



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

P.O. Box 2117

St. Augustine, FL 32085

Bill Dudley, Publisher

Michael Rothfeld, Editor

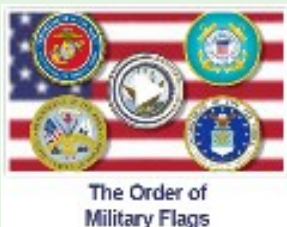
Volume 15, Issue 1

From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

January 2025

Inside this Edition

- Veterans Village decorated
- Veteran Council's 2024 Activities Summary
- WAA 2024 St Augustine National
- Honoring a Veteran no one knew
- Retiree Appreciation Day
- Disabled veteran gets new roof
- Veterans Council November, 2024 Minutes
- Blue Angels return to Jacksonville
- Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- The Gary Sinise Foundation
- Pedro Menendez HS Honors veterans
- Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Part II
- St. Augustine Military Ball
- Vietnam Veterans Ceremony in Clay County
- Jacksonville Veterans Stand Down
- All Veterans Reunion in Melbourne, FL
- NEVER FORGET 1
- Vietnam Veteran Everett Alvarez Awarded



Fellow Veterans,

December has been a busy month for your Veterans Council. Our Holiday Lighting program at Veterans Village on Dec. 11 was a huge success. The FPL volunteers working with many other volunteers from the community completely placed strings of lights throughout the entire campus and decorated a Christmas tree in front of the Veterans Village parking lot in less than two hours. Several of our elected officials including the Mayor of St. Augustine Beach and members of St. Johns County Commissioners showed up and worked diligently to help with the lighting decorations. After the lighting task was completed, members of the choir from Anastasia Baptist Church arrived to entertain everyone with Christmas carols and ladies from one of the ABC church Life Groups were on hand to present all the veterans with a Christmas stocking. It was a joyful event and

was hugely successful in raising the spirits of the veterans for this Christmas season.

This year's Wreaths Across America program was held on Saturday, Dec. 14 at the St. Augustine National Cemetery. Another record number of people showed up to help lay wreaths on the 1240 headstones and to hear Judge Howard McGillin's remarks giving some historical perspective to the WAA program and individuals buried at the country's oldest National cemetery. This program has grown exponentially every year since the Veterans Council assumed the responsibility more than ten years ago and has become a favorite of the community for local involvement. The Veterans Council intends to continue this program into perpetuity and wreaths sales over the past several years have helped make this possible.

I am eternally grateful for the outpouring of veterans and other concerned citizens who attended last Tuesday's County Commission meeting



and spoke on behalf of the Veterans Council and me personally. It was a strong message for the accomplishments of the Veterans Council over the years that has worked tirelessly to help so many of our veterans in our community that have fallen on hard times or have had difficulty in finding their way through the VA system. We ask nothing more than to be able to continue providing that service to those who have served this nation in uniform.

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County wishes everyone a Happy Holiday and extends our appreciation for all the support we have received from this giving community in 2024.

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

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



Upcoming Speakers

January 30, 2025

Katie Eller, Director of Development, HorsePlay Therapy Center
Robert Speta, US Navy Veteran, First Coast News Meteorologist

February 27, 2025

Maggie Beckerman, VP/Trainer, K9Line, Inc.
Dr George Ann Rice, Patriots to Education, Zoom presentation

March 27

Anne Kazel, Author of West Point '41
Bataan. North Africa. Sicily. Omaha Beach. The Ardennes. West Point 41: The Class That Went to War and Shaped America is an uplifting story of ordinary young men in extraordinary times, in extraordinary places, who graduated directly into the teeth of battle and displayed unwavering leadership, honor, duty, and determination.

April 24

Matt Mildorf, Outreach Recruiting Mgr, Warrior Scholar
Ron Howard, the National Pathfinders Assoc. Mission

May 29

Rich Possert, Operation New Uniform
James Smith, Holly Powers, St. Augustine Lighthouse

June 26

Rick McAllister, Vietnam "Tunnel Rats"

Volunteers decorate the Veterans Village in St. Augustine



Volunteers from Florida Power & Light, Home Again and the Veterans Council of St. Johns County decorated Veterans Village.

A Summary of the Council's Activities for 2024

Our Council was established in July 2001 by proclamation of the SJC Board of County Commissioners.



The VC has grown exponentially since that time and today is considered one of the most active and engaged Councils in the State supporting our veterans.

Each year, the VCSJC working with the local MOAA Chapter conducts a Memorial Day Service at the SA National Cemetery. We also host a Veterans Day program each Nov.11 at Anastasia Baptist Church that is attended by well over 1000 attendees. In December each year we conduct the Wreaths Across America program at SANC that usually has about 500 in attendance.

The Veterans Council was responsible for establishing a Veterans Treatment Court about 7 years ago that has been highly successful. We have graduated 110 veterans from the program to date and have 3 more scheduled to graduate this month. In March of this year, the VCSJC in collaboration with Home Again St. Johns purchased a motel in St. Augustine and have repurposed it into a homeless shelter for veterans. This has provided us with the ability to remove over 20 homeless veterans from the street.

In addition to the above activities, the VCSJC meets with needy veterans on a very regular basis to provide them with help with their financial needs such as rent, food, insurance, car payments, house and automobile repairs, utility payments, security deposits and 1st month rent when moving into apartments or a house. We also purchase gas cards as well as food cards for those veterans

who are in need of gas and food. We conduct a monthly visit to Aldi's to restock the food pantry at the local VSO office. The Veterans Council has a goodly amount of donated clothing and household furniture that we provide those veterans and their family who are in need of such.

In addition to the above items that all have a financial implication, we assist veterans with assistance in arranging for honor guards for funerals, Memorial services, and other similar needs by family members. We support two local high schools JROTC program honor cadets with a \$1000 scholarship each year at graduation. We recently made a \$1000 donation to the Young Marines in Jacksonville to help with their upcoming trip to Pearl Harbor next year.

Our income for the Council comes from donations from local organizations, various grant programs, individual donations, estate settlements, and gifts in kind. Last year, our expenditures were a little over \$131000. 98% of every dollar that is taken in goes back out to support veterans. Our Board is made up of all volunteers and no member of our Board receives any compensation.

Any assistance to help by monetary donations or gifts in kind are greatly appreciated. I would be happy to meet with you or anyone from Mission Barbecue at any time to talk more about our services in helping veterans.

Respectfully, Bill Dudley Chairman, Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. anuday00@aol.com 904-806-4712

St. Augustine honors veterans on Wreaths Across America Day 2024

Wreaths Across America 2024 St. Augustine National Cemetery

Lucia Viti, St. Augustine Record

On Saturday, Dec. 14, St. Augustine's National Cemetery was among more than 3,700 veterans cemeteries, including nine in Florida, to honor servicemen and women from the Revolutionary War to present day by adorning 1,240 headstones with wreaths as a part of National Wreaths Across America day.



St. Augustine's American Legion Post 37 motorcade and the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office escorted a truck filled with wreaths from I-95 to the oldest national cemetery in America and were greeted by St. Augustine's Boy Scouts of America, America's young Sea Cadets, Army Junior Reserve Training Officers, CAP Cadets, ladies of the American Legion post 194, St. Augustine Beach Mayor Dylan Rumrell, Sheriff Robert Hardwick and his wife, Kendall, plus local and civic leaders and volunteers.

County Commission Chair Krista Joseph and Commissioners Sarah Arnold, Christian Whitehurst and Ann Taylor were also in attendance.

Retired Air Force Lt. Col. William Dudley, chairman of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, served as master of ceremony.

The ceremonial protocol of placing wreaths began with the family members of those buried in the cemetery. Once the wreath was set, the family stepped back, recited the name on the headstone and said a prayer or offered words of gratitude. Veterans add a military salute

once the wreath was placed.

Gold Star mothers went first.

Joseph, a Gold Star mom, expressed her gratitude to Dudley for allowing Gold Star Moms the privilege of placing wreaths before anyone.

"The gesture was kind and generous," she said. "Dudley did a won-



derful job leading the ceremony."

Dudley said that although emotional, the ceremony focuses on pride, not sadness.

"Wreaths Across America not only honors our veterans on this hallowed ground, it impresses upon our youth the impotence of our mission to remember, honor, teach," he told the St. Augustine Record.

"This is an important lesson for veterans to pass on to today's youth."

According to Dudley, the Veterans Council has worked with the Wreaths Across America program for over a decade.

"The Veterans Council has avowed to assure every headstone in the St. Augustine National Cemetery would have a holiday wreath," he said. "We have honored that commitment every year since assuming the task."

Judge Howard McGillin Jr. from the Seventh Judicial Circuit served as keynote speaker. McGillin, who served in the U.S. Army for 24 years, presides over the Unified Family Court Division and Veterans Treatment Court at the Richard O. Watson Judicial Center in St. Augustine.

"I commend Bill Dudley and the Veterans Council for once again hosting an event that reminds us to honor those who have served in our armed forces," said Commissioner Whitehurst."

Taylor described the event as powerful and emotional.

"Seeing each individual honored made it so special," she said. "I felt such gratitude to those men and women who gave their lives for our freedoms."

Arnold underscored how meaningful the event is nationwide.

"It was an honor to attend Wreaths Across America in St. Augustine and even more meaningful knowing that at exactly the same time my family and I were placing wreaths in St. Augustine, a wreath was being placed on my grandfather's headstone in Arlington National Cemetery," she said.





‘Simply blown away’: Veterans community comes together to honor life of man many of them never knew



JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Robert Watkins and his daughter Gisela Bell showed up at the Jacksonville National Cemetery on Tuesday to honor a member of their family.

Richard Watkins was Robert Watkins' brother and passed away at 73 years old on Dec. 3.

“He was really outgoing,” Bell said. “Very loving.”

Richard Watkins was described by his niece as an animal lover.

"That was his number one passion," she said. (Robert Watkins)

Richard is a U.S. Army veteran that Robert Watkins and Bell said didn't have many other family members.

“He would call me in the middle of the day just to chat,” Bell said. “And ask how I was doing. How my children were doing. And just to talk about his day. I'm going to miss those phone calls.”

So when Bell arrived with her father at the cemetery, she was expecting it to just be the two of them.

She thought it would be a quiet and small sending-off of a loved one.

Then cars started lining up behind them.

Dozens of them.

Motorcycle engines revved.

Suddenly, dozens of people were lined up and ready to honor a brother, an uncle and a brother in arms.



Cars lined up for the procession of Richard Watkins at Jacksonville National Cemetery.

“I am simply blown away,” Robert said. “I mean never this response not this huge response.”

Robert had put a message on Facebook in a veterans group, asking fellow veterans to support his brother.

And they did.

“Proud I served,” Robert said. “I know somebody has my back.”

As the trumpet played and the guns went off, strangers gathered to send off a man most of them never knew.

“I just want to say thank you to all the veterans and non-veterans that showed up,” Robert said. “This was truly awesome.”

Strangers gathered to honor the life of Richard Watkins. (News4Jax)

It was a tribute and turnout that took a day of sadness and sprinkled in a little bit of joy.

“I know that he is looking down on us and he is tickled pink,” Bell said. “I know we can’t believe the turnout. I know that he’s smiling.”

Author, Chris Will News4JAX



Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield

Retiree Appreciation Day

March 22, 2025

University of Central Florida Student Union
12715 Pegasus Drive, Orlando, FL 32816

Presentations From:

U.S. Army Retirement Services Office
Florida Department of Veteran Affairs
Surviving Spouses Briefing

Registration begins 8:00 A.M.; **Presentations** begin at 9:00 A.M. **Meet representatives from the different agencies during the RAD Information Fair, 1300 - 1500 hours**



Walk-in registration can be accomplished at the event – “We” want you there!
All branches welcome.

