

VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

CHAIRMAN BILL DUDLEY

VICE CHAIRMAN RAY QUINN

SECRETARY MICHAEL ROTHFELD

TREASURER JOHN MOUNTCASTLE

Newsletter Editor Michael Rothfeld



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Inside this Issue

Message from the Chairman



page Fellow Veterans:
Hopefully everyone has received word that our monthly meeting venue has changed from the Elks Lodge to the new Health and Human Services building at 200 San Sebastian View. We will continue to meet at this location until further notice.

Those who have attended our Veterans Council meetings have heard me speak about voter registration and the alarming number of veterans we have in the area that are not registered to vote. I find this very hard to accept since this is one of the tenants of the Constitution that we served to defend and protect. I encourage all our Veterans to register and to vote in the upcoming elections. I can think of no time in our

lifetime that the decision for our next Commander in Chief was more important than this election year. On page 4 of this month's newsletter is all the information you need to register in the State of Florida. Please continue your service to the country by voting for our next CINC.

I have seen a remarkable increase in our attendance at our Veterans Council meetings. Please continue this trend. Just as important is the dissemination of the information from the Council meetings back to your respective veteran's organizations. It is vitally important that information is carried back since those attending our Veterans Council meetings are the representatives for the 28 veteran's organizations we have in the County. Events such

as parades, concerts, VA updates are just some of the information that is discussed at our meetings as well as the wonderful speakers we have to inform us of community outreach programs available.

Our Col. Ed Taylor Award committee has recently met. After careful consideration, a candidate for this prestigious award has been selected to receive the award for 2015. The award will be presented at this month's Veterans Council meeting.

Thank you for your service.

Bill Dudley Chairman
Veterans Council of
St. Johns County

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Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

Where Patriotism is our Motto



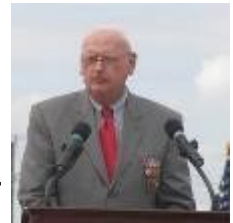
Congratulations to Kay Maley and her staff at the Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine. The 120-bed home has been notified by the American College of Health Care Administrators that it will receive the Eli Pick Facility Leadership Award, recognizing high performing skilled nursing facilities. Fewer than 9% of facilities nationwide qualify.

Re-Creation made their annual trip to entertain Florida's Veterans!!





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



JNC SC Chairman,
Ray Quinn

The Support Committee invites everyone to attend its **next scheduled meeting, on Monday, April 4, 2016.** The meeting will be at **7:00pm.** The meeting will take place at Community Hospice, **4266 Sunbeam Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32257 in Conference Room A.**

+++++2015/2016 Officers of the SCJNC+++++

- Chairman: Ray Quinn
- Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley
- Treasurer: John Mountcastle
- Assistant Treasurer: Michael Rothfeld
- Secretary: Kathy Church
- Chaplain: Michael Halyard
- Master-At-Arms: Joe McDermott
- JAG Officer: Patrick Bennett
- Historian: Jody Raymond

VOLUNTEERS are needed! <http://jacksonvilleladies.org>

Membership in **The Jacksonville Ladies/Gentlemen** is strictly *voluntary* and is open to all Ladies and Gentlemen who have a sincere desire to pay final tribute to our Veterans. A Volunteer is there to attend every Service, not to "intrude" but to stand as a "silent witness" and give honor to the Veteran and condolences to their families. It is not a "typical" Volunteer position, it must come from the heart. It is an honor to be a part of these ceremonies that pay tribute to the everyday heroes that make up our armed forces. The Volunteers give back a little to those who have given so much for our great country.

How to Volunteer - <http://jacksonvilleladies.org>

The Jacksonville Ladies/Gentlemen are a very special group of *Volunteers* dedicated to being the "Silent Witness" for the Service of a Veteran and/or their Spouse. Especially important are those with no family present so they are not laid to rest alone. We also hope to provide some comfort to the family.

The only requirements are compassion, dedication and the sincere desire to honor our Veterans for their service to our country.

If you think you might be interested in becoming a Volunteer please contact Chair Gail Williams at 904-291-0604 or Vice Chair Kathy Cayton at 904-272-9489.

You can also fill out the form in the link below and one of us will get back to you as soon as possible.

<http://www.jacksonvilleladies.org/>

ALL VETERANS MUST VOTE, please register if you have not.



Who Can Register to Vote?

To register to vote in Florida, you must:

Be a United States citizen.

Be a Florida resident.

Be at least 18 years old. (You may pre-register if you are 16 years of age, and you will be able to vote in any election on or after your 18th birthday.)

Not currently adjudicated mentally incapacitated, with respect to voting in Florida, or any other state.

Not have been convicted of a felony in Florida without your civil rights having been restored.

Not claim the right to vote in another state.

Voter Registration closes 29 days prior to each election. In order to be eligible to vote in an election, you must be registered prior to the deadline.

How to Apply to Register to Vote

Online Voter Registration Application



You may apply for voter registration by submitting a Florida Voter Registration Application Form to your Supervisor of Elections office. Registration forms are available on our website, at any Elections office, driver's license office, public libraries, public assistance agencies (HRS), armed forces recruitment offices, and government offices including:

St. Johns County Tax Collector Offices

St. Johns County Public Libraries Branch Locations

You may also call our office at (904) 823-2238 for an application to be mailed to you.

Help needed

The Veterans Council is looking for a non paid volunteer to either repair or replace our website.

The Veterans Council wants to increase its online, social media presence.

If interested, contact Michael Rothfeld: mrothfeld@anyveteran.org

SOUNDS OF FREEDOM CONCERT

Due to unforeseen circumstances we must regrettably cancel the upcoming "Sounds of Freedom" concert scheduled for Friday, March 18, 2016 at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre (904-209-3742), St. Augustine, Florida.

If you have already purchased tickets, please contact the amphitheatre, Ticketmaster, or your credit card company to make arrangements to receive a refund for your tickets.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you.

