



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

P.O. Box 2117

St. Augustine, FL 32085

Bill Dudley, Publisher

Michael Rothfeld, Editor

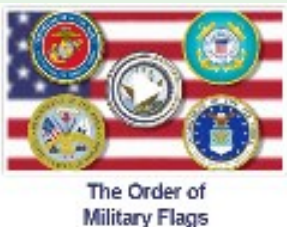
Volume 12, Issue 1

From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

January 2023

Inside this Edition

- Jax National Cemetery Support Committee
- Veterans Council St Johns County Speakers
- Wreaths Across America, St Augustine
- Honoring Florida Veterans
- We Can Be Heroes Foundation
- Jax Airport Military Lounge
- Veterans Legacy Program
- The Long Grey Line reaches Palatka
- MIAP in So. FL National Cemetery
- VC SJC November Minutes
- Recognizing John Leslie & Anthony D'Aleo
- MG James Eifert, FL Adjutant General
- New Presumptive Conditions
- "The Men Are The Mission"
- Blue Angels in Jacksonville, October 2023
- Important Veteran Information
- Project HELP
- Castillo de San Marcos
- Fort Matanzas
- PFC Chesty XVI, USMC
- A Navaho Code Talker Remembered
- The PACT Act
- Military Support Retreats
- First Coast Honor Flight
- Veterans Homestead Exemption



Fellow Veterans,
As 2022 draws to a close, the Veterans Council reflects back over the year to the many activities we have been engaged in and the outpouring of support for our veteran community.

This year has marked a record number of demands for housing especially for our homeless veterans. The Veterans Council has been steadfast in assisting these veterans by providing temporary shelter in local motels and removing them from the streets or sleeping in their cars.

To meet the needs of so many of the less fortunate during 2022, the Veterans Council has assisted with car repairs, utility bills, home repairs, rental assistance, paying past due mortgage / rental payments, past due storage fees so veterans household goods would not be auctioned off, and continuing to be the financial provider for the Veterans Treatment Court participants who are in need of help. Our expenditures for this year has

been over \$50000 for all veterans support. This does not include the many gift cards for gas and food that were distributed that were donated to the Veterans Council by various organizations.

Several veterans have qualified for housing this year under the VA HUD Vash program but have moved into housing lacking furniture and other household goods needed for a new housing start. Through nearly two years of collecting donated furniture, the Veterans Council was able to furnish all of these veterans with furniture and other essentials. Two Men and a Truck provided the moving of all the furniture to the veteran's homes at no cost to the veteran.

At Christmas time this year, we were able to help 14 of our VTC participants with a monetary gift so their families could enjoy the Christmas holiday. Several other families were given food cards and a monetary gift who were also in need.



I would like to mention the highly successful Wreaths Across America Program we had on Sat. Dec. 17 at the St. Augustine National Cemetery. The attendance this year broke records for attendance with over 500 coming out to participate in honoring our veterans who gave their all for our country. Our sales for wreaths this year met our goal to assure every headstone had a wreath. I would like to give a big shout out to our WAA Chairman, Sgt. Major Ray Quinn and his two very able assistant's Jerry Hanchett and Katherine Owens. On behalf of the Veterans Council, I would like to wish everyone a Happy, Prosperous, and Peaceful New Year and to thank you for your support of our Veterans Council during 2022.

Bill Dudley, Chairman
Veterans Council of St. Johns County



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

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

Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee Meetings for 2022
At Hadlow Community Hospice of NE FL.
4266 Sunbeam Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County meets on the last Thursday of the month, all are invited to attend. We meet at the County Health & Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View, at 7 pm



Upcoming Speakers

January 26

Jan Gay, VA Mental Health N FL
Robert Covert, Veterans Oral History Project,
St. Augustine Historical Society

February 23, 2023

James Bullock, Fort Mose History
Dr George Cressman, Camp Blanding Museum

March 30

Gini Solano, Jr. Service League of St. Augustine
Jeanette McMahon, Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation (ZOOM)

April 27

Zach Peyton, President West Point Society of N FL
Kim Kendall, Class Size Initiative

June 29

Michael Dionian, Volunteering at the Jax Naval Museum, USS Orleck

Wreaths Across America St. Augustine National Cemetery



Photos by Michael Isam



Photo by Nancy Sikes-Kline

Honoring Florida's Veterans

The State of Florida established the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame in 2013 to recognize and honor those military veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the State of Florida. In selecting its nominees for submission to the Governor and Cabinet, the Council will give preference to veterans who were either born in Florida or adopted Florida as their home state. The individuals they choose will have made a significant contribution to the state in civic, business, public service, or other pursuits.

The Class of 2022 is the 10th class to enter the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.

Inductees include:

Mike Bousher, U.S. Army Veteran – Palm Harbor

Jeffery Cathey, Captain, U.S. Navy (Ret) – Tampa

Anthony D'Aleo, U.S. Army Veteran – Jacksonville

John Gionet, Sergeant Major, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret) – Orlando

Greg Holder, Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Ret) – Tampa

Don Lanman, U.S. Army Veteran – Rivera Beach

John Leslie, Commander, U.S. Navy (Ret) – St. Augustine

Gordon Lightfoot, U.S. Marine Corps Veteran – Tallahassee

Maxine Reyes, Captain, U.S. Army (Ret) – Tampa

Glenn Sutphin, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret) – Tallahassee



Presentation to SJSO, SAPD, SABPD Monday Nov 21 by the VC SJC and We Can Be Heroes Foundation with a Proclamation of support for Law Enforcement.



Chairman Dudley presenting the Proclamation

Beth Heath of We Can Be Heroes Foundation



**The Jacksonville International Airport Military Lounge
for active-duty military
(THE M LOUNGE)**

was opened by Mark Van Loh, JAA CEO, on 7th Dec 2022..

Per Joe Snowberger of Mission United of The United Way:

“Located on the lower level by baggage claim, the lounge is in the same place as the former USO. All work was done in-house by Jacksonville Aviation Authority (JAA) staff. Facilities employees refurbished the space after the USO’s departure. Special thanks to Building Maintenance for their hard work. In addition, Marketing provided graphic design support, artwork, and selected furniture. Procurement purchased the items necessary to renovate and furnish the space, IT supplied computers, and the sign shop staff printed the graphics that will adorn the outside of the area. The Authority will work with North Jacksonville Rotary Club, United Way of Northeast Florida’s Mission United and the Veterans Council of Duval County to provide coordination of volunteers. Most importantly of all, the Military Lounge will be open for our service members just in time for the Holidays”..

Here are the steps to become a volunteer in the lounge:

Use this link to fill out an application.

<https://www.volgistics.com/appform/1353073576>

Please make note of your login and password. This will be the login and password you use to create your schedule going forward.

I will receive your application once complete. At that time, I will reach out to schedule a JAX Airport parking badge application & fingerprinting appointment.

It takes 3-5 business days for the fingerprinting background check to clear. At that

time, you will schedule an appointment to come pick up your parking badge.

Then you are ready to begin scheduling volunteer shifts in the lounge through Volgistics.

Feel free to share this link with any interested volunteers. I look forward to working with you all!

If you have any questions, please feel free to call/text the cell number listed below.

Thank you,

Wendi Howard

Marketing & Community Programs Manager

Jacksonville Aviation Authority

904.741.3714 (O)

904.910.0358 (C)

wendi.howard@flyjacksonville.com



"THE LONG GREY LINE OF US STRETCHES, THOUGH THE YEARS . . ."
"GRIPPING HANDS" IN PALATKA, FLORIDA



It seemed as though the haunting strains of the "Corps" were wafting through the old knurled oaks in Palatka's West View Cemetery on 15 November, 2022, as the West Point Society of North Florida President, Zack Peyton -- USMA class of 2004, stood at the memorial stone of Capt. James R. Stephenson -- USMA class of 1822. Capt. Stephenson had died of illness during the 2nd Seminole War on 22 November, 1841-- almost

180 years earlier. He was buried in a plot outside the Army hospital at what was then Ft. Shannon, an Army depot and precursor to today's Palatka. *"We sons of today"* were indeed honoring the memory of a son *"long dead."*

The circumstances leading to this moment are equally moving. A local citizen, Ann Williams, noticed that Capt. Stephenson's burial stone had broken from its base and was lying in disrepair on the ground. Determined to right the situation and "honor the fallen," she had the stone repaired and placed on a permanent base slab -- at a cost to her of \$700. Meanwhile, Dr. Amy Giroux, from the University of Central Florida, who is researching the graves of veterans at the near-by St. Augustine National Cemetery, became involved and volunteered to reimburse her for the funds spent.