Pre-Register at: <https://2025RetireeAppreciationDay.eventbrite.com>

Follow us on Facebook at:
www.facebook.com/FtStewartRSO

ONCE A SOLDIER, ALWAYS A SOLDIER... A SOLDIER FOR LIFE!

Receive Services | Understand Benefits | Learn about Programs & Initiatives | Socialize

Local roofing companies come together to give disabled veteran a new roof for the holidays

WJXT News4JAX

MIDDLEBURG, Fla. – A Middleburg veteran received a brand new roof for free thanks to a collaboration between local businesses.

E2 Roofing, ABC Supply Jacksonville, and IKO Roofing Products surprised retired U.S. Marine and Vietnam Veteran Raymond Lamont with the new roof.

Lamont is this year's recipient of the E-2's Annual Holiday Roof Giveaway for Veterans.roofing

He said on his own, repairs would've cost \$20,000.

"I don't know. There's many more veterans that are deserving. I don't know. There's a lot more veterans out there that are a lot more than I am. But God blessed my heart, I thank God for this," Lamont said.

E2 Roofing is a full-service roofing company that helped orchestrate this gift.

This is the first giveaway CEO Elizabeth Weiss said they've done in Jacksonville.

"Being a veteran myself, there's been so much that's been given to me from this country so if I can find a way to give back to other veterans that have made my life better then that's what we like to do," Elizabeth Weiss, CEO Of E2 Roofing said.

Author, Brianna

Andrews



VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
NOVEMBER 21, 2024



CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dudley

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS: Chairman Dudley

PLEDGE: Chairman Dudley

INVOCATION: Bill Jefferson, Chaplain

INTRODUCTION OF NEW GUESTS: New attendees introduced themselves and who they represent.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Minutes of last meeting conducted October 31, 2024, were presented by Chairman Dudley. Copies of the Minutes are available on the sign-in table and were sent to members electronically by the Secretary. The minutes were approved by voice vote with no changes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Mountcastle presented the Treasurer's Report to the Council. As of October 23, 2024, the total liquid cash balance was \$176,967.08. Treasurer Mountcastle went over the Treasurer's Report including all incoming funds and expenses going out. The floor was open for any questions. The Treasurer's Report was approved by voice vote with no changes.

SPEAKERS:

Steve Muskett, Spec. Forces Assoc. 88, JROTC Scholarship Awards Program

Mr. Muskett provided a slideshow detailing the Special Forces Association and the JROTC Scholarship Awards. He spoke of the local chapter that has been in NE Florida for the last 20 years and their contributions and accomplishments. Mr. Muskett also spoke of the commemorative pavers available for purchase for the walk at the Veterans Stadium at Pedro Menendez High School. The floor was open for any questions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE UPDATE, JOSEPH MCDERMOTT

Mr. McDermott gave a status update of the Veterans Service Office (VSO) and the new hires that are now in the learning process to handle claims submitted by our Veterans. The VSO is currently about a month out in scheduling due to the number of new incoming Veterans. Hopefully with the new hires, Veteran assistance will catch up with the backlog. Mr. McDermott also spoke of the problems with the local VA Clinic and the issues being worked on to get these resolved. The floor was open to questions.

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT, JOHN LESLIE

Mr. Leslie introduced himself and gave a history and what the Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) does for our Veterans in the legal system. Mr. Leslie gave an update on the VTC and the number of participants SJC has helped through the legal system process. There is always a need for mentors to help with the VTC program. Everyone was invited to attend the new Court Hearing for the VTC on December 6th. The floor was open to questions.

AWARD PRESENTATION:

The Patriot Award from the Maria Jefferson DAR Chapter was awarded to the Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley. This is a National Award from their headquarters in Washington DC. Chairman Dudley spoke of his appreciation of receiving such an honorable and prestigious award.

UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Dudley presented a plaque to Kealey West, St. Johns County Attorney's Office, in appreciation of her assistance to the Veterans Council.

Chairman Dudley spoke of receiving a check for \$5,000 from Dale Webb/Nocatee Association. Another check was submitted for \$2,500 for Veterans Village. Much support is received from the Nocatee Community for support of the Veterans Council. One hundred percent of the funds received go completely to the support and assistance of our local Veterans in need.

The next program on the schedule is Wreaths Across America and the wreaths being placed on each gravesite at the Nationwide program on December 14, 2024, at 12noon. Everyone is invited to attend the program in St. Augustine.

Veterans Village has received an email from FDVA approving contractor repairs that need to be completed. Work orders should be issued soon to get these accomplished. Florida Power and Light has selected Veterans Village for their lighting this year. FPL will completely decorate Veterans Village for Holiday lighting on December 11th. They will also provide a huge Christmas Tree with colored lights. Other organizations are contributing to making this a big event at Veterans Village. The project at SR 16 is moving forward with success and hopefully will be completed in January.

The floor was open for discussion and added information.

Next Veterans Council meeting will be held on Thursday, December 19th beginning at 7:00pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William Dudley, Chairman

Sea & Sky Air Show featuring Blue Angels back on books for Jacksonville Beach in 2025

JACKSONVILLE BEACH, Fla. – The Blue Angels will soar over the skies of Jacksonville Beach in 2025 after all when they return for the free Sea & Sky Air Show on Saturday, Oct. 25, and Sunday, Oct. 26.

Initially, Jacksonville Beach was not on the schedule for the Blue Angels in 2025, but a show scheduled for Lake Charles, Louisiana, has now been canceled and the squadron will perform in Northeast Florida instead.



“The Sea & Sky Air Show will bring families, neighbors, and visitors together to experience an unforgettable display of skill and teamwork,” said Jacksonville Mayor Donna Deegan. “We are grateful to the Blue Angels for their service, for their role as ambassadors of goodwill, and for bringing the thrill and magic of naval flight back to our proud military community.”

The U.S. Navy Blue Angels are a hometown favorite and their free annual shows are always packed. The United States Navy Flight Exhibition Team’s first demonstration took place on June 15, 1946, at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, which was also the squadron’s first home base.

The free, family-friendly air show next October will feature the Blue Angels, known for their precision flying and dynamic aerial maneuvers, along with award-winning civilian and military aerobatic performances over the Atlantic Ocean.

The details haven’t been finalized but the city made the announcement Tuesday that the air show would be returning after all. “I want to thank the City of Jacksonville for working so hard with us to bring the Sea & Sky Show – along with the Blue Angels – back to Jacksonville Beach,” said Jacksonville Beach Mayor Chris Hoffman. “This is a big day for all of us. We can’t wait to show off our community, celebrate the military, and enjoy the show next year.”

The Blue Angels recently performed at NAS Jax on Oct. 19-20 this year.

The city will share more details as the event approaches, including the complete list of activities, parking options, shuttle services, and road closures.

For more information about the 2025 Sea and Sky Air Show, visit jaxseaandsky.com.

The squadron will also perform in Florida at these locations in 2025:

Key West from March 29-30 Lakeland from April 5-6 Fort Lauderdale from May 3-4

Pensacola Beach from July 12-13 Punta Gorda from Nov. 1-2

Author Francine Frazier, NEWS 4 Jax

PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY December 7, 2024

A special event honoring World War II Veterans, as well as recognizing the Service of ALL USA Veterans, current Active Duty Military, and First Responders.

Organized and sponsored by "We Can Be Heroes Foundation" President Beth Heath, her daughter Debbie Bird (both ALA UNIT 283 members), and many other Volunteers.

World War II Veteran Joe Shomo was the Guest of Honor at the Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance and Luncheon hosted by the We Can Be Heroes Foundation on Dec. 7. Shomo graciously posed for photos with hundreds attending the event at the VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena.

Shomo rose from his wheelchair to stand and salute for the presentation of colors, the saying of Pledge of Allegiance, and singing of the National Anthem. The event featured Shomo's prerecorded story of his service as he explains why World War II Veterans are referred to as the greatest generation.

The Keynote Speaker was retired Navy Captain Ryman Shoaf presenting the unforgettable true story of the life of Japanese Imperial Navy Capt. Mitsuo Fuchida, who coordinated and commanded the air attack on Pearl Harbor. Fuchida's life had several surprising turns during the war. After the war and much personal suffering, Fuchida became a devout Christian, evangelist, and friend of the Rev. Billy Graham.

A remarkable story indeed!

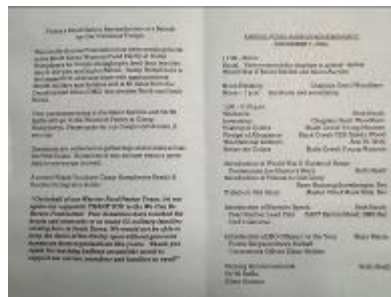
Retired Command Master Chief Mack Ellis presented his renowned and heartfelt Old Glory recital. Ellis and Shoaf served the Navy at home and abroad including the Naval Air Station Jacksonville, and the Naval Station Mayport.

The Black Creek Young Marines presented colors, assisted at the event and posed for pictures with World War II Veteran Shomo and guests. The event included

group photos of Veterans and First Responders with Guest of Honor Shomo.

The Remembrance was a benefit for overseas U. S. troops struggling to feed their families. Over four thousand dollars was raised for the Warriors Pantry at Camp Humphreys, South Korea, pictured below. This Army Garrison is the largest overseas U.S. base with approximately 28,000 military and families.

Thank you to all who donated and to those who will donate this Christmas season to help our troops. May God bless you and protect U.S. Troops everywhere. Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah.



The Gary Sinise Foundation

Always an honor to be with the surviving children and spouses of our fallen military heroes as we welcome them for our big Gary Sinise Foundation Snowball Express annual event to Disney World. Thank you to our presenting sponsor American Airlines for getting us there and all who have supported our mission to bring these families together to uplift them on their grief and healing journey's. I know you join me when I say we will never forget their loved ones and we will never forget the sacrifices of these families. God bless you.



Pedro Menendez High School has relaunched the Veterans Commemoration Project at Veterans Stadium. We believe this project serves to honor Bill Mignon, a celebrated Army veteran, our former principal and many like him in our community.

We hope that this provides friends and families with the opportunity to commemorate and memorialize those closest to them who are or have served in our Nation's armed forces, protecting the values and ideals that makes the United States of America the nation that it is today.

Please see the flyer below for information as to how to donate to this very worthy cause.



Honoring all who served
VETERANS STADIUM
Purchase a commemorative brick today!



\$20
*minimal proceeds used for
campus beautification

Commemorative Bricks to commemorate and memorialize friends and family who have served in our nations armed forces.

Bricks will be placed at the entrance of Veterans Memorial Stadium at PMHS

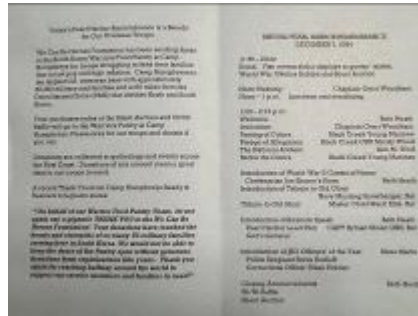
Bricks can be purchased by visiting <https://schoolpay.com/pay/for/Veterans-Stadium-Commemorative-Bricks/SdmqozN> or by contacting Pedro Menendez High School at 904.547.8653

PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY December 7, 2024

Part II

A special event honoring World War II Veterans, as well as recognizing the Service of ALL USA Veterans, current Active Duty Military, and First Responders.

