cecil Field Prisoners of War and Missing in Action Museum is a great opportunity to honor the service members who did not return home from war."

U.S. Senator
Marco Rubio

"With the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, we can renew our commitment to all those who have worn the uniform, to the children and families, and thank them for their selflessness and bravery."

U.S. Senator
Bill Nelson



Brochure funded by Jim Kavitsa, Lt. Col. Air National Guard (Ret.) and owner of Halliday's and Kavitsa's Pharmacy.



JOIN THE MISSION TO BRING A NATIONAL POW/MIA MEMORIAL TO JACKSONVILLE

MISSION STATEMENT

HONOR ALL FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR; REMEMBER AND NEVER FORGET THOSE QUIET, MISSING IN ACTION HEROES AND THE FAMILIES THAT WAIT FOR THEIR RETURN.

More than 82,000 are still Missing in Action and Unaccounted for since WWII

MEMORIAL STRATEGIC PLAN

With the help of the community, Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc. is raising funds to make this memorial a true national honor to all POW/MIA personnel from every state in America. These funds will enable the organization to accomplish the following memorial projects:

- Restore and use the historic chapel (named the "Chapel of the High-Speed Paces") for memorial services, ceremonies and weddings.
- Enhance the existing sacred grounds of the park and to construct a replica of the USS Saratoga (CV-60).
- Refurbish and utilize existing building 333 as a starting point for the POW/MIA memorial center and museum.
- Establish a new memorial center - to honor all Former Prisoners of War, acknowledge those still Missing in Action; feature the history of the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action flag, house the history of NAS Cecil Field.
- Educate the public on the Prisoner of War and Missing in Action issue through exhibits, videos, artifacts and memorabilia.
- Establish a national destination for military remembrance and celebration (there is not a national memorial for all Missing in Action in the United States).



Hero's Walk & Freedom Trees



Chapel of the High-Speed Paces



Starburst Sculpture

HOW YOU CAN HELP HONOR OUR MILITARY HEROES



It will take considerable dollars to fund this sacred project. At this point, the project will depend on contributions from private citizens. You can help this effort by making contributions online by going to our website at powmiamemorial.org or to make checks payable to:

Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc.
612 New World Avenue Jacksonville, Florida 32221

ONLINE PowMiaMemorial.org

Facebook.com/Cecil-Field-POW-MIA-Memorial-Inc-1084029864845232/

Twitter.com/CFPOW/MIA

Instagram.com/cecilfieldpowmia/

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CECIL FIELD NATIONAL POW/MIA MEMORIAL PARK



On November 9, 2017, Representative Charlie Crist (FL) and Representative Jeff Denham (CA) introduced H.R. 4345, the Veteran Treatment Court Coordination Act of 2017.



The bill would create coordination between the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Attorney General to provide grants and technical assistance to the State circuit court systems that have adopted Veterans Treatment Court Programs or have filed a notice of intent to establish a Veterans Treatment Court Program with the Secretary.

There are currently over 200 Veterans Treatment Courts in the United States. These courts seek to treat veterans suffering from a substance abuse and/or mental health disorder, while helping ensure public safety. They combine rigorous treatment and personal accountability, with the goal of breaking the cycle of drug use and criminal behavior. Veterans Treatment Courts require regular court appearances, as well as mandatory attendance at treatment sessions, and frequent and random testing for drug and alcohol use. Veterans respond favorably to this structured environment, given their past experiences in the Armed Forces.

Veterans Treatment Courts keep veterans out of jail and prison and connect them with the benefits and treatment they have earned, all while saving tax dollars for our country. Nationwide, these courts have produced a statistically significant reduction of recidivism rates in veterans.

H.R. 4345 would create a single office in the Department of Justice to coordinate the provision of grants, training, and technical assistance to help State, local, and Tribal governments develop and maintain Veterans Treatment Courts.

In accordance with DAV Resolution No. 105, calling for the continued growth of Veterans Treatment Courts for justice-involved veterans, DAV supports this bill. Please use the prepared electronic letter or draft your own to urge your Representative to cosponsor H.R. 4345.

We appreciate your support for DAV and your grassroots efforts through DAV CAN. Your advocacy makes DAV a highly influential and effective organization in Washington, DC. Your voice makes a difference and we would not be as effective without you.

Click the link below to log in and send your message:
<https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/6kD3dPyCvTVyGGwQ35CRfA>

Chairman Bill Dudley and I were on Jorge Rivera's St Augustine Tonight Show which was taped Wednesday, December 13th, at the St Augustine Art Association (Gallery) in front of a live audience. Guests were Kay Burtin of the St Augustine Art Association, Bill Dudley and Michael Rothfeld from the Veterans Council of St Johns County, Daniel McCook and the art of falconry, and musical guest, Leelynn Osborn.

Chairman Dudley and I spoke about Wreaths Across America, the Veterans Treatment Court, the Homeless Veterans Standdown and the importance of recording veterans stories and then sharing them with students. We have given away hundreds of copies of our documentaries featuring the stories of local veterans in all wars as well as those suffering from PTSD.

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





From the Brooklyn Daily

Oh Captain, my Captain! Coney street co-named after local war hero By Matt John

Brooklyn war hero Capt. Michael Berdy was honored in his native Coney Island with a street co-naming on West Avenue on May 22.

Thanks to a push by Community Board 13 and Councilman Mark Treyger (D–Coney Island), West Avenue between Ocean Parkway and West Fifth Street is now Captain Michael E. Berdy Way. Local leaders gathered a week before Memorial Day for a ceremony to unveil the new street sign and pay tribute to a hero who died for his country after a lifetime of serving his community, according to one CB 13 member.

“He was an amazing person,” said Stephen “Butch” Moran, who grew up with Berdy. “He just helped do the right thing for America and he should be honored in perpetuity for it.”

Straight out of central casting, Berdy was a Boy Scout, played football at Lincoln High School, graduated West Point, and volunteered for deployment to Vietnam in 1965. After being injured in battle, he turned down a transfer out of the war zone, and returned to the fight. Berdy was killed in a helicopter crash in 1967, the day after Christmas, just days before he was scheduled to return home.

After his passing, Brooklyn recognized Berdy’s impact both in and outside of the community. Both PS 188 and the football field at Lincoln High School were named after Berdy, but several years later the football field was re-named after Fred Trump — father of President Trump — after Trump gave money to the school.

Members of CB 13 wanted to make sure that Berdy’s name had a permanent place in the community, according to the district manager. “We didn’t want to lose Captain Berdy’s memory, so we decided to embark on a street naming for him,” said Eddie Mark. “It took about three or four years to do and his name is now on the corner of Ocean Parkway.”

Moran, who spearheaded the co-naming effort, assured the crowd at the ceremony that his childhood friend deserved the honor.

“Was he a hero? Absolutely. Was he a role model? Absolutely. Was he a gift to us all? Absolutely,” said Moran. “Should we honor him? Absolutely.”

Captain Michael Edward Berdy was the Air Operations Officer for the S-3 command of Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st Cavalry Division. His Battalion had just finished operations in the largest contact of Operation Pershing...the Battle of Tam Quan...which was a running battle that stretched over the period from December 6th through December 20th, 1967.