Having learned of these developments through Florida National Guard Historian Ms. Alison Simpson, the Society quickly decided to reimburse the cost of repairs. In a small ceremony by the grave marker, Mr. Peyton presented each lady a letter of appreciation and the West Point Challenge coin, conveying to them the sincere appreciation of the Society's graduates for their initiative and effort. Indeed, their spontaneous action is a moving testament to the continuing desire our nation's citizens harbor to honor their fallen.

Joe Naftzinger, '60.

"Grip hands tho' it be from the shadows."

Nearly two dozen unclaimed veterans, their spouses get final resting place at South Florida National Cemetery

By Caleb Califano

LAKE WORTH, Fla. —

On Thursday, October 27, 22 veterans and spouses of veterans, who've remained unclaimed for years, finally have a resting place at the South Florida National Cemetery.

The Missing in America Project's goal is to work with private, state, and federal organizations to give these veterans a final resting place.

The remains, brought in carefully selected urns, were delivered by representatives from the Patriot Guard Riders as well as law enforcement and fire rescue crews from Palm Beach County.

"These veterans joined the military; they did their time. They were given the promise that they never would be forgotten. Never be left behind," said Todd Newkirk the director of the South Florida National Cemetery.

Thousands of veterans and spouses see their remains unburied, sometimes for decades, whether that be from miscommunication with the family or many other reasons.

"We should do this. No one should go unclaimed but definitely no one in the service or spouse and family of a service person,"



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



NOVEMBER 17, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dudley

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS: Chairman Dudley

PLEDGE: Chairman Dudley

INVOCATION: Chairman Dudley

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Minutes of last meeting conducted on October 27, 2022, were presented by Chairman Dudley. Copies of Minutes and Agenda are available on the sign-in table and were sent to members electronically by the Secretary. The minutes were approved by voice vote with no changes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer John Mountcastle was not in attendance and Chairman Dudley provided a detailed report that as of October 26, 2022, there was a balance of \$122,262.06 and as of date of meeting there is balance of \$122,873.62. The deposit of funds this month was \$5,086.00, with the most significant intake of \$5,000.00 from the Jacksonville Jaguars Foundation. The Treasurer's Report was approved by voice vote with no changes.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS: Chairman Dudley

There were numerous new attendees at this month's meeting that introduced themselves, including members that had not been in attendance in a while.

SPEAKERS:

KYLE MITCHELL, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, PROJECT HELP

Introduced himself a Marine Corp Veteran, community advocate and a father. Project Help started 7 years ago in New Jersey by Mr. Mitchell and his grandmother, Sandy Mitchell. Project Help started off small by collecting clothes, doing drop-off events, fundraising, and aiding struggling and homeless veterans in the area. Project Help later started developing different types of programs for veterans such as Hardship Fund to help with veteran financial crisis, a Mentorship Program to guide them in the right direction, and most recently a Plan for the Housing Program. Three years ago, Mr. Mitchell started the Chapter in Jacksonville, through many struggles in the initial period, things are starting to come together. On Thanksgiving they are giving out food and clothes to those in need. They are also going to aid those in

need during the Christmas season. With the current financial situation as it is nationwide, there are many homeless and struggling veterans in need and Project Help hopes to help. Project Help needs volunteers and financial aid from anyone that can help. Mr. Mitchell answered questions from those in attendance about Project Help. Chairman Dudley expressed his appreciation for what Project Help is hoping to accomplish with assistance to our veterans.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION: Chairman Dudley recognized member John Leslie and his admission into the State of Florida, Veteran's Hall of Fame. It was an honor to see John recognized for all he had done for our country and veterans.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE UPDATE, JOSEPH MCDERMOTT

Mr. McDermott talked about the Veteran's Homeless Standdown that was held in October. Not many in attendance and discussed the need to get the word out there about the Standdown and the military surplus that is given to our veterans. There is a great need to get the information out to the veterans about the Standdown as attendance has dropped off tremendously. Liberty Pines Academy is still wanting to have the event in honor of Veteran's Day, the event had to be cancelled due to weather, and there will be a program on November 22nd at 9:00am. They are going to be serving breakfast to honor veterans. Everyone is invited to attend.

A lot of claims have been submitted regarding burn pits and also for hypertension for veterans with Agent Orange. Burn claims are being held currently and procession of the claims will start after January 2023.

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT, JOHN LESLIE

Mr. Leslie spoke of the honor of being recognized in the Florida Veteran's Hall of Fame and how much he appreciated the recognition. He introduced himself to new attendees and explained the Veterans Treatment Court and its function. The next date for the Veterans Treatment Court will be November 18, 2022, at 10:00 am in the annex of the Courthouse. Then on December 2nd and 16th there will be sessions held. On December 16th, there will be three graduations, maybe four. Mr. Leslie represents the mentors for St. Johns and Putnam Counties. They've had 114 veteran participants in the program since January 2017. Sixty-two have graduated and there are currently 36 in-flow. Sixteen of the 114 did not complete the program, some are considered successful they just didn't reach all the requirements of the court during their probation and once their probation is complete, the court has no jurisdiction. Some have volunteered to stay. Of the 16 not completed, 5 have passed away. The latest being a 23-year-old that passed due to a drug overdose. Still looking for mentors to help with the program and some of the past graduates are volunteering. Anyone looking to join the mentor program for the Veteran's Treatment Court are urged to talk to Mr. Leslie.

NEW BUSINESS:

Due to the absence of Vice Chairman Ray Quinn, Chairman Dudley gave an update for “Wreaths Across America” program. The program is to place wreaths on the graves of our Veterans in the oldest National Cemetery in America here in St. Augustine. The speaker for this year’s program will be City Fire Chief, Carlos Aviles, he is also a 20-year National Guard member. A handout was provided for donations. As of the date of the meeting, we are only about one-third of the way of acquiring the funds to place the wreaths, approximately \$8,000 is still needed to reach the goal. The price of the wreaths has not changed, \$15 per wreath, if you purchase two, the sponsor gets an additional wreath – so that is three wreaths for \$30. Saturday, December 17th is when the wreaths will be placed. Volunteers will place the wreaths at the event that starts at 12:00. Everyone and their families are invited to attend.

Chairman Dudley spoke of Veterans Day Program, November 11th at the Anastasia Baptist Church that had to be cancelled due to the weather and flooding of the streets. The two walls, the Global War on Terrorism and Vietnam Traveling Wall could not be transported due to the weather. The guest speaker also sent an email stating that he had been called to Tallahassee for the Governor’s Hurricane Watch Committee, that he is a member of, and he had to cancel his speech for the ceremony. So, the ceremony had to be cancelled. There will be no makeup day as there is only one “Veteran’s Day.” The 2022 program on the Global War on Terrorism will now be the program for Veteran’s Day program in November 2023. The next major program will be the Memorial Day Program at the St. Augustine National Cemetery.

Chairman Dudley discussed growing veterans’ homelessness that we are experiencing in St. Johns County and some of the things that we are doing to help with this dire situation. The most expensive way to house homeless veterans is to put them up in hotels. St. Johns County does not have a shelter for homeless veterans. Chairman Dudley has been working for years trying to get this problem resolved. Homelessness is at a crisis level here in SJC and especially the City of St. Augustine. The City Manager, John Reagan, gave a report to the City Council members on the homeless situation. Sheriff Hardwick also gave a report to the City Council and the cost of housing them in the jail. The recidivism rate is high on those homeless in St. Johns County. Chairman Dudley was encouraged after attending the City Council Meeting and the plans that are being put into place in terms of how to deal with the homeless. The City Council voted to start looking for a facility, home, property, etc. within the City to convert into a homeless shelter. We need to provide a safe place to house these people. After meeting with several people and discussing this problem, Chairman Dudley is feeling encouragement in dealing with this homeless situation within the city and the county in the future.

