



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

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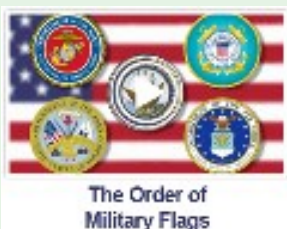
Volume 10, Issue 1

Message from the Chairman

January 2021

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Fellow Veterans:

The evening of Friday, Dec. 11, 2020, The Veterans Council was privileged to attend the retirement ceremony for Sheriff David Shoar. Sheriff Shoar has been a long standing supporter of our Council as well as all veterans residing in our County. We were honored to be one of the 22 presenters who paid their respects to the Sheriff for his many years in law enforcement as well as his 20 plus years in the US Army National Guard, retiring with the rank of Major. The Veterans Council presented the Sheriff with a framed flag that flew over the USS Arizona Memorial on Dec. 7. Also included in the framed tribute were his



military ribbons as well as his rank insignia. To further honor Sheriff Shoar, the Veterans Council has created a \$500 annual scholarship at St. Johns River State College named in his honor for a selected student enrolling in the law enforcement program at SJRSC. Sheriff Shoar will also be joining the Executive

Committee of the Veterans Council in January after his official retirement.

This past Friday, Dec. 18, 2020, The Veterans Council conducted their annual Wreaths Across America wreath laying ceremony at the St. Augustine National Cemetery. Due to the restrictions placed on us by the VA National Cemetery Administration in Washington, we were restricted to 50 volunteers to place a wreath on the nearly 1300 headstones. Our volunteers consisted of members from local civic organizations, individuals who volunteered their time as well as several soldiers from the local FLANG HQ group. Two Men and a Truck again donated a truck this year to deliver the wreaths to the cemetery. It was a cold frosty morning but it did not deter the efforts of the volunteers who were there to contribute to the occasion of placing the wreaths and paying their respects. This was followed by a ceremonial wreath laying for each military service branch which occurred at 12 noon. Unfortunately, this was not open to the public. The Veterans Council would like to thank everyone who purchased a wreath this year and for all the volunteers who showed up to assist in placing the wreaths.



This year has been extremely challenging for many of our veterans due to the COVID-19 virus. Many have lost jobs or had their hours of employment reduced, some have contracted the virus, and so many have been impacted in some negative way. Some have even become homeless over the past months. Due to the generosity and giving spirit of our community, the Veterans Council will be reaching out to many of our veterans to assist them this Christmas assuring that there is food, gifts, housing, and other necessities for them and their families. We would like to thank all those who made a contribution this year so that we can assure our veterans have the Christmas they deserve. The Veterans Council of St. Johns County wishes each of you a Very Merry Christmas and a Safe, Healthy and Happy New Year.

Bill Dudley, Chairman
Veterans Council of St. Johns County

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



Nancy Turner and Jane Fero are two amazing local women who take the time to hand-make these amazing Quilted Christmas Trees and donate to them Veterans homes all around Florida! They recently stopped by Clyde Lassen and donated 10 of these to our Veterans!



Community Hospice providing Ice Cream for all residents and Staff.
Donnie Robbins is seen in the pic with the Santa hat on.



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



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

Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee Meetings for 2018

At Community Hospice of NE FL.

4266 Sunbeam Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257

Hadlow Bldg – Conference Room A 6:00 pm

DATES OF 2021 SC at JNC MEETINGS

Monday, February 1, 2021

Monday, March 1, 2021

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

Chairman: Steve Spickelmier

Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley, Treasurer: Pat Welch

Secretary: Kathy Church, Judge Advocate: Don Guthrie

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

Chaplain: Pat Archuleta, Public Affairs: Pat Mulvihill

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



All SJC Health Guidelines will be followed.

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

Upcoming Veterans Council Meetings Speakers

January 28, Nick Howland, Fire Watch

2021 Meeting Dated

January 28, February 25, March 25, April 29, May 27, June 24

July 29, August 26, September 30, October 28, November 18, December 30

Wreaths Across America, St. Augustine National Cemetery

REMEMBER the Fallen. . . HONOR those who Serve. . . TEACH our children the value of Freedom.