Organized and sponsored by "We Can Be Heroes Foundation" President Beth Heath, her daughter Debbie Bird (both ALA UNIT 283 members), and many other Volunteers.



WW II Veteran Joe Shomo





The Military Officers Association of America—Ancient City Chapter
is hosting the

Saint Augustine Military Ball

Saturday, January 25, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Mark W. Lance Armory

This black-tie fundraiser will feature dinner, dancing, a silent auction, and much more.

Proceeds will support local JROTC and Sea Cadet programs, the future leaders of our nation!

Tickets are \$150.00 per person. Tables for 8 may be reserved - get yours now!

Includes catered dinner by The Spot, open bar, Veteran of the Year award, and live music by the Carpetbaggers.

Sponsorship opportunities, which include guest admission, are also available.

For information or to purchase a ticket please email MilitaryBallStAug@gmail.com



Florida Registration CM1003. A copy of the official registration and registration information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll free (800) 435-7732 within the State. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the State.

Submitted by: David Treffinger

President, Vietnam Veterans of America

Col. William G. Byrns Chapter 1059, Clay County, Florida

Here is Clay County Military information about the TAPS Monument in Green Cove Springs. This is the only monument that recognizes the 66 fallen Clay County residents dating back to the Civil War. There are 21 fallen from the Vietnam War.

We will be holding a Vietnam War Veterans Ceremony at the TAPS Monument on Saturday, March 29. It will be 50 years ago that we left Vietnam.

I have included a photo and a story from when the monument was dedicated in 2017.

TAPS Monument Fact Sheet

The TAPS Monument will be dedicated to the 66 Clay County veterans who lost their lives during combat, dating back to the Civil War.

Where: Clay County Historical Triangle, 915 Walnut Street, Green Cove Springs, FL. The new permanent memorial replaces the old monument.

Monument Sculpture: Richard C. Rist, The Large Art Company, Baltimore, MD

Sculpture Details: The four-sided, 5 feet by 5 feet granite monument will have the names of all Clay County Fallen Warriors inscribed. Topping the memorial will be the TAPS sculpture which measures 44 inches tall and a 32-inch base and 23 inches on each side. The high-quality bronze sculpture is finished in a traditional chocolate brown patina was designed by Richard C. Rist, a Navy veteran who owns The Large Art Company of Baltimore, MD.

The sculpture rests on a triangular base which represents a folded American flag. The three rifles – a 1903 Springfield that was used in WWI, a M-1 Garand rifle from World War II and a M-16 rifle to represent the modern era – form a pyramid with the barrels down to symbolize the fall. The stocks of the rifles come together to form the pyramid which is topped by a “steel pot” combat helmet that was used in WWI until Vietnam. A Civil War-era bugle on the base serves to bring the composition together.

Monument Designer: Craig R. Seaton, Broadus Raines Funeral Home, Green Cove Springs

Granite: The jet-black granite came from the same quarry as that of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Diamond Etching/Engraving

Charles Custom Memorials, Lake City

Monument Details: “Remember Our Fallen” will be carved on all four sides of the Monument. The front panel has a dedication from Clay County and a quote from President Abraham Lincoln’s famous Bixby Letter. The other two panels list the names from the Civil War through the Global War on Terrorism, The four panel will be left blank for future conflicts.

The monument will sit on a concrete base surrounded by pavers, a major fundraiser by Monument committee and the Vietnam Veterans of America Clay County Chapter 1059. The bricks will have engraved dedications.

Bricks Pavers: Stone Plus, Inc., Middleburg

Brick Pavers Engraving

Monument Services, Daytona Beach

Research: Vishi Garig, Archives Specialist, Clay County Office of Tara Green,

Clerk of the Circuit Court. Garig did the historical and genealogical research on each individual and confirmed the names of the Fallen.

Cost: \$82,000. Completely funded by charitable organizations and individuals. Not one governmental dollar was used to fund the memorial.

History: The monument was first proposed 10 years ago by Clay County Commissioner chair Harold Rutledge. In March 2015, the current committee chaired by Gary Newman, President of the Vietnam Veterans of America Clay County Chapter 1059, held its first meeting. The committee has met monthly to date.

“The committee wanted a monument that would stand out for decades to come,” Newman said. “It means those veterans that have been forgotten for so long will be remembered.”

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1059: Chapter 1059 was chartered by Vietnam Veterans of America in January 2012. Gary Newman is the founder and president. He is also the current president. The chapter has 130 members which participates in various community events – The Clay County Fair, Chamber of Commerce member, Northeast Florida Military Museum, Middleburg Civic Association member and Veterans Treatment Court. Current officers: Gary Newman, president; Harry Silvers, vice president; Paul Haws Jr., treasurer; Darline Teel-Williams, secretary; board members: J.J. Thomas, George McCaffrey, David Treffinger.

Committee Members: CDR Pete Antonacci, USN (RET), Susan Aycock, Jack Biddle, Kim Biddle, John Bowles, Ernie Cohen, Dave Fieber, Vishi Garig, Honorable Gayward Hendry, Scott Iannucci, Amy Morie, Deb Mueller, Gary Newman (Chair), Mary Anne Newman, Greg Rawson, Dan Sanchez, Craig R. Seaton, Harry Silvers, Karen Thomas, David Treffinger, Care Valleau, Joseph Wiggins Sr., ESQ., Art Yeaman.

Donors/Sponsors

Platinum Donors

Boondocks Grill and Bar, State Senator Rob Bradley, Broadus Raines Funeral Home, Clay Cruzers, Clay Electric Foundation, State Representative Travis Cummings, The Honorable Wendall Davis, The Garden Club of Green Cove Springs, A.Z. Guiragossian, The Honorable Gayward Hendry, Jaguar Concrete, Inc., Craig R. Seaton, Vietnam Veterans of America Clay County Chapter 1059, Dr. Ann and Ed Wiggins, Wiggins Construction Company of North Florida, Inc.

Gold Donors

Ben Armstrong, James T. Barlow, Gen. Roy S. Geiger Marine Corps League Detachment 1047, Mobro Marine, The Honorable Harold Rutledge, VFW Post 8255, Middleburg, Vietnam Veterans of America Duval County Chapter 1046





FREE SERVICES

for Veterans

The St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller is proud to honor veterans, active-duty military, reservists, and dependents by offering **complimentary passport and wedding photos, notary services, and recording services for DD-214s in November.**



Richard O. Watson Judicial Center
4010 Lewis Speedway
St. Augustine, Florida 32084
904-819-3600

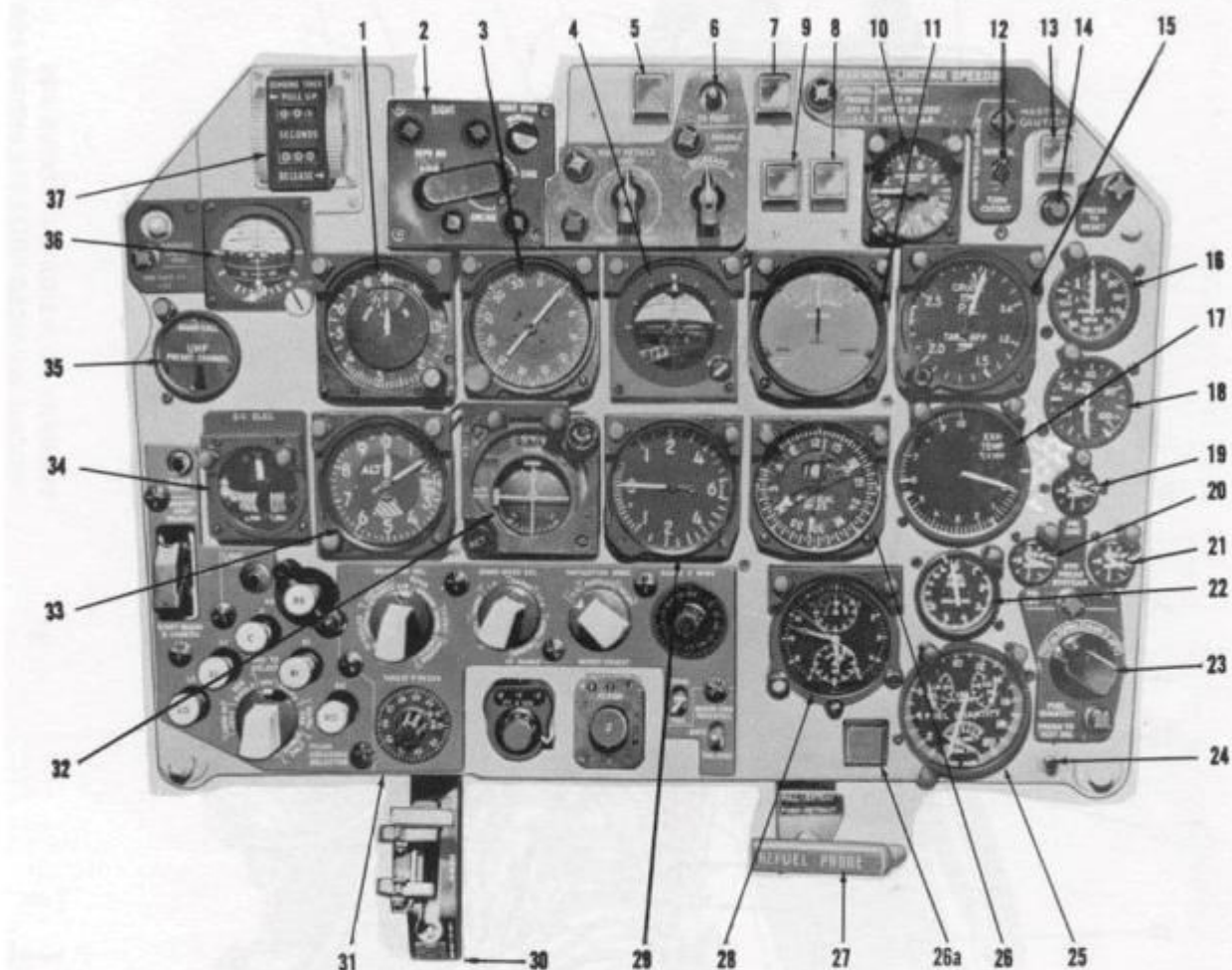
www.stjohnsclerk.com

A pilot's view

MAIN INSTRUMENT PANEL

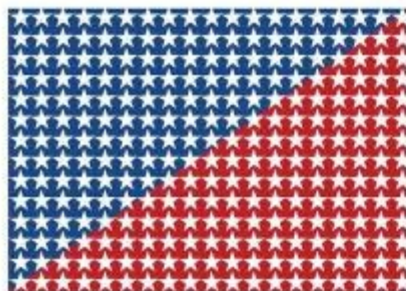
All warning, caution and indicator lights are presented in detail in Figure 1-50

All armament controls are presented in detail in Figure 1-60.