As a welcome respite from that intense action, the day after Christmas, CPT Berdy was a passenger on a helicopter transporting him and others to the Bob Hope Christmas Show at Phu Cat Airbase in Binh Dinh Province. While en-route, his aircraft lost its rear rotor and crashed and burned as a result. He was killed instantly in the crash.

A street in the Coney Island Neighborhood of Brooklyn, NY, CPT Berdy’s home town, was named after the war hero.

Jim Sheppard, Historian, 50th Infantry Regiment.





36 Granada Street, St. Augustine FL 32084

(904) 679-5736

Corazoncinemaandcafe.com

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

The Veterans Council of St Johns County would like to publicly thank Michael Boylan for helping us preserve local veteran's stories. Ten years ago when our Council wanted to record the war stories of our county WW II veterans Michael Boylan sent over a film crew to film and interview over 35 veterans stories. This project was broadcast on WJCT TV as "War Stories from the First Coast". Since then Michael has guided our Council in the production of four more documentaries recording veteran's stories from other wars. When asked Michael B has joined us at the premiers of these veteran's stories. Michael was one of a kind and will certainly be missed by many. Michael Boylan is the President and CEO of WJCT TV, the PBS affiliate in Jacksonville. The Veterans Council of St Johns County thanks him and wishes him God Speed.



William Dudley Chairman Veterans Council



560 N. Wilderness Trail Palm Valley Ponte Vedra Beach 904-285-2484

8th ANNUAL COWBOY NIGHT

Saddle up partners...it's time for another rootin' and tootin' evening with Dakota Don, Beaumont Ben and the Laredo Ladies

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27th 6:00pm til ??



BBQ PORK BUTTS cooked onsite by Dakota Don & Beaumont Ben will be served up with all the fixins by the Laredo Ladies. **ALL** for a small donation of only **\$10.00**

Food service will begin at 6:00pm til 8:00pm (or until we sell out)

*Entertainment by
B-Mac & Chrisi*



Come and experience the best BBQ in all of Palm Valley. Bring your best gal, guy and partners enjoy a fun filled rootin' tootin' evening

Due to the popularity of this event we ask that you RSVP with the number of members and guests that plan on attending. We need a count so we will have enough food and fixins

RSVP by January 20th, 904-285-2484. Leave your name and # attending with the bartender.

WE NOW ACCEPT



Copyright 2017 Palm Valley Post 233. Proceeds support Legion programs.

The Coquina Crossing veterans opened their December meeting to the community for a party with music by the Coconuts. Price of admission was a gift for a child.

On Monday the 18th we delivered the gifts to the children of Armstrong, Elkton and Spuds at the Baptist church in Armstrong. It was very well attended by a dozen members of our group and a very large number of children and parents from the area.



Me and West Point

This past Army-Navy football game rekindled many memories of why I root for Army even though I belonged to the Navy League for a few years.

I have always felt a closeness to West Point and the Army football team. I guess it started in 1964/1965 when a high school classmate of mine, Michael Berdy, was the Black Knight's starting offensive guard. He was everything an Army footballer should be, broad shoulders, muscular, short blonde hair, intelligent and polite. He died in 1969 in Vietnam one month before he was to return home.



One of my favorite movies growing up was "Mr. Inside and Outside" the story of Army Heisman football players in the 40's, Felix "Doc" Blanchard and Glenn Davis. My later heroes were Army halfback Pete Dawkins and Lonesome End Bill Carpenter.

A few years later, in the 1980s, I was given the opportunity to attend an Army football game at Michie Stadium with a family friend who was an "A Club" supporter and donor. We were served lunch in the West Point cafeteria by cadets who treated me like a VIP. After lunch we boarded a bus to the stadium. We were given a MP escort with flashing lights. When we arrived at the stadium we were saluted by a phalanx of cadets who may have thought we were VIPs also. Naturally, we sat on the 50 yard line. After the game we were invited to the Commandant Lt Gen Willard Warren Scott's home for a reception. It was a day I will never forget.

The following year I had the privilege of being invited to the Army Navy game played in Veterans Stadium, Philadelphia. It was very cold and snowing but our seats were in the enclosed VIP section. While others ate hot dogs we were treated to steak. You could get spoiled watching football this way.



In 1984 our friend invited my wife to attend the Mitsubishi Mirage Bowl in Tokyo. Army beat the University of Montana 45 to 31. The group then visited Hong Kong and China. I asked my wife what she remembers most about the trip and she said it was singing the Army fight song in flight for hours on end and then listening to General MacArthur's famous locker room speech to the Army football team.

Now you know why I will always root for the Army!

December 10th was the USMC 242nd birthday, it is the greatest fighting force this world has ever seen, I would like to publicly thank my grandson Christopher Craft for his service. He is pictured in the center of the rear row.

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

Seventy-Five years ago today, after months of fighting at Henderson Field and along Edson's Ridge, Marines on Guadalcanal spent the night of 10 November 1942 planning and preparing. Although the Battle of Guadalcanal would continue for three more months, the plans laid on our Corps' most sacred day became integral to the amphibious campaigns that followed. Success at Guadalcanal proved to be the turning point that ultimately paved the way for Allied victory in the Pacific. Those warriors defended their positions in brutal conditions against a formidable enemy – and triumphed. Through every major conflict our Nation has seen since the Revolution, Marines performed their duty with utmost courage, devotion, and raw determination. Their valiant deeds in the face of overwhelming challenges give us confidence and inspire us to meet the trials of today. As we pause to celebrate the birth of our Corps this year, we honor the legacy that was passed down to us and we recommit ourselves to carrying those traditions into the future.



This November 10th marks 242 years of warfighting excellence. At places like Trenton, Tripoli, Chapultepec, Belleau Wood, Guadalcanal, Chosin, Khe Sanh, Fallujah, Sangin, and so many others, Marines have fought with an inner spirit – a spirit that bonds us, binds us together as a cohesive team. It's that intangible spirit that has formed the foundation of our warfighting reputation for the past 242 years. Now it's our responsibility to ensure we honor and carry on that legacy. The American people expect a Corps of men and women who are committed, selfless, willing to sacrifice, who epitomize honor, courage, commitment, virtue, and character. We owe our Nation and our predecessors no less.

Today, as we celebrate our 242nd birthday, we must remember who we are, where we came from, and why we're here. We must remember the past, honor those who are no longer with us, focus on today's battles, and get ready for tomorrow. We can and will prevail as we always have, in any clime and place. But we must prevail together, united by the unyielding spirit in each of us that makes our Corps unique – that willingness to put our Corps and fellow Marines ahead of ourselves. Victory in battle comes through the integrated efforts of many – teamwork. We value the sacrifices and contributions of every Marine and Sailor, as well as our family members without whose support we would not be able to accomplish our mission. And we remain committed to being our Nation's Expeditionary Force in Readiness that sets the standard for honor, discipline, and courage. I am proud of each and every one of you. Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,, Robert B. Neller, General, U.S. Marine Corps, Commandant of the Marine Corps

Wreaths Across America 2017

Wreaths Across America is a national program that pays tribute to our veterans, making sure they aren't forgotten during the holiday season.

We encourage every volunteer who places a wreath on a veteran's grave to say that veteran's name aloud and take a moment to thank them for their service to our country. It's a small act that goes a long way toward keeping the memory of our veterans alive.

