



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

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St. Augustine, FL 32085

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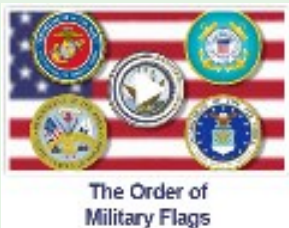
Volume 11, Issue 7

From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

July 2022

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Fellow Veterans

Happy Fourth of July

I hope you and your family are enjoying the birthday celebration for our Nation. As we gather to celebrate with our cookouts and fireworks, take some time to reflect on what America means to you, the sacrifices that have been made to afford us this time of celebration, and how we, individually and collectively, can do our part in preserving this great Nation's status as the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave.

In the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower—*“Freedom has its life in the hearts, the actions, and the spirit of men. And so it must be earned and refreshed daily—else like a flower cut from its life-giving roots, it will wither and die”*.

On Thursday, 30 June 2022 in lieu of our regularly scheduled Veterans Council meeting, a ceremony was held to honor two of our local Patriots, Col. Bill Pruitt, USA ret.

and Mr. Ed Trester. Both men were presented with the Congressional Gold Medal by Congressman Michael Waltz, U.S. Representative, 6th District, Florida. There was an overwhelming turnout for the occasion with many of our national, state and local elected officials or their representatives present. The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest medal given to civilians by Congress. The Veterans Council has been working with both men and the American Merchant Marine Veterans group for nearly a year to make this event possible. We are pleased that after nearly 70 years, these two deserving veterans have received the recognition they deserve. Both men were also recognized by our County Commissioners on Tuesday, 21 June 2022 at the County Commission Board meeting with a Certificate of Recognition and received a standing ovation by all in attendance. Complete coverage of the June 30 ceremony ap-



pears in this month's newsletter.

The Veterans Day committee has begun meeting to plan for this year's celebration to honor our veterans. The venue for our Nov. 11 program will once again be held at Anastasia Baptist Church on Fri, 11 Nov 2022. This year, we will be recognizing all those who served during the Global War on Terror. This 20 year engagement saw many of our local men and women from the Florida National Guard deployed around the world to defeat our enemy. Many of them will be personally recognized for their service on Veterans Day.

The Veterans Council thanks you for your service.

Bill Dudley, Chairman
Veterans Council of
St. Johns County



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

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

Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee Meetings for 2022
At Hadlow Community Hospice of NE FL.
4266 Sunbeam Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257
Hadlow Bldg – Conference Room A 7:00 pm

+++++2022 Officers of the SCJNC+++++

Chairman: Padraic Mulvihill

Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley Treasurer: Pat Welch

Secretary: Kathy Church, Judge Advocate: Don Guthrie

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

Chaplain: Pat Archuleta, Public Affairs: Pat Mulvihill

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



Upcoming Veterans Council Meetings Speakers

July 28, Andrew Stack, FL State Coord for DoD Program
“Building Healthy Military Communities”

Houston Bowles, Chairman, Players PGA Tour

August 25, Carmalita Gaines, Jacksonville Veterans Center
Kathy Church, Missing in America Project

September 29, Officer Kelly Kemp, Chaplain, SJSO,
“Community Involvement”

The June 30th meeting of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County was a very special one.



The Congressional Gold Medal was presented to World War II Merchant Mariners Ed Trester and Bill Pruitt by US Congressman Michael Waltz.



VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY



MINUTES OF GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

MAY 26, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dudley

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS: Chairman Dudley

PLEDGE: Chairman Dudley

INVOCATION: Vice Chairman Quinn

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS: Chairman Dudley

Sharleen Deary, NE FL Women Veterans

Bob & Cathy Adkins, VVA1048

Erick Saks, Operation Lifeline

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Minutes of last meeting conducted on APRIL 28, 2022, were presented by Chairman Dudley. Copies of Minutes and Agenda are available on the sign-in table and were sent to members electronically by the Secretary. The minutes were approved by voice vote with no changes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer John Mountcastle provided a detailed report that as of April 27, 2022, there was a balance of \$111,441.01 and as of May 25, there was balance of \$108,342.62. There is an outstanding credit card charge of \$309.00. Treasurer went over recent deposits and expenditures of the account. Treasurer indicated that \$3,000.00 was donated to the family of SSGT Seth Plant and any additional donated funds for SSGT Plant will be given to his family for expenses. Veterans' Council filed an extension for filing 2021 IRS Form. Chairman Dudley made a motion that the Treasurer's Report be approved as presented. The report was approved by voice vote with no changes.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS: Chairman Dudley

Sharleen Deary, NE FL Women Veterans

Bill Lazar, St. Johns County Housing Partnership

PRESENTATIONS:

Sharleen Deary, NE FL Women Veterans

Dee Quaranta was unable to attend and Sharleen Deary was there to speak about NE FL Women Veterans

which was founded in 2012 by Ms. Quaranta. The organization formed to help veteran women bridge the gap in services. Ms. Deary spoke of the programs and services provided to assist women veterans in their needs in the NE Florida area. All staff participants are veterans of different services. Flyers were provided for additional information.

Bill Lazar, Director, St. Johns County Housing Partnership

The Housing Partnership works within the county on affordable housing issues. The Housing Partnership started out collaborating with volunteers from the Navy to go out and fix up substandard housing. Work is provided to fix up housing for low-income seniors and low-income families in general. Special effort is put into assist veterans throughout the community, especially senior and disabled veterans. The Housing Partnership has a waiting list of over 500 people in need of assistance. The Housing Partnership has about 70 rental properties in SJC and is building new complexes when able. There is not much available here in SJC. The Housing Partnership is working with the Veterans Council to build a 6-unit complex called "Patriot Place" for "at risk" veterans. The nation is looking at a large shortage of affordable housing and we have to continue to work together to provide housing for our veterans. Flyers provided with additional information about the St. Johns County Housing Partnership and their services was provided. Also spoke about "National Make a Difference Day" (usually the last week in October) for volunteers to go out and help with housing issues in the community. SJHP funds are provided from several different organizations such as HUD. There was a lengthy question and answer session that provided quality information regarding housing.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER UPDATE, JOSEPH MCDERMOTT

Veteran Service Officers just recently returned from recertification training through the FL Dept. of Veterans Administration. All three service officers were successful and passed their certification. Judge Mason, chief judge for Board of Veterans Appeals, is leaving the position and there will be a new reappointment. There are 108 VVA Law Judges and 199,843 appeals pending. Of those pending, 77,068 are asking for hearing before the law judges. The Legacy Appeal still has 14,228 cases pending they are trying to get lower. The timeframe for an appeal is taking at least 2 years. The hyperthyroid claims are taking on an average of 260 days or more. With the adding of Agent Orange, they are going back years on some of the claims. Hopefully, the VA will start working harder to get these claims through the system faster.

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT, JOHN LESLIE

Opened with the dire need for volunteers as mentors for the Veterans Treatment Court. In the middle of the sixth year of the Treatment Court and during those years have inducted 103 veterans in the court. Fifty-six have graduated. There are thirty-four veterans in-flow at this time. Thirteen left the program without graduating. There are five phases of the treatment court and when their probation is up, they are free

to go. Next session is June 3rd at 10:00am with an open invitation to anyone that wishes to attend to observe. Maybe consider becoming a volunteer mentor. The mentor's role is to work outside of the court with the veteran to help navigate the system. Training is provided for the mentors.

CHAIRMAN DUDLEY REMARKS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Memorial Day observance will be held at 10:00am on Monday at the St. Augustine National Cemetery. First time is 2 years able to hold observance for those lost and everyone is invited to be a part of the ceremony.

Sargent Seth Plant's, who tragically died in Alaska, remains returned to SJC and the Veterans Council worked closely with family to provide escort from JIA to St. Augustine and St. Johns Funeral Home. Immensely proud of all who turned out for the escort. Also spoke of Sargent Plant's funeral service and extended a call for all to attend the service.

Chairman Dudley is now a Board Member, representing the Veterans, for Home Again St. Johns and attended his first meeting last week. Chairman Dudley appeared on radio show with Mike Davis, Henry Dean and St. Augustine Beach Commissioner to talk housing needs in the county. St. Johns County does not have a homeless shelter and needs one desperately.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bob Adkins, VVA1048, in Daytona Beach, spoke of Hero's Honor Festival to be held at the Speedway and how people are able to attend. The program honors Vietnam Veterans but all veterans are invited to attend. Vietnam Veterans can attend with a DD214 proving they served during the Vietnam War if they have not signed up yet. Vietnam Veterans can attend for free, and their wives will receive a discount.

George McCrea spoke of ways of respectfully retiring old flags. Flags can be dropped off at the VFW on US 1 South. Discussion was held on the Massing of Colors.

Joe Snowberger, Mission United Program, spoke of programs or resources and the dialing of 211 to get information from the program. If you have a program not listed, please contact for addition to the list of resources.