Wreaths Across America will be at St. Augustine National Cemetery to Remember and Honor our veterans through the laying of Remembrance wreaths on the graves of our country's fallen heroes and the act of saying the name of each and every veteran aloud. Our Ceremony will be private and our wreath laying will be done by a core group of volunteers.

Thank you so much for supporting St. Augustine National Cemetery and Wreaths Across America!

(Photos submitted by Wendy Lay and Bill Dudley)



(photos by Michael Isam)



These drone photos were taken by Peter Willott of the St. Augustine Record



(Photos submitted by Wendy Lay and Bill Dudley)



MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT - FLORIDA, UPDATE – December 21, 2020



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MIAP NATION WIDE PROGRESS TO DATE

As of 12/21/2020

Total Funeral Homes Visited - 2,460

Cremains Found - 23,594

Veterans Cremains Identified - 5,178

Veterans Interred - 4,718

MIAP FLORIDA PROGRESS TO DATE

As of 12/21/2020

Total Funeral Homes Visited - 189

Cremains Found - 2,301

Numbers Approved to be Interred - 127

Missions Pending - 1

Veterans Interred - 363

Spouses Interred - 132

Dependents Interred - 1

From Military Culture

How the Green Berets got their name

By Harm Venhuizen



Soldiers from the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, don their green berets during a Regimental First Formation

at the Crown Arena in Fayetteville, North Carolina September 26, 2019. The ceremony marked the completion of four phases of the Special Forces Qualification Course where Soldiers earned the honor of wearing the green beret, the official headgear of Special Forces. (U.S. Army photo illustration by K. Kassens)

“Quiet Professionals.” “Snake Eaters.” “Soldier-Diplomats.” “Bearded Bastards.”

U.S. Army Special Forces are known by a variety of nicknames, but their exclusive right to wear the Green Beret was not recognized until nearly a decade after their formation.

Founded in 1952 as part of the U.S. Army Psychological Warfare Division, the 10th Special Forces Group was the first of its kind, according to Army archives.

It was named the tenth group to make the Soviets think there were at least nine others just like it, Anne Jacobsen wrote in her book “Surprise, Kill, Vanish.” The Army’s mission was to create and maintain a force to conduct unconventional warfare. The skills required to do so, however, she notes, were not. To work by, with and through guerrilla fighters to accomplish the wide range of missions Special Forces are tasked to carry out, these elite soldiers had to become jacks-of-all-trades.

Special Forces’ founder, Col. Aaron Bank, was selected as the man for the job. Bank had been the leader of an Office of Strategic Services Jedburgh Team, a small, highly-trained team designed to gather intelligence and conduct raids and resupply missions with local guerrilla forces during World War II.

Much of the idea for what Bank later called “the unit with the greatest combat potential in the Armed Forces” in the 10th Special Forces yearbook came from this time in the OSS. His Jedburgh Team trained in parachuting, foreign languages, hand-to-hand combat, radio operations, and a host of other specialized skills, and as a result, his new Special Forces team would too.

Wanting to distinguish themselves from conventional Army forces, Special Forces soldiers selected the wear of the beret because of OSS influence, since a number of its teams adopted headgear worn by soldiers in France. And the color green came from the influence of British Commandos during World War II.

However, because green berets were not officially authorized by the U.S. Army, they were only worn in the field and not in garrison.

Special Forces candidates assigned to the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School patrol through a wooded area during the final phase of field training known as Robin Sage in central North Carolina, July 9, 2019. Robin Sage is the culmination exercise and has been the litmus test for Soldiers striving to earn the Green Beret for more than 40 years.

Special Forces candidates assigned to the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School patrol through a wooded area during the final phase of field training known as Robin Sage in central North Carolina, July 9, 2019. Robin Sage is the culmination exercise and has been the litmus test for Soldiers striving to earn the Green Beret for more than 40 years.

The berets continued to be Special Forces' unofficial headgear until then-President John F. Kennedy made it official, stating in a 1962 official memo that the cap had become a "symbol of excellence, a badge of courage, a mark of distinction in the fight for freedom."