We are not here to "decorate graves." We're here to remember not their deaths, but their lives.

—Karen Worcester, Executive Director of Wreaths Across America



Wreaths Across America, December 16: St. Augustine National Cemetery, the Nation's Oldest National Cemetery



Pictures by Michael Isam and Eric West

Wreaths Across America Thank You!

The veterans and the community once again stepped up to the challenge of honoring our fallen comrades. The outpouring of support enable the council to ensure every gravesite was adorned with a fresh holiday wreath.

The ceremony and laying of the wreaths this year was nothing short of a resounding success. The attendance has been described as in the hundreds. It is believed that the attendance was as large or larger than our Memorial Day observance.

It is impossible to thank everyone that contributed or served the project individually. Just know that your efforts are deeply appreciated.

If you have the opportunity to pass the cemetery to see the beauty, please do so.

Thank you!, SGM Ray Quinn, US Army, (Ret)



COASTAL
Foot & Ankle Wellness Center

As we step into a new year, make it your resolution to no longer live with unnecessary foot or ankle pain. Call the caring staff at Coastal and make an appointment with one of our knowledgeable physicians. They will help you start 2018 off on the right foot!

From all of us at Coastal, we wish you and your family a very Happy New Year!!

2018

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

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Chairman William Dudley and I attended a luncheon at TPC Sawgrass on December 6th where the Veterans Council of St Johns County received a check for \$ 6500 from the Story Tellers of TPC. Last year we submitted a written grant request, this year Bill and I made a formal Power Point presentation. The grant is designated for our Veterans Treatment Court and for our general fund to be used to aid veterans in various programs we support.



Applications for new VA ID cards are open By: Leo Shane III

The Department of Veterans Affairs is accepting applications for new Veteran ID cards as of today, but questions surrounding the program's costs and private sector involvement remain unclear.

The cards — designed to be an easy way for veterans to prove their military service for a host of nongovernment services — will be delivered within 60 days of applying with digital copies available next month.

Veterans can start the application process now through the main VA website at www.vets.gov. The link to the ID application is on the bottom left of the page, labeled “Apply for printed Veteran ID Card.”

The cards were mandated by Congress in July 2015, with the expectation of distribution sometime in 2017. In a release announcing the official start of the program Wednesday, VA officials said their moves are “fulfilling a promise that has been unfulfilled since 2015.”

“The new Veterans Identification Card provides a safer and more convenient and efficient way for most veterans to show proof of service,” VA Secretary David Shulkin said in a statement. “With the card, veterans with honorable service to our nation will no longer need to carry around their paper DD-214s to obtain veteran discounts and other services.”

Cards will be printed and shipped by Office Depot, an arrangement that VA officials said will allow veterans to receive the IDs free of charge. VA officials declined to release the cost of the printing and shipping arrangement with Office Depot. The final design of the cards has not been finalized yet. Previous versions had the Office Depot logo on the back with the veteran's information on the front.

Under rules developed by VA, individuals who served in the armed forces, including the reserve components, and have a character of discharge of honorable or general under honorable conditions are eligible for the new IDs. Veterans with other than honorable status are not eligible.

That has upset some veteran's groups, which have noted that the legislation to create the cards had no such restrictions.

The new cards won't replace VA medical cards or official defense retiree cards and will not carry any force of law behind them. Veterans will also need to register for an online account with VA to apply for the card.



HONORING
SERGEANT MAJOR RAY QUINN
CHAIRMAN OF THE FLORIDA VETERANS HALL OF FAME COUNCIL

JANUARY 13, 2018

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

VIP ARMORY COURTYARD COCKTAIL RECEPTION

6:00 PM – 11:00 PM

DINNER BUFFET AND DANCING

MARK W. LANCE ARMORY

190 SAN MARCO AVENUE ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

\$50.00 PER PERSON (RECEPTION)

\$100.00 PER PERSON (BALL, DINNER & DANCING)

DINNER BUFFET BY

BLACK MOLLY RESTAURANT

WITH COMPLIMENTARY OPEN BAR

MUSIC FOR DANCING BY

THE CHRIS THOMAS BAND

BLACK TIE OR MILITARY DRESS UNIFORM WILL BE ADMIRERD.

Congratulations to our friend Toula Wootan of Community Hospice for her continuing work helping veterans.

Jacksonville Named a 'Hidden Heroes' City

Community Hospice & Palliative Care's Toula Wootan and Dale Farrow joined Wounded Warrior Project's Jennifer Mackinday, Ken Johnson from the City of Jacksonville's Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and U.S. Rep John Rutherford to declare Jacksonville a "Hidden Heroes" City by mayoral proclamation at the "Caring for the Military/Veteran" Conference Sept. 22 at WJCT Studios. The Hidden Heroes Cities Program, part of the Elizabeth Dole Foundation's Hidden Heroes Campaign, is a growing network of more than 100 cities committed to better serving military and veteran caregivers through local services and support.



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Application Process for new Veterans ID Card
VA has announced that the application process for the national Veterans Identification Card (VIC) is now available for Veterans — yet another action honoring their service.



This has been mandated through legislation since 2015 to honor Veterans, and today’s rollout of the ID card fulfills that overdue promise.

Only those Veterans with honorable service will be able to apply for the ID card, which will provide proof of military service, and may be accepted by retailers in lieu of the standard DD-214 form to obtain promotional discounts and other services where offered to Veterans.

“The new Veterans Identification Card provides a safer and more convenient and efficient way for most Veterans to show proof of service,” said VA secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. “With the card, Veterans with honorable service to our nation will no longer need to carry around their paper DD-214s to obtain Veteran discounts and other services.”

The VIC provides a more portable and secure alternative for those who served the minimum obligated time in service, but did not meet the retirement or medical discharge threshold. Veterans who served in the armed forces, including the reserve components, and who have a discharge of honorable or general (under honorable conditions) can request a VIC.

To request a VIC, Veterans must visit vets.gov, click on “Apply for Printed Veteran ID Card” on the bottom left of the page sign in or create an account.

Veterans who apply for a card should receive it within 60 days and can check delivery status of their cards at vets.gov. A digital version of the VIC will be available online by mid-December.



Congratulations to Col. Len Loving USMC, Retired, CEO, Five Star Veterans Center for his induction to the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame.



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The Veterans Council congratulates the Nease HS Navy JROTC

Nease High School has once again earned the title of the No. 1 ranked Navy Junior ROTC drill team in northern Florida and Georgia, having won the Terry Parker Drill Championship each of the past three years. The team will seek to make it four in a row on March 3 in Douglas, Georgia, where the best 16 schools in the area will vie for top honors and the right to compete at the Navy National Drill Championships in April.

In addition to claiming the top overall trophy at the Dec. 9 meet, Nease picked up first-place trophies for personnel inspection, academics, overall athletics, unarmed basic drill, push-ups and sit-ups.



Several Nease students received individual recognition during the competition. Cadets Erin Sass, Lilly Short, Teagan Pettit, Elizabeth Villalba, Jacob Hunt, Christopher Oliver, Adam Champney, Mackenzie Davis and Lucas Pels received individual medals in athletics. Cadets Anna Hampton and Scott Cummings received medals for academics.