Chairman announced that the Council received and nice Thank You card from the Staff at the CBOC for the picnic tables they received.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William Dudley, Chairman

Ray A. Quinn, Vice Chairman

First Militia Chapter of the AUSA conducted an Army Ball tonight celebrating the Army's 247th Birthday, established on June 14, 1775. The Chapter also recognized SGM (R) Ray Quinn, a founding member of the Chapter on his enduring service. He was awarded the Lifetime Achievement award. Thanks for your outstanding support of the Chapter covering 3 decades SGM. Go Army and Happy Birthday!



An overdue honor: St. Johns County WWII veterans receive Congressional Gold Medals **Like other merchant mariners, Ed Trester and Bill Pruitt waited decades for recognition**

Sheldon Gardner, St. Augustine Record

It was a long overdue recognition, officials said, and one that was marked with standing ovations and emotional speeches.

Retired U.S. Army Col. William Pruitt, 102, and Edward Trester, 95, held up their Congressional Gold Medals in front of the crowd at the St. Johns County Auditorium on Thursday night.



Both risked their lives by serving in the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II.

Merchant mariners bring supplies to worldwide ports and can be called upon to serve during emergencies and war, according to the U.S. Department of Defense. Close to 250,000 merchant mariners served as part of the U.S. military during WWII, taking not only supplies but also armed forces to foreign countries.

"Roughly 4% of those who served were killed, a higher casualty rate than that of any of the American military services during World War II. . . . Though they did not see combat, mariners risked their lives supplying the various branches of the armed forces and joint operations with the tools needed to win the war," according to The National WWII Museum in New Orleans.

Congress passed and then-President Donald Trump signed the Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act in 2020 to honor them for their service.

The Congressional Gold Medal will be displayed at the American Merchant Marine Museum in Kings Point, New York, and surviving merchant mariners will receive a bronze replica of the award, according to the Department of Defense.

The U.S. Capitol hosted a ceremony in May with WWII merchant mariners present.

But Trester and Pruitt, both St. Johns County residents, chose to receive their awards in front of their hometown crowd on Thursday surrounded by family, friends, neighbors and other supporters, including elected officials and fellow veterans.

Congressman Mike Waltz, a combat veteran and former Green Beret, presented the medals.



"A quarter million of (merchant mariners) stepped up in our time of need to go into those ships in the frigid Atlantic, often completely unarmed when Hitler had a strategy of starving Europe, starving Britain, winning the battle of Britain, by what? By sinking those ships and by sinking so many of those ships that Britain and the United States would just throw up their hands," Waltz said.

Waltz saluted Pruitt and Trester and thanked them for their service.

The Congressional Gold Medal is the top honor given by the U.S. Congress.

"We do not give out many Congressional Gold Medals," Waltz said. "And it is really my honor to give it to these two gentlemen."

'Too few people know'

Trester was 17 when WWII was "raging," and he wanted to do something to help, he said.

Somewhat of a brash young kid, he quit high school and went down to a U.S. Navy recruiting office in Brooklyn, New York, he said. The man told him to go back to school.

But he went to a Merchant Marine office and came away with paperwork for his parents to sign.

After a tough conversation with his dad, he walked away with his parents' blessings. He was quickly sent to training and then assigned a liberty ship, he said.

"As I was walking down the dock to join the ship, I noticed they were loading bombs into the hull of the ship," he said.

He recalled on a trip to a North African port seeing ships "as far as your eye could see," and two ships were hit with torpedoes in the convoy, he said.

Trester stayed in the Merchant Marine until around 1950.

Following that, he worked for MetLife in New York City and in the late '70s headed a district office for the firm in Jacksonville.

Trester co-founded the St. Augustine Jazz Society, which awards music scholarship to high school students. His longtime friend Lorri Gill, who sings in his jazz band, accompanied him at the ceremony.

"I feel very proud and very honored ... to be recognized because the merchant service over the years has never really been recognized by our government, and too few people know about the Merchant Marine," Trester said.



Crossing the Atlantic

Pruitt's story began in Alabama, where he was born and raised. After graduating from high school, he worked for the Department of Defense in Birmingham, Alabama, and went into the Merchant Marine in 1942.

"I crossed the Atlantic four round-trips on the way to the Mediterranean Sea," he said.

The journeys carried tanks, personnel, munitions and other supplies for the European and North African theaters, according to a biography provided by his daughter, Dinah.

Pruitt served as a purser, handling customs, signing people aboard, running ship stores and paying the crew, he said. He reached the rank of lieutenant, junior grade.

He came to St. Augustine in 1950 to work with the state's Military Department and was a Florida National Guard member, according to his biography. He reached the rank of full colonel after becoming the United States Property and Fiscal Officer for the state, and he retired on May 31, 1980.

Pruitt remained involved in the community after retiring, including serving on the advisory board for Flagler College at its creation.

He thanked everyone in the crowd for celebrating his award.

"I have so very, very many friends, and they've made my life in St. Augustine the last 72 years wonderful, these citizens of St. Augustine and St. Johns County," he said.

Waiting for recognition

After the war, the Merchant Marine still transported men and supplies for the occupation of Japan, according to the National WWII Museum.

Despite their war and post-war efforts, "The Department of Defense maintained that mariners did not qualify as veterans not because their duties were not perilous, but because they did not meet its criteria based upon training and the organization of the service.

"In 1988, however, a U.S. District Judge ruled that the Department of Defense's views were arbitrary and unfair, prompting recognition of mariners who served in specific defense capabilities between 1941-1945 as veterans and eligible for GI Bill benefits," according to The National WWII Museum.

Waltz said the merchant mariners were in many ways forgotten over the last 70 years.

"And things that their Navy brothers and sisters got automatically and men in women in uniform got, like the GI bill in 1944, the Merchant Marine did not get then and that outrage has never been corrected," he said. "They never received it. It wasn't until 1988 that they finally received VA benefits."

Waltz said he was honored to help get Trester and Pruitt, and other merchant mariners during that era,

the recognition they deserve.

"To you two gentlemen, we will never forget," Waltz said.

'Eternally grateful'

One by one officials came forward to honor the two men on Thursday. They sat, Pruitt in a wheelchair and Trester on a chair next to him, in front of a nearly packed auditorium room.

During the speeches, St. Augustine Beach Commissioner Dylan Rumrell called the men "national treasures."

Among the officials in the audience were members of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, which hosted the event, as well as State Rep. Cyndi Stevenson, and officials representing Congressman John Rutherford, Sens. Marco Rubio and Rick Scott, and State Rep. Paul Renner.

"I think often as an elected official of the privilege that we have to choose our own representatives, and that we should very well work to be worthy of the sacrifices that have happened over hundreds of years here," Stevenson said. "But to think it was a young 17-year-old man and volunteers like him who were the thin line that held our success together for WWII ... I am eternally grateful."



Nease named best NJROTC unit in the Nation

The Naval Service Training Command selected Nease as the Most Outstanding NJROTC Unit in the nation for 2021-2022 – taking top honors over the 583 NJROTC programs worldwide.

The powerhouse program in Ponte Vedra has been a perennial contender for national honors, having finished as the number two program in 2021. The selection is based on an evaluation of academic achievements, competitions, orientation activities, summer training programs, school service projects, community service activities, extracurricular activities, and annual inspection results.

This announcement followed Cmdr. Johnathan Shaw, Navy JROTC Area-12 manager, announcing Nease as the Most Outstanding Unit in Area-12, a region encompassing 60 schools covering the 13 NJROTC programs in northeast Florida and 47 across the entire state of Georgia for the fifth consecutive year.

“There’s immense pressure every year for the seniors to keep Nease on top,” said Battalion Cmdr. Isabella Rivera who accepted an appointment to the United States Coast Guard Academy. “We take our leadership roles seriously. And now we can pass on the torch to next year’s class with our mission completed.”

This year marks the second time Nease has taken home top honors. In 2015 Nease was named the Most Outstanding Unit in the nation.

“They say it takes a village to feed a child, well in the JROTC world, it takes a community of cadets, parents, school administrators and instructors pulling in the same direction to ascend a program to this height,” said senior naval science instructor Capt. Scott LaRochelle who is retiring after eight years at the helm of the program. “Nease NJROTC epitomized a ‘one team, one fight’ unified effort.”

Nease’s main identity is its Drill team that competes in a compilation of 10 academic, athletic and drill individual events at 12-16 school meets. This past year, Nease placed first at Sprayberry, Georgia, Lee County (Georgia), Martin Luther King (Georgia), Mandarin (Florida), Flanagan (Florida), Area-12 State Championship and third overall at the Navy National Academic, Athletic and Drill Championships.

Among other noteworthy achievements, Nease also took first place in athletics, academics, air rifle and orienteering competitions across Florida and the state of Georgia. Cadets completed 5,800 community service hours. And nine seniors received service academy appointments or ROTC scholarships.

“It starts and ends with character building,” said naval science instructor Gunnery Sgt. Duane Hanson. “The solid foundation of character development our cadets acquire in the program will serve them well now and later in life.”



Here is the announcement with registration form for the 15th annual commemoration of the end of the 2nd Seminole War and those who perished in it. This will also be the 180th anniversary of the parade and ceremony we remember this August.

The panel discussion Saturday after lunch should be of particular appeal to those interested in early Florida history. The participants (one a Seminole himself) will discuss/debate the origin of the Seminole people.