And that's just what they are today. Perhaps most popularly known now as Green Berets, Army Special Forces soldiers are still regularly deployed around the world for combat and training missions.

Currently, the Army has seven special forces groups in total: five are active duty, and two are in the National Guard.

Since Kennedy's death in 1963, Green Berets lay a wreath on his grave annually to recognize the role he played in making the nation's unconventional warriors what they have become.

Korea, The Forgotten War: Remembered

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

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

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

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



Here is the link to view the entire Korean War documentary

https://youtu.be/TUgNf_ryFPY

From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

Subject: VA Transportation Assistance

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

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

From the St. Augustine Report by George Gardner

Helping hands open season of good will

As the season of good will opens in a singular year, helping hands are at work.

The Palencia branch of DLP Real Estate funded and assisted the St. Johns Housing Partnership to build a ramp for an 86-year-old Korean war veteran whose disability had advanced from a walking challenge to movement by motorized wheelchair.

"It's such a blessing for him to be able to maneuver up the ramp and into the house and not take a chance on falling," says his wife. "We are so grateful to for the service they provided us."

And Maria Jefferson Chapter, Florida State Society Daughters of the American Revolution joined with the Fort Mose Historical Society and Florida Department of Environmental Protection recently to freshen up the museum entrance, replacing walk and bed borders with new plantings.

The Chapter's Historic Preservation Committee contributes to maintenance, preservation, and protection projects for a wide array of valuable historic resources such as buildings, monuments, cemeteries, landmarks, and trails.



Tail Cone from World War II Plane Found

A Report from the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program



ST. AUGUSTINE
LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM



Figure 1 Section of a WWII plane that recently washed ashore in Ponte Vedra.
Image is an orthophoto of a 3D photogrammetric model created by LAMP.

Storms and hurricanes in Florida are well-known for unearthing and washing ashore previously undiscovered archaeological remains of ships and boats. After Hurricane Irma in 2017, both a section of a late-19th century ship's hull and a 900-year old Timucuan canoe were exposed at opposite ends of St. Johns County prompting emergency documentation and mitigation activities for the fragile wooden artifacts. Last month, an unusually strong nor'easter washed ashore a different type of artifact: the tail section of a WWII-era plane complete with its iconic tail hook still in place. The tail hook is indicative of a plane that was engaged in landing operations on aircraft carriers.

There was at least one aircraft carrier, *Guanacaste*, operating out of the Mayport Naval Station during WWII. The vessel was used to train pilots for oceanic wartime efforts in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. Other inland pilot training bases, including Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville and NAS Lee Field (renamed NAS Green Cove Springs in 1943) were also used for training pilots for aircraft carrier landing operations. Hundreds of training accidents are known to have occurred in our region scattering planes and their parts across the ocean floor and other parts of the state. The exact story of this specific plane is still unknown, however archaeologists and conservators with the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum's Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program (or LAMP) are working alongside naval historians to best tell the tale.



Figure 2 Squadron VN-12 on flight line at NAAS Lee Field in Green Cove Springs, FL.

One of the remarkable components of this find is the intact tail hook. This can be a diagnostic element which is not usually found in place. The aircraft it belonged to relied upon the tail hook to catch a cable stretched across an aircraft carrier's landing strip, allowing planes to safely land on a Navy vessel despite their shortened runways.



Figure 3 Upper left and right: WWII plane conducting landing operations on an aircraft carrier.
Lower left: detail of the tail hook on the plane wreckage, note the excellent condition of the stainless steel on the hook's surface.

After comparing the spacing of rivets, the tail hook assembly, and other construction features with archival records and intact museum examples, LAMP researchers and curators at the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola are confident that the plane section belonged to a Grumman F4F Wildcat: an American carrier-based fighter aircraft that first began service in 1940 with the United States Navy. Different variants of the Wildcat were produced throughout the war.



The F4F-3 in flight, photo taken in 1941.

The Wildcat was often outmatched by the Japanese Mitsubishi A6M Zero which could fly faster, was more maneuverable, and had a longer range than the Wildcat. However, the F4F was considered more rugged and often gained the advantage over the Zero through altitude tactical maneuvers. Changes to plane design over the course of the war relied upon what was learned from Wildcat experiences fighting in the Pacific theater, eventually giving way to the F6F Hellcat that could better compete with the Japanese Zero.