Sound of Freedom 2016 Concert Committee

Contact: Lee Ann Sferrazza-Rios, sferrazza-riosl@fdva.state.fl.us

(727) 518-3202, Ext. 5572 office, (727) 831-1805 cell

Nominations Open for 2016 Class of the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council is currently accepting nominations for the fourth annual class of inductees into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame. The nomination period is open until May 31, 2016. Anyone is permitted to nominate a military veteran.

The Florida Legislature established the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame to honor and recognize veterans, both living and deceased, for their post-military service to the state.

Those nominating a veteran will need to complete a nomination packet that can be downloaded from www.FloridaVeteransHallofFame.org. Nominations are based on established criteria including recognizing veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the state of Florida through civic, business, public service or other pursuits. It is not a traditional military hall of fame, as it focuses on post-military contributions to the State of Florida.

Up to 20 individuals may be selected for induction into the hall each year.

“We are privileged to be one of only nine other states that can honor its veterans for heeding the call to public service after they leave the military,” said retired Army National Guard Sgt. Maj. Ray A. Quinn, chairman of the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Council. “As we roll into our fourth class, we are reaching far and wide to get nominations for those who exemplify continued service, sacrifice and commitment to a greater cause throughout their lifetime so that we can honor them by inducting them into the next Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.”

Names honoring selected inductees are commemorated on a plaque in the Capitol Rotunda in Tallahassee. Since 2013, nineteen Florida veterans have been inducted into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.

“With nearly 1.6 million veterans and a proven track record of service to the country, the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame is honored to recognize those who have taken the passion of service one step further to make Florida a great state not only for veterans but for each and every Floridian,” said State Rep. Jimmie T. Smith, an Army veteran and vice chairman for the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council.”

The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council, a seven-member advisory panel, is responsible for accepting nominations to be considered for induction into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame. In selecting its nominees for submission, the council gives preference to veterans who were either born in Florida or adopted Florida as their home state. Each year, the council transmits its recommended list of nominees to the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, which submits the nominations to the Governor and Cabinet, who will select the nominees to be inducted.

“Let us never forget our veterans, through whose selfless service and sacrifice we enjoy freedom and liberty,” said Mike Prendergast, executive director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. “Help us recognize the contributions and talents of America's finest.”

For nomination information, visit <http://www.FloridaVeteransHallofFame.org>.



We would like to send a big "thank you" to those who have made 2015 such a successful year for K9s For Warriors. As many of you know, in June 2015, we moved into our new facility and graduated our largest class ever on July 24th; these are wonderful milestones in our continuous journey to help veterans and rescue dogs receive a new leash on life. Since our big move to Camp K9, we got overwhelming support from the community. In 2015, we had almost 1,000 volunteers serve more than 9,500 hours. K9s For Warriors has an impressively large volunteer base for a small, national non-profit; our numbers have received positive feedback from Florida Governor Rick Scott. In order for our dogs to make it through our program, they need continuous love, support, exercise, and socialization. Our volunteers make this happen - without you all, K9s For Warriors wouldn't exist.

Our organization was also able to raise more than \$5.5 million, which allowed us to pair 51 warriors with service dogs - that's 102 lives saved because of each person's contribution! To reach this incredible goal, our proud supporters hosted 115 community events, sponsored 84 dogs, and attended K9s events like our DC Gala and FCN Telethon.



In addition, more than 400 supporters pledged their support through our brand-new Guard Dog program, which debuted in July. This program addresses the veteran suicide issue that plagues our country. Each day, an alarming 22 veterans commit suicide in America, making it imperative that we protect the future of our warriors by providing this life-saving program to help our veterans cope. Our Guard Dogs are donating at least \$22 per month to help save the lives of our veterans who have sacrificed so much to ensure our freedom.

It may not seem like much, but when we combine all of our efforts together, we can achieve just about anything! After the success of 2015, we are going into this year with big plans and new goals. Camp K9 will be growing with the addition of our new kennel that is set to break ground in spring 2016. This expansion will allow Camp K9 to accommodate an additional 27 dogs, which means these dogs are OUT of high-kill shelters and training to become battle buddies for our warriors instead. Our new goal will be to serve 12 Warriors every month!

Without your continued support, our plans and goals are just logistics. Thank you for being a part of the K9s For Warriors family and doing what you could to help us with our mission. Giving a small, one-time donation, becoming a Guard Dog, or volunteering your time at Camp K9 has gone a long way to help rescue dogs and save veterans. We can all be a piece of the puzzle to STOP veteran suicide. From all of us here at Camp K9, thank you so much for your continued support. We are so proud to have you as part of the K9s family.

Sincere regards,



Shari Duval
Founder and President, K9s For Warriors



The winter 2016 issue of the Gulf War Newsletter marks the 25th anniversary of the start of Operation Desert Storm. Inside you will find:

- Personal reflections on the Gulf War from VA employees, many of whom are also Gulf War Veterans
 - Information on VA research related to Gulf War Veterans, including how to participate in upcoming studies
 - Results from a recent survey on the physical and mental health of Gulf War and Gulf War Era Veterans
 - A list of Gulf War illnesses that are presumed by VA to be caused by military service
- Tips on how to get a disability compensation claim decision fast

Start reading today at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/publications/gulf-war/gulf-war-winter-2016/index.asp.





Veterans 4 Veterans
2nd Quarterly Gathering of 2016
Veterans Memorial Arena
APRIL 2nd, 1130 to 1300



Parking in lot Z



Gathering of Veterans...We share information of concern to all and provide the opportunity to unite and support one another.

Keynote Speaker:
Sheriff Mike Williams



Together we can be "ONE POWERFUL VOICE" that can make a difference for all our organizations and Veterans here in NE Florida.

Inform, Connect, Grow, Unite

PASS THE WORD!