Lunch will be catered by Sonny's. There will also be a social Friday evening.

15TH ANNUAL PARADE AND CEREMONY
Saturday, August 13th 2022
St. Augustine National Cemetery



**“Commemorating the end of the Second Seminole War
and honoring all those who perished in it.”**

9:00 AM: Welcome coffee. Officers Club St. Francis Barracks, 82 Marine St.*
(All marchers must report to courtyard NLT 1000 for inspection/practice.)

10:45: Living-historians march to the National Cemetery.

11:00: Commemoration Ceremony at the pyramids and Dade Monument.

12:00: For registered guests, lunch and PM program in Officers Club, including the 2022 commemorative coin awards + panel discussion “The Origin of the Seminole People.”

N.B. For registered guests, the St. Augustine Officers Club will host a welcome social with hors-d-oeuvres Friday evening, Aug. 12th, 5 to 7 PM., during which a display of the coin and Alabama state medal honoring Maj. David Moniac, USA, will be presented to the Florida National Guard Museum.

This event is hosted by the Florida National Guard Historian.
The West Point Society of North FL and the Seminole Wars Foundation are Founding Partners.
Further information at stevenrinck@gmail.com or alison.m.simpson3.nfg@army.mil.

TO REGISTER.

Fee \$25. (Waived for participants, Support Brigade donors and those under 19 yrs.)

Make a check payable to **The Seminole Wars Foundation**. Annotate **August event**.

Mail w/form below to: Seminole Wars Foundation, P.O. Box 1456, Dade City, FL, 33526.

Name _____, e-mail _____

I will bring _____ guests. Enclosed is check # _____ for _____ (\$25 x number in party)

I/we plan to attend the Friday evening social. Yes _____ NO _____.

Support Brigade Appeal!! Help defray the cost of this event!

(Donors receive the commemorative, recognition in the program and waived reg. fee.)

Yes, I want to help! Enroll me as: _____ Commander (\$100), or _____ Loyal Trooper (\$50)

(Please write a separate check for the Support Brigade if you also register.)

Name for the program: _____

Titusville thrift shop finds proper threads for veteran burials

By Scott Heidler

TITUSVILLE, Fla. —

One Central Florida Navy veteran is on a mission to make sure service members are buried with dignity.



Jerry Vaughn runs a Titusville thrift shop geared toward serving veterans and their families. But he does more than that by helping vets when and however he can.

“When I joined the military, we took an oath to defend our country and our country is not necessarily real estate,” Vaughn, founder of The Dover Detail, said.

The scope of his service to the veteran community recently expanded into an area he had never thought of before.

A Marine private died at a local nursing home but had no family or money for a dress uniform for his burial at a National Cemetery. That prompted Jerry to start his nonprofit The Dover Detail.

“Within 48 hours, we were able to put together a 1960s Marine Corps private uniform that was age and era-appropriate for that Marine,” Vaughn said. “The funeral director says this happened more times than he cares to mention.”

Part of his talent for this, he says, comes from the time he worked in the costume department at Universal Studios.

“So I’ve made it my mission not to allow another veteran to go into that cemetery without being properly attired,” Vaughn said.

In less than the year since The Dover Detail started, he has already provided 26 dress uniforms for burial, including medals and ribbons.

Vaughn’s now getting referrals and donations from across central Florida. More families are coming to him for help to honor their loved ones who put themselves on the line.

Vaughn does it every day of the year. Not just the last Monday in May.

“If you want to celebrate this, go have your picnics, go have all that other stuff. But go by a cemetery and just find one tombstone that’s marked as a veteran. And pay your respects,” he said.

Dear Friends and Supporters of **First Coast Honor Flight**,

I am writing to share that on June 30, 2022, I will step down as President of First Coast Honor Flight.



My successor is Donald (Don) Simmons, Captain, U.S. Navy, Retired, a Jacksonville native and 30-year naval aviator. Don maintained deep roots in the community throughout his career and returned home after completing military service in 2019. He is the perfect individual to lead First Coast Honor Flight to its next level, and I ask that you continue to support him and the organization in days to come.

My term of service has run from establishing Northeast Florida's first Honor Flight Network Hub at the same time as the start of a global pandemic, through successful completion of two Honor Flights carrying 49 World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans on "the trip of a lifetime". It has been a privilege to participate in First Coast Honor Flight's mission as the organization grew from just a handful of volunteers in January 2020, into a now steadily expanding team dedicated to honoring and "giving back" to senior and critically ill Veterans in nine Northeast Florida counties and beyond. I'm also grateful for the opportunity to meet and chat with many of you, and for your assistance in spreading the word about our mission.

Thank you all for your commitment to supporting First Coast Honor Flight. We would not be here without you.

With respect and appreciation,

Selena

Selena Hernandez-Haines, Commander, U.S. Navy (ret.)

President, First Coast Honor Flight, Inc., 888.400.1185

info@firstcoasthonorflight.org, www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

Donald B. Simmons, III is a retired Captain having served 30 years in the U.S. Navy. He is currently the Director of Operations for Crossworks Technologies, Inc. (CWTI).

He has an Associate of Arts degree from Florida State College at Jacksonville, a Bachelor of Arts degree from Flagler College, and a Master of Science degree from the Florida Institute of Technology.



He is a life time member of the Military Officer Association of America and the National Eagle Scout Association. In addition to serving as the President of the First Coast Honor Flight Board of Directors, he also serves on the Flagler College Alumni Board of Directors.

He resides with his wife of 28 years, Josie, in Fleming Island, Florida.

Donald B. Simmons, III, Captain, U.S. Navy (Ret.)

First Coast Honor Flight, Inc., www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

First Coast Honor Flight Completes Second Trip for Northeast Florida Veterans



By Selena Hernandez-Haines, Commander, U.S. Navy (ret),
President Emeritus, First Coast Honor Flight Inc.

On May 21, 2022, First Coast Honor Flight, Inc. (FCHF) traveled to Washington, D.C. with 24 Northeast Florida Veterans, 24 Guardians, and six Flight Staff. This was the second Honor Flight for FCHF, which formed in early 2020 and conducted its inaugural flight in October 2021.

FCHF's sole mission is to provide World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, and critically ill Veterans of any era with a day of honor and recognition at their memorials in Washington, D.C. These one-day trips are provided free of charge to the Veteran.

The May 21 Honor Flight included three World War II, four Korean War, and 17 Vietnam War Veterans. Among the group were two Purple Heart recipients and two women Veterans. One Veteran had served during three wartime periods: World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Veterans in the Flight Group hailed from Alachua, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties.

Early on Flight Day, Veterans and Guardians checked in at the Evangel Temple Assembly of God on Jacksonville's Westside, where they were met by a host of Volunteers, Flight Staff, and special guests including a Marine Corps color guard from Blount Island Command. The assembled Flight Group then enjoyed an honor escort to Jacksonville International Airport (JIA) by members of the Patriot Guard Riders and Combat Veteran Motorcycle Association.

At the airport, a second honor escort was provided by JIA Terminal Operations, Transportation Security Administration, and Southwest Airlines staff. Led by a bagpiper, surrounded by uniformed escorts and K-9s, and applauded every step of the way by an early morning send-off crowd, the Flight Group proceeded through Security and on to our Southwest Airlines gate -- which turned out to be "C-4". Naturally, our gate designation was the subject of much amusement among the Veterans.

Soon the group was on its way to BWI Marshall Airport in Baltimore, where we boarded a charter bus bound for our first stop, the World War II Memorial on the Mall in Washington,



D.C.

Despite temperatures soaring well into the 90s, the Flight Group received a bona fide heroes' welcome from crowds of well-wishers at the World War II Memorial. From there, the Veteran-Guardian pairs split up to visit the Korean War and Vietnam War Memorials at their own pace, rendezvousing later at our charter bus and its welcome air conditioning.

From the Mall, the group rode into the hallowed grounds of Arlington National Cemetery. Once our bus passed the entry checkpoint, the women Veterans -- one World War II era, the other Korea/Vietnam era -- received a special visit by a representative of the Military Women's Memorial, who presented each with a certificate commemorating her registration in the historical database maintained by the Women's Memorial. Due to delayed completion of facility maintenance, the group was unable to visit the memorial and museum in person, but FCHF greatly appreciates the Memorial staff's "above and beyond" recognition of our women Vets.

Next, the FCHF group joined another Florida-based Honor Flight to observe, from front-row seats, the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns. This ceremony is riveting to watch, with its emphasis on perfection of the Guards' military appearance and their precise execution of the intricate drill involved in relieving the 24/7/365 watch. "SILENCE AND RESPECT" read the signs on walkways leading to the viewing area, and indeed, aside from the Sergeant of the Guard's orders to the audience and sentries, utter silence ruled throughout the 15-minute ceremony.



Due to time and access constraints, visits to the Pentagon 9/11 Memorial, Air Force Memorial and Iwo Jima Memorial were conducted as "windshield tours". And then... somehow, it was time to return to BWI Marshall Airport for the evening flight back to Jacksonville.

And in Fall 2022, FCHF plans to do it all over again.

