



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

P.O. Box 2117

St. Augustine, FL 32085

Bill Dudley, Publisher

Michael Rothfeld, Editor

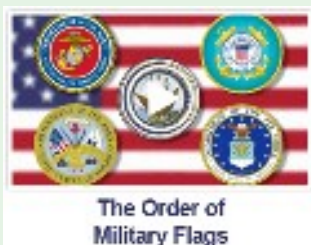
Volume 6, Issue 6

Message from the Chairman

Newsletter Date: June, 2017

Inside this Edition

Clyde Lassen State Veterans Home
 Jax Ntl Cemetery Support Committee
 Veteran Council Honors Sheriff Shoar
 SGM USA (Ret) Honored by Governor
 Missing In America Project
 NE FL Women Veterans
 The Ride Home
 Veteran survives Atomic bomb in 1953
 Seminole War Convocation
 Vietnam Veterans reunion in Melbourne
 Vietnam Documentary
 Honor Flight
 MIAP June 17 in Boynton Beach
 A Local Hero Remembered
 Honor Release Return
 Navy Wives Clubs of America
 Veteran Council April Minutes
 Honoring Vietnam Helicopter Pilots
 Americas Greatest
 Veterans Center
 MIAP Update
 POW/MIA Recognition Day
 Military Support Retreats
 From a former Vietnam AF mechanic
 Gold Star Family



Fellow Veterans:

Our local schools are now on summer break, so this is a clear indication we are entering the summer season. Many in our community regard Memorial Day weekend as the official beginning of summer. I vehemently disagree. Although there will be Memorial Day sales, picnics, family get togethers, concerts, and other special events, the real meaning of Memorial Day is none of the aforementioned. It is a day appointed by the President as a day of remembrance for those who have died in service in the defense of our nation. It is further symbolized by the red poppy worn by those who choose to honor our men and women who gave their all. Please plan to join us on Monday, 29 May 2017 at St. Augustine National Cemetery at 10 AM as we honor our war heroes of all wars.

This week, at a Cabinet meeting in Tallahassee, Governor Rick Scott paid tribute to retired Sgt. Major Ray

Quinn with the Governor's Medal of Merit. In honoring Sgt. Major Quinn, the Governor stated the following.... "I'd like to thank Sergeant Major Quinn for his dedication to the safety of families in Florida and the nation. I am incredibly humbled by his lifelong service, first as a member of the Army National Guard and then as a community leader in local government. I'm honored to present him with the Medal of Merit today for his service and positive impact on the lives of Florida veterans." We are pleased the Governor chose Sgt. Major Quinn to receive this prestigious award. His remarks about the Sgt. Major are well known to his fellow veterans as he has been an inspiration to all who have served with him both in and out of uniform. HOOAH, Sgt. Major.

Last month, I was pleased to be appointed to the Florida Defense Support Task Force by Florida Senate President Joe Negron. The Task Force Mission is to: Preserve, Protect, and Enhance Florida's Military



Missions and Installations. The Task Force works to assure all 20 of our States military installations remain viable to our military mission during periods of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), promote and expand the missions of Florida's military installations, prevent encroachment on military installations, improve transportation access to Florida's military bases, assist installations in meeting DOD renewable energy goals, and strengthen state support for military families and veterans with a focus on education, health care, employment, and family programs. I am very honored to have been selected to serve on this Task Force and helping to assure the continued viability of our military installations and those who are serving in our great state.

Bill Dudley, Chairman
 Veterans Council of
 St. Johns County

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



National Nursing Home Week is an annual week celebrating those who live and work in nursing homes. Each year our two units, Alpha and Delta, engage in competitions involving both residents and staff. This year our competitions included multiple sports/game events, wheelchair hungry hungry hippo, target shooting, and all day trivia. The week concluded on Friday with a fabulous carnival complete with carnival goodies and a dunking booth.



Target Shooting



Hungry, Hungry Hippo
.....wheelchair version



Annual Fishing Trip to
the Elk's Lodge in Green
Cove Springs.



Fishing



Gary and his son drove to
the fishing trip in style!



Jana Teehan, the Blount Island Command
Liaison for the Navy League, presents the
Marine NCO of the year for Blount Island



In celebration of Cinco
de Mayo the residents
enjoyed Margaritas and
"walking tacos."



Cinco de Mayo



Visiting with sailors
during the carnival



Thank you to Com-
munity Hospice for
helping out on
carnival day!!



Joe enjoying a corn
dog and cotton can-
dy at the carnival



**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, August 7, 2017**. 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**.

+++++2015/2016 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

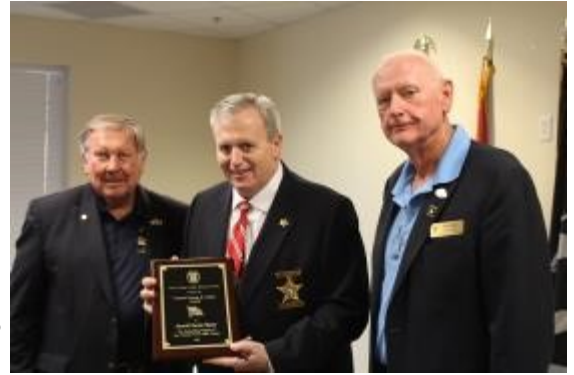
Historian: Kathy Cayton

Council of County Veterans Council Presidents



Together We Are Stronger

**VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY
PRESENTATION OF THE
COLONEL GEORGE “ED” TAYLOR AWARD**



EACH YEAR THE VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY PRESENTS THE COLONEL “ED” TAYLOR AWARD. THIS AWARD IS PRESENTED TO THE ORGANIZATION OR INDIVIDUAL THAT GOES ABOVE AND BEYOND IN THE SUPPORT OF OUR COUNTY’S VETERANS.

COLONEL TAYLOR SERVED AS A TRUE INSPIRATION TO OUR COUNCIL. HE WAS THE FOUNDER AND FIRST CHAIRMAN OF OUR COUNCIL AND RESPONSIBLE FOR NUMEROUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE LASTING BETTERMENT OF OUR VETERANS.

SPEAKING CANDIDLY IN THE MANNER OF COLONEL TAYLOR, HE WAS UNRELENTING, DETERMINED TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GOALS FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR VETERANS.

A TRUE AMERICAN HERO, HE WAS THE RECIPIENT OF TWO SILVER STARS AND MULTIPLE BRONZE STARS. HE WAS A MENTOR, A LEADER AND A FRIEND TO ALL WHO HAVE SERVED.

TO HAVE HIS NAME ATTACHED TO AN ORGANIZATION OR INDIVIDUAL SHOULD BE CONSIDERED A TRUE HONOR.

RECIPIENTS OF THE TAYLOR AWARD ARE CONSIDERED TRUE CHAMPIONS IN THE ROLE OF RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT OF VETERANS. BY PRESENTING THE TAYLOR AWARD WE WISH TO BOTH HONOR AND RECOGNIZE THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

TODAY WE WISH TO PRESENT OUR AWARD TO SHERIFF DAVID B. SHOAR FOR THE TREMENDOUS IMPACT HE HAS MADE IN SUPPORTING OUR VETERANS. SHERIFF SHOAR’S MAJOR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE MADE MANY PROJECTS POSSIBLE THAT WOULD HAVE OTHERWISE NOT COME TO FRUITION.

HE CONTRIBUTES TO POLICE MANPOWER AT SPECIAL EVENTS, THEREBY EASING A COST BURDEN ON THE COUNCIL. HE HAS PROMOTED THE VETERAN’S COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMEND TO OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE VETERANS COUNCIL.

SHERIFF SHOAR HAS BEEN A CHAMPION FOR THE ST. JOHNS COUNTY VETERANS COUNCIL.

BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COUNCIL’S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SHERIFF SHOAR IS RECOGNIZED FOR THESE ACCOMPLISHMENTS. WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT THE COLONEL “ED” TAYLOR AWARD TO OUR OWN SHERIFF DAVID SHOAR.

SGM Ray A. Quinn, USA (ret) received this distinguished Medal at an Award ceremony in cabinet room 0900 hours Tuesday, 23 May 17 in Tallahassee.

14.34 Governor’s Medal of Merit.—

(1) The Governor may present, in the name of the State of Florida, a medal to be known as the “Governor’s Medal of Merit,” which shall bear a suitable inscription and ribbon of appropriate design, to:

(a) Any legal resident of this state who has rendered exceptional meritorious service to the citizens of this state;

(b) Any legal resident of this state who is serving under honorable conditions on active duty as a member of the United States Armed Forces, the Florida National Guard, or the United States Reserve Forces and has rendered exceptional meritorious service to the citizens of this state while on active duty; or

(c) Any legal resident of this state who has been honorably discharged from active duty as a member of the United States Armed Forces, the Florida National Guard, or the United States Reserve Forces and, while on active duty, rendered exceptional meritorious service to the citizens of this state.

As used in this subsection, the term “exceptional meritorious service” means acts above and beyond the level of duty normally required by that person’s respective military or civilian position.

(2)(a) In the event of the death of an individual who has been chosen to receive the Governor’s Medal of Merit, the medal shall be presented to a designated representative of the chosen recipient.

(b) The Governor’s Medal of Merit may only be presented to an individual once.





The "VOICE" of Women Veterans

Northeast Florida Women Veterans, Inc. is focused on ensuring women who served on active duty, National Guard or Reserves and their children, transition into the civilian community with the tools they need to become self-sufficient.

"Helping Women Veterans excel beyond their own expectations"



As we grow our network, it is important that we connect with female veterans, community partners and all those who support our military.

Visit our website to seek assistance, sign up to participate in our many activities, or volunteer your time.

If you or your company would like to support our mission, contact us at info@forwomenvets.org or call (904) 239-9519.

www.forwomenvets.org

2133 Broadway Ave, Jacksonville, FL 32209

Northeast Florida Women Veterans, Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.

May 23, 2017

Gov. Scott Awards Sergeant Major Ray A. Quinn with the Governor's Medal of Merit



TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, during a meeting of the Florida Cabinet, Governor Rick Scott recognized retired Sergeant Major Ray A. Quinn with the Governor's Medal of Merit. Sergeant Major Quinn served in the U.S. Army and Florida National Guard for 30 years.

Governor Rick Scott said, "I'd like to thank Sergeant Major Quinn for his dedication to the safety of families in Florida and the nation. I am incredibly humbled by his lifelong service, first as a member of the Army National Guard and then as a community leader in local government. I'm honored to present him with the Medal of Merit today for his service and positive impact on the lives of Florida veterans."

Lieutenant Colonel Glenn Sutphin, Executive Director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, said, "Sergeant Major Quinn has dedicated his life to serving his community, state, and nation during his time in the U.S. Army and Florida Army National Guard. He continues today to serve his community and veterans across the state with honor and integrity. Sergeant Major Quinn represents what it means to be a member of the Florida National Guard and a leader in our community."

About Sergeant Major Ray A. Quinn

Sergeant Major Ray A. Quinn enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1965 and transitioned to the Florida Army National Guard in 1973. He was an infantry soldier, First Sergeant, Operations Sergeant and Personnel Noncommissioned Officer. After he retired, he went on to serve on the staff of the Adjutant General of Florida as the Director of Executive Services. In 2010, Sergeant Major Quinn was appointed by the Governor of Florida to serve as an interim County Commissioner for District 3 in St. Johns County. He served in that position from January 2010 until January 2011. He currently serves as Chairman of the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council, Vice Chair of the St. Johns County Veterans Council and is Vice President for Veteran Affairs, First Militia Chapter Association of the U.S. Army.

The Veterans Council of St Johns County is proud to announce the appointment of its Chairman, Bill Dudley, to the Florida Defense Support Task Force



THE FLORIDA SENATE
SENATOR JOE NEGRON
President

April 6, 2017

Mr. William E. Dudley
1072 Alcala Drive
St. Augustine, FL 32086

Re: Florida Defense Support Task Force

Dear Mr. Dudley:

It is my pleasure to appoint you as a member of the Florida Defense Support Task Force. Your term of office begins immediately and expires November 2, 2020. In connection with your appointment and by copy of this letter, I request Bruce Grant, Executive Director, supply you with all necessary materials, agendas and meeting schedules.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this appointment during your term of service, please feel free to contact Holly Demers in my office by phone at (850) 487-5229 or by email at demers.holly@flsenate.gov. Holly is also available to share the perspectives of the Senate on matters that may come before your task force during your tenure.

Thank you for your willingness to serve on behalf of the Florida Senate. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Negron".