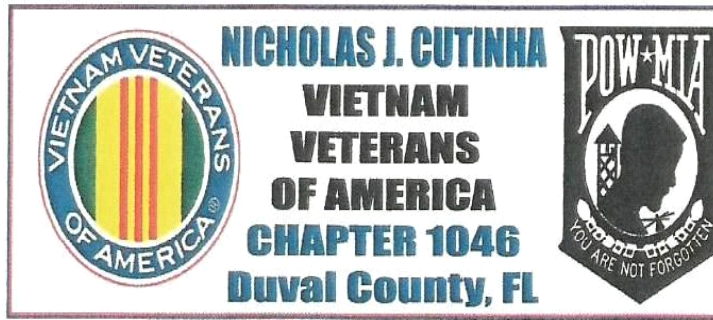
(Veteran Commanders and leadership share this info with your membership)

THINK ABOUT IT...

Over 150,000 Veterans reside in NE Florida, we can be a powerful force if we all got the word.

Join us!





**SECOND ANNUAL VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
GOLF TOURNAMENT
TO BENEFIT VETERANS OF DUVAL COUNTY**

**Monday, March 28, 2016
NAS JAX GOLF COURSE
Club House is on Mustin Road, Bldg #809**

GOLF TOURNAMENT PRIZES

**HOLE IN ONE
CLOSEST TO PIN
LONGEST DRIVE
PUTTING CONTEST BEFORE TEE-OFF
50/50 RAFFLE**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**8:00 Check in opens
9:30 Check in closes
10:00 TEE OFF
2:00 LUNCH AND AWARDS & PRIZES**

Submitted by Vietnam veteran Jerry Domask
Veterans Art Exhibit at the University of North Florida (UNF)

Objectives:

Provide a venue for veterans and students to express themselves in different media forms by examining their experiences and its impact upon self and society,

To share the sacrifices and hardships endured by individuals serving their Country; and to

Provide a journey of self-expression and enlightenment of the invisible becoming visible in art for any subject matter or period of time.

Scope of Art Creations:

Visual (paintings, drawings, sculpture, ceramics, etc.)

Video/film

Multi-media

Photography

Poetry

Participants: Active duty, veterans and civilians/students addressing veteran issues and/or topics. Veteran artists are not limited to exhibition subject matter. Student creative works will be limited to military and/or service member genre.

Tentative Date for Art Exhibit: 2016 or early 2017. An exhibit date will be announced once facility planning and gallery schedules are finalized.

Place of Exhibition: University of North Florida (UNF) Art Gallery (TBA).

Art Exhibit to be Curated: Artists will be invited to exhibit by personal invitation. Please express your interest in participation by sending an email to UNF, Military and Veterans Resource Center, at mvc@unf.edu. or Jerry Domask, at jerrydomask@gmail.com

Jerry Domask 904-386-3622 Website: JeromeDomaskFineArt.com

NOTE: There is a new “closed group” facebook page for veteran artists called Veterans Artist Program (VAP) : www.facebook.com/groups/VAP . Sign up if interested. Great group, very talented, many mediums. Currently approximately 400+ members nationally.

Support federal benefits for WWII Merchant Marine volunteers



Ed Trester

When World War II started, the Merchant Marine was called on by President Roosevelt to help supply our troops that were fighting around the world. They were in every invasion from North Africa, Europe, and to the far reaches of the Pacific with the much needed supplies. The casualty rate was the highest of any service with 1 in 26 paying the ultimate price, with hundreds of ships sunk, sending these seaman to a watery grave. American shipyards were building the much needed ships in record numbers, and men were needed to man them. They came from all walks of life - from 16 to 66 - all volunteers. Maritime training stations sprung up around the country. The largest one was at Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn N.Y.

Trainees were taught the skills of seamanship in rapid order, and found themselves on a ship at sea 2 weeks later. Every ship that left port with a cargo of bombs, trucks, fuel, and other supplies was in a combat zone as soon as they cleared the harbor to join a convoy. German U-boats were waiting in wolf packs sending these ships to a water grave. 1942 was a dreadful year for the Merchant Marine. Records show that some 400 ships were sunk or damaged with heavy loss of life. The war ended when America dropped the atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Japan unconditionally surrendered on August 6th 1945. After the war the Merchant Marine was called on to bring our troops and supplies home from around the world. On a lighter note, many of our troops fell in love while stationed overseas. The Merchant Marine brought back war brides - some with babies - back home. The victorious troops returned home to a grateful nation and made the adjustment to civilian life. To help them, President Roosevelt and Congress enacted the Service Reinvestment Act of 1944 commonly known as The G.I. Bill. This bill was without a doubt one of the largest economic boons in American history.

The bill gave

- job preference,
- low cost home loans,
- health benefits, and a
- college education

to the troops after the war. At one time, college G.I. enrollment exceeded 50%. This produced engineers, doctors, lawyers, and other skilled professionals back into society.

President Roosevelt wanted to include the Merchant Marine veterans under the G.I. Bill, but he died before the war ended. His recommendation died with him. Over the years the Merchant Marine became the forgotten service. It was not until 1988, after a court battle, that they received a watered down G.I. bill benefit. This meant as veterans they could only

- be buried in a national cemetery, or
- accepted in a VA nursing home.



Then in January of 2005 Congressman Filner of California rose on the floor of the House and said "Mr. Speaker I rise today to correct a grave injustice that has been inflicted against the World War II veterans of the Merchant Marine." He drafted a bill called "The Belated Thank You To The Merchant Marine Of World War II" and introduced it as bill HR 23. This bill would provide a small monthly pension to the some 8,000 remaining merchant seaman to help them in their retirement years. Their average age, in 2005, was 82. This bill would make up, in a small way, all the lifetime benefits never given to these veterans under the original G.I. Bill according to Congressman Filner. This bill passed the house and went to the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs to be released to the Senate floor for a vote to become law. This did not happen. Senator Akaka of Hawaii who was chairman of this committee never released the bill for a floor vote. At that time there were some 68 Senators who were signed on as co-sponsors of this bill. If the bill came to a floor vote it would have surely passed. Why did the senator prevent this bill from being marked up for a floor vote? No one knows but him. That was in 2005.