For old service buddies and new-made friends, for Veterans and Guardians, FCHF Board members and Flight Staff, for our dedicated army of Volunteers and all our additional supporters (far too numerous to list here) – Honor Flight is "the trip of a lifetime". It truly is an experience like no other.



Our 9-county area of responsibility (Baker, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, and Union Counties) includes roughly 64,000 Veteran residents aged 65 and older. Almost 10,000 of those are 85 and older.

We ask your help in identifying candidates for future Honor Flights.

Applications to travel with Honor Flight as a Veteran -- and also as a Guardian -- may be downloaded from our website, www.firstcoasthonorflight.org, or obtained by emailing info@firstcoasthonorflight.org. Interested Veterans should submit an application as soon as possible, to be placed on the waiting list for a future flight.

FCHF is operated entirely by people who selflessly volunteer their time and talents. We receive no federal, state, or local grants. We can provide senior and critically ill Veterans with an Honor Flight only through the generous support of corporate and private donors. Visit our website,

www.firstcoasthonorflight.org to learn how to make a tax-deductible donation.

Our website now includes an FAQ section with answers to common questions about FCHF. If you can't find an answer to your question online, email it to info@firstcoasthonorflight.org.

First Coast Honor Flight, Inc. is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit corporation and is the first Honor Flight Network Hub to be based in northeast Florida. Honor Flight Network serves Veterans nationwide through 130 Hubs in 45 states.

Picture credit: Lew Turner, FCHF Videographer



The Veterans Council would like to thank Big John Sutherland for recommending several veterans/friends to join the Veterans Council of St. Johns County's Facebook Group page.

We are now well over 550 active members and encourage you all to ask your friends to Join or Like us. We would like to have over 750 members by summer's end.



Once a member you will be allowed to post your organizations flyers/meetings/events/golf tournaments and pictures as long as they are for the benefit of veterans, their spouses, families and organizations. Fund raiser advertising is allowed for Not For Profits.

The Council is a 501 C3 Not For profit and does not allow political or religious comments on its Facebook Group site. If you violate this rule your posting will be deleted. If you do it more than once you will be deleted from our group.

If you would like me to post your organizations events instead of posting them yourselves, just email me at: rothfeldm@gmail.com.

The Council's Facebook Group is current and active daily. It is the best way to get the word out to hundreds immediately.

The Veterans' Council of St. Johns County also publishes a monthly newsletter, The Patriot Reader, with a circulation of over 8,000 veterans, organizations and families. If your Not For Profit would like to submit something for the newsletter please email it to me by the third Sunday of the month for inclusion in the next Patriot Reader. There is no charge for this service as long as you are submitting for a Not For Profit.

Please submit articles in Microsoft Word and pictures in jpg format.

Please remember Memorial Day is fast approaching and our Facebook page and Patriot Reader lists times, dates and locations of the Ceremonies. We hope you will attend one of these events.

Chairman Bill Dudley

Secretary Michael Rothfeld

Mark your calendar for the Gary Sinise & the LT. Dan Band Concert 2022 coming up on Saturday, July 9! The event will be held in the Dewey's parking lot so be sure to bring chairs or blankets for seating. Food and beverage will be available for purchase--cash will move you through the lines more quickly!

Gates open at 5 pm, Opening act starts at 6 pm

Gary Sinise and the LT Dan Band starts at 7 pm

Free water provided by USO Jacksonville, No Navy endorsement implied.

GARY SINISE & THE
LT. DAN BAND
HONOR. GRATITUDE. ROCK & ROLL.

DEWEY'S PARKING LOT / GATES OPEN AT 5 PM
SATURDAY, JULY 9, 2022
OPENING ACT PERFORMS AT 6 PM / LT. DAN BAND PERFORMS AT 7 PM

*This is a free show. Food and beverages for sale.
No outside food or beverages permitted.
Patrons are encouraged to bring chairs & blankets.*

f **ig** **tw** **STAY CONNECTED AND FOLLOW US ONLINE**
@NASJAXMWR | NavyMWRJacksonville.com

MWR
NAVY JACKSONVILLE

VetStream TV is a streaming entertainment platform for veterans and their families.

VetStream TV is an American entertainment company founded by Joe Ramirez and LaVonne McIver James in January 2017 and launched in July of the same year. The company specializes in providing streaming media of interest to our nation's veterans and their families. The company has its headquarters in Santa Monica, California.

VetStreamTV offers feature films, shorts, television series, documentaries, and comedies. Soon, the VetStreamTV family of content will include exclusive one-time events, news, talk shows, and family entertainment.

VetStreamTV is available at <http://www.vetstreamtv.com>

The Veterans Council's 6 documentaries featuring the stories of local NE FL Veterans can be viewed now on VetStream TV

VETERAN RELATED CONTENT
Made, produced and distributed by Veterans on our own streaming channel.

Owned and Operated by Military Veterans

FREE SIGN UP HERE

Featured Films

- STOLEN FREEDOM**
- SHE WILL BE LOVED**
- Our Veteran Stories VIETNAM**
- I WILL NOT FORGET YOU**
- SURPRISE!**

Liberty Life Media is the pro-military media house for the 350,000 military Servicemembers, DOD personnel, Veterans, and their families who serve on The Liberty Coast's 9 military bases and live in Florida and Georgia's Camden, Charlton, Nassau, Duval, Baker, Clay, Bradford, Putnam and St. Johns counties with relevant, relatable, referential, and usable information which:

Showcases the diverse missions, assets and people of the 6 military branches operating on The Liberty Coast,

Shares the stories of the region's Servicemembers, Veterans, and their families,

Promotes On Base, In Town and Pro-Military events and activities,

Welcomes and helps newly arriving military and families assimilate to our community,

Assists Servicemember's transition to civilian life, connecting employers to Veterans,

Introduces and promotes military and Veteran support services and

Advocates for military and Veteran-owned businesses and Vetrepreneurs.

Liberty Life's mission is to build, connect and uplift one of the nation's largest and diverse Defense communities. In addition to the online "Audio" Digital Print Articles and free print distribution across The Liberty Coast, readers can expect a robust social media and promotional presence and an informative weekly newsletter.



We invite you to share your stories, events, offers and information across The Liberty Coast.

Contact us to share a story, event or idea, become a content contributor, become a print distribution point, or advertise to the military, Veteran and pro-military population of The Liberty Coast.

How Well Do You Know Your World War II Slang? From St. Augustine Lighthouse

The use of slang is one way in which soldiers who served in World War II communicated with each other. Men and women developed words and phrases that helped to define their wartime experience. After the war, the slang entered the English language and many of these words and phrases are still used today.

Slang Word or Phrase	Actual Meaning
1. Bail Out	A. to get out of a situation, term comes from parachuting
2. Army Chicken	B. Beans and Franks
3. Battery Acid	C. the powdered lemonade mix included in K-rations
4. Bubble Dancing	D. Dishwashing duty
5. Chow Hound	E. First person in line at the mess hall
6. Eagle Day	F. Pay day
7. Get Cracking	G. To get a move on, borrowed from the British RAF
8. Gremlin	H. Imaginary creature that caused mechanical failures
9. Dog Food	I. Corn Hash
10. Jawbreakers	J. Army biscuits
11. Lay an Egg	K. Drop a Bomb
12. Tin Pickle	L. Submarine or Torpedo
13. Sandpaper the Anchor	M. Doing unnecessary work
14. Pineapple	N. Grenade
15. Army Strawberries	O. Prunes
16. Bedpan Commando	P. Medical corpsman
17. Devil's Piano	Q. Machine gun
18. Juice Jerker	R. Electrician
19. Mae West	S. An inflatable rubber life belt for buoyancy
20. Sugar Report	T. Letter from a sweetheart
21. Carrier Pigeon	U. Serviceman acting as officer's messenger
22. Behavior Report	V. Letter to a girl
23. Ash Can	W. Depth Charge
24. Admiral of the Swiss Navy	X. Self Important Person
25. Canned Morale	Y. A Movie
26. Garbage Catcher	Z. A metal mess tray with 8 depressions in which food is served

Joe McLean, Reporter, WJXT News4JAX

NAS Jacksonville: Amid world conflict, base trained generation of Navy pilots for battle

Referendum to transfer land for naval base received near-unanimous public support from Jacksonville voters



Naval Air Station Jacksonville is the largest Naval base in the Southeast region and the third-largest in the United States.

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Naval Air Station Jacksonville is the largest Naval base in the Southeast region and the third-largest in the United States.

As Jacksonville celebrates its bicentennial anniversary in 2022, News4JAX dug into the history of this key strategic air station for this brief look at its origins, operations during the world’s largest conflict and the astronomically one-sided vote that made it all happen.

A public referendum

In the summer of 1939, Japan had already invaded China and in just a matter of months, Adolf Hitler’s armies would invade Poland, thrusting the world into a second world war. Though the U.S. would not join the war initially, the U.S. government was working to bolster its coastal air defense and identified Jacksonville as a prime location for a new naval air station.

“They were looking for a place to put pilot training,” NAS Jacksonville historian Ronald Williamson said. “They also needed a place near the water there so they could train in the big seaplanes, and they also wanted a place where they could get carriers in.”