Nease won the Mandarin NJROTC drill meet earlier this fall. In 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, Nease swept both the Mandarin and Terry Parker drill meet championships.

St. Johns County Veterans Treatment Court

On November 11, our nation honored our veterans with parades and dedications at monuments. These are important. But we can show our gratitude in no better way than helping those who return from military service live productive and happy lives. The Veterans Treatment Court is dedicated to this goal.

More than 20,000 veterans live in St. Johns County. These men and women sometimes return to the community with life-changing impairments, including post-traumatic stress disorder, brain injury and depression. Sadly, some turn to substance abuse and other destructive behaviors. Crimes such as DUI, domestic violence, and theft can be the result.

Twelve generations of veterans have returned home since our nation's founding. Until this century, those charged with crimes found themselves in an adversarial relationship with the state they had faithfully served. Destructive cycles of incarceration, homelessness and suicide often followed. As Judge Howard O. McGillin, Jr., who heads the St. Johns County Veterans Treatment Court, notes, these veterans have "not made it all the way home."



The Veterans Treatment Court is designed to break this cycle, and ensure that justice is accessible and responsive to our veterans in a collaborative, treatment based program. Currently, there are twenty-one participants, with several veterans typically joining at each court hearing, which is held twice a month. Most participants have substance abuse problems. Many have received trauma-related diagnoses. Some were homeless prior to entering Veterans Treatment Court.

Veterans entering the Court experience a team approach, familiar from their military service. The Judge has the role of commanding officer: asking each participant about his or her progress, offering encouragement, and commendation for their achievements. The Judge is also there to address difficulties the participants may have in meeting their goals, and to set them on the right path.

Participants consult with the Veterans Justice Outreach specialist and therapist, and set

up their first therapy appointments. As non-commissioned officers are to the military, these Veterans Administration representatives are the backbone of the program, ensuring that all participants receive the treatment they need. Among the other team members present are the director of St. Johns County Legal Aid, who assists participants with civil legal issues, and the Office of the Public Defender's attorney assigned to the Court.

Participants are never alone in facing their challenges. Each is assigned a mentor, who is also a veteran, to be their "battle buddy." Mentors stand by their participant in Court, and are never more than a phone call away.

Life skills and goals, such as education, employment, and finding stable housing, are fostered by all members of the team.

The Veterans Treatment Court is no easy out. Misdemeanor participants meet weekly with the coordinator, while participants with felony cases are supervised by the Department of Corrections officer assigned to the Court. All participants are subject to frequent drug/alcohol screenings. They do community service, and may pay fines and costs. Participants who violate program requirements, such as testing positive on a drug screening, face sanctions, including jail time for serious or repeated infractions.

This is obviously a very different approach from a traditional court. Its benefits to the veteran are evident. However, it also benefits the community at large. Graduates of veterans' courts are proving to have far lower recidivism rates than defendants processed through traditional courts. The St. Johns County Veterans Treatment Court is approaching its first anniversary. We look forward to continuing to build this valuable service in which our community offers our veterans in the criminal justice system the dignified and effective solution they deserve. At our first graduation, scheduled for January 2018, the Judge will present the graduates with our challenge coin, provided to the program by the St. Johns County Veterans Council. It is engraved "Welcome Home".

"If you have further questions, please contact Cynthia C. Thompson, St. Johns County Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator at 4010 Lewis Speedway, Suite 275, St. Augustine, Florida 32084, (904) 827-5626", ccthompson@circuit7.org

FINAL SALUTE

Volunteers offer last honor to veterans at Haven Hospice

BY JOE DARASKEVICH joe.daraskevich@jacksonville.com

Volunteers Robin McKenzie, a retired Navy nurse corps captain (right), and Scott Killen, a Marine veteran, salute World War II veteran Tal Motes, 97, during a Nov. 21 pinning ceremony at Haven Hospice. Haven has a program to honor new patients who are veterans. Volunteer vets read a thank-you letter and present them with a card, quilt and pin. (Photos by Will Dickey/Florida Times-Union)



Each patient at Haven Hospice who served in the military is offered a final salute from a fellow veteran as a way to say thank you.

Some have few breaths left in their bodies.

Others are close to the end, but still have time to say goodbye to friends and family.

After 97 years and serving in World War II with the Army, Tal Motes didn't have much left when family gathered around his bed last month when he was admitted to hospice care.

Two veterans who volunteer for Haven Hospice were there to honor his service the same day. He would die that night.

Motes received a certificate, thank-you card, small American flag, quilt and lapel pin, while loved ones quietly showed respect.

Veterans Robin McKenzie and Scott Killen then stood at attention and saluted Motes one last time.

"No matter how sick they are, they try to salute back," said Sandra Francis, a volunteer coordinator at Haven Jacksonville and Orange Park.

Francis has a group of six dedicated volunteers who perform pinning ceremonies for new veteran patients. Not every veteran chooses to utilize the program, she said, but it means a lot to the ones who do.

"A lot of people were never told that, they were just discharged and sent home. I love to be able to convey that to them because to me it's important that every single veteran hears those words."

All Haven locations across Northeast Florida offer the service. In 2016, 854 veterans

were admitted and about 275 of them elected to take part in the pinning ceremony, according to Haven.

“It’s important because you don’t know if they’ve ever been told thank you,” Killen said.

Killen served in the Marines during the Vietnam War and started volunteering at Haven about two years ago. He said there were no parades or pats on the back when he came home from war.



“Most of us were met at airports by protesters,” Killen said. That’s what sticks in his mind when he performs the pinning ceremonies and thanks the veterans for their service.

“A lot of people were never told that. They were just discharged and sent home,” Killen said. “I love to be able to convey that to them because to me it’s important that every single veteran hears those words.”

Killen said he keeps a few certificates in his car in case he gets a call from Francis asking him to drop everything and perform a ceremony. He always dresses nice in a white shirt and a pair of black slacks, but he said that’s just because he no longer fits in his uniform.

McKenzie and Mike DePizzo are able to include that added element. “We wear our uniform whenever we do these ceremonies,” McKenzie said. “The family, patient and staff appreciate seeing that.”

She spent 30 years in the Navy before retiring in 2008. She then met Francis and immediately offered her time to Haven.

McKenzie said the presentation of the certificate feels very similar to an official military honor or award. They address the patient by rank and name, just like they do in the service, she said.

Most of the time, the ceremony is very somber, but McKenzie said sometimes it turns out to be a joyous celebration, complete with battle stories or memories from days in the military.

She said she once spent three hours with a patient and about 10 family members, eating and sharing stories.

Now McKenzie helps teach others how to perform the ceremony.

St. Johns County 4-H extension agent Geralyn Sachs presents retired Maj. Gen. Kennedy C. Bullard with a Quilt of Valor, sewn for him by volunteers from the St. Augustine Piecemakers, in the agricultural center on Tuesday in celebration of his 100th birthday. The St. Augustine resident and World War II veteran served as Adjutant General of Florida from 1975 to 1981, and is the oldest living Florida National Guard general. PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA>KELSO@STAUGUSTINE>COM



The Five Star Veterans Center is a nonprofit corporation committed to making a positive impact in the community by assisting those men and women who, when answering the call to duty, protected the freedom of that same community by serving their nation.