Today the average age of the 4,400 seaman still living is 93. The bill still remains dormant in Congress after thousands and thousands of letters, phone calls, and contacts from families and friends of these veterans. Most of these W.W.II veterans have perished during the war, or they have died over the years waiting for the government to correct this injustice.

The current bill in the house is HR 563 called "Honoring Our W.W.II Merchant Mariners Act of 2015."

Ed Trester W.W. II Merchant Marine veteran and co- author of best selling book "TORPEDOED FOR LIFE" available on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

1st Annual
Coastal Realty Golf Tournament
to benefit
K9s for Warriors

St. Augustine Shores Golf Club
707 Shores Blvd.
St. Augustine, FL 32086
(904) 794-4653



March 18, 2016
Shotgun Start @ 8:00am
Register Individually or by Team
by March 12, 2016

Best Ball Format and Closest to the Pin Contests!

**\$55 for 18 Holes, Bucket of Range Balls,
Lunch & Coffee**

Light Breakfast Available for Donation

Prize Starter Pack \$20
(2) Mulligans
(6) 50/50 Tickets
(6) Raffle Tickets

For Questions and Registration Email or Call:

Dotti@coastalrealtyfl.com (904) 471-0825



Vietnamvetradio.com

Vietnam Vet Radio is an internet only radio station dedicated to the men and women who served in the Vietnam War, their families, and friends. We are incorporated as a non-profit veterans ministry organization. With a few exceptions all the songs played are from the Vietnam War era. We also play the authentic jingles and public service announcements that were played on AFVN (American Forces Vietnam Network) Radio.



While Vietnam Vet Radio is neither political or religious, in the normal sense of the word, it is most certainly a pro-America and pro-military radio station that acknowledges that we are a blessed people. No anti-war rhetoric or anti-war songs; there are other sites on the internet for that. Our mission is to heal, not open old wounds.

Please contact us with suggestions on how Vietnam Vet Radio can better serve you.

Welcome Home!

Bennie P. Blount

SFC, US Army, Retired

Chu Lai 1969, Long Binh 1970, Vung Tau 1971-72



Warrior Spotlight
Name: Debra
Dog: Jet
Graduating Class: January 2016



Debra spent 27 years in the United States Air Force, where she completed three tours of duty. She was an Air field manager and has said that through her experiences, she has seen the “worst of the worst.” After describing symptoms of PTSD, Debra’s physician encouraged her to look into the benefits of a service dog. “I applied to K9s For Warriors because I was essentially housebound,” said Debra. “I wanted to be able to visit with my family and live my life, but I couldn’t. Jet, however, has changed that.”

Debra is reassured by Jet’s unconditional love at every moment. Jet, who is a black lab mix, was named in honor of celebrity chef and restaurateur, Jet Tila, who has chosen K9s For Warriors as his charity of choice on the Food Network show “Chopped.”

“K9s For Warriors is a wonderful program,” continued Debra. “They are amazing from the moment you walk through the door. The encouragement is unbelievable.” Debra has since settled back at home in Georgia, and is looking forward to living life to the fullest with Jet.

How K9s For Warriors Differs From Other Veteran Service Organizations: K9s Facts

- **Established in 2011 by Shari Duval as a way to help her son Brett, who was afflicted with PTSD**
- **Is a 501(c)(3)**
- **Has graduated 207 warrior-dog teams, as of 1/2016**
- **K9s For Warriors facility is called Camp K9**
- **Eighty percent of funding raised is spent on our warriors and dogs**



It's this Medal of Honor recipient's 82nd birthday. You'll be stunned by what he did in Vietnam

written by Cliff Sims in *YellowHAMMER*

OPELIKA, Ala. — Bennie Adkins turns 82 today. Exactly 50 years ago, Mr. Adkins was in the jungles of Vietnam. He returned to the United States a legend among Army Rangers, and almost a half-century later was awarded the Medal of Honor for personal acts of valor above and beyond the call of duty during the Vietnam War.

So numerous and heroic were Adkins' battlefield exploits that President Obama started his remarks at the White House Medal of Honor ceremony by saying that there was no way there would be enough time to describe them all. At another point he paused to simply say, "you can't make this stuff up."

Here's a lightly edited transcript of the official citation, which details a portion of Adkins' incredible story:

When Adkins' camp was attacked by a large North Vietnamese and Viet Cong force in the early morning hours of March 9, 1966, Sergeant First Class Adkins rushed through intense enemy fire and manned a mortar position continually adjusting fire for the camp, despite incurring wounds as the mortar pit received several direct hits from enemy mortars.

Upon learning that several soldiers were wounded near the center of camp, he temporarily turned the mortar over to another soldier, ran through exploding mortar rounds and dragged several comrades to safety. As the hostile fire subsided, Adkins exposed himself to sporadic sniper fire while carrying his wounded comrades to the camp dispensary.

When Adkins and his group of defenders came under heavy small arms fire from members of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group that had defected to fight with the North Vietnamese, he maneuvered outside the camp to evacuate a seriously wounded American and draw fire all the while successfully covering the rescue.



Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins participating in a press conference just after receiving the Medal of Honor at the White House, Sept. 15, 2014.

When a resupply air drop landed outside of the camp perimeter, Adkins, again, moved outside of the camp walls to retrieve the much needed supplies.

During the early morning hours of March 10, 1966, enemy forces launched their main attack and within two hours, Adkins was the only man firing a mortar weapon. When all mortar rounds were expended, Adkins began placing effective recoilless rifle fire upon enemy positions. Despite receiving additional wounds from enemy rounds exploding on his position, Adkins fought off intense waves of attacking Viet Cong.