After congressional approval, it was up to a local referendum of Jacksonville voters to decide whether to bond the land out to the U.S. Navy.

Though the special election day saw rainy skies in Duval County, 92% of voters turned out to cast a ballot, of which, 98% voted to approve the bond issue.

The National Guard operations that had been on the NAS Jacksonville site were relocated to Clay County, and that new base was called Camp Blanding Joint Training Center. NAS Jacksonville was officially commissioned on Oct. 15, 1940.

Full speed ahead

The main operation at NAS Jacksonville as the U.S. entered World War II was the training of naval aviators.

Pilots would begin training on the N2S Stearman biplanes and later graduate to PBY Catalinas and SNJ Texan aircraft for more strategic water or attack missions.

At its peak in 1944, there were roughly 1,000 aircraft on the base and there were an average of two take-offs and landings every 60 seconds.

To facilitate the training, more than 30 satellite bases were drafted into operation, including sites at Cecil Field, St. Augustine Airport, Green Cove Springs, Mayport and many others.

“A lot of the little small regional airports that you hear about today; St. Augustine’s airport, Fernandina beach’s airport, the airport up at Jekyll Island, the Lake City field, they took Lake City Airport,” said Williamson.

More than 10,000 pilots and 11,000 crewmen earned their gold wings at the station during World War II.

Prisoners of war

Near the end of the war, NAS Jacksonville also served as a holding center for more than 1,600 prisoners of war in German uniforms.

The first of the POWs arrived at the air station on June 4, 1945. Under the supervision of the Army commanders at nearby Camp Blanding, NAS Jacksonville was used as overflow for the main POW holding facility in Clay County.

Life on the base was comparatively comfortable for POWs held in America, as U.S. policy was to treat prisoners of war the same as servicemen. Sports, entertainment, religious leaders and even a German chef were available to the captives.

Those POWs were put to work in captivity as well, with work assignments including the construction of a golf course, maintenance and engineering work, and removal of a railroad spur line. “American farmers still needed help harvesting because we were fighting a war in Japan at least until September,” said Robert Billinger, historian and author of “Hitler’s Soldiers in the Sunshine State.” “The labor priorities of the American government were, of course, first on military reservations, and that’s why they work places like Jacksonville or



Blanding.”

Billinger said the U.S. government realized that POWs could serve a dire domestic need. “Generally speaking, the military found that they didn’t have as many civilian laborers, carpenters, machinists, garbage collectors, food supply people, etc., on the bases as they had before the war because those people had often been drafted, and so they needed to fill those ranks somehow,” Billinger said.

For their labor, the POWs were compensated with spendable currency in the camp, while the labor costs were paid to the U.S. government for the lease of POW labor.

By May 1946, the last of the POWs were released from the base and transported back to Germany.

After the war

After the surrender of Japan, World War II was over and the U.S. government was tasked with scaling down its military. “Just like any big war, Congress decided, ‘Hey, it’s time to start downsizing the military. We don’t need this massive military that we have that we just won the war with,’” Williamson said. “So they began downsizing and getting rid of bases all across the United States. NAS Jacksonville was just waiting to see if it was going to be on some kind of a list, but it didn’t happen.”

While several bases were closed down in the years following the war, NAS Jacksonville remained in operation as a key training site and strategically positioned naval air station. It remained in operation as the U.S. entered conflicts in Korea, Vietnam and the Persian Gulf. In 2022, NAS Jacksonville is a multi-mission base hosting more than 100 tenant commands and employing more than 17,000 active duty and civilian personnel.

VFW Post 11406 awards NJROTC citation, medal and check

NJM Staff report

NORTH JAX — The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 11406 is proud to present this year's First Coast High School VFW Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) Citation, Medal and Check to Cadet Sonya Keiser. In special recognition for her outstanding achievement, exceptional leadership ability with the NJROTC in the school year 2021/2022 under the command of Senior Naval Science Instructor CWO4 Allan Layne, USN (Ret).

VFW Post 11406 has supported the First Coast High School NJROTC for many years



and is honored to do so for these incredible young men and women this program generates.

Jacksonville apartment complex boosts affordable housing options for homeless veterans

Beth Reese Cravey, Florida Times-Union

A national nonprofit that helps cities address homelessness has purchased a Jacksonville apartment complex to provide permanent housing for homeless veterans.

New York-based Community Solutions paid \$9.35 million for Caroline Village at 2929 Justina Road in Arlington, which has about 92 units, according to the nonprofit.



"As units turn over, vacancies will be first offered to veterans experiencing homelessness," spokeswoman Anna Kim said. "The goal is to dedicate at least 50 percent of the units to veterans as Jacksonville works toward its goal of ending veteran homelessness."

Veterans who live there will also receive supportive services. Purchase of a second facility in Jacksonville is in the works.

As of April, Jacksonville's list of homeless veterans included 191 names, including 120 who had a housing voucher or subsidy to pay part of the rent and were looking for an available unit, according to Community Solutions. The supply was insufficient to house all of them, but adding Caroline Village to the mix will help close the gap.

"We are very excited they have acquired their first property in Jacksonville," Dawn Gilman, CEO of Changing Homeless, the area agency for homeless prevention, said.

The purchase is not only expanding the local supply but "preserving the affordable housing we have," she said. Caroline Village was already considered affordable housing because some of its current residents have federal Veterans Affairs supportive housing vouchers or are assisted by the federal Supportive Services for Veteran Families program, she said.

Mayor Lenny Curry said, "Jacksonville was selected for this opportunity because of our proven data-driven, coordinated approach to addressing the housing needs of our most vulnerable citizens. With this acquisition, we have increased our portfolio of affordable housing units needed to be within reach of achieving functional zero."

'Built for Zero'

Community Solutions coordinates the "Built for Zero" movement, an ongoing national initiative that helps communities, including Jacksonville since 2009, end veteran and chronic homelessness. The initiative develops real-time data on homelessness, optimizes local housing resources, tracks progress against monthly goals and accelerates proven strategies.

The goal is reaching "functional zero" for a certain homeless population, such as veterans, meaning capacity is available within 30 days to house every homeless person in that population who seeks help.

Location rift: Sulzbacher shifts Jacksonville site for apartments, jobs for homeless men

Caroline Village will expand that capacity, said Cindy Funkhouser, president and CEO of the Sulzbacher center for the Jacksonville area's homeless.

"We are ecstatic and so very grateful to Community Solutions for choosing to invest in Jacksonville," she said.

"Our homeless-provider community has been working closely with Community Solutions and have decreased veteran

homelessness by a large percentage in the past several years."

The obstacle to achieving "functional zero," she said, has been insufficient affordable housing.

"Community Solutions is now solving that issue for this population," she said. "No person who has fought for and defended our country should ever be sleeping on our streets."

Addressing homelessness

The property will remain in nonprofit ownership for at least 25 years, according to David Foster, manager of Community Solutions Large Cities Housing Fund.

Jacksonville's efforts to end homelessness stems in part from being a large city with a "tight housing market," he said, and such cities need the "means to create permanently affordable housing in a way that is faster and more adaptable than many traditional approaches allow."

Community Solutions' "social impact investment model" helps them ... accelerate their progress," he said.

City Councilwoman Ju'Coby Pittman is CEO of Clara White Mission, which in 2017 opened the \$3.8 million Beaver Street Veterans Villas. Those apartments, which now house about 35 veterans, are also designed to be long-term homes with supportive services.

Caroline Village "is another opportunity for veterans to choose where they live," she said, based on "where they are in their journey."

The last full accounting of overall homelessness in Duval, Clay and Nassau counties, the annual Point in Time survey in January, was done in 2021. But Gilman and other area homeless prevention officials questioned the accuracy of the count, which appeared to show that the number of unsheltered people was almost 50 percent less than 2020.

That data might have been too low because of the impact of the pandemic on homeless populations and their movements and on collecting data about them, Gilman said at the time. Also, a "quirk" in a new app the agency used to collect data produced "invalid data" to gauge the chronically homelessness, she said.

The 2021 count showed 230 unsheltered people, compared to 541 in 2020; 247 families experiencing homelessness, living in emergency or transitional housing, compared to 370 in 2020; and 160 veterans experiencing homelessness, living in emergency or transitional housing, compared to 181 in 2020.

The 2022 count was limited because of the ongoing pandemic. Changing Homelessness decided against mobilizing volunteers to survey unsheltered homeless people and only count people who have no permanent home but are living in emergency or transitional housing.

bcravey@jacksonville.com, (904) 359-4109



JACKSONVILLE
N A V A L M U S E U M

Interested in Volunteering?



Please visit our online website volunteer interest form at:
<https://www.jaxnavalmuseum.org/volunteer>

Hershel “Woody” Williams, USMC, Medal of Honor

America’s last Medal of Honor Recipient representing the Second World War has passed away. Another mark in history highlighting the departure of the greatest generation. The U.S. Marine Corps is one of the most UNDER-AWARDED branches of the U.S. Military. As an enlisted corporal, Hershel “Woody” Williams represented poor enlisted Marines all over the country that were never properly recognized from WWII until present day. He was a symbol of Marines who never earned as much as an commendation or Bronze Star for their actions. Woody could have quit life 78 years ago, drank for free, and lived off being a Medal of Honor Recipient; but he didn’t. He retired a Marine, worked for the Veteran Affairs for 30+ years, and when that was enough started his own non-profit. Woody had monuments placed around the country to represent Gold Star Families. We often build monuments to those killed in war, but Woody saw the need to honor living family members plagued with the torture of losing a son, daughter, father, or mother in war.