Joe Negron

JN/hd

c: The Honorable Rick Scott, Governor
The Honorable Richard Corcoran, Speaker of the House
Bruce Grant, Executive Director, Florida Defense Support Task Force

Florida Times Union By Joe Daraskevich



Group needs help in Florida finding unclaimed veteran remains to restore deserved dignity

Patriot Guard Rider Ed Elster holds a flag at funeral services held at the Jacksonville National Cemetery in 2013 for 10 veterans whose remains had been discovered and documented by the Missing In America Project. (Florida Times-Union)

The remains of U.S. Navy veteran Raymond Regis Garrity are laid to rest at Jacksonville National Cemetery at a ceremony in 2013. Garrity had no family or friends to claim him, so his burial was handled by the Missing in America Project. (Will Dickey/Florida Times-Union)

Petty Officer 2nd Class Destiny King (left) gives a flag to Kathy Church of the American Legion Auxiliary during a funeral service for U. S. Navy veteran Raymond Regis Garrity at Jacksonville National Cemetery in 2013. Garrity had no family or friends to claim him, so his burial was handled by the Missing in America Project. (Will Dickey/Florida Times-Union)

Veterans salute as the remains of U. S. Navy veteran Raymond Regis Garrity are laid to rest with full military honors at Jacksonville National Cemetery in 2013. Garrity had no family or friends to claim him, so his burial was handled by the Missing in America Project. (Will Dickey/Florida Times-Union)

Patriot Guard Riders salute as the remains of U. S. Navy veteran Raymond Regis Garrity are laid to rest with full military honors at Jacksonville National Cemetery in 2013. Garrity had no family or friends to claim him, so his burial was handled by the Missing In America Project. (Will Dickey/Florida Times-Union)

When human remains go unclaimed, they can sit on shelves for years without much of a chance for a proper interment.

Some of the ashes are former members of the military who were promised a final resting place in national cemeteries to commemorate their service to the country.

One way or another, the veterans got lost in the shuffle.

Instead of military funerals with honor and respect, their remains collect dust in funeral home attics or in medical examiner storage rooms — among other places.

Kathy Church of Neptune Beach is part of a group trying to find those lost veterans, but she needs help.

She never served in the military, but she believes the forgotten men and women deserve dignity in death. She works tirelessly to make that belief a reality for people she never knew.

“What we do is not hard, it’s just time consuming,” Church said of the Missing in America Project.

The national nonprofit locates, identifies and interments unclaimed American veterans and dependents eligible for burial in national cemeteries.

First, volunteers reach out to funeral homes to ask if they possess unclaimed remains. They then compile a list of the

deceased to send to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office where they determine if a person qualifies.

There are seven pieces of information necessary to make that determination: name, date of birth, date of death, Social Security number, birthplace, race and sex.

Any other relevant information is also passed on, Church said.

She said she doesn't like to use the word "I" when she talks about everything the national nonprofit accomplishes in Florida, but there are so few volunteers helping her that sometimes it feels overwhelming.

Church is the Florida coordinator for the Missing in America Project and gives plenty of credit to her team for all the hard work it does. But the team is small, the work it does takes time and none of them get paid.

"This project is going to be around for a long time, and our goal is to inter every unclaimed veteran out there," Church said.

There's no telling how many are out there.

Church said there are only 10 active volunteers who work under her in Florida — a state with about 1.5 million veterans — and she needs more to join.

In Jacksonville the group has already gone through every Hardage-Giddens Funeral Home location as well as A.B. Coleman Mortuary. But they have a lot of work left to do.

"The biggest thing is without any more volunteers we can't reach out to more funeral homes," Church said.

Through April 30 the group has located 14,977 unclaimed remains nationally and identified 3,405 of those as qualified veterans. They've interred 3,128 of those, complete with full military funeral honors ceremonies with more scheduled soon.

The program was started in 2007 and made its way to Florida in 2013.

Church said in Florida alone they've reached out to 120 funeral homes and located about 900 remains. In the state they've interred 130 veterans, 63 spouses and one infant, who was a dependent of a veteran.

They try to have ceremonies for about 20 veterans at a time. Church said if they inter any more than that at once, it seems to lose some of the honor and significance.

There have been five services at the Jacksonville National Cemetery.

Church said veteran organizations in Northeast Florida are great about donating money to the cause — something that helps a great deal — but they need more people to donate their time.

"People are wearing so many volunteer hats that they don't have the time [to join another one]," Church said.

Anyone interested can learn more about the cause at miap.us or email Church at miapjax@yahoo.com.

Joe Daraskevich: (904) 359-4308

Northeast Florida Women Veterans

Formed in 2012 by a group of female veterans, The Northeast Florida Women Veterans provides support to women who served on active duty, Reservists and members of the National Guard and their children.



The Challenge

Women are the fastest growing community of military veterans. As veterans, they are subject to the same challenges as their male counterparts: PTSD, MST, high divorce rate, health issues and even homelessness. But women have challenges that men don't have, often including child care, sexual abuse and gender discrimination.

Here in Florida we host the third-largest population of women veterans in the country, with Duval County as the largest in the state. Therefore it is on us to set the standard for providing care and resources to the women who have and continue to serve.

Our Vision

Northeast Florida Women Veteran will be the voice of women veterans and help them excel beyond their own expectations.

Our Mission Statement

Northeast Florida Women Veterans, Inc. is focused on ensuring women who have served on active duty, National Guard or Reserves and their children, transition into the civilian community with the tools they need to become self-sufficient. We operate a resource center to provide supportive and career services to women veterans and advocate for and promote community awareness of their challenges and accomplishments at the local, state and national level ensuring each has a voice

By networking with other female veterans, we make each other stronger. If you are a female veteran in need of help, please reach out to us.

Phone: (904) 239-6801 Email: info@forwomenvets.org

[Facebook.com/NortheastFloridaWomenVeterans](https://www.facebook.com/NortheastFloridaWomenVeterans)

P.O. Box 2874 Jacksonville FL 32203

The RIDE HOME, Inc., 3818 Litchfield Loop, Lake Wales, FL 33859
theridehome.com



On National POW/MIA Recognition Day we will be hosting **The RIDE HOME 2017**. This weekend event, 14-16 September 2017, takes place in and around the cities of Warner Robins, Perry and Andersonville, Georgia, home of the National Prisoner of War Museum. The RIDE HOME 2017 complies with the Presidential Proclamation by paying tribute to Former American Prisoners of War who have returned home and the families of those Americans still Missing in Action.

Honorees for the 2017 event will include former Prisoners of War and families of our Missing in Action from World War II, Korea, Cold War, Vietnam, USS Pueblo, Iraq and Afghanistan. As part of the tribute package to these true American Heroes, The RIDE HOME with the help and generosity of American Patriots, like you, will provide a room (3 nights), Heroes Dinner, Ground-Pounder & Fly-Boy Lunch, entertainment, Awards Ceremony as well as transportation to and from the events for the Honored Guest. This complete Tribute package is valued at \$375.00. For all they endured as Prisoners of War and the emotional torture the Missing in Action families struggle with every day, we hope you agree this is worthy of your participation. Remember, a full Tribute Package or a portion of one, either choice is greatly appreciated and will help us reach the goal of 200 Honored Guest for the 2017 event.

The RIDE HOME is open to the public and we encourage everyone to attend so that they may meet and spend time with the POW or MIA family member you help sponsor.

Please complete the form below and mail it with your contribution to The RIDE HOME. Contributions of \$375 or more will receive The Ride Home 2017 t-shirt, patch, sponsor bar, and pin. If you would prefer to use your Debit or Credit Card, you can go to our website, www.theridehome.com, click on DONATE and follow the instructions.

On behalf of The RIDE HOME, Inc. Board of Directors,

Thank You!

Respectfully,
Jim 'moe' Moyer , Chairman

I wish to help sponsor a former POW and/or a MIA Family member to The RIDE HOME 2017

_____ Tribute Package \$375. _____ Other

Includes a t-shirt for donations of \$375.00 or more: _____ size

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City _____

State & Zipcode _____

Phone/email: _____

Mail check to: The RIDE HOME, Inc. 3818 Litchfield Loop, Lake Wales, FL 33859

From the FL Times Union, reprinted in its entirety: by Joe Daraskevich

Life of pain, mental anguish followed Army veteran after 1953 atomic bomb test



George DeSalvo, 88, entered the Army in 1951 & has endured a life time of health problems since his exposure to radiation from a 1953 atomic bomb test. (Photos by Bruce Lipsky/FL Times Union)

George DeSalvo covered his closed eyes with his hands as he crouched down in a 3-foot trench in the middle of the Nevada desert. Wearing two pairs of gloves — one wool, one leather — he braced for the blast of an atomic bomb just over two miles away.

With his eyelids still squeezed shut, DeSalvo could see the bones in his hands as the cloud of radioactive debris rushed over the top of his head.

“When this thing went off, the earth was turning sideways,” DeSalvo said, remembering the day that changed his life forever.

That day was April 25, 1953. DeSalvo feels his body and mind were never the same.

The shockwave from the explosion sucked back to the origin of the blast, and DeSalvo’s orders were to march straight toward ground zero to inspect the damage. About 2,400 Army personnel marched along with him, and when the drill was over they boarded buses to go back to Camp Desert Rock.

“All they did was brush off my clothes with a common house broom,” DeSalvo said of decontamination efforts before the buses left the area.

He even ate an apple that was tucked in his pocket when the bomb went off.

“They told me the worst thing that could happen would be damaged ears,” DeSalvo said. He already had a punctured eardrum from an earlier training exercise, so that didn’t seem like a huge concern.

Sixty-five years after the atomic test in the Nevada desert, DeSalvo is still fighting to get 100 percent disability from the Department of Veterans Affairs for the pain and suffering he endured throughout his life — which he blames on his exposure to an atomic detonation and being ordered to march into a bomb’s radioactive dust.

Forced by the Army to sign a secrecy agreement, he only learned recently other soldiers in the trenches suffered similar health issues.

He reached out to the government in the early 2000s when he learned about the others and eventually started corresponding with 10 men who were there in the trenches with him at Shot Simon — the nuclear test explosion that was part of the Upshot-Knothole Series near the start of the Cold War.

Only one of the 10 is still living.

DeSalvo assumes most of the others who were with him died much younger due to radiation complications,

but he feels all of them are owed more respect than they were given.

“When I think of that it makes me shiver,” DeSalvo said.

DeSalvo was honorably discharged from the Army less than two months after Shot Simon. Soon after that his health problems started.

“Within six months of getting out of the service I started getting cramps all over my body,” DeSalvo said recently from his daughter’s Fleming Island home.

The medical issues snowballed from there.

“He’s been falling apart since I was a child,” Carol Smith said of her 88-year-old father.

She remembers lying in bed with him some nights as a girl, knowing something was wrong, but not knowing what it was. Her father remained quiet about the nuclear test, and Smith said she figured he would die before she became a woman, long before she became a mother.

For 30 years DeSalvo was afraid he would be tried by a court-martial if he told his friends or family about the test he lived through in the desert.

Smith always thought her mother would outlive her father by many years. But she died of cancer March 30, 2015, leaving DeSalvo without his faithful caretaker.

Smith’s sister helped care for DeSalvo in Georgia for a while but now he spends most of his time in Fleming Island.

He worked as a supervisor in Ohio at Ford Motor Co. for 33 years, wearing a smile on his face so that people didn’t know how much he was suffering.

“I wanted nobody to know there was anything wrong with me,” DeSalvo said. He always had trouble sleeping and could never seem to get comfortable.

He brought an apple to work each day, tossing it up and catching it as he walked to his office. He learned to sing to alleviate his mind and to ease concerns from others.

But the doctor visits continued and continue still.

DeSalvo’s medical history shows 35 active problems, according to his records with the VA.

The first two on the list: Post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.

The last two on the list: Ionizing radiation exposure resulting from 1953 atomic bomb nuclear test and radiation effects.

In between is a combination of conditions any aging man can expect mixed with ailments commonly linked with radiation exposure.

DeSalvo had bladder cancer in 2000 and again in 2011. In 1968 government doctors made an incision across

the front of his abdomen to repair an aneurysm on his left kidney.

When he was 30 years old, his wife wanted to take out an insurance policy, but doctors were shocked to find his blood pressure was 240/130 — much higher than most men that age.

He has a two-page list he brings to doctor visits with a yearly breakdown of medical combinations he's used going back to 1962.

“Documentation for the years 1968 thru 1974 is not clear since the drugs were used in different combinations and changed often,” the list warns at the bottom.

There's another list that points out, in bold, all the medications he cannot take due to adverse side effects that were worse than the conditions doctors were trying to treat.

Smith calls her father a “guinea pig” because of the unknown nature of the atomic bomb test and the constant remedies he endured to keep him alive afterward.

People who suffered through similar circumstances as DeSalvo can obtain compensation in a variety of ways. The VA website has a page dedicated to diseases associated with ionizing radiation exposure with links to possible benefits and compensation.

Congress enacted the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act in 1990 for people who were impacted in various ways by nuclear testing. There have been 7,705 total filings from onsite participants with 4,212 of those approved, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. Each atomic veteran case is dealt with on an individual basis.

But there are two things that bother DeSalvo the most.

He's mad the government didn't use him to learn more about radiation exposure, and he's mad he can't claim 100 percent disability from the VA.

The countless doctor visits could have been used to benefit future generations, DeSalvo said. He said there are just as many threats of nuclear attacks now compared to the 1950s. But he wishes his mind and body would have been studied closer to help people understand the effects of exposure to nuclear blasts.

“It feels like it was all in vain,” DeSalvo said.

He's fought with the VA for years to gain as much disability as they will acknowledge, but he's still listed at 90 percent.