Michael Goodman spoke of the upcoming Inter-Service Industry Training Simulation and Education Conference held for 11 days at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL. It is the cutting-edge technology from many companies that support the war fighter. There are over 600 vendors from all over

the world. It is a huge pipeline for training in all branches of the military. Anyone wishing to attend should see Michael and he will help get you in and waive the \$125 admission fee.

Joe Snowberger spoke of ALICE report and how the organization deals with limited income situation for our veterans. He also spoke of a second report, the ENDEVORS report, just for NE Florida and community and wellness center for our veteran population. Also, they are looking of volunteers for the Military Lounge at the Jacksonville International Airport.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William Dudley, Chairman

Ray A. Quinn, Vice Chairman



The State of Florida established the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame in 2011 to recognize and honor those military veterans who, through their works and lives during and after military service, have made a significant contribution to the State of Florida, their city, town and community through civic, business, public service and other worthy pursuits.



The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Society, Inc. was formed in 2019 as a supportive non-profit organization to provide financial and administrative support to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs and the Florida Veterans Foundation as requested to insure the continuing success of the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.

JOHN LESLIE

[Leslie \(fvhofsociety.org\)](http://www.fvhofsociety.org)

<https://www.fvhofsociety.org/leslie.html>



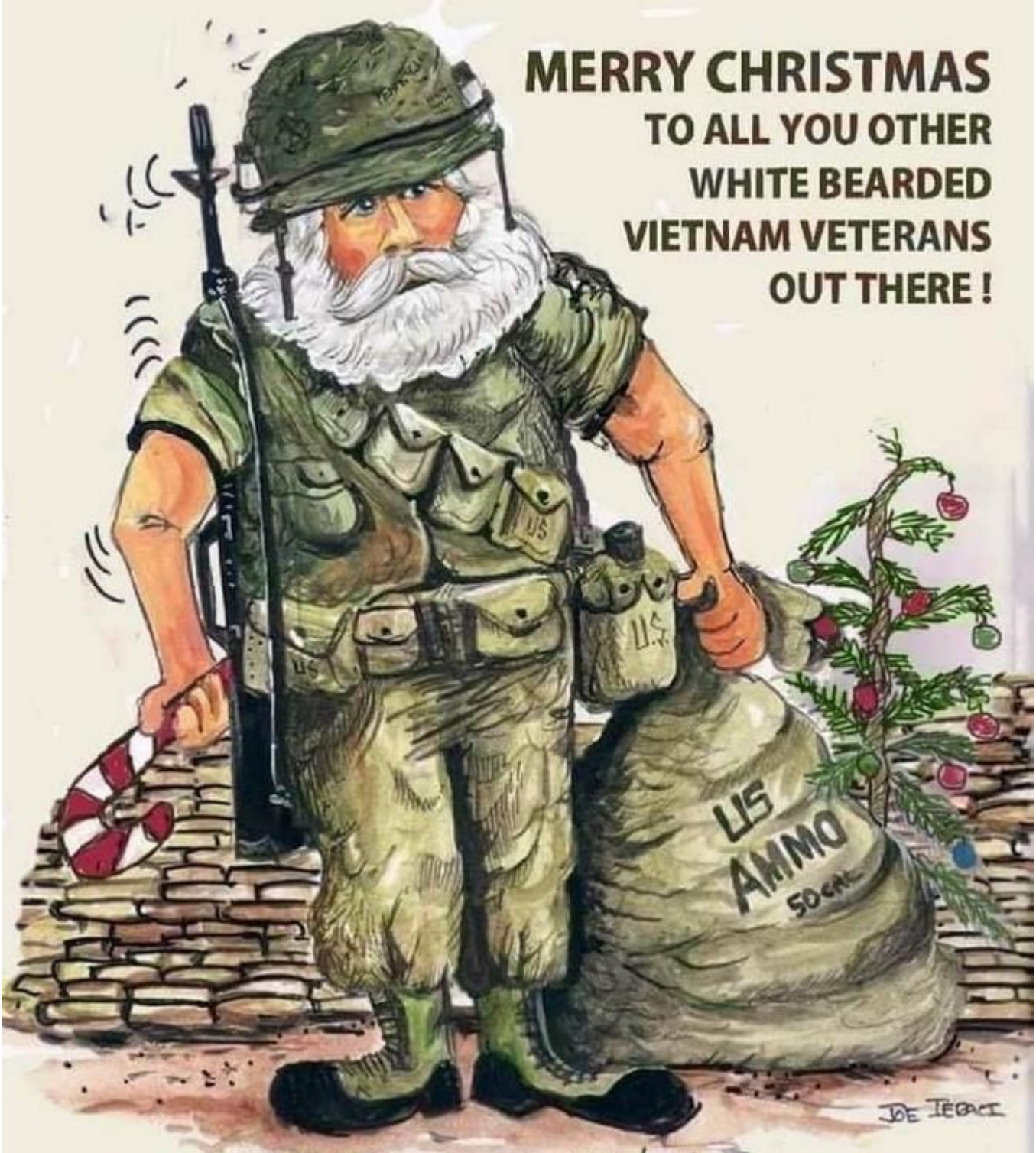
ANTHONY D'ALEO

[D'Aleo \(fvhofsociety.org\)](http://www.fvhofsociety.org)

<https://www.fvhofsociety.org/daleo.html>



**MERRY CHRISTMAS
TO ALL YOU OTHER
WHITE BEARDED
VIETNAM VETERANS
OUT THERE !**





Florida Guard Team -

As we head into the peak of holiday season, I want to thank each of you for your extraordinary work over the last year. Unlike recent years – when we were focused on establishing a new normal in the midst of the pandemic – we were recently reminded of the most familiar threat to our state: hurricanes. Following a relatively calm storm season last year we were blasted by Hurricane Ian, the most devastating storm to hit our state since Hurricane Michael in 2018. As powerful as Ian was, your response efforts were more so, and we demonstrated to our citizens, once again, our compassion and dedication to preserving life and protecting property.

In addition to hurricane response, our Soldiers and Airmen have deployed all over the world this past year. Task Force Gator deployed to the Ukraine to assist in training their military forces. Other elements of the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team served throughout the Middle East, while the 114th Space Control Squadron served in AFRICOM. Numerous other units served overseas, on our southwest border and in our nation's capital, each answering the call to duty and leaving loved ones behind.

As we bring 2022 to a close and reflect on this year's accomplishments, I am filled with gratitude for your service. Serving as your Adjutant General has truly been the greatest honor of my career, and not a day goes by that I don't reflect on the value of your contributions to our state and nation. This holiday season, I encourage you to spend every available moment with your families. We would be nothing without the support of our spouses, children, and extended families, and I thank them for their commitment.

Beth and I wish you all a safe and joyous holiday and look forward to seeing you all in the new year!

**NEVER
UNDERESTIMATE AN
OLD MAN**



**WHO FLEW IN A
HUEY**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. Johns County announces new District 3 Commissioner and Interim Fire Chief

ST. AUGUSTINE, Florida, December 22, 2022 – Gov. Ron DeSantis has appointed Roy Alaimo to represent District 3 on the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners. Mr. Alaimo fills the seat left vacant by the untimely passing of Commissioner Paul Waldron, 53, in October 2022. District 3 covers the southeastern portion of the county. Mr. Alaimo is a former District Representative for the U.S. House of Representatives and previously served as the chair of the St. Johns County Planning and Zoning Agency. He is also the owner of Alaimo Strategies, a St. Augustine-based consulting firm.

“I am honored and humbled to be appointed by Gov. DeSantis to serve on the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners,” said Mr. Alaimo. “I am excited for the opportunity, and I look forward to serving the community.”



Mr. Alaimo will take the ceremonial oath of office during the Jan. 17, 2023, meeting. He will serve on the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners until the 2024 election.