STRATEGIC PARTNERS

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22 Zero
813-221-6304
dan@22zero.org



Veterans Counseling Veterans
407-516-8398
ellsworth@vetscounselingvets.org



First Counseling Center
407-468-0004
karirusso@firstorlando.com



Paint 22
727-490-7338
contact@paint22.com



IGY6 Foundation
321-505-9005
andy.igotyour6@gmail.com



SOF Missions
910-382-6492
damon@sofmissions.org



K9 Line
386-566-7438
slowe@k9line.org



The Grey Team
561-203-3815
david@greyteam.org



Liberty OVE
757-778-5337
scott.hendrick@liberty-ove.com

Norman Bissel, LMHC
614-259-7414
normanbisselpc@gmail.com

**PROJECT: VetRelief is an official program of the American Legion, Department of Florida*

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WWW.PROJECTVETRELIEF.ORG



On June 22, 1942, Congress formally adopted the Pledge of Allegiance.

Francis Bellamy wrote the pledge. Bellamy was born in 1855 and raised in Rome, New York, where his father, David, was the pastor of the First Baptist Church.

In 1884, Bellamy accepted a position with the Dearborn Street Church in Boston. While in Boston, Bellamy was part of a national committee that formed to foster patriotism in schools in conjunction with the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America. James Upham of *The Youth's Companion* magazine saw the event as an opportunity to support his goal of placing flags in every school in America.

Bellamy was tasked with writing a brief salute to be recited as the flag was raised. Though the result was just 23 words, Bellamy labored over every one of them, ensuring the final pledge would be both concise and meaningful. He penned the pledge on September 7, and it was published the following day:

“I pledge allegiance to my Flag and to the Republic for which it stands; one Nation, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.”

On June 22, 1942, Congress formally adopted the pledge as part of the US Flag Code. And in 1945, the official name, “Pledge of Allegiance,” was adopted.

Though its ideals are still the same, the wording has changed over the years. In 1923, the phrase “the flag of the United States of America” replaced “my Flag,” to distinguish it from the flags of other nations. The words “under God” were added in 1954, taken from Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, but have come under attack as the battle over religion continues.

Perhaps the most unusual change came not in the wording, however, but in the salute that Bellamy devised to be used during the pledge. In 1942, this straight-arm salute was dropped when the Nazi Party in Germany began using it and changed to placing a hand over the heart.

The pledge, as it has remained since 1954, is “I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands: one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.”



Join us for this 3rd Annual Virtual Fallen K9 Memorial Run and help us support K9 units in need all over the country.

About this event

This event is an opportunity for us all to join together for a wonderful cause, memorializing the 2021 Fallen Law Enforcement K9s, while honoring all the K9s continuing to hold the line.



This virtual run will provide us with an opportunity to band together for a great cause and bring together people who are passionate about K9 LEOs from across the country! We are super excited to share this day with all of you.

Plus, you will get an amazing race t-shirt with the design below so you can always have a memento to remember the fallen K9s, and your support of K9 LEOs.

Let Their Memories Live On With This Commemorative T-Shirt

Your commemorative t-shirt is a memento to honor the brave, fallen K9 officers of yesterday. Order by August 7th to be sure to get your t-shirt in time for the race*. SHIRTS WILL NOT BE MAILED UNTIL AUGUST 19TH!

You can still get the t-shirt by ordering after that date, but it may not arrive in time to wear for the race. We still encourage you to participate no matter what.

*More than likely to receive shirt barring unforeseen circumstances or USPS delays.

Want to join us? All you have to do is register online, choose your distance, and join in on the fun the day of the run!

Distances

1 Mile Fun Walk, 1 Mile Fun Run, 5K Run, 9K Run

Post the run distance of your choice, your finish time, fun videos, and pics of you or your group participating. Tag K9s United on Facebook and Instagram when posting, and hashtag your pics and videos with #2022FallenK9MemorialRun.

Be creative with your posts! There will be numerous giveaways, some will be given away based on those posts.

We can't wait to see all of you and your pics and videos on social media for this amazing event!

See you at the finish line!!

Fishing, kayaking classes offered to veterans by Peter Willott, St. Augustine Record

A group of military veterans gathered at the end of the Shands Fishing Pier in the northern part of St. Johns County early Wednesday morning for a fishing clinic sponsored by the county's Parks & Recreation Dept. and the Veterans Administration.

The county offers free fishing and kayak classes to veterans once a month. The next fishing class takes place from 9 to 11 am July 13 at the Surf Side Park. Anglers need a valid shoreline saltwater fishing license.

The next kayaking program takes place from 6 to 9 pm July 21 at Trout Creek Park. Pre-registration is required for both events. Register online at sjcfl.us/ExploreSJC. Call 904-209-0333 for information.

Although the Health Dept. sent out an alert about an algae bloom in the area, county spokeswoman Lorena Inclan said in an email that staff reviewed the information before conducting the event and determined no harm in offering the program.

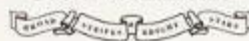
"Participants do not enter the water at any time during the program, nor do they keep the fish they catch," she wrote. "Additionally, there were no visible blooms in the area where the program occurred at the Shands Pier,"





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Urgent Volunteer Opportunity Available:

Please help support Council On Aging (COA) need for volunteers to provide lawn maintenance to elderly residents. "The Cutters" service about 20 yards every Thursday. COA provides all equipment and lunch. All hands on deck 0800 -1200 at 180 Marine St. 32084. Your service is greatly appreciated by our elderly clients.

Questions: Phil Topcik, Capt., USNR-R 904-716-1679



ALL are invited to attend



Veterans Council Upcoming Meeting Change

**ALL Meetings in 2022 will be back at
200 San Sebastian View where the Veterans Service
Office (VSO) is located.**

Upcoming Veterans Council Meetings Speakers

**June 30, SPECIAL PRESENTATION OF THE CONGRES-
SIONAL GOLD MEDAL to WW II Merchant Mariners Ed
Trestler (96) and Bill Pruitt (103) by Congressman Mi-
chael Waltz**

**This meeting will be held in the Board of County Com-
missioners Building at 500 San Sebastian View at 7:00 pm**

**July 28, Andrew Stack, FL State Coord for DoD Program
“Building Healthy Military Communities”**

Houston Bowles, Chairman, Players PGA Tour

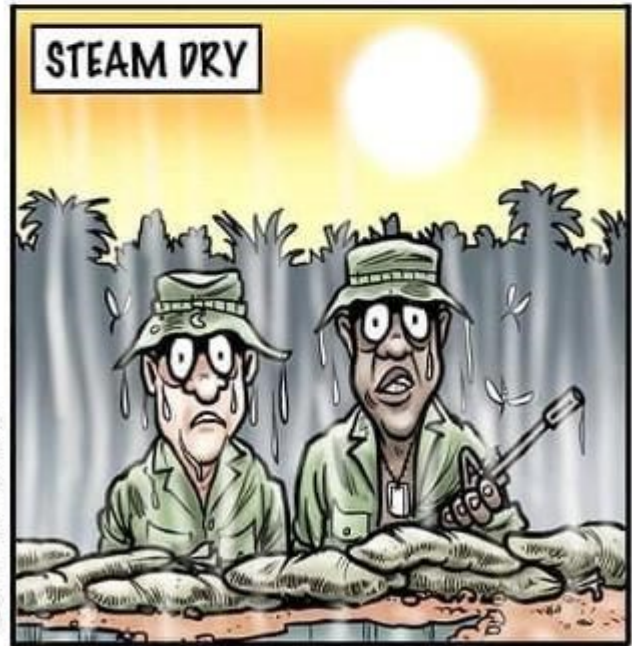
**August 25, Carmalita Gaines, Jacksonville Veterans Center
Kathy Church, an update in Missing in America Project**

**September 29, Officer Kelly Kemp, Chaplain, SJSO,
“Community Involvement”**

IN-COUNTRY



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UNITED STATES ARMY



"I LOVE THE INFANTRY BECAUSE THEY ARE THE UNDERDOGS.
THEY ARE THE MUD-RAIN-FROST-AND-WIND BOYS.



THEY HAVE NO COMFORTS,
AND THEY EVEN LEARN TO LIVE WITHOUT THE NECESSITIES.
AND IN THE END THEY ARE THE GUYS THAT WARS CAN'T BE WON WITHOUT."
- ERNIE PYLE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 23, 2022

Contact: legislativeinfo@trea.org



Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Leaders Push to Deliver
Annual Cost-of-Living Increase for Veterans

WASHINGTON: Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Jon Tester (D-Mont.) and Ranking Member Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) have introduced the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Act of 2022 to increase the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and military survivors under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

“When it comes to our nation’s veterans and their families, we’ve got to see to it that they don’t fall back on hard times,” said Chairman Tester. “Our bipartisan bill will ensure their benefits are keeping pace with the changing economy—providing these folks with the support they need and earned.”