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Airspeed and Mach Number Indicator | 20. Hydraulic Pressure Gage (Pri Two) |
| 2. Sight Control Panel | 21. Hydraulic Pressure Gage (Utility) |
| 3. Heading Indicator (J-4 Compass) | 22. Fuel Flow Indicator |
| 4. Attitude Indicator | 23. Fuel Quantity Selector Switch |
| 5. Fire Warning Light | 24. Fuel Quantity Indicator Test Button |
| 6. Fire and Overheat Warning Press To Test Button | 25. Fuel Quantity Indicator |
| 7. Overheat Warning Light | 26. Bearing Distance Heading Indicator |
| 8. Limit 4 G MAX Caution Light | 26a. Excess Fuel Vent Light |
| 9. Bomb Release Indicator Light | 27. Air Refueling Probe Handle |
| 10. Accelerometer | 28. Clock |
| 11. Fire Control Roll Indicator | 29. Vertical Velocity Indicator |
| 12. Directional Indicator Turn Error Switch | 30. Auxiliary Release Handle (Internal Store) |
| 13. Master Caution Light | 31. Armament Control Panel |
| 14. Master Caution Light Reset Button | 32. Course Indicator |
| 15. Pressure Ratio Gage | 33. Altimeter |
| 16. Tachometer | 34. Turn and Slip Indicator |
| 17. Exhaust Gas Temperature Gage | 35. Command Radio Remote Channel Indicator |
| 18. Oil Pressure Gage | 36. Standby Attitude Indicator |
| 19. Hydraulic Pressure Gage (Pri One) | 37. Dual Timer Control |

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



★★★ City of Jacksonville ★★★

VETERANS STAND DOWN

ALL VETERANS WELCOME Homeless, At-Risk & Transitioning

—FRIDAY—
JANUARY 24TH
10AM-2PM ★ JACKSONVILLE FAIRGROUNDS

**Veterans Job Fair
& Support Services**

- Employers On Site
- Resume Assistance
- Shelter & Housing
- Personal Care Services

All veterans & military welcome

**SATURDAY
JANUARY 25TH**
9AM-2PM ★ JACKSONVILLE FAIRGROUNDS

- VA Services
- Dental Services
- Food & Clothing
- Hygiene Kits
- Vet Center



** For unhoused/homeless veterans (ID required)



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.

Events
Hosted by



www.jacksonville.gov/mavd

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ·

Which National Park is your favorite to use your free Military Lifetime Pass?

Don't have one yet? Don't miss out! Veterans, service members, dependents, and Gold Star families are eligible Learn more:
<https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/passes.htm...>



From David “Flyboy” Shelton

Fellow PGR, Below is an updated schedule for the Vietnam and War on Terrorism Walls.

September will be a busy month, so any assistance you can provide would be greatly

FL PGR Vietnam & WoT Wall Schedule

To request one or both of the walls for display, contact FL State Captain

Email: flsc@patriotguard.org / 321-689-4699

Updated as of:
08/09/24

Date	Time		Duration	Wall(s)	Location	Comments
08/08/24	1200 hrs	Set-Up	7 Days	WOT	VA Hospital Lake Nona 13900 Veterans Way Orlando, FL 32827	Display in hospital main lobby
08/09/24 - 09/13/24		Display				8-11 Remembrance
09/14/25		Take Down				Ceremony 08/11/24 @ 1100 hrs
09/21/24	0900 - 1700 hrs	Set-Up / Display	1 Day	Vietnam / WoT	OB's Restaurant & Lounge 1750 N. Woodland Blvd Deland, FL 32720	National POW / MIA Recognition Day 2024 CVMA 20-13 Event
09/27/24	1200 hrs	Escort	2 Days	Vietnam / WoT	American Legion Post 72 1500 N. Church Ave. Mulberry, FL 33860	Fall Festival
09/28/24	1400 hrs	Set-Up				Vietnam Vets
09/28/24	0900 - 1800 hrs	Display				ALR
10/25/25	1400 hrs	Set-Up	1 Day	Vietnam / WoT	American Legion Post 45 316 Osceola St. Palatka, FL 32177	
10/26/24	0900 - 1600 hrs	Display / Take Down				
Possible escort of The Walls to the event						
11/02/24	0700 hrs	1700 hrs	1 Day	Vietnam / WoT	City Hall (across the street) 300 W. Plant St Winter Garden, FL 34787	Challenge 22 Ruck Walk Suicide Awareness
11/10/24	1100 hrs	Escort / Set-Up	2 Days	Vietnam / WoT	Anastasia Baptist Church 1600 A1A S St. Augustine, FL 32080	Veteran's Day Ceremony
11/11/24	0900 - 1100 hrs	Display / Take Down				Escort from Daytona to St. Augustine
03/29/25	1100 hrs		2 Weeks	Vietnam	VA Hospital Lake Nona 13900 Veterans Way Orlando, FL 32827	Erect in hospital main lobby Vietnam War Veterans Day
Dates and times to be verified						
05/24/25	0800 hrs	Set-Up / Display	3 Days	Vietnam / WoT	City of Clermont Highland Pavilion Complex 330 3rd St Clermont, FL 32711	Memorial Day Ceremony
05/25/25	1600 hrs	Take Down				Stage - Home Depot Rt. 50 Clermont, FL
11/10/25	1100 hrs	Escort / Set-Up	2 Days	Vietnam / WoT	Anastasia Baptist Church 1600 A1A S St. Augustine, FL 32080	Veteran's Day Ceremony
11/11/25	0900 - 1100 hrs	Display / Take Down				Escort from Daytona to St. Augustine
03/25/26	0800 hrs	Escort / Set-Up	2 Days	Vietnam	Florida National Cemetery 6502 SW 102nd Ave. Bushnell, FL 33513	Vietnam War Veterans Day
03/25/26	To be verified	Display / Take Down				
Dates and times to be verified						



★ Veterans Food Assistance Program ★

What?

Starting October 1st DVNF will be offering a one-time grant per veteran household to support their nutritional needs.

How to Apply

We have an online application that will need to be completed by the Veteran. The application can be found at <https://www.grantinterface.com/sl/dI4NjA>. The link will be open starting October 1st, 2024.

Veteran Qualifications

- Must have a DD214 or Veteran ID
- Was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable
- A letter of reference from a case worker or advocate may make the application more favorable.

Other Details

- This is not a monthly grant.
- The groceries will be delivered directly to the Veteran using Walmart or grocery store delivery service.
- Veterans can receive up to \$450 worth of groceries

For more information, please contact us: (202) 737-0522 - info@dvnf.org

VA TOBACCO CESSATION RESOURCES



COUNSELING

Counseling can help you develop a quit plan, build support, and prevent a recurrence of tobacco use.

- Call **1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838)**, 9am – 9pm Eastern time, Monday to Friday, to speak with a quit coach.
- Ask your VA health care team about a referral to a treatment program:

[INSERT LOCAL GROUP INFO]



MEDICATIONS

Medications can help to reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms when stopping tobacco use.

- Talk to your VA health care team about which medication may be right for you. VA offers varenicline, nicotine replacement therapy (patches, gum, lozenges, nasal spray), and bupropion. For a proven approach, combine medication with counseling.



TEXT SUPPORT

Sign up for **SmokefreeVET** to receive texts with tips and tools to beat cravings by texting **VET** to **47848**. Benefits of signing up for SmokefreeVET include regular text messages and extra support at your fingertips when you text the keywords URGE, STRESS, SMOKED, and DIPPED to 47848.



STAY QUIT COACH 2.0

Download Stay Quit Coach 2.0, a free VA app that helps you identify personal reasons to stop tobacco use, set your goals, and track your progress over time: mobile.va.gov/app/stay-quit-coach.



ONLINE RESOURCES

Follow the SmokefreeVET Facebook page for tips and encouragement from other Veterans: facebook.com/smokefreevet. Find VA resources and more tips for quitting at mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco and veterans.smokefree.gov.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

**Alton Green Memorial
American Legion Post 194**

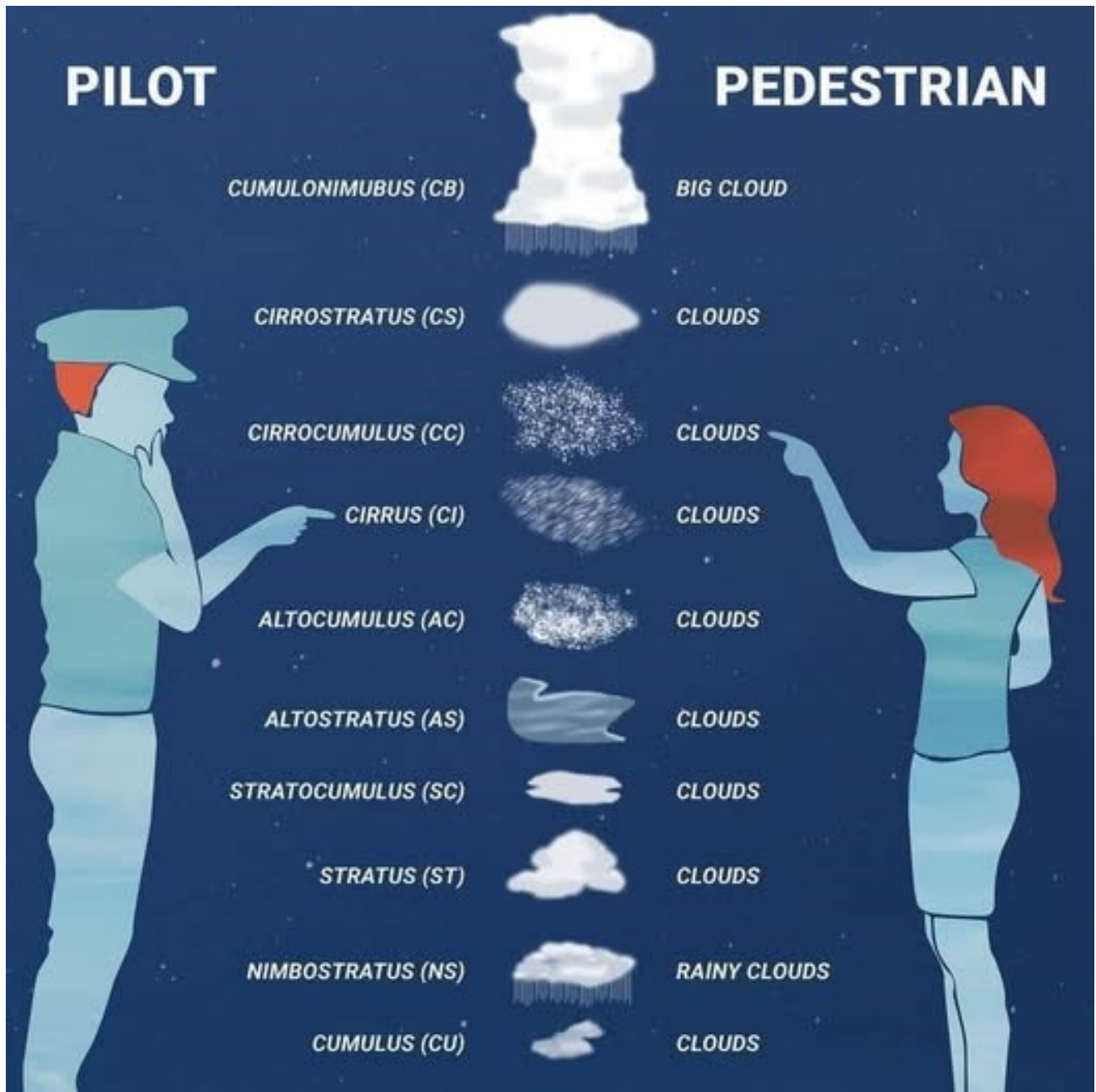
Save the Date

19 SEPT 2025

77th Anniversary

GOLF
Tournament

**St. Johns Golf Club
4900 Cypress Links Blvd
Elkton, FL 32033**



Form 180 to get DD214

Standard Form 180 (Rev. 09/01) (Page 1)
Prescribed by NARA (24 CFR 1233.1042)

Authorized for local reproduction
Previous editions obsolete

OMB No. 3095-0029 Expires 04/30/2024

REQUEST PERTAINING TO MILITARY RECORDS

Requests can be submitted online using eVetInfo at <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>
To ensure the best possible service, please thoroughly review the accompanying instructions before filling out this form. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY OR TYPE BELOW.