“It would be nice for him to get that peace of mind,” Smith said of her father. “He knows he doesn't have much time to live, so it would be good for him to know the government is finally giving him everything he deserves.”

DeSalvo paid about \$3,000 in combined taxes on the last two cars he purchased in Georgia because he isn't considered 100 percent disabled.

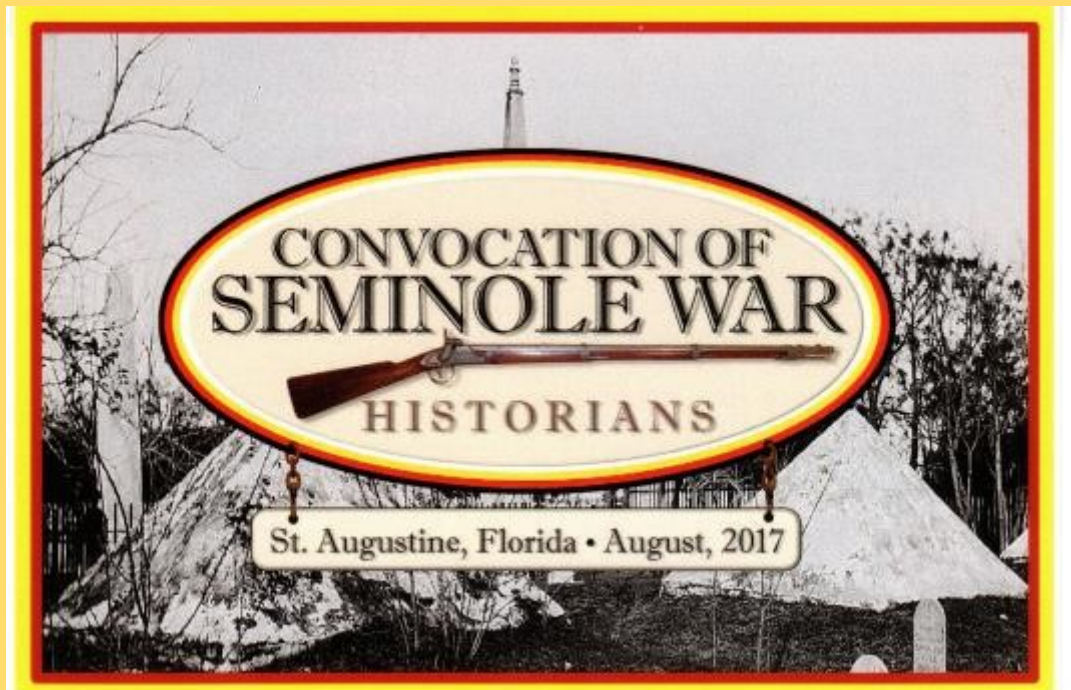
“It's just an example of one more way the government has let him down,” Smith said.

Joe Daraskevich: (904) 359-4308

Plan ahead, save the date.

Convocation of Seminole War Historians, Parade, curator hosted tours of the FL National Guard Museum, lunch, and evening presentation hosted by the West Point Society of N. Florida.

More information to follow.



August 11th, 12, 13th.

The convocation will gather organizations and historians throughout Florida interested in the Seminole Wars era.

Do not miss this unique opportunity to interact with others!

Highlights

- * **Friday:** Informal evening social at the St. Augustine Officers Club. Curator hosted tours of the Florida National Guard Museum.
- * **Saturday:** 10th annual living-history commemoration of the 1842 parade and ceremony, National Cemetery. Organized by the West Point Society of N. Florida.
 - >A festive lunch. Elgin Jumper presents his reflections on Seminole art and culture.
 - >Panels on: Research, publications, archaeology, Fort King, and Seminole history.
 - >Living-historians' workshop at the historic Ximinez-Fatio House.
 - >Evening presentation by award-winning authors Mary Lou and John Missall.
- * **Sunday:** Breakfast buffet. Retrospective of Frank Laumer's groundbreaking research, publications, and organizational initiatives. Speakers. Commentary.

Registration and Details at: www.seminolewars.org

(on line at: events.eventzilla.net/e/convocation-of-seminole-war-historians-2138894235)

Follow us on www.Facebook.com/Seminolewar.

Organized by the Seminole Wars Foundation, inc.

Supported by the St. Johns County TDC.



**CONVOCATION OF SEMINOLE WAR HISTORIANS
ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA**

AUGUST 11, 12 and 13, 2017

Organized by the Seminole Wars Foundation, Inc.



FRIDAY, AUGUST 11

St. Augustine Officers Club, 82 Marine Street.

5:00 -- 8:30 Informal evening social. Early registration. Florida National Guard Museum open, curator on site for personal tours. Light hors d'oeuvres, cash bar.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12

Trinity Hall. Trinity Episcopal Parish, 215 St. George Street.

- 08:30 -- 09:30 Registration, welcome, orientation.
- 09:30 -- 09:50 Historical background, Alison Simpson, Florida National Guard Historian.
- 09:50 -- 10:15 Move to St. Francis Barracks via Trolley, foot, POV.
- 10:30 -- 11:30 **10th annual living-history commemoration of the 1842 parade and ceremony, National Cemetery. Organized by the West Point Society of N. FL. Public Invited.**
- 11:30 -- 12:00 Return to Trinity Hall.
- 12:00 -- 1:00 Lunch, award of coins. Steve Rinck, President Seminole Wars Foundation. Remarks by George Godfrey, President, West Point Society of N. Florida.
- 1:00 -- 2:00 **Convocation Address: Seminole art and culture by Elgin Jumper.**
- 2:15 -- 4:30 Breakout sessions: [Timing of individual sessions TBD]
 1. Living-historian workshop. Ximenez-Fatio House.
Chair: Steve Rinck. Seminole Wars Foundation.
 2. Seminole Heritage and History. Trinity Hall.
Chair: Chris Kimball. Seminole Wars Foundation.
 3. Archaeology and Resurrection of Ft. King. Hendri Hall.
Chair: David Laffey. Fort King Heritage Association
 4. Current Research and Recent Literature. Trinity Hall.
Chair: Dr. James M. Denham. Chair, History Dept, Fla. Southern College

Ringhaver Student Union Theater. Flagler College, 50 Seville Street.

7:00 -- 8:00 Award-winning authors John and Mary Lou Missall. Public invited.
"St. Augustine is Healthy and Delightful: Capt. John Rogers Vinton in the Second Seminole War."



SUNDAY, AUGUST 13

Marc Lance National Guard Armory, 190 San Marco Avenue.

- 09:00 -- 10:00 Buffet breakfast.
- 10:00 -- 11:20 Reports from breakout chairmen. Commentary, discussion.
- * 11:30 -- 11:45 Background to Osceola's death mask and its copy. St. Augustine Historical Society.
- 11:45 -- 12:30 Presentation of special award honoring Frank Laumer. Retrospective of efforts by Mr. Laumer and others to promote interest in Florida's Seminole Wars.
- 12:30 -- 1:00 Conference chairman's concluding remarks and future convocations:
(Steven Rinck with representatives from Fort King, Loxahatchee and Okeechobee.)

Follow us on WWW.Facebook.com/Seminolewar.

To register (\$60), follow prompts on the Foundation's website, www.seminolewars.org, or directly on line at:

<http://events.eventzilla.net/e/convocation-of-seminole-war-historians-2138894235>



Pictures by John McGinty, FL VVA VP at the Vietnam Veterans Reunion and
Traveling Vietnam Wall Memorial in Melbourne, FL

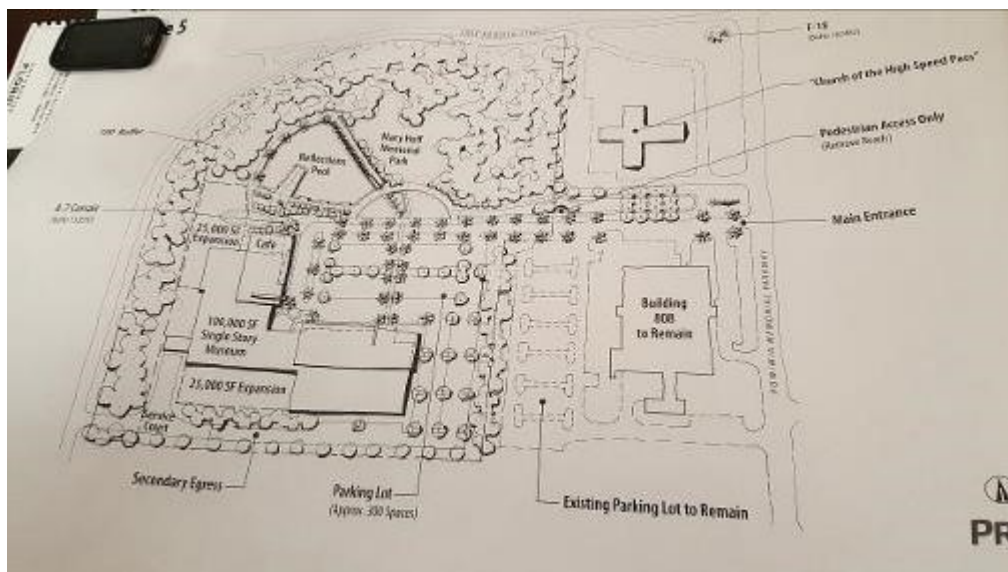


Founded on June 13, 2016

Mission

The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial's mission is to preserve the memorial, honor the POW/MIA pilots and service members that were lost over the Vietnam and Desert Storm conflicts, and distinguish the history of NAS Cecil Field as a base, and the major support and combat roles it provided throughout the years.

Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. A board has been established that consists of the project initiator and former members of the "Friends Working to Free Scott Speicher Organization". CAPT Scott Speicher is one of the 16 POW/MIA pilots, who not only was stationed at NAS Cecil, married at the Cecil Field Chapel, but also grew up locally in Jacksonville. Various committees will be set up that will consist of executives from a variety of sectors: military, civilian service groups, retired Navy pilots, and other veteran and retired military groups and individuals. These members will serve as advisory councils on numerous aspects of the project, as well as advocates to raise awareness and provide support of the project.



An important message from John Mountcastle:

Dear folks,

Tadzia Alexander (904) 669-4650 or tadzia-aa@gmail.com called me.

The Pilot Club's storage facility was flooded by Hurricane Matthew and the names of deceased Veterans, living Veterans, and those serving on Active Duty (all of whom had requested their names be placed on service flags) were damaged beyond recovery.

The Pilot Club seeks only the name of the Service member and their Service. Those interested in having their name on a flag representing their service should contact Tadzia directly (see first paragraph for contact info).

The Pilot Club will also have notices in the St. Augustine Record.

I believe this information should be volunteered by each Service member (Florida Statutes protect the names and addresses of those currently serving, if the Service member so desires).

Feel free to forward this to other St. Johns County Veterans.

John A. Mountcastle

Honor Flight Veterans application:



Stars and Stripes Honor Flight, Inc. was created as a way to honor veterans for their service and sacrifice. It would be our greatest privilege to honor you on an upcoming Stars and Stripes Honor Flight. With gratitude, The Stars and Stripes Honor Flight Board of Directors and volunteers

This application puts you on a waiting list to fly out of MILWAUKEE, WI. For Information for Honor Flight hubs in other areas visit www.honorflight.org.

Please Note: At this time, we are only accepting applications from WWII, Korean, and Vietnam veterans as well as terminally ill veterans of any conflict.

The service dates for each conflict are as follows:

WWII : December 7, 1941 – December 31, 1946

Korean War: June 27, 1950 – January 31, 1955

Vietnam War: February 28, 1961 – May 7, 1974

Here's how you apply for a Stars and Stripes Honor Flight.

Mail your application to : Stars and Stripes Honor Flight, Inc.

ATTN:Veteran Application

P.O. Box 526

Port Washington WI 53074-0526

Or fax application: 262 546-5656

You will be contacted by Stars and Stripes Honor Flight approximately 6 weeks before the flight to which you are assigned.

Please Note: A guardian application must also be completed if the veteran desires to travel with a specified individual of their choice (please see the guardian application page for guardian requirements). If you have someone you want to accompany you, please have them fill out the guardian application, or online guardian application, and send it in with your own.

MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT – FLORIDA

CALL TO HONOR #12

SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 2017

11:00AM

MISSION STATEMENT



The purpose of the Missing in America Project (MIAP) is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations, and to provide honor, respect and dignity to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes.

“IT’S THE RIGHT THING TO DO”

On Saturday, June 17, 2017, at 11:00am, MIAP – Florida, in cooperation with the Boynton Memorial Chapel and Crematory, Boynton Beach, FL, will be interring the cremains of 13 veterans and 8 spouses of veterans, with full military honors, at the South Florida National Cemetery located at 6501 Florida State Road 7, Lake Worth, FL 33449.

The veterans being interred served in the US Army and US Navy during World Wars I and II. The spouses sacrificed in the absence of their husbands during World Wars I and II, and Korea. The longest that any of these being interred has been unclaimed is since 1956.

An escort led by the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office (PBCSO) will leave from the Southeast parking area (the Lantana Road side) of the Target Store at 5900 Florida State Road 7 (Rt. 441), Wellington, FL, on the Northeast corner of State Road 7 and Lantana Road. Any and all motorcycle organizations, riders, and vehicles are welcome to participate. Meeting time is 9:30AM for a safety briefing with the PBCSO, and the escort will depart (KSU) to the cemetery at 10:15AM.