Our mission is to ensure a positive impact in North Florida by offering safe/secure housing to displaced veterans, in an attempt to alleviate veteran homelessness.



Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation

Mission

The mission of Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation is to provide college scholarships and educational counseling to military children who have lost a parent in the line of duty. Our vision is that every such child can have a college education.



ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFO, contact@fallenpatriots.org,
<http://www.fallenpatriots.org>

About

Our mission is to provide college scholarships and educational counseling to the children of military personnel killed in the line of duty.

Company Overview

In 1989, five days before Christmas, Sergeant William Delaney Gibbs from the 7th Infantry Division was killed in action during Operation Just Cause in Panama, leaving behind a young wife and an unborn daughter. Our Founder and President, David Kim, served with Sergeant Gibbs and was inspired by his sacrifice to establish Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation as a way to help Sgt. Gibbs' daughter and the thousands of children like her. leaving behind a young wife and an unborn daughter. Our Founder and President, David Kim, served with Sergeant Gibbs and was inspired by his sacrifice to establish Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation as a way to help Sgt. Gibbs' daughter and the thousands of children like her.

General Information

To help: Visit us at <http://fallenpatriots.org>

Products

College Scholarships, Educational Counseling, Family Support

From the front page of the November 27th St. Augustine Record

Ralph Mitchell has had many titles in his long life: war medic, entrepreneur, prosecutor. But, at 91, he's still not ready to call himself a retiree.



Mitchell still practices law, now in St. Johns County. He exudes energy and confidence, and says things have had a way of working out for him in his life.

From his World War II service as a Navy medic to his later work as an expedition operator in Cuba, Mitchell has a really interesting life story to tell.

And one day soon, when he makes good on a vow to take it easy, he just might write it down.

Mitchell, who also worked for years as a trial lawyer, has lived in St. Augustine for more than two decades. He grew up in Miami, the son of an enterprising entrepreneur who built his own travel agency transporting tourists to Cuba beginning in the 1920s.

“He was bringing ferry boats 90 miles, from Key West to Havana,” Mitchell said of his father.

It was on one of those boats that Mitchell’s mother actually went into labor with him. The captain had to turn the vessel around and “I landed just in time in a clinic in Key West in 1926,” Mitchell laughed.

He started college at the University of Miami with plans to become a doctor (his mother was a nurse). But at 18, with friends around him getting drafted to serve, he voluntarily enlisted. Growing up around the water, it wasn't

much of a stretch to imagine that Mitchell chose the Navy. He said he was guaranteed a deployment at a naval hospital and would receive training to be a nurse.

But the “skinny little boy in a sailor suit” soon found out that promise was not to kept, at least in the short term. Mitchell was transferred to a Marine unit, and “I walked out of that office in tears.”

Mitchell was sent to the Marine base at Camp Lejeune and then shipped out to Guam the day after D-Day.

“I slept in a pup tent and they trained me in a M.A.S.H. unit,” Mitchell said. “Then they broke out a relief map of Iwo Jima.”

His unit was the only one, however, that was held back while thousands of other American troops met their fate in the battle. Company E was ordered to stay back and convert their Higgins boat into a hospital ship.

“That’s what changed my mind about the medical field,” said Mitchell. “I saw way too much. And when I came out of the service I never wanted to go back into a hospital again.”

When he was discharged, Mitchell returned to college, this time as a pre-law student. After passing the bar, he decided law “wasn’t as glamorous as I thought.”

“I asked my father, ‘Can you teach me to be in the travel business?’ ” recalled Mitchell.

And so it began, with Mitchell and his dad going into business as partners in Mitchell’s Havana Tours, booking passengers on some of the first commercial airliners going to the island nation, transferring them to hotels, and leading them on sightseeing tours with English-speaking guides to places like cigar

factories and historical sites.

“It was a glamorous place to be ... the nightclubs where people like Nat King Cole were performing; it was like the Paris of the West Indies,” said Mitchell. “You didn’t need a passport, and it was only a \$20 round-trip [air] ticket.”

This was in the early 1950s, before the rise of Fidel Castro. Soon after Castro’s regime took power, Mitchell’s father was called to the presidential palace for a private appointment with the leader.

“And [Castro] said, ‘I have been told that there is no one who knows more about tourism than you,’ ” Mitchell said. “He said he wanted to appoint [my father] to be minister of tourism. ‘I will make you a multimillionaire,’ he said.”

Mitchell’s father snubbed the tyrant, telling him he wanted nothing to do with his communist regime. The decision effectively shut down the father-and-son business.

Mitchell returned to law, rising to the position of assistant prosecutor to the state attorney in Florida. He worked first in traffic court, then criminal cases, even taking down drug lords in the 1960s and ’70s. He later switched to the defense side, serving in divorce, personal injury and other civil cases.

It was stressful work, however, and Mitchell left trial law, moving into the field of estate planning, wills and taxes, working out of his home office.

For the past 22 years, Mitchell has led a slower life, with wife Linda and a grown daughter who lives in Hollywood.

Of the many rich and varied chapters of his personal story, Mitchell said, “My life has been so full and so full of marvelous experiences.”

That time eggnog almost brought down West Point

By Blake Stilwell

In the early years of the U.S. Military Academy's history, the "Father of West Point," Col. Sylvanus Thayer, was trying to whip the future officers of the U.S. military into shape. He began by outlawing alcohol on the academy grounds. The cadets were also not permitted to leave the academy.



His fundamental changes were having the desired effect — until Christmas 1826, that is. That's when the plebes got into an eggnog-fueled riot.

Egg nog was pretty different back in 1826. Today, it's more of a sweet, dessert drink and the addition of rum or brandy isn't as popular as it once was. Back then, nog — like life — was a lot more intense.

George Washington's personal recipe called for rum, sherry, brandy, and whiskey.

Before the alcohol ban, an egg nog night was part of West Point's Christmas tradition, and the cadets weren't about to let the tradition die because of one guy's teetotaling. So, a young cadet named Jefferson Davis and a group of others decided to sneak some booze into the eggnog party.

They snuck in a few gallons of whiskey under Thayer's nose (with the help, of course, an enlisted man). On Christmas Day, officers of the day Capt. Ethan Allen Hitchcock and Lt. William A. Thorton tried to monitor the cadets, but they could only do so much. They were woken in the middle of the night by a drunken party in the barracks. They dispersed it, but the revelers sought revenge.

Partying cadets raged on a different floor and the officers moved to break that one up. Thorton was knocked to the floor with a piece of wood while another took a shot at Hitchcock with a pistol. He called a runner to get the Commandant, but that request was misinterpreted as a summons for artillery troops stationed on the grounds.

The cadets reinforced the windows and entrances to the barracks to prevent the artillerymen from gaining entry. The interiors and windows of the building were smashed and damaged. They literally drummed up the cadets from their beds to prepare for bombardment.

Artillery never came, but William Worth, the Commandant of Cadets, did. He was able to quell the 260-strong uprising before it escalated further. Hitchcock and Thorton suffered only minor bruising, despite the drunken cadets' calls for their heads.

Of the 260 drunken cadets, 19 were expelled. When they built new barracks on the West Point grounds, they were designed so that cadets would have to leave the building to access other floors.

Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. Minutes of November 30, 2017



Officers present: Chairman Bill Dudley; Secretary Michael Rothfeld, Vice Chairman Ray Quinn
Absent Treasurer John Mountcastle

Chairman Dudley called the meeting to order at 1900 hours

Chairman Dudley led the Pledge to the Flag, Vice Chairman Ray Quinn gave the Invocation

Last month's Minutes were approved as amended

The Treasurer's Report was approved as read by **Chairman Dudley**

Introduction of Guests: Debbie Johnson, CPL Bruce Cline, Officer Kilo. Baker County Veterans Council President Larry Porter

Speakers:

Cynthia Thompson, Coordinator Veterans Treatment Court St Johns County, spoke about the VTC goal of helping veterans with problems which led to their involvement in the criminal justice system. She then spoke about treatment, how to enter program, what to expect, support, mentors, and lastly benefits to the veteran and the community.



Volunteer veteran mentors are needed, contact John Leslie for more info.

Eric Heineman, Debbie Johnson, CPL Bruce Cline and K9 Office Kilo, spoke



about its non-profit goals of providing K9 unit equipment & assistance to those that protect and serve. K9s are used for drug & bomb detection, & locating missing persons.

The Veterans Council donated \$ 500 to K9s United, those wanting to donate online: www.K9sUnited.org

Committee Reports:

Mac: spoke about how to get a VA Health Care Card and also how to get a Veterans ID card

issued by the VA

Ray Quinn: Thanked everyone on behalf of himself & Judy Davis for another successful year for WAA. Ray will ask for volunteers to meet the wreath truck and for unloading & cleanup. AAR on Parade, another success.

FL Veterans Hall of Fame will soon be accepting nominations for the HOF 2018 Inductees.

Steve Spickelmier: briefed all on the Jax National Cemetery Support Committee, giving new golf cart to the Jax Ladies. The NE FL Veterans Council is now the Duval County Veterans Council, there is a new 5 Presidents of 5 surrounding counties Veterans Council uniting to help all NE FL veterans. 9 Flags donated by local veterans' groups donated to the Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena.

Kathy Church: updated Council on MIAP statistics and announced the next Call to Honor in February.

Chairman Dudley: Veterans Day events in St Augustine and the Beaches were very successful, would like more organizations to participate. FPL surprised a local veteran by installing Christmas lights on his house.

New Business:

Good of the Order: Mike Cassata told group that there were POW Flag ceremonies at Daytona, Jax Arena & EverBank

Larry Porter- Veterans Day in Baker County Honored 55 Vietnam era veterans

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

The next meeting of the Veterans Council will be on Thursday, December 28, 7 pm in the Health & Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View.

Future speakers:

December 28, Lynn Brannon, Building Healthy Military Communities
SSG Ben Watford, "The Warriors Peer Group"

January 25, 2018- Mike Mitchell, Jacksonville University Veteran Students Coordinator
Alison Simpson, Historian FL National Guard

February 22, Leigh Devane, Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

FDVA Spotlights Vietnam Veterans

Florida is home to more than 496,000 Vietnam-era veterans, so it is very likely that one in three veterans you meet in the Sunshine State is a Vietnam veteran.



To thank and honor veterans of that war on behalf of a grateful nation, the State of Florida has erected a Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Tallahassee next to the Capitol building. In addition, Florida honors its Vietnam veterans annually during Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.

The Florida Legislature has enacted laws in which honorably discharged veterans who, as a result of being inducted into any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces and unable to complete their high school education, can be awarded a State of Florida High School Diploma. For more information, call (850) 245-0446 or visit: www.fldoe.org/acade.../career-adult-edu/veterans-diplomas.shtml

Approval for a Vietnam Veterans license plate has passed and you can find out about the license plate here <http://www.flhsmv.gov/specialtytags/miltags.html#vietnam>

We strongly encourage our eligible Vietnam veterans to enroll in health care through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs if they have not already done so. The VA recognizes that service in Vietnam may have exposed veterans to certain cancer causing chemicals and other health problems as presumptive diseases related to exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides. We want those veterans to be identified, treated and compensated for any effects they may be having as a result of exposure. Call (727) 319-7440 for more information.

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commanding Officer
U. S. Coast Guard HITRON

6213 Aviation Ave
Bldg 1846
Jacksonville, FL 3221-8120
Phone: 904-594-6850
Fax: 904-594-6854

5050
October 20, 2017

Veteran's Council of St. John's County,

On behalf of the Men and Women of U.S. Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) Jacksonville, please accept my most sincere appreciation for your generosity in providing supplies and monetary donations to support our Coast Guard crews affected by the devastating hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria.

Your donated supplies and money were collected at HITRON Jacksonville where HITRON crews used the funds to procure additionally needed supplies. HITRON volunteer crews assembled, packaged, and prepared the supplies for shipment via Coast Guard aircraft. Those crews then delivered the packaged load of more than 6,500 pounds of sorely needed supplies to Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater where they were palletized and transported via C-130 aircraft to their ultimate destination of Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen, Puerto Rico.

Coast Guard personnel and their families living in Puerto Rico had been without power, water, and basic essentials for weeks; and are still working hard every day to perform their Coast Guard missions. They do their missions while also helping their community of families who live on the Island recover from the devastation. Your generous donations were distributed and received by these families exuberantly. They wanted us to know how very much they appreciated the fantastic and generous support and how much it has helped. Your contributions went a long way in boosting their morale and empowering them to continue to provide the great support that all U.S. citizens have come to expect from your Coast Guard men and women.

Please accept my most sincere appreciation for your time, effort, and donations. It is greatly appreciated by all here at HITRON as well as those assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen, and goes a long way to show the strength and appreciation of our surrounding communities during such challenging times.

Thank you again for supporting your U.S. Coast Guard.

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. E. Campbell".

M. E. Campbell
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Commanding Officer
HITRON Jacksonville



Letter of appreciation and pictures received from Capt. Campbell, Commanding Officer, HITRON Jacksonville for our Veterans Councils efforts in collecting food goods and money to help our Coasties in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria devastated the island.

Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) personnel conduct a repatriation ceremony in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Dec. 7, 2017. Possible remains connected to the Vietnam War are returned to the United States and examined for possible identification. DPAA's mission is to provide the fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel to their families and the nation. (DPAA photo by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jocelyn A. Ford)



Friday, December 01, 2017 Dedication of a gas powered golf cart from the Support Committee, Chairman, Steven Spickelmier, to the Jacksonville Ladies lead by Veronica Potter.



Meet your Joint Chiefs of Staff representing U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, United States Air Force, and National Guard.

Learn more about their role in national defense here: <http://www.jcs.mil/About/> — with GEN Mark A. Milley, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson, Gen. David L. Goldfein and General Joseph L. Lengyel at The Pentagon.



Vietnam War Hero With 37 Medals Barely Remembered from The Veterans Site

Many people have heard about Alvin C. York and Audie Murphy. Both men were portrayed in feature films as the most decorated soldiers of World War I and World War II, respectively. But what about Joe Ronnie Hooper?



Hooper joined the U.S. Army at age 19 and served two tours in Vietnam from 1966 to 1968 as part of the 501st Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, also known as the Delta Raiders. He earned 37 medals for his bravery on the battlefield, more than any other soldier in the history of the U.S. military. Somehow, American history seems to have forgotten the sacrifice of this soldier, even as the United States remembers the 50th anniversary of the unpopular conflict.