SECTION I - INFORMATION NEEDED TO LOCATE RECORDS (Furnish as much information as possible.)

1. NAME USED DURING SERVICE (last, first, full middle)	2. SOCIAL SECURITY #	3. DATE OF BIRTH	4. PLACE OF BIRTH			
5. SERVICE, PAST AND PRESENT (For an effective records search, it is important that ALL service be shown below.)						
	BRANCH OF SERVICE	DATE ENTERED	DATE RELEASED	OFFICER	ENLISTED	SERVICE NUMBER (If unknown, write "unknown")
a. ACTIVE				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. RESERVE				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. NATIONAL GUARD				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6. PLEASE LIST LAST FOUR DUTY STATIONS, IF KNOWN: 1. _____
2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

7. IS THIS PERSON DECEASED? NO YES - MUST provide Date of Death if veteran is deceased: _____

8. DID THIS PERSON RETIRE FROM MILITARY SERVICE? NO YES

SECTION II - INFORMATION AND/OR DOCUMENTS REQUESTED

1. CHECK THE ITEM(S) YOU ARE REQUESTING:

DD Form 214 or equivalent: Year(s) in which form(s) issued to veteran (Date of Separation): _____
This form contains information used to verify military service. An UNDELETED DD Form 214 is ordinarily required to determine eligibility for benefits. If you request a DELETED copy, the following items will be blacked out: authority for separation, reason for separation, reenlistment eligibility code, separation (SPD/SPN) code, and, for separations after June 30, 1979, character of separation and dates of time lost. Please note - recent veterans may be able to request a DD Form 214 through milConnect by visiting: <https://www.va.gov/records/get-military-service-records/>
An UNDELETED copy will be sent UNLESS YOU SPECIFY A DELETED COPY by checking this box: I want a DELETED copy.

Official Military Personnel File (OMPF): The OMPF may include duty stations and assignments, training and qualifications, awards and decorations received, disciplinary actions, administrative remarks, enlistment and/or discharge information (including DD Form 214, Report of Separation, or equivalent), and other personnel actions. Detailed information about the veteran's participation in battles and their military engagements is NOT contained in the record.

Medical Records: Includes health (outpatient), extended ambulatory, and dental records. If inpatient/hospitalization records are requested, please specify below.
 I request inpatient/hospitalization records from _____ (facility), last treated in _____ (year). (NOTE: Fields are required)
If available, you may receive copies of inpatient narrative summaries, operative reports, discharge summaries, etc. contained in the record.

Dental Records: Please check this box if ONLY dental records are needed from the medical record.

Other (Please Specify): _____

2. PURPOSE: (Providing information about the purpose of the request is voluntary; however, it may help to provide the best possible response and may result in a faster reply. Information provided will in no way be used to make a decision to deny the request.)
 Benefits (explain) Employment VA Loan Programs Medical Genealogy Correction Personal Other (explain)
Explain here: _____

SECTION III - RETURN ADDRESS AND SIGNATURE

1. REQUESTER NAME: _____	2. RELATIONSHIP TO VETERAN: _____
3. <input type="checkbox"/> I am the MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER OR VETERAN identified in Section I, above.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am the VETERAN'S LEGAL GUARDIAN (MUST submit copy of Court Appointment) or AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE (MUST submit copy of Authorization Letter or Power of Attorney)
<input type="checkbox"/> I am the DECEASED VETERAN'S NEXT-OF-KIN (MUST submit Proof of Death. See item 2a on instruction sheet.)	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify): _____
4. SEND INFORMATION/DOCUMENTS TO: (Please print or type. See item 4 on accompanying instructions.)	5. AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURE: I declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the information in this Section 3 is true and correct and that I authorize the release of the requested information. (See items 2a or 3a on the accompanying instructions sheet. Without the Authorization Signature of the veteran, next-of-kin of deceased veteran, veteran's legal guardian, authorized government agent, or other authorized representative, only limited information can be released unless the request is archival. No signature is required if the request is for archival records.)
Name _____	Signature Required - Do not print _____ Date _____
Street Address _____ Apt. # _____	* This form is available at https://www.archives.gov/veterans-military-service-records/standard-form-180.pdf on the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) web site. *
City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____	
Daytime Phone _____ Fax Number _____	
Email Address _____	

Form 180 to get DD214

The various categories of military service records are described in the chart below. For each category there is a code number which indicates the address at the bottom of the page to which this request should be sent. Please refer to the Instruction and Information Sheet accompanying this form as needed.

BRANCH	CURRENT STATUS OF SERVICE MEMBER	Personnel Record	Medical or Service Treatment Record
AIR FORCE	Discharged, deceased, or retired before 5/1/1994	14	14
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 5/1/1994 - 9/30/2004	14	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 10/1/2004 - 12/31/2013	1	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired on or after 1/1/2014	1	13
	Active (including National Guard on active duty in the Air Force), TDRL, or general officers retired with pay	1	
	Reserve, IRR, Retired Reserve in non-pay status, current National Guard officers not on active duty in the Air Force, or National Guard released from active duty in the Air Force	2	
	Current National Guard enlisted not on active duty in the Air Force	2	13
COAST GUARD	Discharged, deceased, or retired before 1/1/1898	6	
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 1/1/1898 - 3/31/1998	14	14
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 4/1/1998 - 9/30/2006	14	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 10/1/2006 - 9/30/2013	3	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired on or after 10/1/2013	3	14
	Active, Reserve, Individual Ready Reserve or TDRL	3	
MARINE CORPS	Discharged, deceased, or retired before 1/1/1895	6	
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 1/1/1905 - 4/30/1994	14	14
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 5/1/1994 - 12/31/1998	14	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 1/1/1999 - 12/31/2013	4	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired on or after 1/1/2014	4	8
	Individual Ready Reserve	5	
	Active, Selected Marine Corps Reserve, TDRL	4	
ARMY	Discharged, deceased, or retired before 11/1/1912 (enlisted) or before 7/1/1917 (officer)	6	
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 11/1/1912 - 10/15/1992 (enlisted) or 7/1/1917 - 10/15/1992 (officer)	14	
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 10/16/1992 - 9/30/2002	14	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired (including TDRL) 10/1/2002 - 12/31/2013	7	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired (including TDRL) on or after 1/1/2014	7	9
	Current Soldier (Active, Reserve (including Individual Ready Reserve) or National Guard)	7	
NAVY	Discharged, deceased, or retired before 1/1/1896 (enlisted) or before 1/1/1903 (officer)	6	
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 1/1/1896 - 1/30/1994 (enlisted) or 1/1/1903 - 1/30/1994 (officer)	14	14
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 1/31/1994 - 12/31/1994	14	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired 1/1/1995 - 12/31/2013	10	11
	Discharged, deceased, or retired on or after 1/1/2014	10	8
	Active, Reserve, or TDRL	10	
PHS	Public Health Service - Commissioned Corps officers only	12	

ADDRESS LIST OF CUSTODIANS and SELF-SERVICE WEBSITES (BY CODE NUMBERS SHOWN ABOVE) - Where to write/send this form

1	Air Force Personnel Center AFPC/DP2SSM 550 C Street West JBSA-Randolph TX 78150-4721 Fax Number: 210-565-3134 Email: DP2SSM.MIL.RECS.INCOMING@US.AF.MIL	6	National Archives & Records Administration Research Services (RDTIR) 700 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20408-0361	11	Department of Veterans Affairs ATTN: Release of Information Claims Intake Center P.O. Box 4444 Janetville, WI 53547-4444 Fax Number: 844-531-7818 https://www.va.gov
2	Air Reserve Personnel Center Total Force Service Center: 1-800-525-0102 https://www.arpcc.af.mil/	7	US Army Human Resources Command's web page: https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/1113 or 1-888-ARMYHRC (1-888-276-9472)	12	Division of Commissioned Corps Officer Support ATTN: Records Officer 1181 Wooten Parkway, Plaza Level, Suite 100 Rockville, MD 20852
3	Commander, Personnel Service Center (BOPS-C-MR) MS7260 US Coast Guard 1703 Martha Luther King Jr Ave SE Washington, DC 20593-7200 https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/omg/	8	Navy Medicine Records Activity (NMRA) BUMED Detachment St. Louis 4300 Goodfellow Boulevard, Building 103 St. Louis, MO 63120 Fax number: 314-360-8128	13	AF STR Processing Center ATTN: Release of Information 3370 Nacogdoches Road, Suite 116 San Antonio, TX 78217
4	Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps Manpower Management Records & Performance (MMRP-10) 2008 Elliot Road Quantico, VA 22134-5030 SMB.MANPOWER.MMRP-10@usmc.mil	9	AMEDD Army Record Processing Center 3370 Nacogdoches Road, Suite 116 San Antonio, TX 78217 Fax Number: 210-301-8310	14	National Personnel Records Center (Military Personnel Records) 1 Archives Drive St. Louis, MO 63128-1002 https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/
5	Marine Corps Forces Reserve 2009 Opelousas Avenue New Orleans, LA 70114	10	Navy Personnel Command (PERS-313) 5720 Integrity Drive Millington, TN 38055-3130		

From R. Hernandez, I find it easier and quicker if a Veteran goes to the National Archive Records Administration site NARA.gov. when the Get the email back they will ask for a password which is the request number.

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation

Come paddle down memory lane as we relive last Thursday's **Veterans Kayaking** at Trout Creek, where we rowed onto the St. Johns River to watch the sunset.

Want to come along for real? Sign up for our newsletter to find out about future trips and other fun programs:

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/vgkHwTm/SJCParksandRec>



37th Annual All Veterans Reunion May 8th-May11th, 2025!!



One of the Nations "Largest and Longest Running" Reunions!

PUBLIC IS ALWAYS INVITED TO ATTEND!

Reunion Date: May 8th—11th, 2025

@ Wickham Park in Melbourne FL

Reunion Information can be found at: www.veteransmemorialreunioninc.org

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall and Some Gave All—The Moving Tribute are being donated for the duration of the Reunion by the VVB.

Wall escort will be on May 4th, departing the Eastern Florida State College (EFSC) Cocoa Campus @ 10am sharp and escorted to Wickham Park.

First Responders Honored and Requested to join in!

Scan here for all of our links!



Family Friendly!

There will be a "Kid Zone"

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



Wickham Park: 2500 Parkway Dr. Melbourne, FL 32935



- Health Care
- Education
- Earned Benefits

FDVA.VSO@FDVA.FL.GOV
727-319-7440



OPERATION STRONG & READY
A Military Wellness Program

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

STARTING JULY 30TH , 2024
OSR - VETERANS ONLY!

**To register stop by the
Welcome center or
email**

EHernandez@fcymca.org

Program Overview

Operation Strong & Ready (OSR) – "Veterans Only" is an 8-week/16 session program is designed to not only help our veterans get back into shape physically, but also mentally and emotionally. The program is held twice a week for approximately 1.5-hours. Each week a new topic will be discussed or a new resource will be provided to help better assist the veterans during their 8-week journey.

Program Goals

Increase participant's physical and mental health through exercise, peer support and educational resources.

Who Can Participate?

The program is open to any military veteran who desires to increase their physical activity, improve their overall health, and to connect with other like-minded veterans.

For more information, email our Military Outreach Program Coordinator, Eric Hernandez, at EHernandez@fcymca.org.