The St. Johns County Fire Rescue Department also announces Raymond Scott Bullard as the new interim fire rescue chief. Interim Fire Rescue Chief Bullard’s appointment comes after the retirement of Chief Jeffrey Prevatt, who served St. Johns County for more than 40 years. Bullard is a 21-year St. Johns County Fire Rescue veteran who has served the department in various operational ranks, including firefighter, engineer, lieutenant, captain, and battalion chief.

“Serving the people of St. Johns County has been one of the greatest honors of my life. I’m looking forward to continuing that service as the Interim Fire Rescue Chief and leading the best fire department in Florida and the nation,” he said.

Interim Fire Rescue Chief Bullard was selected as the 2013 Fire Rescue Paramedic of the Year and has been instrumental in developing several department initiatives, such as the Firefighter Development Program and the Live Fire Instructor Training Program. St. Johns County Administration will continue the process of selecting a permanent fire rescue chief. Once a selection has been made, it will be announced to the public.



###

The Veterans Legacy Program is offering a new way for Americans connect with their history. Through the program, VA's National Cemetery Administration is forging partnerships with academic institutions to engage students and professors alike in discovering the stories of service and sacrifice found in VA's national cemeteries.

Dr. Amelia Lyons is leading the University of Central Florida's team researching these stories. her students are researching Florida Veterans who fought in World War I and are interred at Florida National Cemetery. Along with Lyons, Dr. Barbara Gannon and four colleagues are teaching research skills that will help UCF students learn more about Florida history through its Veterans.

Researching Veterans who served a century ago can be challenging. Through archival research, they learn when their assigned Veteran served and when they came back. Using materials such as Census records, marriage certificates, newspapers and genealogical records, students began piecing together the lives of these Veterans. Many soldiers, sailors, and Marines gave the ultimate sacrifice in World War I, but many also came home. Students were able to assemble the Veterans' post-War lives. Ken Holliday, an Army Veteran, even found that his WWI Veteran had a son who served in WWII, and they are both buried in the same section of Florida National Cemetery. This was not an easy discovery, as the son had changed the spelling of his last name.

Bringing college students to the national cemetery is only half of the program. On May 19, UCF students were at Florida National Cemetery with 150 seventh-graders to teach them about the Veterans who came from their community. For students who otherwise only thought about, say, World War I as "arrows on a map," they have a new understanding of American history through Veterans. They now think about people from Florida serving in World War I and understand that Americans from every state and territory wore the uniform and contributed to the victory.



Continued on next page

VLP 2022-2023



- UCF faculty and student researchers support educators
- Teachers will produce:
 - A biography of a Veteran buried in SANC
 - Mini-themed tour of SANC
 - Lesson plan for their class assignment
- Teachers around the state
- Potentially working with any of the 9 national cemeteries in Florida

SANC and UCF History Department's Theme of Reparations



- Book: *Lost Soldiers*
- UCF Course and Program: *History 3900: U.S. Empire and Gender*
- *Florida Through Soldier's Eyes: An Ancestral Journey*
- UCF's *Reparations* website: www.ucf.edu/reparations
- Program dates: Jan 7

Why We Do This Work



Reparations

- Search for historical information
- Examine historical records
- Identify historical events
- Determine how to repair damage

Education

- Search for historical information
- Examine historical records
- Identify historical events
- Determine how to repair damage



Thank you, **Quentin**

Webpages and Contacts

- UCF VLP Website: www.ucf.edu/vlp
- UCF's Department of History: www.ucf.edu/history
- UCF's Florida Through Soldier's Eyes: www.ucf.edu/ftse
- UCF's Reparations Website: www.ucf.edu/reparations
- UCF's History Department: history@ucf.edu
- UCF's Florida Through Soldier's Eyes: ftse@ucf.edu
- UCF's Reparations Website: reparations@ucf.edu

From Hope 4 Veterans

For those of you having BREAST CANCER or any kind of GYN Cancer such as Uterine or Ovarian. I want you to clearly understand that is now a presumptive condition under the new VA PACT Act. It falls under "Reproductive Cancer". Contact a Claims Service Officer and file your claim today.

The image shows a printed document with the title "New Presumptive Conditions" in a large, bold font. The document is divided into several sections. The first section explains that to get a VA disability rating, your disability must connect to your military service. For some conditions, the VA automatically assumes (or "presumes") that your service caused your condition. The VA calls these "presumptive conditions," and they are established by law or regulation. The second section states that if you have a presumptive condition, you don't need to prove that your service caused the condition. You only need to meet the service requirements for the presumption. The third section, titled "FOR GULF WAR-ERA AND POST-9/11 VETERANS", lists several cancers that are now presumptive: Brain cancer, Gastrointestinal cancer of any type, and Glioblastoma. The fourth section, titled "FOR VIETNAM-ERA VETERANS", lists two new Agent Orange presumptive conditions: Asthma that was diagnosed after service and Chronic bronchitis. The fifth section, titled "These illnesses are now presumptive:", lists a long list of conditions: Melanoma, Neck cancer of any type, Pancreatic cancer, Reproductive cancer of any type, Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type, Asthma that was diagnosed after service, Chronic bronchitis, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), Chronic rhinitis, Chronic sinusitis, Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis, Emphysema, Granulomatous disease, Interstitial lung disease (ILD), Pleuritis, Pulmonary fibrosis, and Sarcoidosis.

New Presumptive Conditions

To get a VA disability rating, your disability must connect to your military service. For some conditions, the VA automatically assumes (or "presumes") that your service caused your condition. The VA calls these "presumptive conditions," and they are established by law or regulation.

If you have a presumptive condition, you don't need to prove that your service caused the condition. You only need to meet the service requirements for the presumption.

The PACT Act adds more than 20 health conditions to the presumptive list of conditions.

FOR GULF WAR-ERA AND POST-9/11 VETERANS
These cancers are now presumptive:

- Brain cancer
- Gastrointestinal cancer of any type
- Glioblastoma

- Melanoma
- Neck cancer of any type
- Pancreatic cancer
- Reproductive cancer of any type
- Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type

These illnesses are now presumptive:

- Asthma that was diagnosed after service
- Chronic bronchitis
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Chronic rhinitis
- Chronic sinusitis
- Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis
- Emphysema
- Granulomatous disease
- Interstitial lung disease (ILD)
- Pleuritis
- Pulmonary fibrosis
- Sarcoidosis

FOR VIETNAM-ERA VETERANS
Two new Agent Orange presumptive conditions:

National League of POW/MIA Families

SE Region unveiling of "The Men Are the Mission" ...now we see their faces on black granite.

"For the Families with shattered hearts, actively seeking their loved ones return home" inscribed on the poster. All 1,582 faces of our missing and unaccounted-for Vietnam War Veterans.



From American Legion 5th District FL

IMPORTANT VETERAN INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

NEVER release an ORIGINAL copy.

APPOINT an administrator for minor children.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE: contact your County Veterans' Service Officer



55 Bank Street | Sussex, NJ | 07461 | 973-875-2068 | EIN 81-1804210

Join us as we gather resources for Project Help in Jacksonville FL.

Beginning in December, Project will be interviewing for non-paid internships and volunteers. They have a number of events and tasks to share with the public and getting the word out requires some help.

Who are the best candidates for these tasks? Recent retirees, students and graduates from college who have some writing skills, social media, organizational skills and grant writing experience.

If you have couple of hours a week to contribute, you will gain some useful skills and things you can use on your resume down the road. Being an intern makes you part of the team that drives Project Help's success. If you are looking for a more permanent position, you can become a volunteer and even grow into a board position or team leader.

The Project Help mission is to assist military and veterans through difficult situations and facilitate a path to success. "We work with the homeless and forgotten heroes who are down on their luck as well as those who have simply fallen upon hard times", said Kyle Mitchell, VP of Operations for Project Help.

If you think this sounds like something you want to be involved with, please contact Kyle at (904) 304-6228 for an application and a conversation or you can go to their website at www.ProjectHelp.us and click on the Volunteer button on the home page and fill out the form online and you will be contacted by Kyle or his representative.