“We have a responsibility to take care of our veterans, many of whom rely on VA for financial support,” said Ranking Member Moran. “As rampant inflation is driving up the cost of living, this legislation helps makes certain veterans are able to keep up with our changing economy and receive the benefits they have been promised.”

The Senators’ bill would increase certain VA benefits including disability and dependent compensation, clothing allowances, and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children to reflect increases in the cost of living. The cost of living adjustment will be determined by the annual COLA adjustment to social security benefits, as determined by the Social Security Administration, and would go into effect Dec. 1, 2022. The Social Security Administration bases their annual COLA adjustment on the Consumer Price Index, as determined each December by the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Text of the Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2022 can be found [HERE](#).

###



BE PART OF THE SOLUTION TO END VETERAN SUICIDE

#1

- Recognize the Problem of Veteran Suicide
- 20-22 Veterans Take Their Own Lives Each Day

#2

- Take 30-45 mins and Train to be a Watch Stander
- Explore Resource Guide
- Stand Vigilant to Concerns of Veterans and Direct Them to Needed Assistance

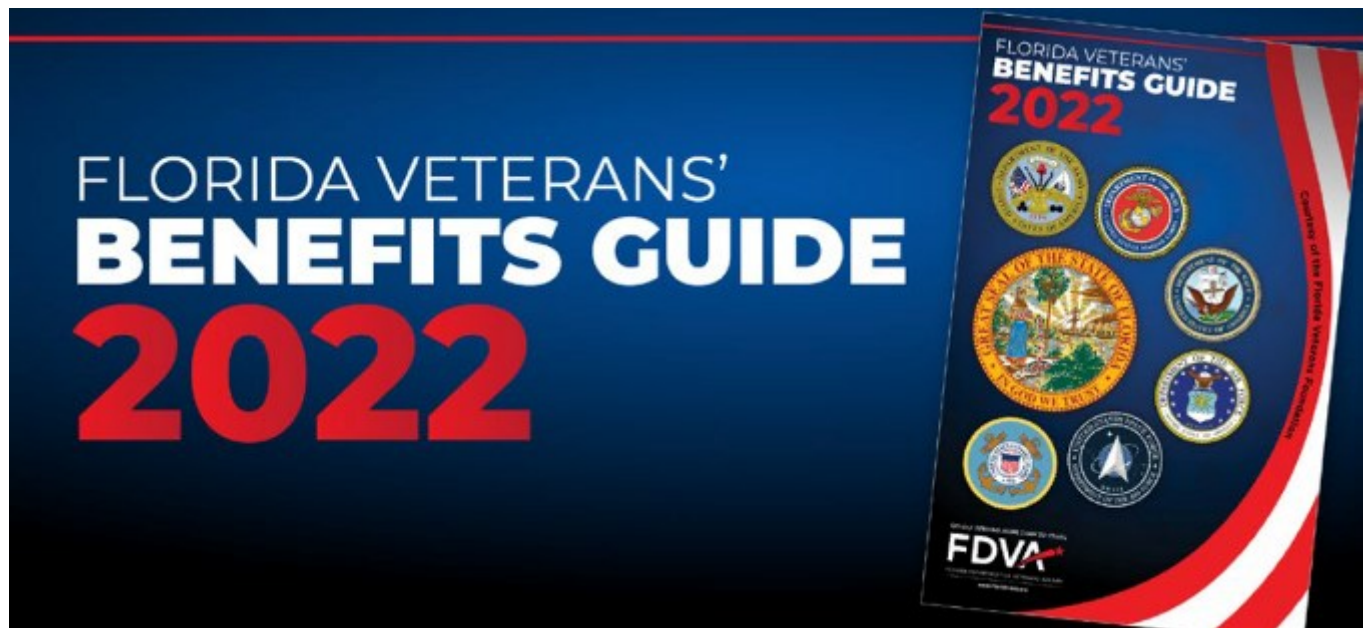
#3

- End the Tragedy of Veteran Suicide

[#YourTurnToStand](#)

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

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



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF U.S. NAVY AIRCRAFT CARRIERS





FIRST COAST HONOR FLIGHT

Would love to come talk with you!

Can we come speak to your
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We would LOVE to share our
stories with you!

We are a new non-profit
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of honoring our local Veterans!
First Coast Honor Flight creates a
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of flying our local Veterans to Washington D.C.
to see our national memorials and
monuments.

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

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



Here are the 2022 Honor Flight Dates



2022 FCHF Flight Dates

EVENT	DATE
Orientation	Saturday, April 30, 2022
FLIGHT	Saturday, May 21, 2022
Reunion	Saturday, June 11, 2022

EVENT	DATE
Orientation	Saturday, October 1, 2022
FLIGHT	Saturday, October 15, 2022
Reunion	Saturday, November 5, 2022

Dates are subject to change due to airline schedule adjustments and other factors beyond First Coast Honor Flight's control

1/3/22



Sponsorship Levels

First Coast Honor Flight is 100% dependent upon donations from generous people and organizations.

Without your support, FCHF would not be able to transport WWII, Korean War, and other Northeast Florida Veterans to Washington, D.C. for a day of honor and remembrance.

Trip Sponsor : \$25,000

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

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

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

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

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

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



First Coast Honor Flight Donation

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

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

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

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

www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

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

Name of Organization _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____ Email _____

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

Name _____

Address _____

Veteran? Yes _____ No _____ Relationship _____

Branch _____ Dates Served _____

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

Save the Date



State of Florida
Women Veterans'
Benefits Fair

Monday

June 6, 2022

11 – 7pm

**Active Duty
and
Veterans**



- **Benefits**
- **Employment**
- **Healthcare**
- **Education**
- **Homeless**

SALEM CENTRE
7235 Bonneval Rd
Jacksonville, FL 32256



The Steven A. Cohen
Military Family Clinic
at Centerstone

MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT

@ <http://my-business-102935.square.site/>

www.FloridaVets.org

Clyde Lassen Veterans Nursing Home is looking for essential care givers including CNA, LPN, RN's. A shortage of staff has resulted in a significant waiting list-even though beds are available. We have some incredible veterans here in SJC being cared for at Lassen. If you or someone you know have these qualifications and would be interested in serving those who have defended our freedoms, please call Clyde Lassen for details.



Flag Etiquette



- Never allow the flag to touch the ground or any other object while on display.
- Salute the flag as it is hoisted and lowered, during the playing of the National Anthem and while saying the Pledge of Allegiance. Stand at attention with your right hand over your heart and your hat removed.
- Display the flag outdoors only between sunrise and sunset, unless illuminated by a spotlight.
- When displaying the flag indoors, always position it to the right of a speaker or staging area.
- To place a flag at half-staff, hoist it to the peak for an instant before lowering it to a halfway position.

From the FDVA THEY ARE HIRING!

New health care job opportunities at our State Veterans' Nursing Homes throughout Florida have recently been posted! If you are looking for a fulfilling new role, visit our jobs page to view the available positions. <https://bit.ly/FDVAJobs>

A central graphic of a smartphone displaying the VA logo at the top, the phone number "800-MyVA411 (800) 698-2411", and a numeric keypad with a green call button. Surrounding the phone are ten service categories, each with an icon and a brief description:

- LIVE ASSISTANCE** (Headset icon): General information, directory assistance and technical support for VA.gov
- VA HEALTH CARE** (Medical bag icon): Eligibility, enrollment, locations and COVID-19
- COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE** (Flame icon): MISSION Act eligibility, copayments
- NATIONAL CEMETERIES** (Gravestone icon): Burial benefits, interment scheduling and headstone/Veteran marker
- VETERANS CRISIS LINE** (Star and speech bubbles icon): Immediate connection to caring, qualified responders
- DEBT MANAGEMENT** (Stack of money icon): Debt details, payment options and debtor rights
- FACILITY LOCATOR** (Location pin icon): Locations of medical centers, benefits offices or cemeteries
- BENEFITS ASSISTANCE** (Dollar sign icon): Information about a variety of VA benefits
- HOMELESS VETERANS LINE** (House icon): Information and support for homeless and at-risk callers
- COVID-19 INFORMATION** (Microscope icon): Frequently asked questions and live assistance for COVID-related questions

★ ACTIVE DUTY ★ VETERANS ★ NATIONAL GUARD & RESERVE ★

MILITARY SUPPORT RETREATS

RETREATS FOR COMBAT VETERANS,
AND THEIR PRIMARY SUPPORT PERSON



Marineland
Florida



MAY 19-22

Amelia Island
Florida



JUNE 9-12

Helen
Georgia



JULY 7-10

Lake Chatuge/Hiawasse
Georgia



AUG. 4-7

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



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

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

★ Small, friendly group setting ★

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

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

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

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



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



Please note: the Vietnam and War on Terror Walls will be in St. Augustine on display on Veterans Day, November 11, 2022 at Anastasia Baptist Church in St. Augustine.