You are cordially invited to attend this service. This service is open to all residents of our area communities.

**Kathy Church, MIAP – FL State Coordinator, (904) 219-3035,
miapjax@yahoo.com, www.miap.us**

A Hero Remembered

Giles Gilbert McCoy Survived sharks after sinking of cruiser Indianapolis in WWII

A few years ago I had the honor of meeting Dr. Giles McCoy, a WW II veteran who lived in nearby Palm Coast. I had just finished producing and directing my World War II documentary and with the help of Flagler College President Dr. William Proctor was going to premier the documentary in the Flagler College Auditorium.



My friend Dan Hughes, a former Marine living in Palm Coast said to me he had the perfect WW II veteran to be the Keynote speaker, Dr. Giles McCoy, himself a Marine. Little did I know then what Dr. McCoy's military background was.



Here is a short bio from the St. Louis Post Dispatch
BY MICHAEL D. SORKIN • msorkin@post-dispatch.com May 1, 2009



Gil McCoy grew up in St. Louis and joined the Marines at 17 to fight in World War II. He was aboard the cruiser Indianapolis when it was torpedoed and sank after delivering atomic bomb parts that helped end the war in Japan.

He survived five days in the water as sharks attacked men around him, in what has been described as the worst single-incident sea disaster in U.S. naval history.

Giles Gilbert McCoy died Thursday (April 30, 2009) at his retirement home in Palm Coast, Fla., after battling prostate cancer. He was 83.

After his ship sank, Mr. McCoy clung to part of a life raft, promising to dedicate himself to helping others if he survived, family members recalled Thursday.

He returned home, graduated from the University of Missouri at Columbia and the Logan College of Chiropractic in St. Louis. He married his St. Louis sweetheart, Betty Goldbeck, and took off in a borrowed truck for Boonville, Mo., to start his practice.

Along the way, another driver tossed a burning cigarette into the rear of their truck, setting their belongings on fire. Mr. McCoy fought the blaze with the only tools he had - his hands. He began his practice with his hands covered in bandages.

In Boonville, Mr. McCoy coached a youngsters' baseball team and paid the way for two of his players to attend Mizzou. "They were like my brothers," said his daughter, Marsha Hudson of San Antonio.

The story of the Indianapolis is recounted in books and in Ken Burns' documentary, "The War."

Mr. McCoy had graduated from Ritenour High School here. He was underage when his mother reluctantly gave him permission to enlist in 1944.



The Marines made him a sniper on a small Pacific island. He was assigned to kill a teenage boy who had been shooting Marines.

When Mr. McCoy wouldn't do it, the Marines transferred him to duty aboard the Indianapolis, his family said.

The heavy cruiser had dropped off uranium and other parts of the atomic bomb at the island of Titian, where the Enola Gay took off for its run to Hiroshima. Two days later, the ship and Mr. McCoy were halfway between Guam and the Philippines when a Japanese submarine attacked.

Mr. McCoy was guarding the brig and recalled later how he helped release some prisoners when the word was passed to get above deck and seal off the compartment.

"I still remember hearing guys hollering in there that they couldn't get out," he told an interviewer.

Within 12 minutes, the ship was gone and 300 crewmen were dead. The rest were left bobbing in the waves, hundreds of miles from land, some with life jackets and others, including Mr. McCoy, clinging to life rafts.

Of 1,196 men on board, only 316 (or, by some accounts, 317) survived the next five days at sea.

The ship's SOS messages were disregarded as likely hoaxes, and no rescue was launched.

As recounted in the book "In Harm's Way," the drifting seamen began hallucinating with visions of dancing girls, hotels and ships. Most were killed by sharks or died of exhaustion.

"It was easier to die than to stay alive," Mr. McCoy recalled.

Their skipper became the only U.S. Navy captain ever court-martialed for losing a ship in wartime. Mr. McCoy was among those who worked successfully to get him exonerated in 2001.

Mr. McCoy helped raised money to build the USS Indianapolis Survivors Memorial in Indianapolis. His family plans to take his ashes to the memorial.

A memorial service was held in Palm Coast, Fla.

In addition to his wife, of Palm Coast, and his daughter, among the survivors are two sons, Dennis McCoy of Dallas and Craig McCoy of Midlothian, Texas; a sister, Elsie Woolverton of Collinsville; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial and Center

Overview and Phasing Plan



MISSION STATEMENT:

Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial's mission is to preserve the memorial, honor the POW/MIA pilots and service members that were lost over the Vietnam and Desert Storm conflicts, and distinguish the history of NAS Cecil Field as a base, and the major support and combat roles it provided throughout the years.

BACKGROUND:

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 1974 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 was also very instrumental in the creation of the POW/MIA Flag, making her the "Betsy Ross" of 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. The existing memorial is owned by the City of Jacksonville (herein the "City"). An existing adjacent historic chapel is also owned by the City as well as an existing theatre (Building 333) across the street.

POW/MIA MEMORIAL AND POW/MIA MEMORIAL CENTER:

The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc. organization is proposing to acquire acreage for this area in a long-term land lease with the City. The vision is to preserve and enhance the existing memorial areas; renovate the Chapel back to use for ceremonies, weddings, and memorial services; initiate a memorial center in the existing theatre (Building 333) with related artifacts and memorabilia; fundraise for design and construction of a new memorial center; and construct a proposed 100,000 SF POW/MIA Memorial Center (reference *Exhibit A* for conceptual phasing plan). The organization is also proposing to relocate, restore, and repaint the F/A-18 Hornet (BuNo162462) located at Cecil Tower, A-7 Corsair (BuNo152650) located at Don Garlits Drag Racing Museum (same aircraft on display at front gate), along with other various aircraft stationed at Cecil for display at the Center. The Center will serve as a memorial for POW/MIAs and veterans with a memorial wall or high relief panels, provide educational programs (including American civics and STEM), and educate the public about POW/MIAs and the history of NAS Cecil Field.

This proposed Center will also provide the ability for veterans to connect with other fellow veterans, organizations and associations making this a premier military venue for Northeast Florida.

The Veteran Council's Vietnam documentary is rapidly approaching 200,000 views on YouTube. It currently has 194,921 views. This documentary features 5 local veterans from St. Augustine. One is a Navy Corpsman, an Apache Helicopter pilot, two Marine Infantry and a Green Beret.



“Serve and Protect”

"NE Florida Vietnam veterans contributed their tender, often hurt feelings to shape this project. The Vietnam veterans were not like the WWII or Korean War veterans we had worked with on our previous documentaries. The Vietnam veterans were more actively involved in watching, suggesting and directing us to tell their true stories. What emerged shows the veterans to be just like you and me. They fought in an unpopular war and yet returned home to lead normal and successful lives. They could be and are your neighbors, friends and relatives. This documentary was produced by Bill Dudley & Michael Rothfeld, directed by Josh Wallace and filmed and edited by the students in the Flagler College Communications Department."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_5gJVXK0gl&list=UU5TLKyliWlgXdbKz2vRsXGg

SUBARU OF JACKSONVILLE SUPPORTS YOU

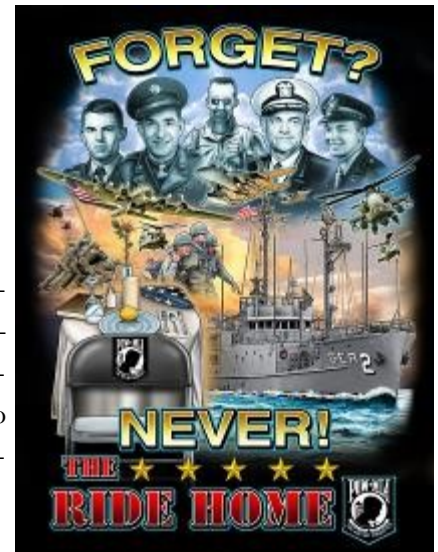


SUBARU

JACKSONVILLE | SOJAX.COM

SUBARU OF JACKSONVILLE
10800 ATLANTIC BLVD, JACKSONVILLE, FL 32225
PHONE: (888) 781-0319 (904)641-6455 - SUBARUOFJACKSONVILLE.COM

HONOR –RELEASE –RETURN, Inc.
3818 Litchfield Loop Lake Wales, Florida 33859
www.honorreleasereturn.com



Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc. P.O. Box 440625 Jacksonville, Fl 32222

To whom it may concern, My name is Jim ‘moe’ Moyer and I am currently the National Co-Chairman of HONOR-RELEASE-RETURN, Inc. Our goal; act as a catalyst for the POW/MIA community through communication, organization and coordination of efforts to foster common success of all and nurture a universal will to account for all the missing. I have been a Prisoner of War/Missing in Action advocate full time since the 1990’s.

I am writing today to express my support of the project – Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial – under the leadership of Mr. Mike Cassata and Mr. Sam Houston. Why Cecil Field? Aviators have played a significant role in our military mission since before the beginning of World War II. This Naval base played a vital role in the training of Navy & Marine aviators from the late 1930’s until mid-1990’s when the federal government decommissioned the base and turn much of the property over to the City of Jacksonville. To note just a few of those aviators – McCain, Speicher and Hoff. If those three names are NOT familiar to you – then that alone would be reason enough to create this National POW/MIA Memorial on this site to Educate the public! (McCain – POW – October 1967 – March 1973; Hoff – date of incident, January 1970 – Still Unaccounted for: Speicher – date of incident, January 1991 – remains recovered August 2009). These are just three (3) aviators with direct ties to this special military installation and to the POW/MIA issue and there are many more.

Why This Issue – POW/MIA? For over two (2) centuries Americans have united to defend this Republic when threaten and for over one hundred years we have chosen to Honor those who died while defending our Liberties (Memorial Day) and we have chosen to Honor all who served in defense (Veterans Day). But, what have we done for those who have served – HONORABLY – but have yet to come home? The number is by no means small. The Department of Defense estimates more than 80,000 plus American Military since the beginning of World War II are unaccounted for. Their story deserves to be told, every day, until they all come home. The proposed venue, National POW/MIA Memorial, is the right way to do that. This venue will be proof to the families of those that are still unaccounted for, as well as the soldiers themselves that the American people mean what they say – ‘You are NOT Forgotten!’

Support – I will work with Mr. Cassata and Mr. Houston, their Directors and Staff to ensure that Veterans Service Organizations at the local, State and National level are informed and involved, physically and financially. I will work with the National Family Organizations to ensure that the story of their soldier is told with the utmost accuracy and work with the proposed POW/MIA Memorial Center to obtain significant artifacts for display as well as story-telling. Will work to garner their financial support as well I will work with the Former Prisoner of War organizations to ensure their involvement at the production level and the financial. I look forward to seeing the vision of Mr. Cassata and Mr. Houston coming to fruition in the near future. Until they all come home.....

Moe, Jim ‘moe’ Moyer National Co-Chairman HONOR-RELEASE-RETURN, Inc

Good Day Advocates, Patriots!

I would like to introduce to you the driving force behind a fairly new POW/MIA initiative which will base itself on the grounds of the former Naval Air Station, Cecil Field. Cecil Field, for those who do not know, is located in Jacksonville Florida just west of the I-295 loop. The base has Naval aviator history dating back before we entered World War II and due to political budgetary concerns was decommissioned in late 1990's.



At the Helm of this huge project;

Captain Sam Houston, US Navy, (Retired), Chairman of the Board of Directors

Mr. Michael Cassata, BAS, MBA, Son/Grandson of two retired Naval Gentlemen (50 years plus between the two careers), Executive Director

Check out the Board Members attachment above for their individual bios.

Their intent, as I understand it, is to initially create a POW/MIA Memorial referencing the 16 Aviators who have called this Base, Home. (i.e. Lt. Cdr. Mike Hoff, Lt. Cdr. John McCain and Lt. Cdr. Scott Speicher) who have served under the DoD classification Prisoner of War and Missing in Action. The Facilities will include a Museum and an educational center. Their long term goal is to acknowledge POWs from all wars and educate the public on those that are still MIAs. A long term goal of bearing the title of “National POW/MIA Memorial” has been heard in conversation.

I hope you will check out their Facebook site - <https://www.facebook.com/Cecil-Field-POW-MIA-Memorial-Inc-1084929864949232/> - then consider dropping them a note and ‘welcome’ them to the POW/MIA community.

Feel free to distribute this information to all of your friends, Family, Veterans and Veteran Organizations.

Moe



Navy Wives Clubs of America

A National Organization for spouses of Enlisted Navy, Marine Corps & Coast Guard Personnel

April 20, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

The members of Navy Wives Clubs of America, Daughters in Dixie #300 have reviewed and are in support of the proposal from Mike Cassata regarding the project for Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc. It is very worthwhile and its mission to care for the memorial, honor the men that were Prisoners of War and Missing In Action during the Vietnam and Desert Storm conflicts, and to distinguish the history of NAS Cecil Field as a base. Preserving the major support and combat roles that NAS Cecil Field provided throughout the years is an exciting idea that will be supported by many veterans and military veteran organizations as well as the community. Florida is home to over 1.5 million retired veterans and their families and it would be an easy drive from anywhere in the state to visit the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial and Museum and the future events that will be held there.