ATTENTION: MILITARY MEN CURRENTLY IN TRANSITION AND/OR VETERANS

**Have you been looking for help and direction
but getting very slow or no response?**

Project Help has a program just for you, coming in January 2023

A peer to peer support group offering a safe place to:

- Connect with other veterans
- Have open discussions, share experiences & problem solve
- Make new friends and help each other navigate the hurdles of life after service
- Meet and learn from other veterans who have successfully transitioned

A WARRIOR'S
Welcome

LEARN MORE & REGISTER AT
projecthelp.us/warriorwelcome



The Jacksonville Naval Museum Hours

OPEN
BUSINESS HOURS

MONDAY	CLOSED	TO	CLOSED
TUESDAY	CLOSED	TO	CLOSED
WEDNESDAY	9AM	TO	3PM
THURSDAY	9AM	TO	3PM
FRIDAY	9AM	TO	3PM
SATURDAY	9AM	TO	4PM
SUNDAY	10AM	TO	4PM

**LAST GROUP ON 30
MINUTES BEFORE CLOSING**

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Castillo de San Marcos National Monument

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

It's a National Monument, and at over 315 years old, it's the oldest structure in St. Augustine. It's also one of the main attractions visitors to St. Augustine come to see.

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

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



Fort Mantanzas



What follows is the back story of the fort.

Jean Ribault returns to Florida

Meanwhile, a Spanish explorer named Pedro Menendez de Aviles arrived in Florida. Spain had also claimed sovereignty over Florida. Menendez wanted to drive the French out of Florida. He built a fort at St. Augustine, just south of Fort Caroline, and prepared his men for battle. In September of 1565, Spanish forces, led by Menendez and consisting of 500 of his men, marched overland from their newly established settlement at San Agustín (St. Augustine), some 40 miles distant, and overran the French colony, killing many of the French defenders, and ending France's effort to build a permanent settlement in Florida. Rene Laudonnière was wounded in the Spanish attack. He managed to escape to France where he documented the events of his tragedy. Laudonnière died in 1582.

At the same time Menendez was attacking Ft. Caroline Ribault tried to capture St. Augustine! It would be a most frustrating and life ending disaster. His ships were destroyed in a severe storm. Ribault's forces, crushed on the Daytona Beaches, had no other option but to march northward in hopes of attacking St. Augustine. The effort might have succeeded if they were not stopped at Matanzas Inlet, the southern entrance to St. Augustine Harbor. Without tools and sufficient lumber, the French could not cross the waterway.

Menendez found the worn French on the south side of the Inlet. Some rich Frenchmen offered payment for their lives, but Menendez refused. He brought Ribault across the Inlet in a rowboat and accepted formal surrender. Ten Frenchmen at a time were brought across the waterway, and with their hands tied behind them, marched behind sand dunes to be executed.

When it was Ribault's turn to die, he told Menendez he was proud to be a Lutheran. He was stabbed to death by Menendez' orders October 12, 1565. Only ten Catholic

French and six cabin boys were spared from the ordeal. The Inlet became known as "Mantanzas" or "massacre" Inlet. That ended the French presence in this part of North America.



After this massacre the Spanish decided they needed an alert system for their “back door” and in 1569 built a wooden watchtower manned by 6 soldiers. This system had men who watched the ocean for possible threats. If one materialized someone would return to St. Augustine to alert the city.

In 1740 Gen James Oglethorpe, who had founded the colony of Georgia (which was on land claimed by Spain) lay siege to St. Augustine by blocking the Matanzas River. Oglethorpe withdrew because of the massive fort and the approaching hurricane season. Governor Manuel de Montiano decided a more reliable stone structure should be built and was accomplished by engineer, Pedro Ruiz de Olano. After the English gained control by the treaty in 1763, they also used it as a watchtower. When the U.S. gained control of Florida in 1821 the fort was in ruins. Here is a photo taken in 1912 of the ruin. In 1924 the fort was proclaimed a national monument. In 1933 control was transferred from the war department to the National Park Service. After much stabilization and restoration it is now in similar condition and design to the original.

The fort is made of coquina and in 1750 had 5 cannon mounted covering all approaching directions. Today there are 2 cast iron cannons that were mounted in 1793. A water cistern that holds 1,500 gallons of water is at the rear of the deck.

The island on which the fort is located is called Rattlesnake Island and covers 22 acres.

From The Marine Times

Marine Corps' top dog promoted to private 1st class

By Irene Loewenson

Pfc. Chesty XVI, mascot of the Marine Corps walks back to his seat during a promotion ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington, December 13th, 2022. (Lance Cpl. Pranav Ramakrishna/Marine Corps)



WASHINGTON, D.C. — It's not often that the secretary of the Navy speaks at the promotion ceremony of a Marine who is picking up the rank of private first class. Then again, Pfc. Chesty XVI is not just any Marine.

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro personally changed the Marine Corps mascot and English bulldog into a dress-blue-Charlies-style onesie bearing an E-2 chevron at a ceremony held at Marine Barracks Washington on Tuesday. The promotion was well earned, according to Del Toro.

“Since you relieved your predecessor, you’ve amassed a nearly spotless record,” Del Toro said. “Literally. No spots on the rug, no sword biting, no assaults on your superiors and no barking in silent drill.”

Pfc. Chesty XVI enlisted in the Marine Corps in February and relieved Lance Cpl. Chesty XV of his duties in May. Lance Cpl. Chesty XV was reportedly a handful, so much so that Del Toro had to give the bulldog an official pardon at his retirement ceremony.

Chesty the 15th, the lovable bulldog mascot for the Marines in Washington

D.C., got a special pardon at his retirement ceremony.

In contrast, his successor has mostly obeyed official orders to sit at a majority of the summer's parades, according to Col. Robert A. Sucher, commanding officer of Marine Barracks Washington. Unlike Chesty XV, Chesty XVI also hasn't attacked any Marines' scabbards or tried to jump on guests at parades, said Cpl. Jesus A. Moras, handler to both mascots.

In a nod to the Marine moniker "Devil Dog," the Corps has had an English bulldog as its official mascot for a century. The first, Jiggs, enlisted as a private in 1922 and rocketed to the rank of sergeant major in less than two years.

Since 1957, the mascots have borne the name Chesty in honor of legendary Marine Lt. Gen. Lewis "Chesty" Puller.

Still a puppy, Chesty XVI wears two medals on his uniform: the National Defense Service Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

Moras confirmed to Marine Corps Times that the private first class, in addition to being a good Marine, is a very good boy. In his off-duty moments, Pfc. Chesty XVI likes to walk around the barracks, according to Moras.

"For myself and the other Marines around here, sometimes you're having a bad day and you see Chesty walking around and it cheers you up, especially being away from family and away from home," Moras said.

When Marine Corps Times offered Chesty XVI the chance to comment on his promotion, he remained doggedly silent.

**National Cemetery Administration (NCA) U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

Pfc. Bill Toledo died May 5, 2016 and is interred at Santa Fe National Cemetery. He was 92.

It's Native American Heritage Month. The Navajo Code Talkers are an acclaimed group of Marines who spoke in their native language allowing for unencrypted communication that could be understood by the Japanese.

#PreservingVeteranLegacies

An interview he did with the National Archives is available here:

<https://www.loc.gov/.../legacie.../item/afc2001001.54889/...>

Photo Credits: Dress blues, Library of Congress website

Veterans Legacy Memorial

Obituary, Sante Fe New Mexican May 7, 2016





How the PACT Act is Already Helping Veterans

Veterans are applying for benefits and VA is expediting delivery

The PACT Act is a historic new law that will help VA provide health care and benefits to millions of toxic-exposed Veterans and their survivors. Since President Biden signed the PACT Act into law on August 10, VA has been hard at work implementing this landmark bipartisan legislation—and Veterans have already begun to apply for the benefits they've earned and deserve.

Here's an update on what's happened since August 10th:

Veterans are applying for the PACT Act benefits they deserve

The day after the PACT Act was signed into law (August 11), Veterans set an all-time record for filing online disability compensation claims. Since the PACT Act was signed, Veterans have filed more than 200,000 total claims—an increase of more than 21% over the same period last year. And to date, VA has already received more than 70,000 PACT Act-related claims from Veterans since August 10.