STRENGTHENING OUR MILITARY FAMILIES™
YMCA OF FLORIDA'S FIRST COAST | FCYMCA.org

Program Cost

Thanks to generous donations and sponsorships, this session is FREE for anyone qualified. Future programs may have a participant costs pending future funding.

Program Details

In a small group setting, an OSR Instructor will safely guide participants through 8 weeks of exercise programming designed specifically to meet the veteran's needs. The program consists of pre and post assessments, 16 exercise sessions with a certified instructor, healthy living and veteran resource discussions, and a YMCA membership for the participant and their immediate family members for the 8-week duration of the program.

The 90-minute OSR session consists of:

- ✓ Healthy-Living/Resources Discussions
- ✓ Warm-Up
- ✓ Teamed Cardio + Strength Workout
- ✓ Cool-Down

**Program will be held at
Dye Clay Family YMCA. We
will meet twice a week on
Tuesday and Thursday's
from
10:00AM – 11:30AM.**



2023 FACT SHEET

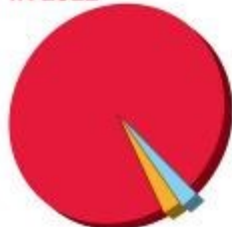
OUR MISSION

On September 11, 2001, FDNY firefighter Stephen Siller laid down his life to save others when America was attacked. For over 20 years, the Tunnel to Towers Foundation has honored Stephen's legacy by supporting the heroes who continue to risk life and limb in the line of duty.

To date, Tunnel to Towers has delivered over 1,000 mortgage-free homes to our nation's heroes and committed over \$500 million across all of our programs.

This year the Foundation is delivering over 200 mortgage-free homes to catastrophically injured veterans and first responders, Gold Star families, families of first responders who leave behind young children and more than 1,500 housing units to combat veteran homelessness.

ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY IN 2022



95%

of Fundraising Dollars
Went Directly to Programs

2.5% **2.5%**
Fundraising Management & General

Tunnel to Towers is committed to practicing sound fiscal management, organizational efficiency and program integrity.

The Foundation keeps fundraising and administrative costs to a minimum, with only a small percentage of funds allocated to overhead expenses.

In 2022, the Foundation's program service percentage on average was 95% — 95 cents out of every dollar went directly to our programs and services. Tunnel to Towers' Chairman and CEO, Frank Siller, is an uncompensated volunteer.

For nine years running, the Foundation has achieved the highest rating, four stars, from Charity Navigator, the nation's largest and most-utilized evaluator of charities.

OFFICE: (718) 987 1931 • WEB: T2T.ORG 2361 • Hylan Boulevard, Staten Island, NY 10306

IN THE LINE OF DUTY PROGRAMS

To honor the lives lost on September 11, 2001, the Tunnel to Towers Foundation developed the **In the Line of Duty Program**, which provides mortgage-free homes to our nation's catastrophically injured veterans and first responders, Gold Star, and fallen first responder families with young children.

★ SMART HOME PROGRAM

The Foundation builds specially-adapted, mortgage-free smart homes that help our most catastrophically injured veterans and first responders to reclaim their day-to-day independence.

★ FALLEN FIRST RESPONDER PROGRAM

The Foundation pays off the mortgages for the families of law enforcement officers and firefighters who are killed in the line of duty, pass away from 9/11-related illnesses, and leave behind young children.

★ GOLD STAR FAMILY HOME PROGRAM

The Foundation honors the legacy of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country by paying off the mortgage or providing the surviving spouses and young children with mortgage-free homes.

HOMELESS VETERANS

In 2022, the Tunnel to Towers Foundation launched a new national campaign to eradicate homelessness in the Veteran community. This program provides a stable home and a wide range of needed services to diagnose and solve the root causes of veteran homelessness, addressing a veteran's specific emotional, financial, and physical issues.

In the program's first year, through grants and partnerships Tunnel to Towers has helped to provide 500 housing units and services to homeless veterans in their time of need.

This year Tunnel to Towers is providing more than 1,500 housing units and services to veterans. The Foundation believes no veteran should be living on the streets of the country they signed up to protect.

NEVER FORGET PROGRAMS

The Tunnel to Towers Foundation made a promise to "NEVER FORGET" those lost on 9/11 and the continued impact the attacks have on America and its first responders.

To keep that promise and educate future generations, the Foundation engages people in events across America and is educating future generations. The Foundation launched the Tunnel to Towers 9/11 Institute™ in 2022.

The Institute comprises 9/11 Curriculum, the "Discovering Heroes®" Book series, a 9/11 Speakers Bureau, the 9/11 NEVER FORGET Mobile Exhibit and Russell F. Siller Memorial Scholarships.

The Tunnel to Towers 9/11 Institute™ Curriculum Units are unique and age appropriate for all K-12 students. By the end of 2022, the Institute's Curriculum Units were in use in 47 states and Puerto Rico.



National League of POW/MIA Families

Hello everyone!

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

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

nationalleague@pow-miafamilies.org

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



NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS & MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
5673 Columbia Pike, Suite 100, Falls Church, VA 22041

PH ---703/465-7432

www.pow-miafamilies.org

FAX ---703/465-7433

2024 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

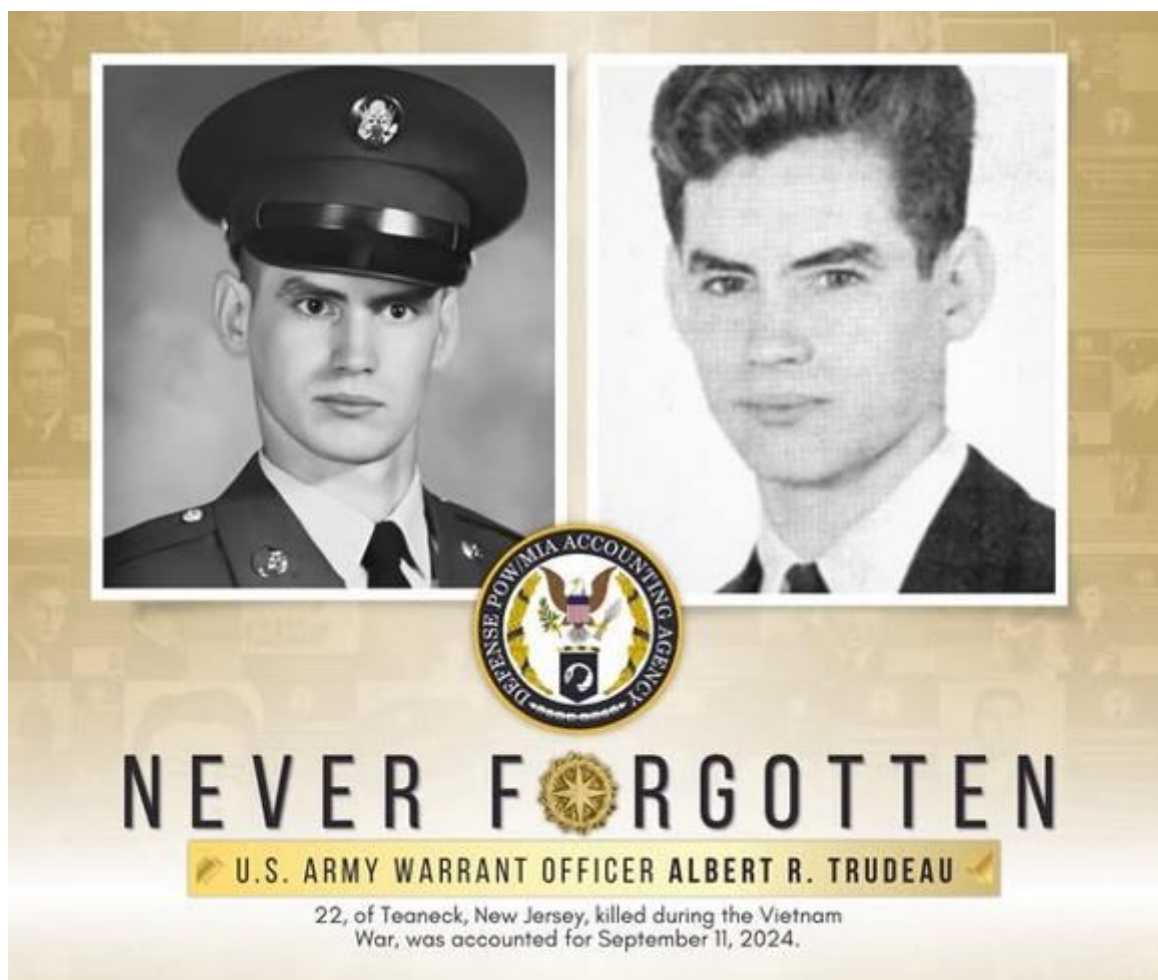
Would you prefer to receive League material by email? Y__N__ Email: _____

_____ @\$20/member

_____ Total Amount: _____

IRS EIN# 23-7071242

DPAA recently announced that Army Warrant Officer Albert R. Trudeau, 22, of Teaneck, New Jersey, killed during the Vietnam War, was accounted for on Sept. 11, 2024. His family has received a complete briefing on his identification, allowing more details to be shared. DPAA is grateful to the Vietnamese government for their partnership in this mission.



Highest Award Congress Can Bestow Going to Revered Vietnam POW Everett Alvarez

Lt. Cmdr. Everett Alvarez Jr., a former POW for 8 1/2 years in North Vietnam, waves to joyous well-wishers during a parade in his honor in his hometown of Santa Clara, Calif., March 25, 1973. (Richard Drew/AP Photo)



A Vietnam prisoner of war who spent years in captivity in the prison camp they dubbed the Hanoi Hilton and whose story was closely followed by the American public is set to be honored by Congress.

For his grit under interrogation, and for his unbending commitment to survive the prison ordeal and "return with honor," retired Navy Cmdr. Everett Alvarez is slated for the highest award lawmakers can bestow -- the Congressional Gold Medal.

By unanimous consent Wednesday, the Senate passed the bill to award the medal to the 86-year-old Alvarez, following on a unanimous vote in the House last week.

The bill to add Alvarez' name to the list of those who have received the Congressional Gold Medal -- ranging from George Washington and Winston Churchill to Frank Sinatra and the Wright Brothers -- now goes to the White House for President Joe Biden's signature.

Rep. Jimmy Panetta, D-Calif., who sponsored the Gold Medal bill in the House, said in a statement that in tough times the nation can "look to the service and sacrifice of those like Cmdr. Everett Alvarez Jr. to remind and inspire us as to what it takes for our nation to endure."

Panetta had a special interest in passage of the bill. His father, former Defense Secretary and CIA Director Leon Panetta, was a member of the class of 1960 with Alvarez at Santa Clara University.

"Cmdr. Alvarez is an American hero who served as an inspiring source of hope for other prisoners of war during his time in Vietnam," said Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Calif., who sponsored the bill in the Senate.

Alvarez was captured on Aug. 5, 1964, while flying a mission over North Vietnam in his A-4 Skyhawk as part of Operation Pierce Arrow. In interviews over the years with Military.com and other outlets, he detailed how he was shot down when "the sky turned black with flak" after he had strafed North Vietnamese patrol boats over majestic Ha Long Bay, now one of Vietnam's major tourist attractions.

Then, "a sudden burst jarred my plane. A sickening feeling crept over me as I tried to control my aircraft. Smoke filled the cockpit, and every warning light lit up."

He keyed his mic: "I'm on fire! I'm out of control!"

Alvarez fought to regain control to allow him to eject, but before punching out, he keyed the mic again: "I'm getting out! I'll see you guys later!"