LAMP was chosen by the U.S. Navy, which still owns this plane's remains, as the best institution in our area to store and study the plane wreckage. With approval from the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC), and depending on space, funding, and technical requirements, LAMP and the Museum hope to conserve, curate, and ultimately display the unique artifact for posterity. Rather serendipitously, the Museum recently opened a new exhibit focusing on Northeast Florida's role in WWII, Guardians of the First Coast: Building Readiness for World War II. The tail section of an F4F Wildcat that wrecked during carrier training activities would be an excellent interpretive component to help tell our region's World War II story.



About the Author

Nicholas Budsberg, Administrative Director of the St. Augustine Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program (LAMP), wrote this article as part of the St. Augustine Archaeological Association Newsletter. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate with Texas A&M University's Anthropology department in Nautical Archaeology. Nicholas is also a founder and director of the Shipwreck Institute for Education and Local Development and a Research Associate for the Institute of Maritime History.



FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD VACCINATION PROGRAM

MODERNA COVID-19 VACCINE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW WILL OUR GUARDSMEN RECEIVE THE VACCINE?

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

IS IT SAFE?

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

DOES IT WORK?

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

IS IT MANDATORY?

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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

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

Mayo Clinic (2020). <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-vaccine/art-20484559>

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

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

**VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY
MINUTES
17 DECEMBER 2020**



WELCOME: CHAIRMAN DUDLEY

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: CHAIRMAN DUDLEY

PRAYER: VICE CHAIR QUINN

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS: CHAIRMAN DUDLEY

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES: ALL

FINANCE REPORT: JOHN MOUNTCASTLE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OF FILLING THE CEMETERY.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA: JOHN LESLIE

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

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

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

FROM THE CHAIRMAN: CHAIR BILL DUDLEY

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

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

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

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

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

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

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

RAY A. QUINN

VICE CHAIR, VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

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



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

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

Date and Time

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

Location

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

Event Activities

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

Uniform of the Day

Flight Jacket
Business Casual

Event Registration

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





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



Invitation to Sponsor

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

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

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

The order of events are as follows:

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

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

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

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

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



US VRC, Wreaths for America 2017



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

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It was just a circle of fire:' WWII veteran remembers flying over Nagasaki hours after atomic bomb explosion



Kenneth Bender, 95, served our country as a gunner on a B29. He flew over Nagasaki just hours after the U.S. dropped the second atomic bomb on Japan.

Author: Jeannie Blaylock

JACKSONVILLE, Fla — In 1939, Kenny Bender, who was 13 at the time, remembered riding on his bicycle to deliver news that would forever change the world.

"I rode my bicycle and hollered, 'Extra! Extra,'" Bender remembered. Germany had just overtaken Poland. Warsaw was in ruins. World War II had started.

Little did Bender know as a young teenager how much history he would witness with his own eyes.

Two years later, Pearl Harbor was attacked. Bender believed the Americans would quickly be able to defeat Japan in response to the surprise attack. "I thought the Japanese were so stupid we'll wipe them off in a day or two," Bender remembered. "It didn't quite happen that way."

However, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, America was not yet the military superpower it would eventually become.

"If you look at the size of the army in 1939 at the beginning of the war with Europe, we were somewhere around 17th in the world," said Dr. Rob Citino, Senior Historian for The National World War II Museum in New Orleans and author of 10 scholarly books on WWII.

However, knowing war was almost inevitable, the U.S. called for the first-ever peacetime draft in American history. "A million men went into uniform by 1941," Citino explained.

Either drafted or by volunteer, 16 million Americans put on the uniform during the course of the war. The home front turned from a mass of shocked people to ingenious, industrious workers, both men and women, who converted, for example, the Remington typewriter factory into a facility churning out semi-automatic pistols.

"[Japan] had just picked a fight with an economy 10 times bigger than their own," Citino said. "It blows my mind."

"My dad walked to work every day," Bender remembered of wartime rationing. "He didn't want to burn that precious gasoline."