Adkins eliminated numerous insurgents with small arms fire after withdrawing to a communications bunker with several soldiers. Running extremely low on ammunition, he returned to the mortar pit, gathered vital ammunition and ran through intense fire back to the bunker. After being ordered to evacuate the camp, Adkins and a small group of soldiers destroyed all signal equipment and classified documents, dug their way out of the rear of the bunker, and fought their way out of the camp.

While carrying a wounded soldier to the extraction point he learned that the last helicopter had already departed. Adkins led the group while evading the enemy until they were rescued by helicopter on March 12, 1966.

During the thirty-eight hour battle and forty-eight hours of escape and evasion, fighting with mortars, machine guns, recoilless rifles, small arms, and hand grenades, it was estimated that Adkins killed between 135 and 175 of the enemy while sustaining eighteen different wounds to his body.

When that last line was read aloud, there was a collective, audible gasp throughout the assembled crowd of friends, family, press and members of the military in the East Room of the White House.

Every member of Adkins' unit was either killed or wounded during the 48-hour ordeal detailed above. Two of the men he saved were able to attend the event. After the ceremony, Adkins' thoughts quickly turned to the other heroes with whom he served.

"This Medal of Honor belongs to the other 16 Special Forces soldiers with me," he said.



Ex POW Bill Ingram Honored

Bob Mitchell and his wife Ann had a great day at the St. Augustine Film Festival as we were honored to be escorts for our friend Ex POW Bill Ingram. Bill was the guest of honor for the showing of the film "Never The Same" The Prisoner of War Experience at the Saint Augustine film festival. Thank you Director: Jan Thompson and film narrator Loretta Swit for making us feel special. We have never seen Bill so excited. He will be wired for a long time. You made his day and ours. Thanks again for all you both do for our POW's. We will never forget.



VA Caregiver Support Line Celebrates 5 Years!

The Caregiver Support Line has been providing support to Caregivers for five years! Over 220,000 callers have reached out to the CSL since it's opening in February 2011.

Staffed by licensed social workers, the Support Line is available to provide supportive counseling, education on topics related to caregiving, and help to connect Caregivers to local supports and services to assist them in their caregiving role, including a referral to a local Caregiver Support Coordinator located at every VA medical center nationwide. To further support Caregivers, the Caregiver Support Line also facilitates telephone education presentations several times each month for Caregivers, with a focus on self-care.

Are you caring for a Veteran loved one? Call us today at [1-855-260-3274](tel:1-855-260-3274) to learn more about ways VA may be able support you in your caregiving journey!

FMC 22nd Annual Golf Tournament



To our Chapter Members, Past Players, and Guests:

The First Militia Chapter, AUSA (Association of the United States Army) will conduct its 22nd Annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser on April 11th at The Golf Club at South Hampton on CR-210, St. Augustine. Same great location as the last few years.

This years Golf Tournament Chairmen will be MAJ Scott Taylor.

He is off to a great start with a great support team.

There will be great prizes, raffle items and as always a delicious lunch. Please plan on participating by playing, sponsoring a hole, or helping us to gain sponsors.

You can now pay your entry fee or sponsorships online at <https://squareup.com/market/first-militia-chapter-ausa>.

Please remember to still submit your Entry/Sponsor forms to

Rebecca Gibson, C/O AUSA Golf Tournament

PO Box 3883, St. Augustine, FL 32085-3883

or rebecca.j.gibson.ctr@mail.mil.

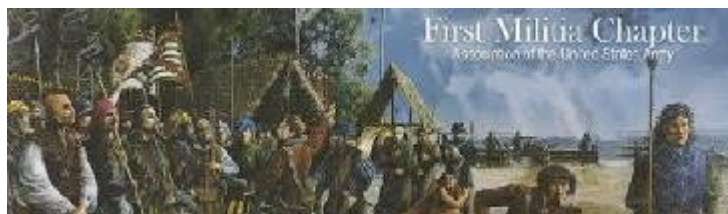
We are looking forward to another great success and memorable event!

Respectfully,

Daniel (Matt) Johnson

Colonel, Florida National Guard

President, First Militia Chapter



Statement from VA Secretary McDonald on Budget Request to Modernize Appeals Process

Current Process is ‘Complicated and Ineffective’



WASHINGTON – A few weeks ago during a [hearing](#) on VA’s transformation strategy, I made clear that we would need the help of Congress and our Veterans Service Organization partners in legislating a fair, streamlined and comprehensive process for new appeals, as well as providing much-needed resources to address the current pending inventory of appeals.

We have also engaged with Veterans and their representatives, and have heard them loud and clear that the experience they expect is a simple and understandable process with a personal touch that is capable of responding to their changing needs.

This week’s [budget request](#) represents a down payment toward that effort. Our budget proposes legislation to simplify the appeals process that will enable VA to provide most Veterans with an appeals decision within one year by 2021. The \$156 million request, which is \$46 million more than last year, and the 242 additional full-time appeals employees we requested are a down payment on a long-term, sustainable plan to provide Veterans with timely decisions.

The appeals process we have in current law is failing Veterans—and taxpayers. Over the years, laws have been changed to add layers of process, which, at the time, was perceived as being necessary to protect the interests of Veterans. Those perceived protections have crippled the system to the point where it is now broken. Most importantly, it is now so antiquated that it no longer serves Veterans well. Many find it confusing and are frustrated by the endless process and the length of time it can take to get an answer.

Veterans deserve an appeals process that is simple, timely, fair and transparent, and one that preserves their rights. We look forward to working with the Congress, Veterans Service Organizations, our state and federal partners and other key stakeholders to accomplish this important goal for Veterans and for American taxpayers.

Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard Presents
Florida's 29th Annual

VIETNAM & ALL VETERANS REUNION

April 21-24, 2016

THE NATION'S LARGEST VETERANS REUNION

Supported by the Vietnam and All Veterans of Florida, Inc. - vvoof.org

Come visit the
**Vietnam Traveling
Memorial Wall**
April 17 - 24, 2016

www.travelingwall.us

Wall Escort

April 17, 2016, Leave 10AM
Eastern Florida State College
Cocoa Campus on Clearlake Road

POW MIA
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MILITARY VENDORS

THE LAST PATROL
By Seacoast Vietnam Veterans

THE MOVING TRIBUTE



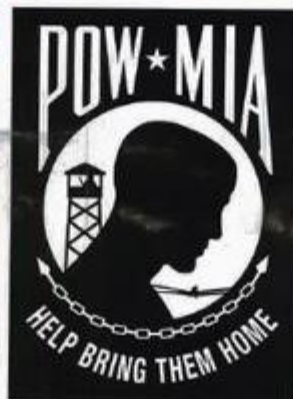
Visit the Reunion Web Page at www.FloridaVeteransReunion.com
VVB Web Page www.VietnamandAllVeteransofBrevard.com

Public Invited

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MELBOURNE, FL
321-255-4307
Take I-95 to Exit 191
Off Exit 73

**NO COOLERS, GLASS OR PETS
ALLOWED IN THE REUNION AREA**

Per Wickham Park: Golf carts
permitted for handicapped only and
must abide by Florida highway laws.



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vet.reunion.vendor@gmail.com

ESCORT INFO
reunionescort@aol.com

Vietnam & All Veterans of Brevard, Inc.
P.O. Box 237225, Cocoa FL 32923-7225



Air Force Sergeants Association
Chapter FO559

The Air Force Sergeants Association, or AFSA, is a non-profit group made up of Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard and Retired/veteran Air Force enlisted personnel. We provide funds to local projects, legislative representation/advocacy, assist military families and promote patriotism.

On 5 March 2016 we will be hosting our 5th annual golf tournament at Bent Creek Golf Course. Funds raised will go to assist various charities, including K-9s For Warriors, Wreaths Across America and the Missing In America Project (MIAP).

We are seeking businesses to sponsor holes. There are four levels of sponsorship: the Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum Sponsorships. In addition to having a sign on a hole and being allowed to set up a table or tent on the hole or around the clubhouse all sponsors will be named at the closing. Donations and auction items will also be accepted.

The basic \$150.00 Bronze Sponsorship includes a company sign on a hole and enables the Sponsor to set up a table or other display on a hole or at the clubhouse.

The \$250.00 Silver Sponsorship enables the Sponsor the same benefits as the Bronze Sponsor but also includes one registration for the tournament.

A \$400.00 Gold Sponsorship is an exclusive hole. In other words, no other sponsor will be on the hole and the Gold Sponsor is allowed to set up a display on the hole or at the clubhouse. This level includes 3 registrations for the tournament.

We are also looking for some sponsors for various hole-in-one shoot off games or a putting contest. These will be the \$500.00 Platinum Sponsorships. The prize will be the choice of the Sponsor. It could be a special product or one of the packages listed on the Golf Invite website @ www.golfinvite.com. Please note that the Platinum Sponsor is liable only for the cost of the insurance to cover the prize which is available through Golf Invite and is based on the number of players eligible for the shoot-out and the cost of the prize. This level includes hole exclusivity and four tournament registration fees.

Dixon Golf, who will be hosting a Million Dollar Hole-In-One contest plus other contests, is offering logo balls at \$400.00 per twelve dozen. Logo balls could also be added to the various Sponsorship levels at an additional \$300.00.

We have a web site at www.golfinvite.com/airforce which describes the Air Force Sergeants Association and the tournament. Players may register and pay online on our web site. Sponsors may also pay on line or if preferred, checks can be made payable to AFSA Chapter F0559.

We are a 501C-3 organization and copies of all tax documents will gladly be provided upon request. Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Richard (Rick) Wiggs
Tournament Chairman
rswiggs52@comcast.net
(904) 703-0601



Chapter FO559

The Air Force Sergeants Association

Will be hosting our 5th Annual Golf Tournament
Saturday March 5, 2016 at Bent Creek Golf Course
10440 Tournament Lane; Jacksonville, FL. 32222

Your help in supporting our group as we strive to remember, honor and support all those who chose to sacrifice all or part of their lives for America will be greatly appreciated. We have several Sponsorship packages.

Bronze Sponsorship: \$150.00. Includes sign on hole and Sponsor may put a table or tent on a hole or at the clubhouse.*

Silver Sponsorship: \$250.00. Includes sign on hole and Sponsor may set up a table or tent on a hole or at the clubhouse. Also includes one tournament registration.*

Gold Sponsorship: \$400.00. Includes tournament registration for four, sign on hole and Sponsor may set up a table or tent on the hole or at the clubhouse. **

Platinum Sponsorship: \$500.00. Includes tournament registration for four, sign on hole and Sponsor may set up a table or tent on the hole or at the clubhouse. This level is reserved for Hole-In-One contests. ***

Logo Balls: \$400.00 for twelve dozen. May also be added to a Sponsorship Package for an additional \$250.00.

*These are not exclusive holes so there may be more than one Sponsor on the hole.

**Exclusive holes. Only one Sponsor on the hole.

***Insurance and extra prize packages are available at www.golfinvite.com.

The donation of items for use in an auction will also be appreciated.

You may fill out and submit the information below or go to our website at www.golfinvite.com/airforce to register and pay as a Sponsor.

For questions contact Rick Wiggs @ (904) 703-0601.

.....

Company Name _____
Address _____
Contact _____
Phone Number _____

Mail to AFSA Golf 10657 Plum Hollow Dr. Jacksonville, Fl. 32222.



The Air Force Sergeants Association

Will be hosting our 5th annual golf tournament
Saturday March 5, 2016 at Bent Creek Golf Course
10440 Tournament Lane; Jacksonville, FL 32222

Participation in this
Tournament helps the
Air Force Sergeants
Association honor and
Serve both active duty
And former service
Members.