Navy Wives Clubs of America, Inc is a National Organization and our aims and goals are Educational and Charitable. NWCA has been an important part of military bases throughout the United States and overseas since 1936. The first NAS Cecil Field wives club #121 was chartered on base from 1953-1963 when many military families were arriving for training to the Master Jet Base. After many years of being together the club disbanded, due to member's husbands receiving orders to new duty stations. Just a few years later another group of dedicated military wives rechartered the same club again aboard base from 1968-1981 and they continued to be an integral part of the base providing support to the military families and community throughout the Vietnam War.

Our current club, Daughters in Dixie #300 was formed from local NWCA members from NAS Jacksonville and NS Mayport that were transferring and retiring to the Westside. The club chartered on March 18, 1985 our organization was active again at NAS Cecil Field and remained vital to supporting the families during Operation Desert Storm and up until the base decommissioned. We held many chili dog, lumpia and bake sales as well as operating the base Thrift Shop. Those sales enabled us to contribute to many local and military charities throughout the years. Our club has remained active in the Jacksonville area attending veteran's events and donating to the community and military families in need.

The Cecil Field Chapel was the location for many of our club installations, weddings, funerals and retirements. To see it refurbished and used again would be delightful. Many of our current member's husbands were stationed at Cecil and we are dedicated to this project that is near and dear to our hearts! We are volunteering to assist with the fundraising for this Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial project creating a cookbook, making quilts to sell and holding Spirit Nights at local restaurants and any other events we can support and participate in.

The purpose of this letter is to ask you to help support this great project. Should the idea of honoring our POW/MIAs and distinguish the history of Cecil Field touch your heart the way it did ours, please do whatever you can to further develop this needed project. Our club is proud to say we are formerly from NAS Cecil Field and we are helping to bring its history back to the Jacksonville area in an awesome way!

Respectfully,

Misty Sanders, President DID#300

"They also serve, who stay and wait."



Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. Minutes of April 27, 2017

Officers present: Chairman Bill Dudley; Vice Chairman Ray Quinn, Secretary Michael Rothfeld, Absent J Mountcastle, Treas.

Chairman Dudley called the meeting to order at 1902 hours

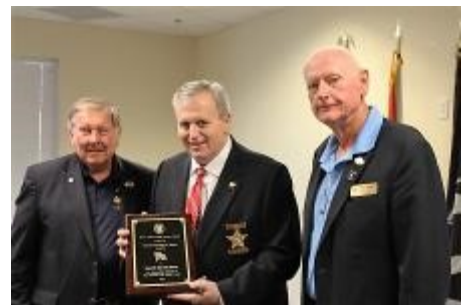
Chairman Dudley led the Pledge to the Flag
Vice Chairman Quinn gave the Invocation

Last month's Minutes were approved as presented at the meeting.
The Treasurer's Report was approved as presented at the meeting

Introduction of Guests: none

SGM Ray Quinn presented the COL Ed Taylor Award to St Johns County Sheriff David Shoar.

This is the highest honor the Council can bestow to an individual or group that goes Above and Beyond in the Support of our County's Veterans, more on the Council's



Speaker: Dave Seamans, President, Florida Fallen Heroes Foundation

The Timothy J. Seamans Memorial Foundation will dedicate a fallen hero's monument at each home town high school for all of the fallen heroes of the Iraq / Afghanistan conflict. We will commemorate in red brick the name of each fallen alumni from past wars and conflicts. We strive to make certain that every fallen hero is not forgotten.

Committee Reports:

Mac spoke about the Veterans Choice program that will continue until its funds run out and about veterans needing a limited Power of Attorney on file so records can be more easily accessed.

Michael spoke about how the Council uses Social Media to get its message out and read a letter from History students at Interlachen High School thanking the Council for its local veteran's documentary series.



Ray spoke about the Vietnam Commemoration Ceremony and wreath laying held at St Augustine National Cemetery.



Kathy: MIAP is looking for volunteers, they have interred 3387 veterans since 2007. The next interment will be in south Florida on June 17, 22 will be interred. Five Vietnam veterans were recently interred in GA.

Jim Crutchfield, Mentor Program Coordinator

There are currently 10 veterans in the VTC program, they are working well with their mentors. Mentors are needed, please contact Jim.



Eric West, Veteran organization can advertise in Military Deals at half off, and at no charge for website ads.

Steve Spickelmier, Memorial Day Ceremony at Jacksonville

National will be at **10:00 am on Saturday, May 27.** Volunteers are needed to place over 12,000 flags in the ground. This will start at 2:30 pm on Thursday May 25.



Chairman Dudley: Memorial Day Service at St Augustine National Cemetery will be on Monday May 29. B. Gen Brian Simpler will be the speaker.

Plans are underway for the Third Annual Veterans Day Parade.

Council members attended a Dining With Dignity Dinner by Home Alone St. Johns which provided free nightly dinners. The Air Force JROTC from Bartram Trail worked as servers and Honor Guard.

For the Good of the Order: Long time Council member & WW II Veteran Herb Neumann is in the hospital. Prayers needed.

The next meeting of the Veterans Council will be on Thursday, May 25, 7 pm in the Health & Human Services Building.

Our speaker will be RADM Patty Wolfe, USN ret, of the NE FL Woman Veterans Org.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Stars and Stripes Honor Flight will begin taking Vietnam veterans

Meg Jones , Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

(Editors note: please contact Honor Flight, links below, to see if they are taking FL Vietnam veterans at this time)



As the ranks of World War II and Korean War veterans dwindle, Stars and Stripes Honor Flight will begin taking Vietnam veterans to Washington, D.C.

The Honor Flight hub in southeastern Wisconsin announced Tuesday it will transition to Vietnam veterans for three flights this fall though World War II and Korean War veterans who haven't traveled on the free one-day trip yet will continue to get priority.

"We are ready to welcome our Vietnam veterans for their day of honor," Stars and Stripes Honor Flight President Paula Nelson said at the War Memorial Tuesday morning.

Applications by Vietnam veterans will open Monday either online or by mail with veterans chosen on a first-come, first-served basis. Terminally ill vets will go to the head of the line, Nelson said. As with all flights, every veteran will be assigned a guardian to help them throughout the day. Guardians pay \$500 for the trip. Veterans who want to travel with a specific guardian must apply together.

Vietnam veterans will begin traveling on the Port Washington-based Stars and Stripes Honor Flight leaving from Milwaukee's Mitchell International Airport this fall: Sept. 16, Oct. 14 and Nov. 4.

Vietnam veterans Mike Orban and Joe Campbell spoke at Tuesday's news conference about the difficulty military members experienced when they returned from Vietnam.

"That blasted Vietnam War has haunted us for so long because we were not welcomed home," said Campbell.

Added Orban: "I think this is going to be one of those healing events for Vietnam veterans ... to complete the circle of friends who didn't come home."

Nelson said Vietnam veterans who have previously traveled as honor flight guardians are welcome to apply to travel for free now that Vietnam veterans are being accepted on future flights.

Stars and Stripes Honor Flight has taken more than 4,900 veterans from southeastern Wisconsin to Washington, D.C., to visit monuments and connect with other veterans since 2008.

For more information: starsandstripeshonorflight.org

Monument to Honor US Helicopter Crews From Vietnam War

ARLINGTON, Va. (AP) — A new monument at Arlington National Cemetery, near the U.S. capital, will honor American helicopter crews who flew during the Vietnam War.

The Military Times reports (<http://bit.ly/2qwoHFM>) Congress has approved the monument, which will be near the Tomb of the Unknowns.

Spearheading the memorial campaign is retired Air Force Lt. Col. Bob Hesselbein, who flew AH-1 Cobra gunships in Vietnam. Hesselbein says Arlington has the greatest concentration of helicopter-crew casualties from the war.

Democratic Sen. Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin says the monument will create a "teachable moment" for people to understand the story of pilots and crew members. The U.S. relied heavily on helicopters to transport troops and provide support to ground forces near enemy soldiers in Vietnam.

The nonprofit Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association is paying for the monument.



NEW PROGRAM - America's GREATEST Heroes Photographic Initiative.

Every day America loses numerous remarkable men and women, many of them among the last remaining veterans from World War II. However, while these heroes fall victim to time, their remarkable stories and lessons do not have to disappear into history with them.



The Greatest GENERATIONS Foundation has launched a new program titled “America's Greatest Heroes Photographic Initiative” to photo-document 10,000 American Veterans and Citizens over the next three years in their homes, retirement communities and assisted living facilities across our great nation. These portraits will reflect the person they are today at the end of their lives and ideally, will include the citizen holding a photo of themselves as they were in their youth.

As beneficiaries of their legacy, we must ensure that the achievements and sacrifices of those who served are never forgotten, which is why it’s important to remember them. Our goal is to make 100% certain their sacrifice in preserving the liberties we enjoy today is never forgotten or taken for granted and that their legacies are recorded and retold in perpetuity to future generations.

General Notes:

This project is free of charge to the veterans. TGGF will cover all costs to photo-document the veterans. All participants will receive a FREE framed portrait and commemorative album once completed.

If you know a Great American who served in World War II, Korean or Vietnam veteran that would like to partake in this photographic initiative, please write to the Foundation today and schedule your appointment to help be a part of this amazing Initiative. "Every day is Memorial Day."

Email: info@tggf.org Remember Those Who Served

The Greatest GENERATIONS Foundation

Web: www.TGGF.org | Email: info@TGGF.org

New veterans center to open Sept. 19 at former Navy base in Brunswick

By Dylan Martin, Special to the BDN

BRUNSWICK, Maine — After the loss of the former naval air station, area veterans will once again have a central place to meet and support each other.



The Mid-Coast Veterans Resource Center will have its grand opening Sept. 19 with Gov. Paul LePage and other guests at 62 Pegasus St.

The Brunswick Landing center will be the new home of the Mid-Coast Veterans Council, a nonprofit organization that includes representatives from veteran service organizations, with a focus on facilitating connections for current and former service members with local, state and national assistance programs.

The office will be open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays.

“Veterans will often not ask for help, but rather try to make do with what they have,” council President Roger Dumont said. “The center will be creating a welcoming and safe environment that is staffed by volunteers that are also members of local veteran service organizations as well as families and friends of veterans.

“Our goal is to ensure that all veterans in the mid coast region and their families receive all entitlements due, are helped with financial hardships and are given every opportunity for self-improvement through higher education,” he continued.

Dumont said the center will fill a gap for more than 10,000 mid coast veterans who may not have a place to go for consultations. The center will also soon have a website, so that veterans and families may learn about its location and offered services online.

Because of the council’s sprawling network of veteran service organizations, he said, some groups are already poised to use the 2,000-square-foot office space, which will be in a former U.S. Navy recreation center.

They include the Retired Activities Office, whose director has been working out of his home since the former naval air station closed in 2011, and Operation Resilient Hope, a faith-based organization for veterans and first responders.

“Our mission is to provide a home for all veteran service organizations,” Dumont said. “None of them have homes where they can have monthly meetings. We’re offering a place for them to have meetings, to have a place to go.”

Priority Real Estate Group owns the Pegasus Street property. Its president, Jim Howard, decided to provide a free five-year lease to the council as part of the company’s community outreach program.

The Topsham-based developer also paid for \$2,000 in renovations on the center’s office space.

“They serve probably the highest number of veterans in Maine,” said Kerri Prescott, Priority Real Estate Group spokeswoman. “So we’re honored we can give back to them in a big way and look forward to what they can do there.”

The center will have to pay for utilities and some other expenses, which is why Dumont said the council will continue to hold fundraising events, like the upcoming second annual Mid-Coast Veterans Golf Tournament on Sept. 27.

“Our theme right now is ‘one veteran at a time,’” he said. “We’re not looking at bureaucracy, we’re looking at that veteran. ... We’re not going to be able to fix that veteran, but we’ll be able to direct them to the services they need.”