Bender became a gunner on a B-29. He flew 22 recon missions over Japan to bomb key targets and photograph the before and after. The new B-29's created hell under the clouds for the Japanese.

In August 1945, news came of the dropping of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima.

"In our barracks, we were hollering and hitting each other on the back," Bender recalled.

At that point, Bender was living in a Quonset hut on Guam. He says he had no idea there would be a second bomb.

However, a few days later, he noticed Jeeps with high-ranking military officials on the island. He later found out his

next assignment was to fly his B-29 over the center of Nagasaki, a Japanese town with a population of more than 260,000 people.



On Aug. 9, just days after the Enola Gay dropped an atomic bomb over Hiroshima, Bender climbed into his B-29 plane to witness the aftermath of the second use of an atomic bomb in war. Just five hours after detonation, Bender's plane flew over ground zero.

"It was just a circle of fire," Bender remembered. "We went in at about 30,000 feet because we didn't know if there was radiation."

His eyewitness account to history, however, was not over.

On Sept. 2, 1945, the USS Missouri was moored in Tokyo Bay as Allied leaders accepted the formal surrender of Japan to end the deadliest war in modern history.

Staff Sgt. Kenny Bender, less than a month after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, was in Tokyo. There were hundreds of ships in the bay. While no planes were overhead, General Douglas MacArthur had them on the periphery.

"It's theater orchestrated by Gen. MacArthur. The entire crew not in dress whites like the Japanese," Citino said. "Gen. MacArthur said we'll accept the surrender in the kind of uniform we fought this war in. Pretty good stuff."

After the documents were signed, it was time for Bender to make his flight.

"We flew in one behind each other, strung out for a long time," Bender said.

Citino said the theatrics planned by McArthur was meant to send one message to the Japanese: "Don't mess with the U.S."

Bender says his plane flew just about 400 feet above the USS Missouri.

They were so low he could see the "sailors hanging on the gun turrets." And just after the ceremony, he could see that now-famous table where the surrender was signed.

"It makes me feel wonderful to be an American," Bender remembered.

Bender, whose mind is still sharp as a tack, is also well-known for his work with the computer system on the B-29's. That's a story still coming up on First Coast News in our Voices of Valor series.

How can we thank Sgt. Bender for his years of service during WWII? Seems impossible.

Veterans Life Stories

Honoring and capturing the voices of our country's veterans through interviewing them and writing their stories

Who we are

We are a student run club at the University of Pennsylvania created to honor and capture the voice of our country's Veterans through interviewing them and writing their stories.

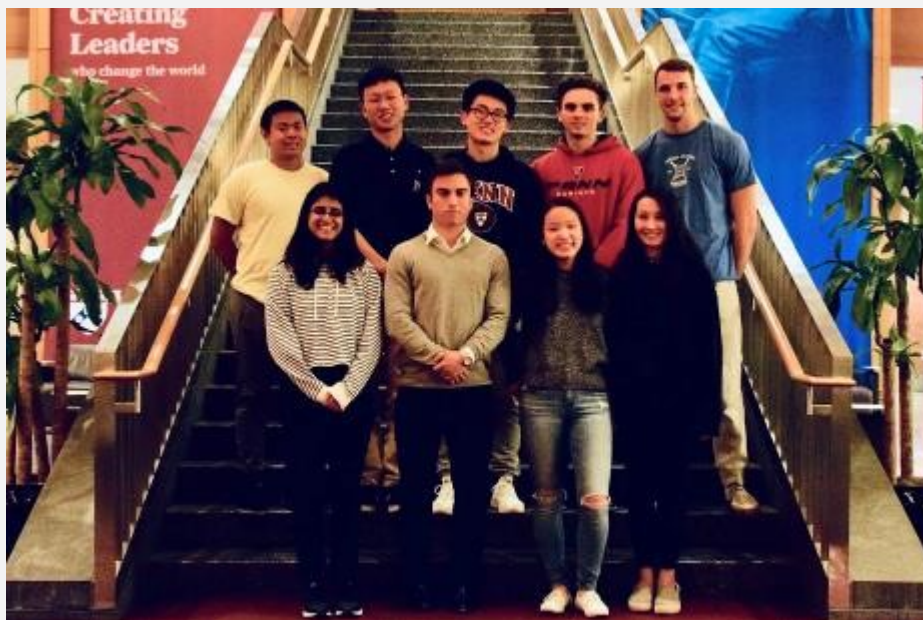
We aim to foster a sense of connection between Veterans and their providers as well as the general public. Sharing their stories will give others a glimpse of who these Veterans are as well as the events and circumstances that have shaped them into the people they are today.