**Contests/Prizes will include items donated by Dixon Golf
including a Million Dollar Hole-In-One contest.**

Registration:

Play is limited to
The first 100 players.
\$75.00/player*
Pre-registered or
\$85.00 on site.
Military
\$65.00/75.00*
*includes golf, cart, bag of balls.

To register you may use the
included form or you may
visit our website @
www.glfinvite/airforce.

Raising Funds For:

K9S For Warriors;
The Missing in America Project;
Wreaths Across America and to
Serve veterans in need.

For more information

Contact:

Rick Wiggs @ (904) 703-0601
rswiggs52@comcast.net

Contact Information

Golfer 1 _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Golfer 2 _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Golfer 3 _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Golfer 4 _____

Address _____

Email _____

To register by mail please fill out the above information for each person in your group.
Make check payable to: **Air Force Sergeants Association Chapter F0559** and mail to
AFSA; 10657 Plum Hollow Dr; Jacksonville, FL. 32222.

The month of March is National Women's History Month, and Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry has signed a proclamation declaring the third week in March "**Women Veterans Recognition Week**". The week of events will not only celebrate women veterans but also bring awareness to their unique needs and the challenges they face in transitioning to civilian life, including educational and employment opportunities.



Schedule of Events

Monday, 14 Mar – Veterans Career Review

Veterans, active duty, guards, reservist and families, will be able to attend breakout sessions hosted by different industries. They will have the opportunity to hear that employer's product/service, what type of person they are looking for and share vacancies. Veterans will have the opportunity to ask questions and apply for open positions.

Tuesday, 15 Mar - VA Clinic Women Vets Health Fair

The Health Fair will be held at the VA clinic (Jefferson Street). Health and wellness vendors as well as VA services will be available to share with veterans

Wed, 16 Mar - RestorHER Research Report Release

The RestorHER research reached out to women veterans to assess their needs and services available to them. This research reached to all of Northeast Florida. The University of Florida will release those findings and a roundtable will commence.

Thurs, 17 Mar - FDVA Women Veterans Conference

The Florida Department of Veterans Affairs will present a conference on VA benefits and services. This event is primarily for women veterans. Caregivers of women veterans are also invited.

Friday, 18 Mar - Lunch and Learn

A gathering of veterans to talk about joining a civilian workforce with a military mentality. This event will be held at the University Club and is pay as you go.

Sat, 19 Mar - Gala

This event will honor women veterans who served during the WWII, Korea, and Vietnam era. We will also honor women veterans who are serving in their community.

Other 16-19 March 2016

- **Armed Forces Service Display in City Hall**
- **Traveling Stories to Duval County Schools**
- **Traveling Documentary will be displayed at each event**

All event times and locations will be released NLT February 1, 2016.



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

Our Vision: To be the “voice” of women veterans and help them excel beyond their own expectations.



WOOF ALERT: We get a lot of questions how our three-week program works. Our Ladies are doing amazing and going out to public places with their new service dogs. This is huge for all of them - to venture out of their comfort zone. It is incredible to see the smiles, the laughter, and the bond that forms with their dogs, and each other. Dog Power And Team K9 Power. Each day stronger than the day before. One Warrior told us this morning "I went to the store for the first time in two years," and her smile said it all. **The class is under the careful eye of their warrior/trainer, a past graduate that has walked in their shoes, and now leads this walk to their new future. Grateful.**



With VA's **Caregiver Support Line** assistance is just a quick phone call away. Whether you're in need of immediate assistance or have questions about what ser-

vices you may be eligible for, the caring licensed professionals who answer the support line can:

Tell you about the assistance available from VA.

Help you access services.

Connect you with the Caregiver Support Coordinator at a VA Medical Center near you.

Just listen, if that's what you need right now.

If you're just getting started with VA, calling the Caregiver Support Line is a great first step to take to learn more about the support that's available to you.

Fred Dupont: Meanwhile back in December 1967 at Ca Lu.

MOS: 1345, Heavy Equipment Operator. My nickname was Marvin Mobile for operating a mobile crane most of my time with 9th Engineers. Although, as you can tell by the picture, I also operated an E-Tool at times. Semper Fi.



=====

For several years, D.A.V. FI Chapter 6 has furnished the passenger vans for the delivery of Veterans between the St. Augustine Clinic and the Gainesville, V.A. Hospital, and back, Monday – Friday. The Van departs the Clinic every weekday at 0600. Phone (904) 209-3710 to schedule a ride. Drivers furnished by the COA are:

- Monday – Lonnie Woodard**
- Tuesday – Jack LaLonde**
- Wednesday – Floyd Bubba**
- Thursday – Bob Garlander**
- Friday – Robert “Butch” Harrison**



Tribute to be Given to World War II Hero After 71 Years Lost at Sea

A soldier who helped to end the Second World War is being honored with a documentary, memorial and monument many decades after his fateful, yet important voyage on the USS Indianapolis.

LORAIN, Ohio - Feb. 2, 2016 - PRLog -- For Jaclyn Bradley Palmer, the legacy of her great uncle began with a story and a photograph. As a child, Jaclyn loved when her grandmother, Fran Bradley would share tales and pictures from her life. She was especially drawn to the story of her grandmother's brother, John Rozzano Jr., who died at age 18 in the Second World War.



A photo of John Rozzano being held by his sister, Fran and great niece, Jaclyn.

Years later, Palmer learned that Rozzano had not only perished during the War, but had died on the USS Indianapolis, the Navy ship that delivered the Atomic bomb components which ended World War II. Just days after delivering the important cargo, the ship was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine. The vessel went down in 12 minutes, leaving most of the 1196 crew members to fend for themselves in shark infested waters. Being such a secret mission, the men went without rescue for 5 nights and 4 days. The men endured dehydration, hypothermia, saltwater poisoning and shark attacks, leaving only 317 survivors. Rozzano never made it home.