His first thought after hitting the water was to swim to one of the outcroppings in the bay and possibly hide under the brush, but shots fired from a patrol boat kicked up the water around him and a bullet grazed his elbow. He was quickly hauled aboard the patrol boat, where his captors immediately began trying to interrogate him.

Alvarez, the grandson of Mexican immigrants, instinctively resisted. He replied in Spanish -- "No entiendo [I don't understand]." He would later tell Military.com, "I don't know why I did that -- seemed like a good idea at the time."

Alvarez was the first U.S. aviator to be captured and would spend eight and a half years as a prisoner -- the first 13 months of it in solitary confinement in a 7-by-7-foot cell. He was the second-longest held POW in U.S. military history after Army Capt. Floyd Thompson, who was held for almost nine years after the aircraft he was riding in was shot down in March 1964.

After 3,113 days of captivity, Alvarez was released on Feb. 12, 1973, as part of the Operation Homecoming wherein all U.S. prisoners, including then-Lt. Cmdr. John McCain, who also flew the A-4 Skyhawk and was shot down in October 1967, were sent home.

In 2016, McCain, who became a Republican senator from Arizona and unsuccessfully ran for president twice, spoke to the example Alvarez set for other POWs in presenting him with the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award. "Whenever I'd start feeling sorry for myself, I'd think about Ev and how long he had been there and all that he had been through, and I would feel a lot less sorry," McCain said at the event. "He had a record of steadfast resistance and strength, and we not only admired him, we revered him."

After his release, Alvarez completed 20 years in the Navy, earned a law degree, formed a technology company, and also served as deputy director of both the Peace Corps and what was then the Veterans Administration.

On Nov. 13, 1982, Alvarez represented the Reagan administration at the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorials, which at the time listed the names of more than 57,900 U.S. service members who were killed in that divisive conflict.

In 2022 on the 40th anniversary of the memorial's dedication, Alvarez reflected on his initial doubts about the design of the shiny black concrete wall listing the names and how the public would react.

"Oh yeah, I had concerns. It was a tumultuous time," Alvarez told Military.com, but "I changed my view" on the memorial as he "realized how it affected the public," and what it would mean to future generations.

He watched as veterans came forward to touch the names of those they knew and "what struck me was the tremendous outpouring of the people, the veterans that came for the dedication and their families," he said. "That was heartwarming. It is, I would have to say, very therapeutic in a way for a lot of people."



Join Our Team of Volunteers

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



Requirements

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

Registration On

www.jaxnavalmuseum.org/volunteer

Skills Needed

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

For More Info

volunteer@jaxnavalmuseum.org

USS Orleck's Address

610 East Bay Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202

How to report a Veteran's death to VA

The passing of a Veteran is a solemn time that deserves to be recognized and reported with the utmost respect. Veterans have served their country and worked hard for their well-deserved benefits.

However, after a Veteran passes away, family members should report the death of the Veteran to VA as soon as possible to stop current benefits payments. If the death is not reported promptly, survivors or executors of the Veteran's estate may have to repay any overpayments received. Payments the deceased Veteran received may include compensation, pension, education or Veteran Readiness & Employment benefits.

VA encourages loved ones of deceased Veterans to follow the guidance below on reporting Veteran deaths to avoid falling victim to benefit scams.

How to report the death of a Veteran

Calling is the fastest way to report a Veteran's death so VA will stop benefit payments, but there are other options available for reporting.

Options for reporting:

By Phone: Call VA 800-827-1000 (TTY: 711) and select 5. Agents are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET.

In Person: Go to a VA regional office. Find the nearest VA regional office.

By Mail: Department of Veterans Affairs Claims Intake Center, PO Box 4444, Janesville, WI 53547-4444. Include your relationship to the Veteran and any supporting documents that can help us verify the Veteran's identity. Examples of supporting documents are:

Death certificate or other public record of the Veteran's death

Discharge document (like a DD214)

If you report in person at a VA regional office or by mail, provide copies of:

Death certificate or other public record of the Veteran's death.

Discharge document (like a DD214).

Provide as much information about the Veteran as you can when you first report the notice of death to VA. This information will help VA verify the Veteran's identity. This information includes:

Full name.

Social Security Number or VA claim number.

Date of birth.

Date of death.

Branch of service.

Best practices to avoid survivor benefit scams

Save important files, such as the Veteran's military service/treatment records, discharge papers and copies of their VA claims.

Go to the VA website. For guidance on creating an account and obtaining a VA security Personal Identification Number (PIN) to securely access benefit information. A VA Security PIN is an additional way to secure direct deposit accounts from theft and protect Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

Never give out PII via text, and be cautious of suspicious hyperlinks or unfamiliar hyperlinks.

If a survivor is missing a VA benefits payment, identifies a discrepancy in payments, or find suspicious activity with a direct deposit account, contact VA immediately at 800-827-1000.

Review all documents thoroughly. Survivors should never sign a blank form for some

one else to complete later. They should always review the completed form before signing and retain a copy of the completed form for their records.

For protection against identity theft scams, notify the major credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion) to update the individual's credit report with a deceased notice and notify the Veteran's financial institutions so all accounts can be closed or transferred appropriately.

According to AARP, scammers also use names published in obituaries to pretend to be long lost relatives of the deceased. When it's time to write your loved one's obituary, consider leaving out the birthdate, middle name, home address, birthplace and mother's maiden name.

For other scams predators use, visit www.VA.GOV/VSAFE.

VA is committed to delivering world-class care and benefits to Veterans and their dependents by providing survivors with ongoing support and assistance. Check to see if you qualify for survivor benefits, such as health care coverage, Survivors' and Dependents' Education Assistance Program, housing assistance, or even help with burial costs.

For more guidance on how to report the death of a Veteran, submitting necessary documentation and finding additional resources available, visit [VA Benefits For Spouses, Dependents, Survivors, And Family Caregivers | Veterans Affairs](#).

To report a missing VA benefits payment, identify a discrepancy in payments, or find suspicious activity with a direct deposit account, contact VA immediately at 800-827-1000. You may also file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission if funeral homes charge to set up funeral honors or schedule a burial with VA's National Cemetery Administration by visiting reportfraud.ftc.gov. For other scams predators use, visit va.gov/vsafe.

Burials and Memorials

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

How to Apply

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

Apply for Pre-Need Burial Eligibility

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

VA Memorial Benefits

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

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

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

The following burial benefits may be provided:

Burial in a VA national cemetery

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

A government furnished grave liner

Perpetual care of the gravesite

A headstone or marker with an inscription

A burial flag

A Presidential Memorial Certificate

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

Burial in a private cemetery

A government headstone, marker, or medallion

A burial flag

A Presidential Memorial Certificate

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

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

VA Requirements

Discharge papers to establish your eligibility for burial services

VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8)

11000 Bruce B. Downs Blvd. • Tampa, FL 33612 • www.visn8.va.gov

TAMPA

- Lecanto VA Clinic**
2000 W. Main Ave/Highway 101
Lecanto, FL 33462
(352) 784-6860
- Brooksville VA Clinic**
1800 Carter Blvd. SW
Brooksville, FL 34601
(352) 591-6362
- Delephilly VA Clinic**
1001 Eisenhower Blvd
Delephilly, FL 33617
(813) 766-3500
- New Port Richey VA Clinic**
901 E. 15th St.
New Port Richey, FL 34614
(727) 869-5200
- Lakeland VA Clinic**
4217 South Poplar St
Lakeland, FL 33801
(352) 521-2500
- Hidden River VA Clinic**
1275 Lake View Dr
Tampa, FL 33617
(813) 291-4800
- Tampa VAMC**
1601 Bay Pines Blvd
1601 Bruce B. Downs Blvd
Tampa, FL 33613
(813) 872-2800
- Tampa VA Dermatology**
1601 Bay Pines Blvd
Tampa, FL 33616
(813) 872-4800
- South Hibernia VA Clinic**
12570 Hemlock Hill Cir
Hernando, FL 34132
(813) 794-6800
- Fort Smith VA Clinic**
1601 Bay Pines Blvd
Tampa, FL 33613
(813) 872-4200
- Fort Smith VA South VA Clinic**
1601 Bay Pines Blvd
Tampa, FL 33617
(813) 872-2200
- Deer Park VA Clinic**
11800 Deer Park Blvd. SW
New Port Richey, FL 34612
(352) 313-4800
- Wimereux Circle VA Clinic**
1601 Bay Pines Blvd
Tampa, FL 33616
(813) 291-2700
- New Port Richey VA Clinic**
7900 Deer Park
New Port Richey, FL 34614
(727) 861-4200
- Bruce B. Downs Blvd VA Clinic**
12270 Bruce B. Downs Blvd
Tampa, FL 33613
(813) 712-2800, 4201
- Medical/View Lane VA Clinic**
1601 Bay Pines Blvd
Building 10-17
Delephilly, FL 33617
(813) 766-3700
- Tampa 1 VA Mobile Clinic**
1601 Bay Pines Blvd
Tampa, FL 33613
(813) 872-2800
- Tampa 2 VA Mobile Clinic**
1601 Bay Pines Blvd
Tampa, FL 33613
(813) 872-2800

BAY PINES

- C.H. BOYD Young EHR**
1300 Bay Pines Blvd
Bay Pines, FL 33714
(941) 861-6800
- St. Petersburg VA Clinic**
1601 Bay Pines Blvd
St. Petersburg, FL 33713
(727) 562-1700
- Bradenton VA Clinic**
1310 Main Ave SE, Box 971
Bradenton, FL 34209
(941) 724-4600
- Sarasota VA Clinic**
1402 1st St SE, Box 100
Sarasota, FL 34231
(941) 551-1000
- Sebring VA Clinic**
1001 W. Highway 17 South
Sebring, FL 33857
(888) 871-6227
- Port Charlotte VA Clinic**
4011 Gateway Trail, Box 401
Port Charlotte, FL 33952
(941) 624-3700
- Lee County VA Clinic**
1601 East Main Street
Cape Coral, FL 33904
(239) 642-1800
- Naples VA Clinic**
12950 Golden Gate Blvd, Box 128
Naples, FL 34102
(239) 654-4700
- North Naples VA Clinic**
12800 Gulf Highway 128
Charmley, FL 34102
(239) 734-5274