The vision

"I founded the club while I was volunteering at the VA hospital because I heard many unique and engaging stories there. I wanted to find a way to honor our veterans and share their stories with others while engaging members of the local University of Pennsylvania student community."

— Peter Ma, Founder

https://veteranslifestories.com/?fbclid=IwAR14uYa-T-VU9880fN_6K-om7MxJe4KiOixP6zHHAYTdnepkQA8Fznc0U8





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COWBOY: A LEGENDARY COMMANDO IN AMERICA'S SECRET WAR IN VIETNAM

Stavros Atlamazoglou, Sandboxx News

During the Vietnam War, there was a small group of special operations troops who took the fight to the enemy. Military Assistance Command Vietnam-Studies and Observations Group (MACV-SOG) was a highly secret outfit comprised of Green Berets, Navy SEALs, and Air Commandos who conducted covert cross-border operations deep into Cambodia, Laos, and North Vietnam.

SOG recon teams consisted of a few Special Forces operators and their indigenous troops, or "little people," as the Americans affectionally called them.

Khanh "Cowboy" Doan, a South Vietnamese commando, was one of them.

In the early 1960s, Cowboy's father saw that America would have a bigger role in Vietnam's affairs, and so prompted his son to learn English. And so Cowboy became an interpreter. As American involvement in the Southeast Asian country grew, Cowboy began working for the American forces and soon ended up in SOG.

During his career in SOG, Cowboy participated in scores of missions. He was part of the relief column that went into Lang Vei, a Special Forces A camp that had been overrun by NVA tanks and troops in the early stages of the Siege of Khe Sanh. He also took part in a mission where his nine-man team squared off against 10,000 NVA troops.

While in SOG, Cowboy narrowly escaped death numerous times. In one instance, he didn't go out with his team for some reason, and the team (ST Alaska) ended up being wiped out save one man who escaped and evaded for two days before getting picked up.

In 1972, after operating in SOG for six years, Cowboy lost his leg during a mission across the fence.

At the end of his career, he had served in numerous recon teams, including ST Alaska, Virginia, Idaho, and Alabama.

After Saigon fell in 1975, Cowboy thought that the cleverest thing to do in order to avoid the wrath of the North Vietnamese was to go North, where they wouldn't be expecting him. After 11 years and 14 failed escape attempts from the country, he managed to reach the Philippines in 1986 and from there the US.

Recently, Cowboy contracted COVID-19 and had to be hospitalized with serious symptoms. What's worse, his entire family was also infected, including his wife, son, and grandson. As a consequence, they are hard put to make ends meet. Cowboy was released from the hospital and is back in his home, but he still has to go through dialysis twice a day, totaling nine to ten hours of treatment. The good news, however, is that he is improving by the day.

Some of Cowboy's SOG buddies, including Special Forces legend John Stryker "Tilt" Meyer, who has written extensively about America's secret war in Vietnam.

The GoFundMe campaign aims at helping Cowboy and his family during this difficult time. Donations will help pay rent, cover medical expenses not covered by his insurance, and buy food and medicine for Cowboy and his entire family.

Men like Cowboy fought for their country against the Communist tide. But they also fought for their American brothers, with whom they share a bond that only war and adversity can forge.

"Cowboy is a clearly a legend but also very humble," Meyer told Sandboxx News.



Cowboy Honoring a Fallen Comrade
after the War

From Veterans Council Treasurer, John Mountcastle
2021 Federal Filing Deadlines for Exempt Organizations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2021 Florida Filing Deadlines for Exempt Organizations

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

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

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

New for 2020

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

Form 1099-MISC

At least \$10 in royalties (box 2)

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

At least \$600 in:

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

Form 1099-NEC

At least \$600 in payments for

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

New sculpture pays tribute to military working dogs

by skytales

Sculptor Susan Norris has a long history of touching the hearts of others through her art, but recently, she took on a new project — one involving man's best friend in everyday life, but perhaps even more so on the battlefield.