Thousands of Veterans participated in toxic exposure screening pilot

As a part of the PACT Act, VA will begin providing 5-minute toxic exposure screenings to all Veterans enrolled in VA health care. On September 6, VA began a pilot of this program—screening 13,380 Veterans across 12 medical centers over a 2-week period, and finding a 37.4% concern of exposure among those Veterans. These results will help VA make toxic exposure screenings available to all Veterans in early November, and more importantly, make sure that VA provides all toxic-exposed Veterans with the care they need and the benefits they deserve.

VA expedited the timeline to deliver benefits to Veterans as soon as possible

Instead of phasing-in conditions over the coming years (as outlined in the legislation), the Biden Administration decided to make all conditions in the PACT Act presumptive for benefits as of August 10, the day the bill was signed into law. We will begin processing these benefits on the earliest date possible, which is January 1.

VA will expand health care eligibility in October

On October 1, VA will expand and extend eligibility for VA health care for certain Veterans of the Gulf Wars and post-9/11 era. This expansion will increase health care eligibility for hundreds of thousands of toxic-exposed Veterans. Additionally, VA has already expanded health care eligibility for certain Veterans of the Vietnam War. More detailed information about this expansion can be found on [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT).

Meeting Veterans where they are

Within minutes of the PACT Act passing the Senate, VA launched [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT)—a one-stop-shop website where Veterans and their families can learn about the PACT Act and apply for health care or benefits. This website, which is available in English and Spanish, has garnered nearly 2.5 million views to date.

Apply now. VA encourages Veterans and survivors to apply now for the PACT Act-related benefits and care they deserve. All Veterans and survivors can go to [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT) or call us at 1-800-MYVA411 to learn more about what this legislation means for them.

STOKING SATURDAYS



COME TO SURF, HANG OUT, TALK STORY WITH OUR LOCAL HEROES. ALL MILITARY MEMBERS, VETERANS, FIRST RESPONDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES. DON'T KNOW HOW TO SURF? WE WILL TEACH YOU.

WHERE:

ST
AUGUSTINE



SCAN TO DONATE!!

WHEN:

FIRST
SATURDAY OF
THE MONTH
8AM-12PM

FOLLOW US ON FB
AND IG: @TFHY901

• EMAIL COMMUNITY@TASKFORCEHEROES.ORG
• FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TFHI.

• SIGN UP TODAY ON
TASKFORCEHEROES.ORG

★ ACTIVE DUTY ★ VETERANS ★ NATIONAL GUARD & RESERVE ★

MILITARY SUPPORT RETREATS

RETREATS FOR COMBAT VETERANS AND THEIR PRIMARY SUPPORT PERSON



~~Amelia Island~~
Florida

~~FULL JAN. 12-15~~

Marineland
Florida

★ FEB. 2-5

Sarasota
Florida

★ MAR. 23-26

Hiawassee
Georgia

★ APR. 13-16

From Thursday at 5:00pm – Sunday at 2:00pm



★ RESTORATION ★ RECREATION ★ RELAXATION ★

Strengthen and restore connections, enjoy the natural beauty of each location, be inspired by fun outdoor activities, learn about available support resources, and relax while exploring the stress coping concepts of Post Traumatic Growth.

★ Small, friendly group setting ★

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

★ Facilitated by Vets, Licensed Clinicians, and Community Nonprofit Support Organizations ★

Please note: Must be 18 to attend and no childcare is provided. Participants are responsible for travel.

TO LEARN MORE AND TO APPLY VISIT: [GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG/RETREATS](https://www.gratitudeamerica.org/retreats)



CHRISTOPHER DUKE
770-298-7654
DUKE@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG



★ ★ CITY OF JACKSONVILLE ★ ★

Veterans Stand Down

ALL VETERANS WELCOME: Homeless, At-Risk, Transitioning & Newly Retired

Army • Marines • Navy • Air Force • Coast Guard • National Guard • Space Force

Veterans Job Fair & Support Services

FRIDAY - JANUARY 27, 2023

10AM - 2PM | Jacksonville Fairgrounds | 510 Fairgrounds Place

• Employment Services • Medical Services • Shelter & Housing

Veterans Stand Down

SATURDAY - JANUARY 28, 2023

9AM - 2PM | Jacksonville Fairgrounds | 510 Fairgrounds Place

• VA Services • Food & Clothing
• Vet Center • Hygiene kits • Dental Services

For more information



Military Affairs & Veterans Department
(904) 255-5550

Accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Please contact Disabled Services at VM 255-5466, TTY 255-5475, or email your request to KaraT@coj.net.





Hello First Coast Honor Flight Supporters:

Our mission at First Coast Honor Flight (FCHF) is to provide a unique experience for our local Veterans in Washington D.C. to visit the memorials dedicated to honoring those who have served and sacrificed for our country.

We consider it our honor to give our Veterans the opportunity to remember, celebrate, grieve, and gain closure for the time they sacrificed for our country.

Unfortunately, the current limited commercial airline schedule from our Jacksonville Airport is not sufficient to provide our Veterans the experience they deserve in Washington D.C. Therefore, we have decided to postpone our planned October 2022 flight to April 2023.

We're making great progress towards an April 2023 flight which will allow us to bring more Veterans and allow more time for the true experience that we want to be able to give our Veterans.

Stay tuned for more information.

We would welcome any connections you may have and will be creating some fundraising opportunities for you to help us make our April 2023 flight a reality!

Your First Coast Honor Flight Team

Candace Mabry, Fundraising Director, First Coast Honor Flight

904-708-2445, cmabryfchf@gmail.com, www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

"We can't all be heroes, because somebody has to sit on the curb and applaud as they go by"

-Will Rogers



PROPERTY TAX BENEFITS FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY AND VETERANS

Certain property tax benefits are available to members of the Armed Forces.

Property Tax Oversight

Filing and Keeping Your Homestead Exemption

When a person serving in the Armed Forces owns and uses property as a homestead, the servicemember may rent the homestead property without abandoning the claim to the homestead exemption (see section 196.061, Florida Statutes).

A servicemember's next of kin or any other person who has written authorization may file a homestead exemption claim on behalf of a servicemember who cannot file in person because of a service obligation (see s. 196.071, F.S.).

Property Tax Exemptions and Discounts

Eligibility for property tax exemptions depends on satisfying certain requirements. Information is available from the property appraiser's office in the county where the veteran or surviving spouse owns a homestead or other property.

- An ex-servicemember who was honorably discharged, is a resident of Florida, and who is disabled to a degree of 10% or more because of misfortune or while serving during wartime may be entitled to a \$5,000 reduction in his or her property's assessed value. This exemption is not limited to homestead property. Under certain circumstances, the veteran's surviving spouse may be entitled to carry over the exemption. See Form [DR-501](#). (see s. 196.24, F.S.)
- Veterans who are Florida residents and were honorably discharged with a service-related total and permanent disability may be eligible for a total exemption from ad valorem taxes on property they own and use as their homesteads. A similar exemption is available to disabled veterans confined to wheelchairs. Under certain circumstances, the veteran's surviving spouse may be entitled to carry over the exemption. See Form [DR-501](#). (see ss. 196.081 and 196.091, F.S.)
- If they meet certain requirements, veterans 65 or older who are partially or totally permanently disabled may receive a discount on the assessed value of property that they own and use as homesteads. This discount carries over to the veteran's surviving spouse if the spouse holds the legal or beneficial title to the homestead, permanently resides there and has not remarried. The discount is a percentage equal to the percentage of the veteran's permanent, service-connected disability as determined by the United States Department of Veteran's Affairs. See Form [DR-501](#). (see s. 196.082, F.S.)



Eligible veterans who want to apply for these exemptions may apply before they receive the necessary documentation from the United States government or the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or its predecessor. After the property appraiser receives the documentation, the exemption will be effective as of the date of the original application. Please see the [How to Apply for a Refund](#) brochure for information about refunds.