The Army noticed Hooper's uncommon valor during the Battle of Hue on Feb. 21, 1968, part of the Tet Offensive. Hooper single-handedly destroyed three enemy bunkers using grenades. He killed enemies in four more bunkers with grenades before killing more enemies with his rifle and bayonet during the six-hour battle. All the while, Hooper was wounded 11 times, and he refused any medical help until he knew the rest of his unit was safe. By the end of the battle, Hooper killed 24 enemies and somehow evaded machine gun fire to rescue his fellow troops.

Just 14 out of 189 men survived the battle, mostly due to Hooper's actions, before the hero passed out from loss of blood. One day later, he left the hospital and rejoined his unit still wearing his hospital gown. However, two days after he returned to duty, Hooper was wounded again. On March 17, 1969, President Richard Nixon awarded Hooper the Congressional Medal of Honor. As the most decorated American soldier, he also earned eight Purple Hearts, two Silver Stars and six Bronze Stars to go along with 115 confirmed enemy kills.

Even with all of his heroism, bravery and decoration, Hooper remains a forgotten soldier. Sebastian Moraga of the Quad City Herald wrote in 2004 that Hooper's legacy hasn't received the recognition he deserves because he fought in an unpopular war. Hooper also suffered from alcoholism. However, neither of those circumstances should detract from his sacrifices to save his fellow soldiers. Hooper died in 1979 at the age of 40.

Flagler College to lead study of little-known chapter in Castillo's history

Mention the Castillo de San Marcos and most probably think of the fort as the backdrop to battling European nations or raids by marauding pirates.

Lesser known is another chapter in the history of the coquina-built stronghold: the imprisonment of Native Americans throughout the 19th century.

Thanks to funding from the U.S. Department of Interior, more light will be shed on that period of time. The National Park Service, in cooperation with Flagler College, has been allotted \$50,000 to study the tribal heritage of the Castillo.



The fort (then called Fort Marion) was used as a prison for Native Americans rounded up by the U.S. Army in the aftermath of the Indian Wars in the west. Drawings on several walls which can still be seen today testify to the time the tribes, from the Apaches to the Plains Indians, spent inside the fort's barriers from the 1830s through the 1880s.

According to a news release from the Department of Interior, the NPS, along with Flagler College professors and students, will conduct "much needed research on tribal perspectives of the imprisonments, develop collaborative interpretive and scholarly programs for the general public, and develop opportunities to use Native American art as a way to present these tribal perspectives."

Steven Roberts, chief of interpretation and education for the Castillo de San Marcos, said much of what we do know about this part of the fort's history is from journals kept by Army soldiers at the time.

"So it is not a complete story," said Roberts. "And it's not a story that many people are familiar with."

The hope is that the project with Flagler College will help fill in some of the blanks, particularly by researching more direct sources such as tribal records and accounts, as well as archives of the Library of Congress.

Leslie Keys, director of historic preservation and special initiatives for Flagler College, said it was an opportunity for students to conduct scholarly research and perhaps even see it through to completion, since the project was expected to go through at least 2021. It is being headed up by Keys as well as professors in the areas of history, art and archaeology.

"This will take them to a very different level in doing research that no one else is doing, and it is a chapter that has not been widely interpreted," Keys said.

Roberts said the idea came about during planning for the 450th anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine in 2015 when Flagler College hosted an exhibit on local Native American history as seen through art. Many of those incarcerated at the fort recreated their traditional artwork to sell to tourists in St. Augustine at the time.

At the same time, Roberts said, native people were encouraged to assimilate to European culture by cutting their hair, wearing surplus Army uniforms and studying academic subjects.

The hope is that new research will add to Americans' understanding of the period and that it will lead to public events such as lectures and art exhibits.



From Shari Duval, Founder K9s For Warriors

Thursday night, Nov. 30 Florida Power and Light surprised one of K9s For Warriors Graduates, Kevin with a complete Christmas Light show on he and Lisa's home. St. Augustine Florida, looks amazing, and he was so surprised. Merry Christmas Kevin, Lisa and our girl Bella.



★ A SPECIAL INVITATION ★
VIRTUAL HONOR FLIGHT
A DAY OF HONOR
FOR WWII, KOREAN and VIETNAM WAR VETERANS

For those veterans who cannot physically take their Honor Flight to Washington, DC to see the memorials built to honor their service and sacrifices, Southeast Florida Honor Flight is bringing the memorials to them.

*Date: Saturday, January 20, 2018
10:00AM-3:30PM*

*Location: Suncoast Community High School
1717 Avenue S, Riviera Beach, FL*



- *Every veteran "flies" free of charge.*
- *Each veteran will be assigned a Student Guardian and be allowed one aide or escort/driver to attend the event.*
- *Interested veterans should fill out and submit the veteran application as soon as possible.*
- *WWII and terminal veterans take first priority.*
- *Questions? Please call Sara Mendinhall at 772-220-1404.*





Time: 7:30 AM Registration 8:30 AM Shotgun Start

Location: Marsh Creek Country Club

169 Marshside Drive, St. Augustine, FL 32080

Format: 4 Person Captain's Choice

Field: First 36 Teams



Entry Fee: \$80.00 per player (Includes Green Fees, Cart, Lunch & Prizes)

Prizes For: 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place

Hole Prizes Include: Longest Drive, Closest to Pin and Longest Putt
Chipping & Putting Contests (During the Tournament)



Golf Shoes Must Be Soft Spikes Only

The Luncheon & Awards Ceremony will be held on-site after the Tournament

TEAM CAPTAIN: _____ PHONE #: _____ EMAIL: _____

PLAYER #2: _____ PHONE #: _____ EMAIL: _____

PLAYER #3: _____ PHONE #: _____ EMAIL: _____

PLAYER #4: _____ PHONE #: _____ EMAIL: _____

MAIL ENTRY FORMS (whether paying by check or credit card) TO:

Ms. Natasha Huertas, C/O AUSA GOLF TOURNAMENT,

P.O BOX 3883, ST. AUGUSTINE, FL 32085-3883. Phone (904) 682-4436.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO FIRST MILITIA CHAPTER - AUSA or

To purchase online visit <https://squareup.com/market/first-militia-chapter-ausa>

AUSA is an exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the US Internal Revenue Code.



FIRST MILITIA CHAPTER
P.O. Box 3883
St. Augustine, Florida 32085-3883

1 Nov. 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

Maybe you've seen a soldier in uniform and had the impulse to say thanks. Maybe you know how it feels to wear that uniform. Either way, soldiers and/or their families need your support.

Please consider partnering with the First Militia Chapter (FMC) of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA). We give the "*Voice for the Army, Support for the Soldier*" in Northeast Florida. Our members, with help from businesses like yours, provide programs that bolster the U.S. Army, soldiers, and their families. Here are a few of the ways:

- Help fund departure and welcome home ceremonies for our units
- Supply emergency financial assistance to families
- Present scholarships to deserving chapter applicants
- Provide senior officer and NCO cadre for Junior ROTC
- Award special recognition for the Florida Army National Guard Soldier and NCO of the Year
- Meet quarterly to hear notable leaders, such as members of the U.S. Congress, and bring our issues before them
- Sustain a young professionals group within our chapter

None of this could happen without help from businesses like yours. But in the past, the only way to become involved was as a sponsor for our annual golf tournament fundraiser.