Jim Mattis has ordered the Pentagon to cut wait times for combat valor awards



By: Andrew deGrandpre, April 29, 2017

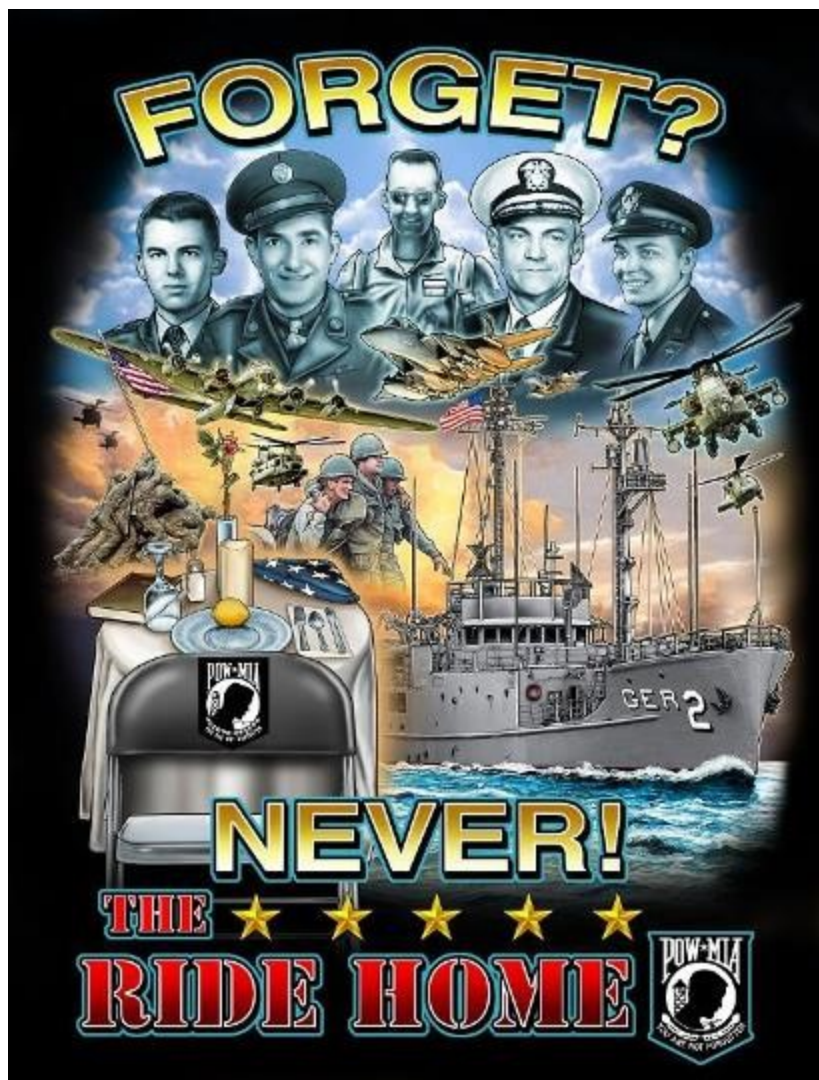
WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, in one of his first directives while heading the Pentagon, subtly ordered military leaders to accelerate internal procedures for initiating, vetting and approving combat valor awards, Military Times has learned, a significant policy shift meant to ensure America's war heroes are recognized with minimal delay within the armed forces, there are few subjects treated with greater pride and sensitivity than personal awards and decorations. Mattis's change, implemented military-wide in recent weeks, addresses a longstanding frustration shared by rank-and-file personnel and commanders alike who in many cases have waited years to see battlefield feats acknowledged.

According to the Defense POW / MIA Accounting Agency, the following still remain unaccounted for from past wars/conflicts:

WWII - 73,060	Korean War - 7,751	Vietnam War - 1,611
Cold War - 126	Iraq & Other Conflicts - 6	Total MIA - 82,554

Note - Out of the 82,554 missing, 75% of the losses are located in the Asia-Pacific, and over 41,000 of the missing are presumed lost at sea (i.e. ship losses, known aircraft water losses, etc.).

You Are Not Forgotten.



Florida National Guard

1951 - May 15 - Florida's Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 227th Antiaircraft Artillery Group of Jacksonville was mobilized and ordered into active federal service for the Korean War. If you have any photos of Florida's Soldiers during the Korean War that you would be willing to share with the Florida National Guard archives, please contact us at 904-823-0696. Thanks in advance.



National POW/MIA Recognition Day The RIDE HOME 2017



Did you know that there are only two (2) days on our Julian Calendar that we set aside to recognize all Americans, civilian and military, who have been held against their will by enemies of the United States?

The first date is 9 April, Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. Why 9 April you ask, because that is the day the largest number of American Military were taken captive by an enemy during combat operations. After a three-month heroic battle in the Philippines, Major General King, Jr. surrendered all troops under his command to Colonel Mootoo Nakayama of the 14th Imperial Japanese Army. The total number varies by reporting source but it is safe to say the total exceeded sixty thousand (60,000) combat troops, at least, were taken as Prisoners of War. The second date, The Third Friday of September, came about more as a compromise than any historical significance to the date. It was Commander in Chief Jimmy Carter who initially requested a Joint Resolution from Congress annually to which he provided a Presidential Proclamation. The Recognition Day was held in April, to the liking of the American Ex-POW organization, or in July from 1978 through 1985. The debating parties, American Ex-POW and the Vietnam POW/MIA Families reached a compromise and starting in 1986 the day has been the Third Friday of September in which we recognize all former Prisoners of War (POW) as well as those who are still classified as Missing in Action (MIA).

For well over a decade a small group of POW/MIA advocates from across the country have been extending an invitation to Former Prisoners of War, civilian & military, and to the Families of those who are still classified as Missing in Action with the goal of fulfilling the Commander in Chief's proclamation, which notes:

"I call upon the people of the United States to join me in honoring and remembering all former American prisoners of war and those missing in action who valiantly served our great country. I also call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities."

In their effort to meet the President's request this group, appropriately named "*The RIDE*

HOME” will be working in conjunction with; The National Prisoner of War Museum, located on the grounds of Andersonville Historical Site, Andersonville Georgia, Central Georgia Technical College, Warner Robins Campus, corporations, private organizations as well as individual patriots from the communities of Warner Robins, Perry, Georgia, and Andersonville Georgia.

The Itinerary for this national event begins on Thursday, 14 September 2017, with honored guest checking in early afternoon followed by a Recognition Day Service, open to the public, at the Museum of Aviation located at Warner Robins Air Force Base. Friday morning, 15 September, following a Law Enforcement escorted ride, service at the National Prisoner of War Museum, open to the public, also. Friday evening the Hero’s Banquet on the Central Georgia Technical College campus. (Dinner requires pre-paid reservation for everyone except the Honored guest.) KEEPING the PROMISE and Candlelight Services follow the dinner and are open to the public. Saturday, 16 September, Recognition Service followed by the FLY-BOY – GROUND-POUNDER Lunch, open to the public, followed by open socials at participating hotels/motels in the Perry/Warner Robins market.

For all the former Prisoner of War Honoree’s, the Next of Kin of our Missing in Action Honorees who wish to attend the RIDE HOME 2017, below we have included an invitation Letter as well as the registration form for this year’s event. Due to the fact this is a National event all registration applications will be vetted prior to acceptance. If you mail your application to the RIDE HOME Corporate address noted at the top of the form, we will start the process and you’ll be contacted acknowledging your participation at this year’s event. Due to popularity of the event all applications will be addressed on a first come first served basis. If you wish to have some of your family or friends join you at the event the RIDE HOME Team will be happy to help you obtain/arrange room accommodations as well as reservations for the two meals for your guest/friends.

We look forward to saying ‘Thank YOU!’ face to face, for not just your service to this great Republic, but for the sacrifices you have made and continue to make on our behalf.

For Questions or Concerns feel free to contact; moe – 407 448 1181 or moehog@verizon.net

Until they all come home.....

The RIDE HOME, Inc.

3818 Litchfield Loop
Lake Wales, FL 33859

theridehome.com

On National POW/MIA Recognition Day we will be hosting **The RIDE HOME 2017**. This weekend event, **14-16 September 2017**, takes place in and around the cities of Warner Robins and Andersonville, Georgia, home of the *National Prisoner of War Museum*. **The RIDE HOME 2017** complies with the Presidential Proclamation by paying tribute to Former American Prisoners of War who have returned home and the families of those Americans still Missing in Action.

Honorees for the 2017 event will include former *Prisoners of War* and families of our *Missing in Action* from World War II, Korea, Cold War, Vietnam, USS Pueblo, Iraq and Afghanistan. As part of the tribute package to these true American Heroes, **The RIDE HOME** with the help and generosity of American Patriots, like you, will provide a room (3 nights), Heroes Dinner, Ground-Pounder & Fly-Boy Lunch, entertainment, Awards Ceremony as well as transportation to and from the events for the Honored Guest. This complete Tribute package is valued at \$375.00. For all they endured as Prisoners of War and the emotional torture the Missing in Action families struggle with every day, we hope you agree this is worthy of your participation. Remember, a full Tribute Package or a portion of one, either choice is greatly appreciated and will help to reach the goal of 175 Honored Guest for the 2017 event.

The RIDE HOME is open to the public and we encourage everyone to attend so that they may meet and spend time with the POW or MIA family member you help sponsor.

Please complete the form below and mail it with your contribution to **The RIDE HOME**. Contributions of \$375 or more will receive **The Ride Home 2017** t-shirt, patch, sponsor bar, and pin. If you would prefer to use your Debit or Credit Card, you can go to our website, www.theridehome.com, click on *DONATE* and follow the instructions.

On behalf of **The RIDE HOME, Inc.** Board of Directors,

Thank You!

Respectfully,

Jim 'moe' Moyer

Chairman

I wish to help sponsor a former POW and/or a MIA Family member to **The RIDE HOME 2017**

_____ Tribute Package \$375. _____ Other

Includes a t-shirt for donations of \$375.00 or more: _____ size

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City _____

State & Zipcode _____

Phone/email: _____

Mail check to: **The RIDE HOME, Inc.** 3818 Litchfield Loop, Lake Wales, FL 33859

THE RIDE HOME, INC. IS A NON PROFIT CORPORATION – REGISTRATION NUMBER: CH38670
A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE, 800 435 7352, WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

The RIDE HOME, Inc. is an IRS 501 c 3, public charity. ID# 31954. Contributions are deductible.

Good Day Patriots and Veterans!



MOE

Special 'Thanks' to Crissy Churwell (our newest Team Member) for locking down our 'Line-Up' spots for the police escorted rides for the 2017 event. As you know, we have moved our base of operations over to Warner Robins/Perry Georgia this year. Crissy's efforts with the Warner Robins Police and Houston County Sherriff has resulted in us using the Georgia State Fair Grounds, in Perry, for our early Friday morning ride to Andersonville for opening services. Friday afternoon and Saturday morning's escorted rides will depart from the HARBOR FREIGHT parking lot, in Warner Robins.

We'll be posting specific times and addresses after we get passed Memorial Day.

On 27 February, John Butts, posted on this Facebook site, the list of hotels/motels that are currently working with The RIDE HOME 2017.

He included the prices they quoted us as well as the local contact for each unit. Don't forget to book your room early! The primary location for services this year will be the Central Georgia Technical College, 80 Cohen Walker Drive, Warner Robins, Georgia 31008.

The majority of the hotel/motels are with-in a few miles of line-up and destination site.



Gratitude America 5K RACE & FUN RUN

Proceeds to benefit Military Support Retreats

Saturday, June 17

At Coastal Policy Center 9601 Oceanshore Blvd, Marineland, FL

5K Race /Exploration Walk 8:30AM

Half Mile Fun Run (10 and Under) 9:30AM



Medals to the top 250 finishers

REGISTRATION

	5K (Adult)	5K (Under 18)	Fun Run
Until Midnight June 9, 2017	\$25	\$15	\$10
Until 9am June 16, 2017	\$30	\$20	\$10
Race Day	\$35	\$20	\$10

Race Day Registration begins at 7AM and closes sharply at 8:20AM

REGISTER AT

gratitudeamerica5k.itsyourrace.com

SCAN CODE BELOW TO REGISTER NOW!



ABOUT THIS EVENT

This all-terrain trail course will provide a scenic tour of Marineland's River-to-Sea preserve, the intracoastal, the ocean, and the town's unique facilities. Food, refreshments, and entertainment will be provided at awards ceremony. Age group awards will be presented.

2017 will showcase a NEW, faster "figure eight course" with more shaded hammock trails and fewer turns! In addition, a half mile Fun Run for younger runners has also been added. **Your race entry also gains you entry to Marineland's Dolphin Adventure!** Plan to visit the park and make it a fitness and family adventure for **Fathers Day!** Race proceeds will benefit Gratitude America's Military Support Retreats.

THE 5K RACE WILL BE CHIP-TIMED.

Active Duty, Reserve, Guard, Retired, and Veterans receive a discount code by emailing race@gratitudeamerica.org

CONTACT

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Michael Anthony, Executive Director
michael@gratitudeamerica.org
912-674-0332

Who's that on the right sitting out in the Kuwaiti desert?
desert?
(Operation Iraqi Freedom)





GratitudeAmerica



MILITARY SUPPORT RETREAT

at Tampa, Florida

June 1st at 4:30pm - June 4th at 3pm

A RETREAT FOR POST 9-11 FLORIDA AND GEORGIA
MILITARY/VETERANS AND THEIR PRIMARY SUPPORT PERSON

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

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

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

★ Small, friendly group setting ★

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

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

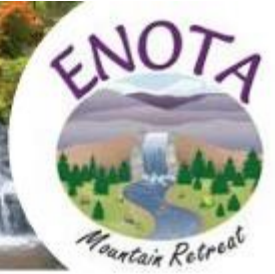
Please note: Must be 18 to attend and no childcare is not provided.



TO LEARN MORE AND TO APPLY VISIT: GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG/RETREATS
CONTACT INFO: MICHAEL ANTHONY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
912-674-0332 OR MICHAEL@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG



GratitudeAmerica



MILITARY SUPPORT RETREAT

*at Enota Mountain Retreat
Hiawassee, Georgia*

July 27th at 4:30pm - July 30th at 3pm

A RETREAT FOR DEPLOYED POST 9-11 FLORIDA AND GEORGIA
MILITARY/VETERANS AND THEIR PRIMARY SUPPORT PERSON

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

★ RESTORATION ★ RECREATION ★ RELAXATION ★

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

★ Small, friendly group setting ★

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

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

Please note: Must be 18 to attend and childcare is not provided.