- A member or former member of any branch of the United States military or military reserves, the United States Coast Guard or its reserves, or the Florida National Guard may receive an exemption if he or she was deployed during the previous calendar year outside the continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii in support of a designated operation (the Florida Legislature designates operations for this exemption). The percent of the taxable value that is exempt for the current year corresponds to the percent of time during the previous year when the service member was deployed on a designated operation. See Form [DR-501M](#). (see s. 196.173, F.S.)

You should file all required forms and applications for these exemptions with your county property appraiser. If the property appraiser denies your application, you may file a petition with the county's value adjustment board. For more information, see [Petitions to the Value Adjustment Board](#).

The Department of Revenue's website has more information about property tax benefits for active duty military and veterans and contact information for county officials.

<http://floridarevenue.com/property/Pages/Home.aspx>

LPGA
INTERNATIONAL



LPGA
INTERNATIONAL



ANNUAL

2ND

GOLF



20

23

TOURNAMENT

DONATION \$100 PER PERSON

Registration 7 am, 18 four-man teams, Lunch included

01. 07. 2023

call: Gabe 386.690.4008

1000 Champions Dr

Daytona Beach, FL 32124



LPGA INTERNATIONAL


<https://vva1048.com/golf-tournament>

8 am Shotgun, Raffle, Ball Drop, 50/50,...more



Red Phillips

The Men are the Mission!

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) is charged with accounting as fully as possible for our men. It is essential for DPAA to have additional funds to increase field operations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Contact both your Senators and ask to increase the DPAA budget from \$131 million to \$175 million for FY2023. There are 1,584 Americans still missing and unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War. No expense was spared to send them into battle...no expense should be spared to prioritize BRINGING THEM HOME!



National League of POW/MIA Families



The Men Are The Mission!

One photo of three airmen who took off on a night reconnaissance mission almost 55 years ago...still unaccounted for.

Three families of the many who still seek answers have come together, with one question: "Why haven't they come home?" The years have faded into decades awaiting their return. These are the faces that connect these three families to the crew of "QUIZSHOW09".

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) is charged with accounting as fully as possible for our men. It is essential for DPAA to have additional funds to increase field operations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Contact both your Senators and ask to increase the DPAA budget from \$131 million to \$175 million for FY2023. There are 1,584 Americans still missing and unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War. No expense was spared to send them into battle...no expense should be spared to prioritize BRINGING THEM HOME!

Blue Angels Show Schedule 2023

Jacksonville in October

Blue Angels

► 2023 | SHOW SCHEDULE

MARCH

11 | NAF El Centro, CA | NAF El Centro Annual Air Show
18 · 19 | NAS Point Mugu, CA | Point Mugu Air Show
25 · 26 | Barksdale AFB, LA | Defenders of Liberty Air Show

APRIL

1 · 2 | Lakeland, FL | Sun 'n Fun Aerospace Expo
15 · 16 | NAS Key West, FL | Southernmost Air Spectacular
22 · 23 | MCAS Beaufort, SC | MCAS Beaufort Air Show
29 · 30 | Fort Lauderdale, FL | Fort Lauderdale Air Show

MAY

6 · 7 | Corpus Christi, TX | Wings Over South Texas Air Show
13 · 14 | Scott AFB, IL | Scott AFB Air Show
20 · 21 | Seymour Johnson AFB, NC | Wings Over Wayne Air Show
24 | USNA, Annapolis, MD | U.S. Naval Academy Air Show
26 | USNA, Annapolis, MD | U.S. Naval Academy Fly Over
27 · 28 | Long Pond, PA | The Great Pocono Raceway Air Show

JUNE

10 · 11 | Smyrna, TN | The Great Tennessee Air Show
17 · 18 | Columbus, OH | Columbus Air Show

JULY

1 · 2 | Oklahoma City, OK | Tinker AFB Star Spangled Salute
8 | Pensacola Beach, FL | Pensacola Beach Air Show
15 · 16 | Duluth, MN | Duluth Air and Aviation Expo
22 · 23 | Milwaukee, WI | Milwaukee Air and Water Show

AUGUST

5 · 6 | Seattle, WA | Boeing SeaFair Air Show
12 · 13 | Billings, MT | Yellowstone International Air Show
19 · 20 | New Century, KS | KC Air Show
26 · 27 | Lincoln, NE | Guardians of Freedom Air Show

SEPTEMBER

2 · 4 | Toronto, ON, Canada | Canadian International Air Show
16 · 17 | NAS Oceana, VA | NAS Oceana Air Show
23 · 24 | MCAS Miramar, CA | MCAS Miramar Air Show
30 | McMinnville, OR | Oregon International Air Show

OCTOBER

1 | McMinnville, OR | Oregon International Air Show
7 · 8 | San Francisco, CA | San Francisco Fleet Week
14 · 15 | Grand Junction, CO | Grand Junction Air Show
21 · 22 | Jacksonville Beach, FL | Sea and Sky Air Show
28 · 29 | Greenfield, IN | Crossroads Air Show

NOVEMBER

3 · 4 | NAS Pensacola, FL | NAS Pensacola Homecoming Air Show

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

Our App got an upgrade! The free App is a quick and easy way to access benefit information, look for available jobs, and connect to the latest news regarding Veterans' issues. Get it now!

<https://app.floridavets.org/>

#FDVA #FLVets

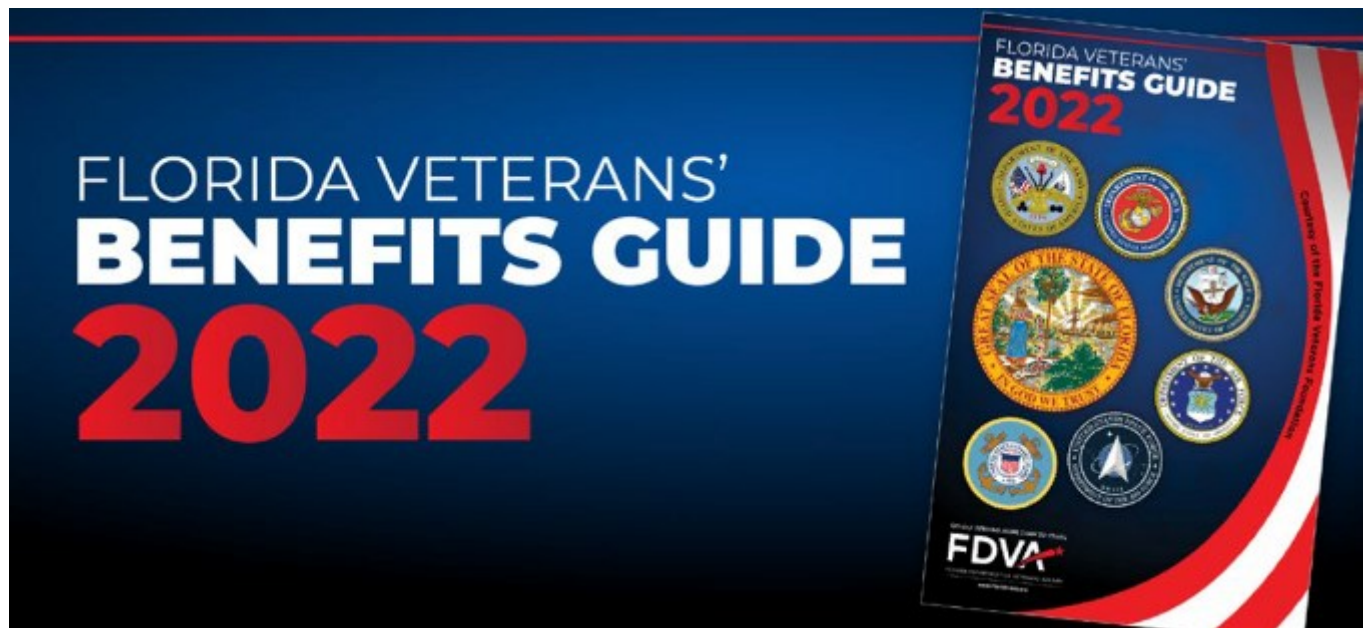
**GET OUR FREE
UPGRADED
APP.**

It won't take
up space on
your phone.