Titled "My Hero, My Friend," Norris' newest statue is a life-size bronze sculpture of a military working dog wearing a Purple Heart, mourning the loss of its two-legged companion.

"I've always had an affection for animals, but the bond between a military dog and its partner is on a whole other level," Norris said in a press release.

This sculpture is meant to honor the bravery and dedication of a military service dog to its human handler, tugging at the heartstrings of passersby. The sculpture will reside at Veterans Memorial Park in Trophy Club, Texas, inside the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.

"It's moving to see people cry when they see my sculpture," Norris added of the reactions to the sculpture.

Military working dogs have gone by all manner of moniker throughout U.S. military history, including K-9 Corps and "war dogs." In various combat eras, they served as guards, messengers, mascots and scouts, according to an Army book on military veterinary services.

As operations in Afghanistan and Iraq ramped-up, so too did the U.S. military's efforts to build a canine program.

"Because of the growing threat of improvised explosive devices in Afghanistan and Iraq, mine detection training also resumed," the book reads. "Dogs became members of forward deployed teams, served with airborne units, and were transported by helicopters when needed."

Norris' sculpture isn't the first honoring combat canines, however. In 2008, Congress approved the Military Working Dog Teams National Monument, which was unveiled in 2013 at Joint Base San Antonio — Lackland.

"Humans are continually rediscovering that technology cannot match many canine senses and other inherent abilities, and they also realize that dogs continue to remain loyal even as equipment and conflicts evolve around them," according to the book.

Olivia is a reporting Intern for Military Times, and a junior Communication student at George Mason University.





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Why our flag is folded thirteen times

When you watch the honor guard meticulously and correctly fold our flag, they make thirteen folds to complete the ritual. Notice the precision and flourish for each fold. Here is the meaning of each fold.

The first fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The second fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.

The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing our ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

The fourth fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.

The fifth fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our Country", in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country right or wrong.

The sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that We pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, Indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

The seventh fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day.

The ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood, and Mothers. For it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.

The tenth fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for defense of our country since they were first born.

The eleventh fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies in the Hebrews' eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The twelfth fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in the Christians' eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.

The thirteenth fold, or when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding us of our nation's motto, "In God We Trust."

Staff Sergeant Reckless was a hero in the Korean War... and a horse... and a U.S. Marine!

SSgt Reckless helped the Korean War effort by delivering ammunition up steep mountain trails and recovering wounded soldiers.

Her Korean name was Flame-of-the-Morning (Ah Chim Hai / 아침 해) and she was purchased at the Seoul Race track for \$250, officially becoming a Marine on October 26, 1952. She has many Military Decorations including two Purple Hearts, a Presidential Unit Citation with star, a Korean Service Medal, and Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation. SSgt Reckless has inspired a number of books and there is a life-size statue of her at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Virginia.





This chart shows some of the units with the 101st Airborne Aviation or attached to them.

Chart done by Joe Kline of the 101st Airborne Aviation, of the 101st Airborne Division for period 1968 to 1972.



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U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Disaster Resources Available to Veterans

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

Health Care Assistance

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

Debt Relief

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

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

Other Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

World War II Resources in Northeast Florida

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Cecil Field POW/MIA MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

Progress Report

By Dave Dollarhide

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

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

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

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

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





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

Only \$100 contact samsanks@yahoo.com

Alton Green Memorial American Legion Post 194

Veterans Centennial Park

BUY A BRICK

Lend a Hand & Leave a Legacy





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

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

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



April 10 & 11, 2021



The National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum at Cecil Field

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

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

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



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



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Memory Care – Short-Term Stays**

Assisted Living Facility #12928

Vietnam Veterans of America

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



Chapter/President/email/Location

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



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

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

Applications are available online, for <https://firstcoasthonorflight.org/>

applications

Guardians

Veterans

Volunteers

Selena Hernandez-Haines, President

Toll Free 888-400-1185

Website: www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

email: info@firstcoasthonorflight.org

Mail: First Coast Honor Flight , PO Box 600785

St. Johns, FL 32260

Please support and donate where you can



First Coast Honor Flight Donation

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

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

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

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

www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

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

Name of Organization _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____ Email _____

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

Name _____

Address _____

Veteran? Yes _____ No _____ Relationship _____

Branch _____ Dates Served _____

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



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

Veterans Ascend

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

Our Military Family Service is now up and running!