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

CONTACT INFO: MICHAEL ANTHONY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

912-674-0332 OR MICHAEL@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG



GratitudeAmerica 5K RACE & FUN RUN

Proceeds to benefit Military Support Retreats

Saturday, June 17

At Coastal Policy Center 9601 Oceanshore Blvd, Marineland, FL

5K Race /Exploration Walk 8:30AM

Half Mile Fun Run (10 and Under) 9:30AM



Medals to the top 250 finishers

REGISTRATION

	5K (Adult)	5K (Under 18)	Fun Run
Until Midnight June 9, 2017	\$25	\$15	\$10
Until 9am June 16, 2017	\$30	\$20	\$10
Race Day	\$35	\$20	\$10

Race Day Registration begins at 7AM and closes sharply at 8:20AM

REGISTER AT

gratitudeamerica5k.itsyourrace.com

SCAN CODE BELOW TO REGISTER NOW!



ABOUT THIS EVENT

This all-terrain trail course will provide a scenic tour of Marineland's River-to-Sea preserve, the intracoastal, the ocean, and the town's unique facilities. Food, refreshments, and entertainment will be provided at awards ceremony. Age group awards will be presented.

2017 will showcase a NEW, faster "figure eight course" with more shaded hammock trails and fewer turns! In addition, a half mile Fun Run for younger runners has also been added. **Your race entry also gains you entry to Marineland's Dolphin Adventure! Plan to visit the park and make it a fitness and family adventure for Fathers Day!** Race proceeds will benefit Gratitude America's Military Support Retreats.

THE 5K RACE WILL BE CHIP-TIMED.

Active Duty, Reserve, Guard, Retired, and Veterans receive a discount code by emailing race@gratitudeamerica.org

CONTACT

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Michael Anthony, Executive Director

michael@gratitudeamerica.org

912-674-0332

Chairman Dudley and I received several articles from a former Vietnamese Air Force Flight Mechanic. Chairman Dudley reached out to a friend in CA who was pictured in one of the articles and Mr. Le's authenticity was verified.

Mr. Le's articles are historic but lengthy so we have decided to post them on the Veterans Council of St. Johns County's website and be accessible by a link we will provide.

Dear VCSJC Newsletter editors, I would like to share to your Veteran readers my articles about Vietnam War, which those writings posted on several websites:

1. Saigon Death Struggle - McBlair Lee, last Saigon battle April 29-1975, Vietnam war historical.
2. Glowing Smart Dragon - McBlair Lee, Last VNAF AC119K air crew sacrificed for their country, Vietnam war historical.
3. A Terrified Evacuation Flight - Huy Bang (my pen name).
4. Farewell To Tonle Cham Outpost - McBlair Lee.
5. My Caribou Flight Mechanic Instructor -
6. I Am A Sky Bird (an English airmen song) - McBlair Lee.

Other articles should be posted on internet shortly:

7. SA-7 Heat Seeking Missile - McBlair Lee, a Vietnam War SA-7/ HSM experience for Military Cargo Aircraft modified.
8. A Nightmare of a Midnight Outpost Landing, a midnight landing on an outpost airfield without runway's lights, a secret mission.

My real name is Be Van Le, but I used my pen name on my writings: Vietnamese and English articles for my relatives safely under Vietnamese communist rules in Vietnam. McBlair Lee was my pen name on my English articles. I am living in Houston, Texas.

I was born in South Vietnam, 1950, I joined VNAF as Flight Mechanic October 1969 to April 1975. I worked on several VNAF cargo aircraft: C-119, C-47 and C-7A Caribou. I served for 5 years on VNAF cargo squadrons: 413rd (C-119), 514th C-47, 427th, 429th and 431st C-7A Caribou. I have trained Flight Mechanics of the C-7A Caribou by USAF at Phan Rang AB, South Vietnam, 1972.

I left Vietnam during the North Vietnamese communist attack on Saigon, at April 29-1975. I left my wife with two kids behind. 10 years after, my family reunion in the U.S.A. We have another two sons born in the U.S.A.

I am a Vietnamese freelance writer, artist and Vietnamese play writer.

Thanks Lee.

From Wikipedia: The South Vietnam Air Force (Vietnamese: Không lực Việt Nam Cộng hòa – KLVNCH), officially the Republic of Vietnam Air Force (sometimes Vietnam Air Force – VNAF) was the aerial branch of the Republic of Vietnam Military Forces, the official military of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) from 1955 to 1975.

The VNAF began with a few hand-picked men chosen to fly alongside French pilots during the State of Vietnam era. It eventually grew into the world's sixth largest air force at the height of its power, in 1974. It is an often neglected chapter of the history of the Vietnam War as they operated in the shadow of the United States Air Force. It was dissolved in 1975 after the Fall of Saigon; many of its members emigrated to the United States.

The Editor has made only slight grammatical corrections to ensure understanding, but has not changed the meaning of his text.

Page 8 & 9, C-7A Caribou Association, November 2010, volume 22, issue 2.

A TERRIFIED EVACUATION FLIGHT

HUY BANG & PAT HANVANA



Dedication: This article is written in memory of a fallen crew member. 1st Lieutenant Doan The Hao. He was a young, good aircraft commander with whom I enjoyed to fly and work. He was a model airman who encouraged me to study hard and become a good flight mechanic. His outstanding actions as an aircraft commander helped us survive

a horrible takeoff. Thanks to Lt. Hao's struggle against the deadly situation, we brought our aircraft back to the base safely. On another mission, he had bad luck, his wings broken. He lives alone today in the Mac Dinh Chi graveyard in Saigon. Sadly, the enemy flattened his last tomb-home after their victory. Dear brother Hao, please, accept my prayers for your peaceful rest in heaven. I will carry your dear images everywhere in the USA, until I leave this world for my final resting.

Thanks for our very first memorable flights in the Caribou. Our young C-7A Caribou crew was made up of an aircraft commander and flight mechanic with about 500 flying hours each and other crew members with less than 250 flight hours. We called ourselves "young birds" in the war storm's sky. I learned a costly lesson of war to become a man in the great offensive "Red Fire Summer 1972."

Huy Bang walked into his new squadron operations room of 427th C-7A Caribou squadron. His unit was based at Phu Cat AB, Binh Dinh Province. They received the Caribous from the USAF several months ago. Bang looked up at a large mission planning board in the center of the squadron operations room. His eyes stopped at the line for a routine flight to Bong Son. He mused about the Bong Son district, a small, remote town where a hot battle to be called "Red Fire of Summer 72" was taking place. Bong Son was one of three "hot" districts in Binh Dinh Province. The Vietcong took over or fought many bloody battles in

the Tam Quan, De Duc, and Bong Son districts. The Vietnamese newspapers, radio, and TV were daily reported these battles. Armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam were trying to re-occupy the land in enemy hands with strong spirited titles such as Tri Thien Dart-up, Binh

Dinh Valiant, Kontum Proud, An Loc Decisive Victory Battle.

Bang slowly sat down on a chair in the operations room, reviewing his next day's flight schedule: aircraft commander 2nd Lt. Hao, copilot 2nd Lt. Binh, Sgt Bang, and Cpl Phung. Flight

route: Phu Cat to Qui Nhon to Bong Son, flying two times. He silently reviewed his young crew's capacity for the hottest mission tomorrow. For some, it is their first C-7A Caribou flight landing at the dangerous outpost airstrips. Lt. Hao and Bang served in the Thanh Long ("blue dragon") 415th Squadron.

For the last eight months they flew the C-47 of WW II. However, this old aircraft must land in the large, convenient, and safer airfields. Now, they fly the C-7A, a newer aircraft that can land and take off at short fields of the dangerous outposts along the borders of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Huy Bang was concerned as he perceived his young crew's capabilities for tomorrow's mission. They were still young, with little war experience at small airfields in dangerous battle conditions. His young aircraft commander was not over 24 years of age.

Four months ago, Lieut. Hao became an aircraft commander, so Bang was not sure how his commander would handle the aircraft in a battle situation. Nobody in the new 427th squadron denied that Lt. Hao was a young, smart, high-energy pilot with great skill. His stature was not large, but he was quick, active, and a great memory. He remembered all his aircraft flying and maintenance systems manuals. In short, he was a young, bright, and valued aircraft commander. Huy Bang was fond of Lieut. Hao like a big brother, a young pilot who loved to study hard. Bang was comfortable around Hao and happy to work with him during "ask and answer questions" while studying together as the crew members. As would teach others everything that he learned himself. After one year of studying hard, Bang became a hard working flight mechanic with more knowledge and confidence about the aircraft.

All afternoon and evening, Bang could not sleep. The hot Phu Cat summer included the noise of the South Korean Tiger Division's cannon fire all night long, mixed with helicopter sounds of the 243rd Lion squadron of the VNAF. No one slept well in this war situation.

After four months working with the Caribou aircraft, Bang was only 22, so young without much thought and worry about life. He was thinking more about tomorrow and how to survive in this long war with its deadly crisis, as most Vietnamese thought "Leave life in God's hands." The cannon fire and helicopter and music sounds brought Bang only a little sound sleep.

In the flight line van carrying the crews to their aircraft, Lt. Hao looked back to check his crew members. Smiling, he saw them all. They made a quick check of their aircraft and took off for Qui Nhon, where they loaded 4,000 lbs of 105 mm cannon shells for Bong Son.

They would make two 45 minute round trips to Bong Son. With the tiny Bong Son airfield in front of them, Lt. Hao started to descend. After a long night thinking without too much sleep, Huy Bang carefully made a request of his aircraft commander: "Lt. Hao, before we land, please fly around a little so we can check them out and see the situation before we land." Hao happily agreed to make a low level pass at 500 feet. The crew members carefully observed the small un-safe town. It was only a few thatched houses and a single road through the town. Looking down, the motorcycles and three wheel Lambrettas seemed like normal activities of life in the town.

Everything seemed OK. Lt. Hao decided to land. Their Caribou turned into the outpost terminal, but it was strange that nobody was there to receive their cargo. Lt. Hao decided to drop the pallets of cannon shells on the ground. Huy Bang left the aircraft to help the pilot clear the way to move up to drop the second cargo pallet.

The pilot turned off the engines and waited for the terminal personnel to come and sign the cargo manifest.

Huy Bang walked around the aircraft to check both engines. The pilots left the cockpit and were walking to the ramp, when, suddenly, they heard the screaming of two hundred Vietnamese passengers who were hidden behind the sand bag walls, elderly people, children, and soldiers. They were running quickly to the aircraft. They jumped into the airplane and they jammed and completely covered the cargo ramp. Both pilots quickly returned to the cockpit. Huy Bang hurried to find a way to get into the aircraft. A soldier trying to throw his large military bag over the heads of the evacuees was struggling at the ramp. Huy Bang pulled his bag down and it fell on the ground. The soldier got mad with a bad words, as

he looked at Bang, pistol hanging at his side. Bang shouted, "Airplane has no room for your property, sir! Please, run for lives."

Bang quickly opened the left passenger door and hooked up the ladder. Only one side was hooked and the evacuees moved over to try and get into the airplane. Bang could get aboard the plane. He took off the ladder and dashed it down on the ground.

He was confused as he thought about how to get into his airplane. The crew may leave him behind if he cannot get into the airplane. The first engine is now running noisily. Bang's face is happier as he remembers the bottom hatch — a last chance to get into airplane. He quick looked around, ducked down under the fuselage and raced to the bottom hatch as fast as possible to get in the aircraft before the pilots moved the aircraft. He got in the cockpit just as the pilot was moving for takeoff.

As Lt. Hao moved the aircraft, several evacuees gave up, leaving the aircraft, but many were still hanging onto the ramp. Turning into runway, Hao made a running takeoff without re-checking the engines. People were in the aircraft and on the ramp. Bang and the loadmaster could not close the ramp and cargo door.

The takeoff run was slow, without normal airspeed to lift off the ground. Bang felt. it was slow as he waited for the airplane to lift up into the air. After a long time, the landing gear still did not lift up from the runway surface. Hao screamed into the interphone: "Flight engineer and loadmaster! Hurry up and move passengers forward. Airplane is tail heavy and we cannot lift off."

One man was hanging on the end of ramp, his foot slipped out, both his hands trying to hold the cargo door actuator. He could no longer endure the wind and the airplane shaking. His hands lost grip and he fell onto the runway, unmoving as our airplane reached takeoff speed.

A 12 year old boy screamed for help as he saw his father fall off the plane without people helping. The plane's engine noise covered his voice.

Almost at the end of runway, the landing gear just lifted up into the air. In horrible, slow motion Bang saw that the landing gear is lower than the barbed wire fence around the field, as

the aircraft moves closer to it.

Landing gear is up, but Lt. Hao cannot throttle back to meto power. He keeps maximum power to climb over the tree tops. His deadly voice screams again: "Help! Quick, move the passengers forward, we cannot fly, move them up!"