The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

Have you checked out the new 2022 Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide? It is now available for download. The annual guide helps connect Florida's Veterans and their families with earned federal and state benefits, services and support. It also contains helpful phone numbers and website addresses for additional information. To view online, click here: <https://bit.ly/3BovveB>. To download a copy for your records, click here: <https://bit.ly/3HYgTF0>.





FIRST COAST HONOR FLIGHT

Would love to come talk with you!

Can we come speak to your
organization
or church?

We would LOVE to share our
stories with you!

We are a new non-profit
and would love
to come share our goal
of honoring our local Veterans!
First Coast Honor Flight creates a
"once in a lifetime" day
of flying our local Veterans to Washington D.C.
to see our national memorials and
monuments.

Please help us spread the word by
connecting us with your groups!

Contact us at info@firstcoasthonorflight.org
or call 888-400-1185





Sponsorship Levels

First Coast Honor Flight is 100% dependent upon donations from generous people and organizations. Without your support, FCHF would not be able to transport WWII, Korean War, and other Northeast Florida Veterans to Washington, D.C. for a day of honor and remembrance.

Trip Sponsor : \$25,000

Honor Guard : \$10,000- \$24,999

Gold Star : \$5,000-\$9,999

Silver Star : \$2,500- \$4,999

Bronze Star : \$1,000- \$2,499

Contact FCHF @
info@firstcoasthonorflight.org for more
information on sponsorship packages

First Coast Honor Flight is a 501(c)3 corporation and
is in compliance with the Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act



First Coast Honor Flight Donation

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

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

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

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

www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

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

Name of Organization _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____ Email _____

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

Name _____

Address _____

Veteran? Yes _____ No _____ Relationship _____

Branch _____ Dates Served _____

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



VA SURVIVOR BENEFITS & THE PACT ACT

ESGR4U

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



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

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

How to Apply for DIC and/or Accrued Benefits

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



Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

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



Accrued Benefits

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

Additional Survivor Benefits Available:



Burials and Burial Allowance

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



Final Monthly Payment

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



Home Loan Guaranty

Certificate of Eligibility is available for surviving spouses receiving DIC.



Education and Training

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



Health Care

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

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

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

Dear Veterans,

A retired VA phone number may be putting your information at risk. The Department of Veterans Affairs established 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411) in 2020 to help Veterans, their family members, caregivers, and survivors understand and access the broad spectrum of VA benefits and services.

VA's previous information number, 1-844-MyVA311, was retired at that time. Since that transition, 1-844-MyVA311 has been repurposed by a non-federal entity claiming to be a medical equipment provider. Veterans may try to call VA using the 1-844-MyVA311 number and unintentionally divulge personal information.

It is imperative that Veterans are informed that 1-800-MyVA411 is the appropriate number to call for information regarding:

COVID-19 updates

Health care eligibility and enrollment

VA benefits, such as disability, compensation and pension, education programs, caregiver support, insurance, home loans, and burial headstones and markers among others

The nearest VA medical centers, benefits offices or cemeteries to Veterans, VA Medical Center operational updates and connection to VA Medical Center operators

Directory assistance and technical support for www.VA.gov

Debt and payment options

Thank you for your attention to this important information and please share with others who may be impacted.



LIVE ASSISTANCE
General information, directory assistance and technical support for VA.gov

VA HEALTH CARE
Eligibility, enrollment, locations and COVID-19

COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE
MISSION Act eligibility, copayments

NATIONAL CEMETERIES
Burial benefits, interment scheduling and headstone/Veteran marker

VETERANS CRISIS LINE
Immediate connection to caring, qualified responders

DEBT MANAGEMENT
Debt details, payment options and debtor rights

FACILITY LOCATOR
Locations of medical centers, benefits offices or cemeteries

BENEFITS ASSISTANCE
Information about a variety of VA benefits

HOMELESS VETERANS LINE
Information and support for homeless and at-risk callers

COVID-19 INFORMATION
Frequently asked questions and live assistance for COVID-related questions

FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

Visit: www.thefirewatch.org/watch-standers to learn more.

Thanks!

Nick Howland

Executive Director, The Fire Watch

www.thefirewatch.org

904.525.1761



From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

Subject: VA Transportation Assistance

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

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

From Michael Isam

The DAV van is now operating 5 days /week!

It will now transport a full capacity of riders.

Schedule your seat on the DAV Chapter 6 van.

It departs from the large parking lot of the clinic at 0600!!!

Contact the VA Clinic at 904-823-2954





Legal Aid for Veterans

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

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

1.866.486.6161

Call Today!

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



We Can Help With

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

Supported by the: **FDVA**
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL SERVICES
FLORIDA BAR AND JUDICIAL CENTER

Become a Watch Stander with The Fire Watch



You sacrificed for our country.

AT SILVER CREEK,
FREEDOM IS YOURS.

Because of your commitment, you helped us achieve the American Dream. At Silver Creek, we want to return the favor – by providing the freedom, independence and personal attention you deserve. Since 2016, Silver Creek has served the St. Augustine community, offering military retirees and seniors at large a vibrant, community lifestyle complete with everything except the burdens of home maintenance. Impeccably-appointed independent concierge living, assisted living and memory care apartments homes, first-class amenities, holistic wellness programming, gourmet, all-day dining and abounding opportunities for enrichment are just a few of the many options you'll find.

Silver Creek provides residents the perfect balance of elegant, upscale living with the warmth and intimacy of home – inspiring socialization and fellowship within a close-knit community.

Call **800-665-9492** to schedule a tour and learn more.

SILVER CREEK

THE FUTURE OF SENIOR LIVING

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



Independent Concierge Living – Assisted Living
Memory Care – Short-Term Stays

Assisted Living Facility #12928

Vietnam Veterans of America



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

Chapter/President/email/Location

1046	Tony D'Aleo	adaleo5579@gmail.com; Duval
1048	Bob Adkins	adk123robert@outlook.com
1059	David Treffinger	dtreffinger433@msn.com; Clay
1084	Ron Howard	ronehoward@gmail.com
1088	Roy (Corky) Rudd	corkstopper50@yahoo.com; Nassau
1092	Forest Hope	foresthope@usa.net; Gainesville
1134	Marvin Lagle	mdlagle@gmail.com; Baker



REMEMBER WHAT OUR MEDAL STANDS FOR:

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



PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO MEET VETERANS' UNIQUE NEEDS

Advance Care Planning

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

Palliative Care

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

Hospice Care

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

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

Complementary Therapies

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

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

We Need Volunteers

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

WE HONOR VETERANS
Partner

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

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



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

VET 007 5/20

Mission Statement:

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



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

What the Council has done:

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

SA-0003147064-01

Veterans Crisis Line

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

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

STAND BY THEM
Confidential help for Veterans and their families

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK (8256)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

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

Military/Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255

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

Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255

Veterans Councils of Northeast Florida



BAKER COUNTY

President: Larry Porterfield

Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

Location:

MacClenny Primitive Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall on North Boulevard

Time : 1800 (6pm)

CLAY COUNTY

President: Harry Silvers

Meetings:

First Wednesday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1400 (2pm)

DUVAL COUNTY

President

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37
Main Building
San Juan Avenue

Time: 1900 (7 pm)

NASSAU COUNTY

President: Mike Doran

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

St. Johns County

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

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



We are inviting all veterans to visit our website at:

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

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

Please join our group on Facebook at:

<http://veteranscouncilsjc.org>

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

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

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

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

He can be contacted at webmaster@veteranscouncilsjc.org

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

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

Send to: rothfeldm@gmail.com



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

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

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

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

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

***The Veterans Council will meet at the County Health & Human Services Building,
200 San Sebastian View
Auditorium, 1st floor***

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

(physical location)

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

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

*Service is by appointment.
Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161
Joseph McDermott, VSO
Travis Neidig, Assistant VSO
Angela McKenzie, Assistant VSO
Lori Chapman, Assistant VSO
Anna Marie Scott, Office Specialist*

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