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

#veteransascend #militaryspouse #veterans

LIVE



LIVE

We've Made Some Great Changes!

FEATURING

The Military Family Module

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

New features for Service Member and Veteran Accounts

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

Create your FREE profile today
www.veteransascend.com

NO RESUME REQUIRED



PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO MEET VETERANS' UNIQUE NEEDS

Advance Care Planning

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

Palliative Care

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

Hospice Care

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

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

Complementary Therapies

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

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

We Need Volunteers

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



WE HONOR VETERANS
Partner

Community Hospice & Palliative Care

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

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



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

VET 007.5/20



SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

Strength

built on
Sacrifice

Your Florida SOS Team

St. Augustine Area

Keith Ham

Support Coordinator

310 Charlotte Street

St. Augustine, FL 32085

(904) 823-0157 (desk)

(904) 472-7689 (cell)

keith.c.ham.ctr@mail.mil

Tallahassee Area

Matthew Reeves

Support Coordinator

1225 Easterwood Drive

Tallahassee, FL 32311-3599

(850) 617-0192 (desk)

(850) 459-6630 (cell)

matthew.p.reeves2.ctr@mail.mil

Orlando Area

Shinequa Baines

Support Coordinator

9500 Armed Forces Reserve Drive

Orlando, FL 32827

(407) 240-5939 ext. 1743

shinequa.l.baines.ctr@mail.mil

Tampa Bay Area

LaShawnda S. Strother

Support Coordinator

2801 Grand Avenue

Pinellas Park, FL 33782

(727)-563-3647

lashawnda.s.strother.ctr@mail.mil

Miami Area

Support Coordinator

9301 NW 33rd Street

Doral, FL 33172-1202

(305) 437-2178

Scholarships & Application Deadlines

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

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

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

Application Deadlines for surviving children

Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation

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

Freedom Alliance

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

Fisher House Foundation/ Heroes Legacy Scholarship

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

Special Ops Warrior Foundation

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

Deadline for multiple relationships

Army Emergency Relief Fund

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

Application Deadlines: For surviving spouses

Aspire

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

National Military Family Association

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

Pat Tillman Foundation

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

Application Deadlines: For surviving siblings

Matthew Freeman Project

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

Deadline for multiple relationships

Folds of Honor

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

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

FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



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

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



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

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

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

VA HEALTH CARE WHERE AND WHEN YOU NEED IT.

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

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

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

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

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

VSN 8 Clinical Contact Center

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

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

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

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

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

To learn more, visit www.vsn8.va.gov/cc.asp.

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



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Mission Statement:

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



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

What the Council has done:

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

SA-0003147064-01




Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

73-8255
PRESS 1






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

STAND BY THEM

Confidential help for Veterans and their families

73-8255
PRESS 1



Veterans Crisis Line

00-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

NATIONAL
SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
www.veteranscrisisline.net

..... Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to 838255



Military/Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255




Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255

Veterans Councils of Northeast Florida



BAKER COUNTY

President: Larry Porterfield

Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

Location:

MacClenny Primitive Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall on North Boulevard

Time : 1800 (6pm)

CLAY COUNTY

President: Harry Silvers

Meetings:

First Wednesday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1400 (2pm)

DUVAL COUNTY

President Steve Spickelmier

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37
Main Building
San Juan Avenue

Tome: 1900 (7 pm)

NASSAU COUNTY

President: Mike Doran

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

St. Johns County

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

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



We are inviting all veterans to visit our website at:

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

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

Please join our group on Facebook at:

<http://veteranscouncilsjc.org>

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

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

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

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

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

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

Send to: rothfeldm@gmail.com



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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