Now we are opening more opportunities through recognition at our quarterly dinners, where you can describe your business to our members and the dignitaries who speak. Sponsors are also acknowledged in our newsletter, website, and social media. Golf tournament sponsors are also recognized with hole-sponsor signs at the tournament set for April 9th, 2018 at Marsh Creek Country Club.

More information and options to help are included. If you have a specific question, please contact LTC Vernon Dohmann at 904-823-0191 or vernon.j.dohmann.mil@mail.mil

I hope you will join us in continuing the good things we do for soldiers, their families, and the mightiest fighting force in the world. Our noble goal, and hopefully yours, is to help keep it that way. Please let us count on your support.

Sincerely,

Mike Canzoneri
Brigadier General, US Army
President, First Militia Chapter



FIRST MILITIA CHAPTER

Association of the United States Army

Sponsorship Form

Sponsorship Level (Choose from accompanying list):

_____ **Platinum Sponsor: \$2,000 Donation**

_____ **Gold Sponsor: \$1,000 Donation**

_____ **Silver Sponsor: \$500 Donation**

_____ **Bronze Sponsor: \$250 Donation**

Sponsor Information:

Corporate/Individual Name(s) for Donation Recognition:

Mailing Address: _____

Sponsor Point of Contact: _____

POC Phone Number: _____

POC Email: _____

Please forward this form to: **First Militia Chapter (AUSA) ATTN: Natasha M. Huertas**
P.O. Box 3883
St. Augustine, Florida 32085-3883
Checks payable to **"First Militia Chapter – AUSA"**
Register Online at: <http://mkt.com/first-militia-chapter-ausa>

Platinum Sponsor: \$2,000 Donation

1. Free attendance for two representatives at all four quarterly dinner meetings
2. Recognition at each dinner meeting and opportunities to speak about your business
3. Recognition in the AUSA First Militia Chapter newsletter (500+ Army supporters and sponsors)
4. Entry for your golf team (4 players) in the tournament (\$300 value)
5. Your corporate sign at a tournament tee box, at a green & at the banquet hall*
6. Your ad/coupon in the tournament goodie bag (144 golfers)
7. Complimentary AUSA Annual Corporate Sponsor Membership

Gold Sponsor: \$1,000 Donation

1. Free attendance for two representatives at three of our four quarterly dinner meetings
2. Recognition at each dinner meeting and opportunities to speak about your business
3. Recognition in the AUSA 1st Militia Chapter newsletter (500+ Army supporters and sponsors)
4. Your corporate sign at a tournament tee box, at a green & at the banquet hall*
5. Your ad/coupon in the tournament goodie bag (144 golfers)
6. Complimentary AUSA Annual Corporate Sponsor Membership

Silver Sponsor: \$500 Donation

1. Free attendance for two representatives at two of our four quarterly dinner meetings
2. Recognition at each dinner meeting and opportunities to speak about your business
3. Recognition in the AUSA 1st Militia Chapter newsletter (500+ Army supporters and sponsors)
4. Your corporate sign at a tournament tee box, at a green & at the banquet hall*
5. Your ad/coupon in the tournament goodie bag (144 golfers)
6. Complimentary AUSA Annual Corporate Sponsor Membership

Bronze Sponsor: \$250 Donation

1. Free attendance for two representatives at one of our four quarterly dinner meetings
2. Recognition at the dinner meeting and opportunity to speak about your business
3. Recognition in the AUSA 1st Militia Chapter newsletter (500+ Army supporters and sponsors)
4. Your corporate sign at a tournament tee box, at a green & at the banquet hall*
5. Your ad/coupon in the tournament goodie bag (144 golfers)

* Sign display on the day of the tournament (Custom signs welcome & must meet golf course limitations)

Thank you for supporting soldiers, their families, and the United States Army!

*AUSA is an exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the US Internal Revenue Code.
Rev. August 10, 2016*



FIRST MILITIA CHAPTER

Association of the United States Army

Voice for the Army, Support for the Soldier

Background

Our chapter, established in November 1994, serves northeast Florida with a range of programs that support the Army, soldiers and their families, and our communities. The First Militia Chapter is an integral part of AUSA National, a strong member of the total military coalition and a vibrant voice representing soldiers on Capitol Hill. Here is how we support our goals:

How we support Excellence in the Army:

- Sponsor "First Militia Striders", our Army Ten Miler Team.
- Sponsor the University of North Florida ROTC Army Ten Miler Team.
- Provide AUSA tribute watches for Florida Reserve National Guard (FLARNG) Soldier and NCO of the Year.
- Conduct the Army Birthday celebration – a Community Affair.
- Contribute financially to the Army Institute of Land Warfare.
- Conduct quarterly dinner meetings with relevant speakers and leaders.

How we support Soldiers:

- Help fund departure and welcome home ceremonies for our units.
- Help fund FLARNG Platoon Leader's Course at Camp Blanding.
- Help fund Ft. Stewart Retiree Appreciation Day activities.
- Sponsor holes at other soldier related golf tournaments.

How we support Families:

- Provide emergency financial assistance to families where possible.
- Provide financial and manpower assistance to Family Readiness Programs.

AUSA is an exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the US Internal Revenue Code.

How we support Excellence in America's Youth:

- Present \$1,000 scholarships to up to three deserving chapter applicants.
- Present AUSA medals and certificates to outstanding students in each of the fourteen high schools in our chapter footprint.
- Provide senior officer and NCO cadre for JROTC summer camp when requested by Cadet Command.

For Your Information

Current chapter membership is 527, exceeding our assigned goal of 500.
Approximately \$15,000 is needed annually to fund our support programs.
Currently we have 20 corporate sponsors. Our goal is to add 15 new sponsors!

All chapter officers are **volunteers**.

First Militia Chapter has been recognized as a "Chapter of Excellence" for multiple years,
and "Best Small Chapter" in the Southeast Region!

**For further information about First Militia Chapter, AUSA,
visit our website at www.ausa.org/first-militia**



AUSA is an exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the US Internal Revenue Code.

Rev: August 10, 2016



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

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

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



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

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

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

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County is proud to announce that it has modernized its website and created a new 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:
VeteransCouncilofStJohnsCounty,FL

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

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

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

You may have noticed the Veterans Council's new logo, it was created by Roy Havekost and his web design company PageAuthors. The VC strongly recommends that you contact Roy, 904-287-6909, if you or your vet group wants to create a website or Facebook page.

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



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

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



**SURVIVOR
OUTREACH SERVICES**

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

Contact Keith Ham

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

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*Veterans Council of St. Johns County,
“Helping All Veterans”*

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

Send to: mrothfeld@anyveteran.org

Please send to: mrothfeld@anyveteran.org



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

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

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

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

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

***The Veterans Council will meet at the St.
Johns County Health & Human Services
Building, 200 San Sebastian View
Muscovy Room, 1st floor***

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

(physical location)

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

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

*Service is by appointment.
Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161
Joseph McDermott, CVSO
Rick Rees, Assistant VSO
Tammy Shirley, Assistant VSO
Lashonda Burns, Office Specialist*

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