Here is the Florida 2022 schedule

FL PGR Vietnam & WoT Wall Schedule

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

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

Updated as of:

01/17/22

Date	Time	Duration	Wall(s)	Location	Comments	
02/19/22	Info forthcoming		WoT	Eustis Area		
02/26/22	0800 - 0830 hrs 0830 - 1100 hrs 1200 - 1600 hrs	Escort Set-up Walls Display & Take-Down	1 day	Vietnam / WoT	The Casements Ormond Beach 25 Riverside Dr. Ormond Beach, FL 32174	Military & First Responder Family Appreciation Expect to escort The Walls to the event from Holly Hill DAV at 0800 hrs.
03/25/22 03/26/22	1400 hrs 0800 hrs	Set up Walls Display Walls	2 Days	Vietnam / WoT	Gator Harley Davidson 1745 US 441 Leesburg, FL 34778	Benefit Active Duty Care Package Program JOBH - Just Our Soldier's Helpers Former USO Ride Overnight secretly provided by Gator Harley
03/28/22 03/31/22	0800 hrs	Set up Vietnam Wall Display & Take Down	3 days	Vietnam	Cape Canaveral National Cemetery 5525 US-1 Mims, FL 32754	National Vietnam War Veterans Day
05/21/22	0900 hrs	Set-UP & Display	1 day	Vietnam / WoT	American Legion Post 10 205 Lake View Dr. Kissimmee, FL 34741	Armed Forces Day Celebration
05/27/22 05/28/22	1400 hrs 1000 - 1600 hrs	Set-Up Display & Take Down	2 days	Vietnam / WoT	Daytona International Speedway 1801 W. International Speedway Blvd Daytona Beach, FL 32114	Heroes Honor Festival Memorial Day Event Vietnam Welcome Home
09/17/22	TBD	Info forthcoming		American Legion Jacksonville, FL.	American Legion Veteran Event	
09/24/22	TBD	Info forthcoming		Remembering Vets Inc. Palm Coast, FL.	Fall Festival	
11/10/22 11/11/22	TBD 0800 - 1100 hrs	Set-up Display	2 Days	Vietnam / WoT	Anastasia Baptist Church 1650 A1A S St. Augustine, FL 32080	Veteran's Day Ceremony Escort from Daytona to St. Augustine



File your DD-214 with your
St. Johns County Clerk of Courts



Safekeeping your military separation records is secure, fast and free of charge and easy to access with the St. Johns County Clerk of Courts.

Bring your original DD-214 to the St. Johns County Veterans Council's Veterans Day Celebration where Clerk staff will officially record it:

- 9:30 a.m. – Noon, Nov. 11
- Anastasia Baptist Church, 1650 A1A S., St. Augustine
- Your record will be returned to you immediately.

Recording your DD-214 maintains a permanent digital copy on file for safekeeping. Your record is **protected** – it doesn't become a public record for 62 years after separation, per the National Archives.

Can't make it on Nov. 11? Record your discharge papers at the St. Johns County Courthouse, 4010 Lewis Speedway, St. Augustine. Call the Recording division at 904 819 3632 for details.

FLORIDA CLERK OF COURTS WILL "LOCK IT UP" FOR FREE

Do you have your DD-214? That is the first question Veterans are asked when engaging in almost every benefits or Veteran-status related process. Often, it is the first question Veteran widows and widowers are asked after hearing "I'm sorry for your loss."

Each of Florida's county Clerk of Courts knows how valuable it is having a copy of your DD-214 safely and privately stored, with easy access. Click and read how you can record your DD-214 for free, year-round, regardless of what county you live in.

BONUS- St Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Courts is providing complimentary passport photos and notary services for military and Veterans through November 30th. Click below for the details.

From Liberty Life Media

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.





2022 VA DISABILITY PAY RATES



ANNOUNCED 2022 COLA OF 5.9%	D I S A B I L I T Y R A T I N G									
	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Veteran Alone	152.50	301.82	467.02	673.52	958.40	1,213.61	1,530.26	1,778.06	1,998.33	3,331.61
Veteran with Spouse	N/A	N/A	522.46	747.41	1,050.57	1,325.22	1,609.15	1,926.69	2,164.79	3,517.84
Veteran with 1 child only	N/A	N/A	504.45	721.99	1,019.86	1,288.16	1,616.79	1,876.92	2,109.72	3,456.30
Veteran with 1 child and spouse	N/A	N/A	563.76	801.42	1,118.35	1,406.77	1,754.46	2,035.77	2,287.63	3,653.89
A D D I T I O N A L										
Family member (not in VA)	N/A	N/A	44.48	59.30	74.13	88.96	103.78	118.71	133.43	149.10
Family member (not in VA) with 1 child only	N/A	N/A	27.53	36.01	45.54	55.07	64.60	73.07	82.60	92.31
Family member (not in VA) with 1 child and spouse	N/A	N/A	88.96	118.61	148.26	177.91	208.62	238.28	267.93	298.18
Family member (not in VA) with aid and attendance	N/A	N/A	50.83	67.78	85.78	101.66	119.67	136.61	153.56	170.38

"Use the compensation rates table to find your monthly payment amount. The monthly payment amounts are based on your disability rating and your eligible dependent family members."

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

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

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

Thanks!

Nick Howland

Executive Director, The Fire Watch

www.thefirewatch.org

904.525.1761



From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

Subject: VA Transportation Assistance

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

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

From Michael Isam

DAV van service to Gainesville returning on a limited basis.

Schedule your seat on the DAV Chapter 6 van.

Contact the VA Clinic at 904-823-2954 and ask for Veterans Van Scheduling.





Legal Aid for Veterans

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

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

1.866.486.6161

Call Today!

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



We Can Help With

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

Supported by the: **FDVA**
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL SERVICES
FLORIDA BAR ASSOCIATION

Become a Watch Stander with The Fire Watch



You sacrificed for our country.

**AT SILVER CREEK,
FREEDOM IS YOURS.**

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

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

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



THE FUTURE OF SENIOR LIVING

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



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

Assisted Living Facility #12928

Vietnam Veterans of America



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

Chapter/President/email/Location

1046	Tony D'Aleo	adaleo5579@gmail.com; Duval
1048	Bob Adkins	adk123robert@outlook.com
1059	David Treffinger	dtreffinger433@msn.com; Clay
1084	Joan Whitfield	jlwbeach@bellsouth.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.



PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO MEET VETERANS' UNIQUE NEEDS

Advance Care Planning

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

Palliative Care

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

Hospice Care

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

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

Complementary Therapies

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

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

We Need Volunteers

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

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

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



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

VET 007 5/20



SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

Strength
built on
Sacrifice

Your Florida SOS Team

St. Augustine Area

Keith Ham
Support Coordinator
310 Charlotte Street
St. Augustine, FL 32085
(904) 823-0157 (desk)
(904) 472-7689 (cell)
keith.c.ham.ctr@mail.mil

Tallahassee Area

Matthew Reeves
Support Coordinator
1225 Easterwood Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32311-3599
(850) 617-0192 (desk)
(850) 459-6630 (cell)
matthew.p.reeves.ctr@mail.mil

Orlando Area

Shinekqua Baines
Support Coordinator
9500 Armed Forces Reserve Drive
Orlando, FL 32827
(407) 240-5939 ext. 1743
shinekqua.l.baines.ctr@mail.mil

Tampa Bay Area

LaShawnda S. Strother
Support Coordinator
2801 Grand Avenue
Pinellas Park, FL 33782
(727)-563-3647
lashawnda.s.strother.ctr@mail.mil

Miami Area

Support Coordinator
9301 NW 33rd Street
Doral, FL 33172-1202
(305) 437-2178

Scholarships & Application Deadlines

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

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

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

Application Deadlines for surviving children

Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation

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

Freedom Alliance

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

Fisher House Foundation/ Heroes Legacy Scholarship

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

Special Ops Warrior Foundation

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

Deadline for multiple relationships

Army Emergency Relief Fund

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

Application Deadlines: For surviving spouses

Aspire

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

National Military Family Association

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

Pat Tillman Foundation

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

Application Deadlines: For surviving siblings

Matthew Freeman Project

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

Deadline for multiple relationships

Folds of Honor

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

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

FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



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

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



Mission Statement:

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



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

What the Council has done:

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

SA-0003147064-01

Veterans Crisis Line

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

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

STAND BY THEM
Confidential help for Veterans and their families

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

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

Military/Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255

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

Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255

Veterans Councils of Northeast Florida



BAKER COUNTY

President: Larry Porterfield

Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

Location:

MacClenny Primitive Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall on North Boulevard

Time : 1800 (6pm)

CLAY COUNTY

President: Harry Silvers

Meetings:

First Wednesday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1400 (2pm)

DUVAL COUNTY

President Steve Spickelmier

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37
Main Building
San Juan Avenue

Tome: 1900 (7 pm)

NASSAU COUNTY

President: Mike Doran

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

St. Johns County

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

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



We are inviting all veterans to visit our website at:

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

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

Please join our group on Facebook at:

<http://veteranscouncilsjc.org>

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

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

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

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

He can be contacted at webmaster@veteranscouncilsjc.org

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

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

Send to: rothfeldm@gmail.com



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(physical location)

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

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

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

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