NORTH FLORIDA/SOUTH GEORGIA

- The Villages VA Clinic**
4000 W. Irons Highway East
The Villages, FL 32170
(352) 274-3600
- Ocala VA Clinic**
4025 SE 49th St
Ocala, FL 32678
(352) 388-1500
- Sergeant Ernest I. "Boots" Thomas VA Clinic**
22811 Orange Ave
Tallahassee, FL 32310
(904) 476-6700
- Warramoa VA Clinic**
4010 Highway 90
Warramoa, FL 32466
(904) 778-3620
- Yulee VA Clinic**
180 Hampton Dr, Ste B
Yulee, FL 32097
(904) 291-8112
- Waycross VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- St. Mary VA Clinic**
2403 Johnson Rd, Ste 1
St. Mary, GA 31058
(769) 718-5000
- Jacksonville 1 VA Clinic**
1100 W. Jefferson St
Jacksonville, FL 32209
(904) 476-5800
- Jacksonville 2 VA Clinic**
1801 University Blvd
Jacksonville, FL 32216
(904) 732-6300
- Jacksonville Southpoint VA Clinic**
4200 Southpoint Dr South
Jacksonville, FL 32216
(904) 476-4900
- Lee C. Chase Jr. VA Clinic**
1800 DePauline Road
St. Augustine, FL 32086
(904) 421-0814
- Palatka VA Clinic**
4000 State Rd 10, Ste B0
Palatka, FL 32127
(352) 278-9800
- Prery VA Clinic**
1224 N. Prery Rd
Prery, FL 32067
(904) 229-6907
- Lake City VAMC**
4177 Wilson Ave
Lake City, FL 32825
(407) 516-3000
- Wabun Bandel VAMC**
563 W. Nelson St
Gainesville, FL 32609
(352) 352-1617
- Gainesville VA Subsidiary**
500 Southwest 1st Ave
Gainesville, FL 32607
(352) 346-1600
- A.J. Baker VA Clinic**
460 College Dr, Ste 200
Waldenburg, FL 32089
(904) 773-2700
- Gainesville 900 VA Clinic**
700 W. University Blvd
Gainesville, FL 32609
(352) 376-1671, 377000
- Gainesville 640 VA 1 VA Clinic**
10237
1401 Southwest 6000
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 336-4900, 491000
- Gainesville 640 VA 2 VA Clinic**
10770 20th St
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 376-1671, 377000
- Gainesville 640 VA 3 VA Clinic**
10770 20th St
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 376-1671, 377000
- Gainesville VA 11 VA Clinic**
5400 SW 34th St
Gainesville, FL 32609
(352) 336-4900, 491000
- Lake City VA Clinic**
805 W. 11th St
Lake City, FL 32829
(407) 764-1000
- Gainesville VA Clinic**
1700 4th St
Gainesville, FL 32609
(352) 336-1500
- Gainesville VA Clinic**
1700 4th St
Gainesville, FL 32609
(352) 336-1500

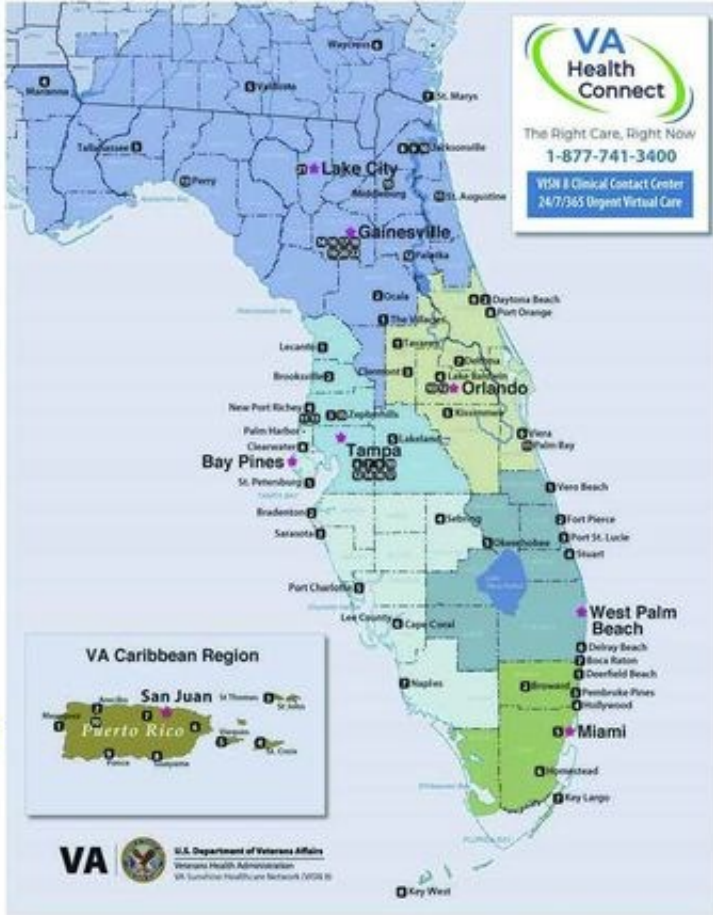
- Gainesville 640 VA 2 VA Clinic**
10770 20th St
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 376-1671, 377000
- Gainesville 640 VA 3 VA Clinic**
10770 20th St
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 376-1671, 377000
- Gainesville VA 11 VA Clinic**
5400 SW 34th St
Gainesville, FL 32609
(352) 336-4900, 491000
- Lake City VA Clinic**
805 W. 11th St
Lake City, FL 32829
(407) 764-1000
- Gainesville VA Clinic**
1700 4th St
Gainesville, FL 32609
(352) 336-1500

ORLANDO

- Tavares VA Clinic**
1200 Tavares Blvd
Tavares, FL 32780
(407) 233-2800
- Westside Pavilion VA Clinic**
3510 W. University Parkway
Westside, FL 32789
(407) 366-4700
- Orlando VA Clinic**
1200 University Blvd
Orlando, FL 32816
(407) 243-4200
- Lake Baldwin VA Clinic**
1200 University Blvd
Lake Baldwin, FL 32086
(904) 586-1500
- Orlando VA Medical Center**
1588 Veterans Way
Orlando, FL 32807
(407) 421-1000
- West VA Clinic**
2000 Veterans Way
West, FL 32792
(407) 421-1000
- Deltona VA Clinic**
1200 University Blvd, Ste 410
Deltona, FL 32725
(407) 761-1000
- Port Orange VA Clinic**
1201 South Lake Martin Blvd
Port Orange, FL 32129
(407) 761-0200
- William T. Chappell, Jr Veterans Outpatient Clinic**
211 National Health Care
Orlando, FL 32814
(407) 521-1000
- Orlando 1 VA Mobile Clinic**
1201 University Blvd
Orlando, FL 32807
(407) 421-1000
- Palmdale VA Clinic**
1200 University Blvd, Ste 101
Palmdale, FL 32909
(352) 738-0200
- Orlando 2 VA Mobile Clinic**
1200 University Blvd
Orlando, FL 32807
(407) 421-1000

WEST PALM BEACH

- Boca Raton VA Clinic**
111 17th St
Boca Raton, FL 33430
(561) 291-4012
- Ft. Pierce VA Clinic**
1801 23rd St, Ste 101
Fort Pierce, FL 34947
(352) 399-1500
- Port St. Lucie VA Clinic**
1601 St. Lucie Ave
Port St. Lucie, FL 34956
(772) 878-1875
- Stuart VA Clinic**
1517 W. Broadway Blvd
Stuart, FL 34997
(772) 298-0304
- Deerfield Beach VA Clinic**
1201 N. Palmdale Ave
Deerfield Beach, FL 33442
(561) 446-5252
- West Palm Beach VAMC**
700 N. Military Ave
West Palm Beach, FL 33416
(561) 433-6252
- Delray Beach VA Clinic**
4001 S. Delray Highway
Delray Beach, FL 33489
(561) 655-6200
- Boca Raton VA Clinic**
111 17th St
Boca Raton, FL 33430
(561) 425-4012



CARIBBEAN REGION MIAMI

- Waycross VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Anneke VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- St. Thomas VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- St. Croix VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Virgen VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Cuba VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Comoros VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Guaymas VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Empire's Roble Outpatient Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Shades VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- San Juan VAMC**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Deerfield Beach VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- William Bill King Outpatient Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Pembroke Pines VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Hollywood VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Miami VAMC**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Key Largo VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000
- Key West VA Clinic**
1100 City Blvd
Waycross, GA 32090
(877) 864-6124, 342-9000



You've made our country
A BETTER PLACE.

Enjoy your well-earned retirement at Silver Creek.

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

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

Call **800-821-8170** to schedule a tour and learn more.



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



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

Assisted Living Facility #12928



Stories of Service

St. Johns County Veterans Oral History Project



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

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

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

A sincere thanks to them all.



View the Digital Exhibit:

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



Main: 904-824-2872

Research Library: 904-825-2333

271 Charlotte Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084

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

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS VETERAN HOMEOWNERS SAINT JOHNS COUNTY

FREE HOME REHAB

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

QUALIFICATIONS

Participant Eligibility:

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

Property Eligibility:

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

* Please review full eligibility criteria on our website *

CONTACT US TODAY

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

Please visit our website to fill
out an application

WWW.OPLIFELINE.ORG



**OPERATION
LIFELINE INC.**

RESERVE COMPONENT TRANSITION ASSISTANCE ADVISORS



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

I am here to help with the following benefits:

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

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

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

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

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



Thank you for serving, now let me serve you.

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

David "Dave" Kennett

Reserve Component
Transition Assistance Advisor

Federal Contractor

202-987-3864

DKennett@gapsi.com

DIRECTION | BENEFITS | COMPASSION



VA SURVIVOR BENEFITS & THE PACT ACT

ESGR4U

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



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

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

How to Apply for DIC and/or Accrued Benefits

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



Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

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



Accrued Benefits

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

Additional Survivor Benefits Available:



Burials and Burial Allowance

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



Final Monthly Payment

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



Home Loan Guaranty

Certificate of Eligibility is available for surviving spouses receiving DIC.



Education and Training

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



Health Care

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

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

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

Surviving Spouse Milestones

Not all milestones apply to every persons situation

One Year Mark:

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

Two Year Mark:

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

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

- Apply for Home of Selection (HOS) extension

Three Year Mark:

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

Spouse Turns 52:

- If disabled, can remain and retain SSA Survivor Benefits

Spouse Turns 55:

- Can remarry and not lose SBP eligibility

Spouse Turns 57:

- Can remarry not lose DIC eligibility

Spouse Turns 60:

- Can remarry and retain SSA Survivor Benefits

Surviving Youth Milestones

Not all milestones apply to every persons situation

Child Turns 16:

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

Child Turns 18:

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

Child Turns 21:

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

Child Turns 22:

- Loss of Child-Only SBP regardless of school enrollment

Child Turns 23:

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

Child Turns 26:

- Loss of TRICARE Young Adult

Child Turns 33:

- Loss of Fry Scholarship eligibility

FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Thanks!

Nick Howland

Executive Director, The Fire Watch

www.thefirewatch.org

904.525.1761



Vietnam Veterans of America



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

Chapter/President/email/Location

1046	Tommy Tittle	twt1968@att.net
1048	Bob Adkins	adk123robert@outlook.com
1059	Dave Treffinger	dtreffinger433@msn.com
1084	Bill Jefferson	bill_jefferson@comcast.net
1088	Roy (Corky) Rudd	corkstopper50@yahoo.com; Nassau
1092	Forest Hope	foresthope@usa.net; Gainesville
1134	Marvin Lagle	mdlagle@gmail.com; Baker



REMEMBER WHAT OUR MEDAL STANDS FOR:

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

Veterans Council of Clay County:

President: Ansil Lewis

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

Mission Statement:

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



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

What the Council has done:

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

SA-0003147064-01

Veterans Crisis Line

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

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

STAND BY THEM
Confidential help for Veterans and their families

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK (8258)
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

• • • • Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to (888)339 • • • •

Military/Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255

Veterans Crisis Line

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

Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255



Legal Aid for Veterans

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

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

1.866.486.6161

Call Today!

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



We Can Help With

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

Supported by the: **FDVA**
FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Become a Watch Stander with The Fire Watch

Veterans Councils of Northeast Florida



BAKER COUNTY

President: Larry Porterfield

Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

Location:

MacClenny Primitive Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall on North Boulevard

Time : 1800 (6pm)

CLAY COUNTY

President: Ansil Lewis, SgtMaj USMC, ret

Meetings:

First Wednesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 250
2608 Black Creek Rd
Middleburg, FL 32068

Time: 1100 (11am)

904-658-0105

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)

DUVAL COUNTY

President

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37
Main Building
San Juan Avenue

Time: 1900 (7 pm)

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 D. McDermott Director

Lori Chapman Assistant VSO

Shauna Holton Assistant VSO

Jonathan Rojas Assistant VSO

April Manner Administrative Coordinator

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.