In a trembling voice, the loadmaster answered, "We try hard, Lt.! But, the crowd of people is on the ramp. We can't close the door, sir!"

Bang's face turns green, his mind frozen as the wing tips are lower than the tree tops. His soul is full of a fear of death. His mouth trembles as he pray for both engines to be good. If one fails, certainly they will die with this overload. Lt. Hao has a hard time to bringing his aircraft over the trees.

Bang mumbles to himself, "What can I do to help? What can I do now? Looking at the empty space behind the two pilot seats, Bang feels an Army soldier standing behind the cargo compartment wall, pushing him into the cockpit as he screams noisily. "Move up! Quick! Move it, you, and you, please, quick move up." Everyone starts moving up.

Moments later, the loadmaster closed the ramp as the plane reached a few hundred feet into the air.

Still shaking, Lt. Hao reduced engine power slightly and turned his aircraft toward the sea, where it is safer than over land. As he was turning, the crew heard a noise. It seemed like enemy bullets struck the plane. Lt. Hao shouted, "Anyone hear that noise?" The load-master replied, "It seemed like enemy bullets hit our aircraft, Lt." Hao quickly climbed to 2,000 feet and leveled off, flying along the sea shore, heading to Qui Nhon.

First Lieutenant Nghiep flew the same route, starting one hour later. Hao stopped Lt. Nghiep from landing at Bong Son to avoid the bad evacuation situation. Lt. Nghiep returned his plane to Qui Nhon and reported the bad situation at Bong Son airfield.

Hao asked his crew, "FE and load-master, how many passengers did we load?" Both crew men counted and answered, "69 passengers, Lt.!" Lt. Hao turned the crying boy who

lost his father over to the Qui Nhon terminal personnel for them to take care of him and find his relatives.

May 9, 2017 VA Announces Adoption of American Cancer Society Mammogram Screening Guidelines

WASHINGTON – Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it is adopting American Cancer Society (ACS) breast cancer screening guidelines that give women a choice to begin screening at age 40. The guidelines also recommend starting yearly mammograms by age 45 and then every other year from age 55. The guidelines apply to women at average risk for breast cancer and complement VA’s already-extensive program for breast care for Veterans.

“It is important for our women Veterans to know that they are in control of their care and the care they receive from VA is consistent with or exceeds care in the private sector,” said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. “Adopting American Cancer Society standards gives Veterans further assurances that their care aligns with other health-care systems. Currently, 76 percent of women Veterans age 40-49 receive mammograms through VA.”

In addition to adopting ACS guidelines for breast cancer screening, other notable achievements include:

- Expanded access to onsite mammograms by 62 percent;
- All eligible women Veterans have access to mammograms either onsite or through care in the community;
- VA quality scores from the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS), show that women Veterans are much more likely to receive age-appropriate breast cancer screening than women in private sector health care;
- In 2015, VA provided mammogram screenings to 86 percent of its women Veteran patients age 50-74, compared with the private sector at 73 percent; and
- VA has established a state of the art information technology Breast Cancer Registry (BCR). The BCR integrates data from several VA sources to provide comprehensive patient specific information about breast cancer screening, test results, past and current breast cancer treatment, and population surveillance of breast care (both in the community and within the VA). “Engaging and better servicing the unique health-care needs of our women Veterans is one of VA most important priorities,” said Dr. Poonam Alaigh, Acting Under Secretary for Health. “When it comes to their care, we want them to be in control of it every day and in every way.”

For more information about VA’s commitment to women Veterans, visit <https://www.va.gov/womenvet/> or call Women Veterans can also call 855-VA-WOMEN (855-829-6636) for information about VA services and resources.

</groups/VCSJC/permalink/1326956850685434/>



Clay County Fallen Warriors Monument BRICK ADOPTION AND / OR DONATION



The Vietnam Veterans of America, Clay County Chapter # 1059, in partnership with other private sector organizations and volunteers are raising funds to build a permanent *Clay County Fallen Warriors Monument* to honor all past, current, and future - in theater - casualties of military war.

This permanent memorial will replace current monument at the Clay County Historical Triangle, *aka Veterans Triangle*, at 915 Walnut St. Green Cove Springs, FL 32043 (SR 16 West at the Railroad tracks).



Please join our efforts to create a NEW (summer ²⁰¹⁷ ~~2016~~) Monument. **TAPS** (named for Civil War era musical that is sounded at dusk and funerals) will be placed on top of a 5'x5' marble monument that will have the names of all of our Clay County Fallen Warriors inscribed. **TAPS** will be surrounded by a brick area of 500 square feet.

Today, you have an opportunity to honor a loved one and or pay tribute to a Veteran(s), a military unit, a period of our history, etc. **ADOPT** (purchase) an inscribed memorial brick that will be installed around the memorial.

Each 4"x8" memorial brick is \$50. Private and corporate donations are also encouraged. Please mail your order form and payment to: **VVA Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 626, Orange Park, FL 32067-0626**. For more details contact Gary Newman at 904-269-1857 or AGNJUSTICE@YAHOO.COM. Vietnam Veterans of America Clay County Chapter #1059 is a non-profit, 501(c)(19) corporation. All proceeds go toward the TAPS Memorial project.

***** PLEASE CONSIDER HONORING OUR FALLEN, THOSE WHO SERVED, AND ARE SERVING TODAY *****

Submitted By: _____ Date _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

DONATIONS (includes brick plus) _____ Bronze: \$ 150 — Letter of Appreciation _____ Silver: \$ 250 — Letter and Certificate
_____ Gold: \$ 500 — Letter, Certificate and Honorable recognition _____ Platinum: \$1,000 — Letter, Plaque and Honorable recognition

BRICK #1

Requested Inscription -PLEASE PRINT - limited to 13 characters (letters, space, punctuation) per line



Line 1: _____

Line 2: _____

Line 3: _____

VETERAN TRIBUTE SUGGESTION: Veteran's name (first line), service branch (second line) and conflict name or service dates (third line). Or Military Unit (first line).... Each line can contain up to thirteen characters (characters include letters, numbers, punctuation marks and spaces). All inscriptions will be in capital letters for uniformity and readability. *Optional PAGE 2 (or back) provided to PURCHASE ADDITIONAL BRICKS.*

Veteran Community Resource & Services Fair

June 16, 2017

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Jacksonville VA Outpatient Clinic
1536 Jefferson Street
Jacksonville, FL 32209

FREE TO ALL

ALL Veterans are Invited to Come

Information provided includes:

VA Services - Geriatric Resources - Medical Information
Housing - Legal Help - Healthcare Planning
Military Sororities and Fraternities - VA Home Loan
and much more

Some Participating Organizations:

NAMI, Hampton Villas, Wounded Warrior, Wekiva Springs, Got Your 6,
Wyndam Lakes Assisted Living Facility, Haven Hospice,
Military Affairs and Veterans Department, Zahara Veterans Network, Inc.,
Career Source, Community Hospice, Gratitude America, PNC Bank,
Kappa Lambda Chi Military Fraternity Inc XI Chapter,
Kappa Epsilon PSI Military Sorority, Continuum of Care, Horton Homes,
Transitional Care, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4761, LSF Health Systems

AND MANY MORE!

FOOD



TRUCKS

FOR more information please contact 904-475-5882

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

The term **Gold Star family** is a modern reference that comes from the Service Flag. These flags/banners were first flown by families during World War I. The flag included a blue star for every immediate family member serving in the armed forces of the United States, during any period of war or hostilities in which the armed forces of the United States were engaged. If that loved one died, the blue star was replaced by a gold star. This allowed members of the community to know the price that the family had paid in the cause of freedom.



The United States began observing Gold Star Mother's Day on the last Sunday of September, in 1936. The Gold Star Wives was formed before the end of World War II. The Gold Star Lapel Button was established in August 1947.

Today, the nation recognizes the sacrifice that all Gold Star Family members make when a father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, or other loved one dies in service to the nation. Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day is the last Sunday of September and Gold Star Spouses Day is April 5. The strength of our nation is our Army. The strength of our Army is our Soldiers. The strength of our Soldiers is our families. The Army recognizes that no one has given more for the nation than the families of the fallen.



SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 16TH 2017
1PM TEE-OFF
Bent Creek Golf Club
10440 Tournament Lane
Jacksonville, FL 32222

PRESENTS
THE FLORIDA FALLEN HEROES
GOLF CLASSIC

PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THIS GREAT ORGANIZATION THAT IS DETERMINED NOT TO FORGET THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE FOR OUR FREEDOM.
ALL PROCEEDS GO TO PLACING MONUMENTS AT HIGH SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA FALLEN SOLDIERS.

Individual Golfer - \$110 Team of 4 Golfers - \$400
Includes golf, lunch, prizes, 2 Mulligans & all you can drink Frozen Margarita

Golfer #1: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Phone _____

Golfer #2: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Phone _____

Golfer #3: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Phone _____

Golfer #4: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Phone _____

To register please fill out this form and email to ffhslunger@yahoo.com Please provide each players name, address, phone # and email. Please make checks payable to : FLORIDA FALLEN HEROES and mail to P.O. Box 11293, Jacksonville, FL 32239-1293 or bring payment with you on day of event. Please make sure you register to save your team a place.

**FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT SHARON LYNN UNGER
(904) 680-8115 (CALL OR TEXT) OR FFHSLUNGER@YAHOO.COM**

The Timothy J. Seamans Memorial Foundation is based in the beautiful city of Jacksonville, Florida and was founded by the family of Jacksonville fallen soldier, Timothy J. Seamans, in August 2006. The purpose and mission of this foundation is to create, establish, and help maintain the Fallen Soldier Monument at each hometown high school of a Florida graduates who have lost their lives defending the United States of America in our war against terrorism. The Timothy J. Seamans Memorial Foundation, (Doing Business as Florida Fallen Heroes) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit exempt organization, registered (# CH34311) with the Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Contributions are deductible from federal income as charitable donations under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code. Bequests, devises, transfers and gifts made in accordance with section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Internal Revenue Code are also tax deductible.

A COPY OF THIS 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.

Veterans Mortgage & Real Estate Day

Including Seminars

Tuesday May 30, 2017 • 9:00AM - 1:00PM

The Seminars will be at 10:00AM and 12:00PM.

YOU VETERANS HAVE SACRIFICED FOR OUR COUNTRY –
IT'S OUR TURN TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE AND HELP
YOU REALIZE YOUR DREAM OF HOME OWNERSHIP.

**Learn About Mortgages And Real Estate
Information Relevant To Veterans While Enjoying
Complimentary Refreshments.**



Theresa Lennon
Branch Manager
Ameris Bank



Tracy Hayes
Lender
Ameris Bank
VA Home Loan
Specialist



Andrew Michael
Realtor
RE/MAX
Marine Corps Veteran



Ameris Bank - Shore Branch | 4070 US 1 South, St. Augustine FL 32086



Camp Blanding Band, February 2, 1942

From the president of the Camp Blanding Museum Association George Cressman Jr, who also serves as the Museum's senior historian.

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.

If you or someone you know are one of the 48 million Americans who suffer from hearing loss, I have Great News to share with you!!!



ClearCaptions is a federally funded telecommunications company. The FCC has commissioned ClearCaptions to inform those experiencing any hearing loss of the federal program available to them based on Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act (mandated since 1990). Those with any hearing loss are entitled to our new technology **caption phone absolutely FREE**, including **installation, training and on-going service**. Those needing our phones need to have:

- 1.**a phone line (AT&T landline, Comcast landline, bundle, OOMA, Magic Jack, Vonage, or OOMA ...)
- 2.** Internet access (wired or wireless).

There is no income requirement. To schedule your installation or for more information, **please contact your North Florida Territory Manager Anas Benjelloun at (904) 568-4562 or anas.benjelloun@clearcaptions.com**

Sign-up, self-certify, and be using your Free ClearCaptions phone

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

Please support our sponsors



RE/MAX
Specialists
Each Office Independently Owned and Operated

Scott Hum
Broker-Associate
Hum Sells, LLC

12646 San Jose Blvd
Jacksonville, FL 32223
Cell: (904) 707-0925
Office: (904) 260-4550
ScottHum@REMAX.net
www.NEFloridaHomes4Sale.com



400 N. Ponce de Leon Blvd.—St. Augustine, FL 32084-3587

904-829-2201— fax 904-829-2020— 800-997-1961

www.herbiewiles.com

The House That Trust Built


Homeowners 62 or older...
Learn how you can enjoy your retirement years with a Reverse Mortgage.

Call for a quote
JOHN REARDON
Mortgage Consultant &
Reverse Mortgage Specialist
Serving all of Florida



MS
community
mortgage solutions
904-982-2210
www.floridareversemortgage.com

NMLS 555210



Pycraft **LAW** LLC
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Foreclosure Defense • Bankruptcy • Debt Defense
Estate Planning • Wills • Trusts • Advanced Directives • Probate
Family Law • Criminal Defense • Civil Defense

www.pycraftlaw.com • (904) 940-0060

Thomas R. Pycraft, Jr. • John J. Spence
Michael J. Pelkowski • David D. Naples, Jr.

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

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

Send to: 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.