When Palmer learned the tragic truth of her great uncle's fate, she asked where his tombstone was so that she could pay respect to her brave ancestor. It was at that point that she learned he had never received a tribute of any kind. "He was never given a funeral, a memorial, or obituary because his parents and siblings held on to the hope that he would one day be found" Palmer said. Decades later, there was little to acknowledge that he had ever even existed. Unable to bear that truth, Palmer set out to give Rozzano the honor he so greatly deserved.

For nearly a decade, Palmer interviewed and corresponded with dozens of Rozzano's USS Indianapolis shipmates and family members. She collected photographs, stories and history in an effort to uncover mystery and bring closure to his passing. Her journey resulted in a documentary film and park monument, both in tribute to Rozzano's heroic service.

On April 9, 2016, a memorial will be held in Lorain, Ohio's Veteran's Park. Seventy-one years after his passing, Rozzano will be given the tribute he has always deserved. Family, friends, veterans, community members, shipmates and their families from across the globe will all attend the service to salute an American hero.

During the program, the monument will be dedicated, Lorain Mayor, Chase Ritenaur, will deliver a proclamation, and Michael Miller, from The Cleveland Orchestra, will play Taps. A colorguard presentation will be given by the Italian American Veteran Association and a statement will be made by Dan Gillotti, Veteran of the Year. In addition, a poem will be read by actress and great niece, AnnMaureen Rozzano, and Palmer, a singer-singwriter, will share a song she wrote for Johnnie. A flag, scheduled to fly in Johnnie's honor above the USS Indianapolis memorial in Indiana, will be received by nephew Mike Rozzano and shall be presented to Johnnie's two living sisters, Fran Bradley (92) and Jennie Bucci (95). The flag tribute is being made possible by Maria Eck Bullard, chairperson of the USS Indianapolis' Second Watch Organization. Other presentations will be made by niece Sharon Sweda, nephew Jack Bradley, and namesake John Anthony Rozzano. The memorial tribute is being funded by the loved ones of John Rozzano Jr. and is being organized by Debora Bradley. The stone is being created by Lewis Monument Company in Lorain.

The documentary will premiere at a local cinema after the memorial ceremony. Serendipitously, a major motion picture, starring Nicholas Cage, will be released nationally this summer, further sharing the important story of the USS Indianapolis and the brave men who served and sacrificed on the heroic voyage.

"Johnnie deserved to be thanked, to be remembered" Palmer says "and what a privilege that I was somehow chosen to help carry out that destiny."

A preview of the film can be viewed on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tIGCyN4l0zg>

PRESS RELEASE DISTRIBUTION



Chaplain Corps History: The Four Chaplains

WASHINGTON (Jan. 28, 2014) -- It was Feb. 3, 1943, and the U.S. Army Transport Dorchester was one of three ships in a convoy, moving across the Atlantic from Newfoundland to an American base in Greenland. A converted luxury liner, the Dorchester was crowded to capacity, carrying 902 servicemen, merchant seamen and civilian workers.

It was only 150 miles from its destination when shortly after midnight, an officer aboard the German submarine U2 spotted it. After identifying and targeting the ship, he gave orders to fire. The hit was decisive, striking the ship, far below the water line. The initial blast killed scores of men and seriously wounded many more.

Others, stunned by the explosion were groping in the darkness. Panic and chaos quickly set in! Men were screaming, others crying or frantically trying to get lifeboats off the ship.

Through the pandemonium, four men spread out among the Soldiers, calming the frightened, tending the wounded and guiding the disoriented toward safety. They were four Army chaplains, Lt. George Fox, a Methodist; Lt. Alexander Goode, a Jewish Rabbi; Lt. John Washington, a Roman Catholic Priest; and Lt. Clark Poling, a Dutch Reformed minister.



Quickly and quietly the four chaplains worked to bring calm to the men. As soldiers began to find their way to the deck of the ship, many were still in their underwear, where they were confronted by the cold winds blowing down from the arctic.

Petty Officer John J. Mahoney, reeling from the cold, headed back towards his cabin. "Where are you going?" a voice of calm in the sea of distressed asked "To get my gloves," Mahoney replied. "Here, take these," said Rabbi

Goode as he handed a pair of gloves to the young officer. "I can't take those gloves,"

Mahoney replied. "Never mind," the Rabbi responded. "I have two pairs." It was only long after that Mahoney realized that the chaplain never intended to leave the ship.

Once topside, the chaplains opened a storage locker and began distributing life jackets. It was then that Engineer Grady Clark witnessed an astonishing sight. When there were no more lifejackets in the storage room, the chaplains simultaneously removed theirs and gave them to four frightened young men. When giving their life jackets, Rabbi Goode did not call out for a Jew; Father Washington did not call out for a Catholic; nor did Fox or Poling call out for a Protestant. They simply gave their life jackets to the next man in line. One survivor would later call it "It was the finest thing I have seen or hope to see this side of heaven."

As the ship went down, survivors in nearby rafts could see the four chaplains -- arms linked and braced against the slanting deck. Their voices could also be heard offering prayers and singing hymns.

Of the 902 men aboard the U.S.A.T. Dorchester, only 230 survived. Before boarding the Dorchester back in January, Chaplain Poling had asked his father to pray for him, "Not for my safe return, that wouldn't be fair. Just pray that I shall do my duty...never be a coward...and have the strength, courage and understanding of men. Just pray that I shall be adequate."

Although the Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart were later awarded posthumously Congress wished to confer the Medal of Honor but was blocked by the stringent requirements which required heroism performed under fire. So a posthumous Special Medal for Heroism, The Four Chaplains' Medal, was authorized by Congress and awarded by the President on January 18, 1961.

It was never given before and will never be given again.

The USS Indianapolis Second Watch

Another survivor, Felton Outland passed away.

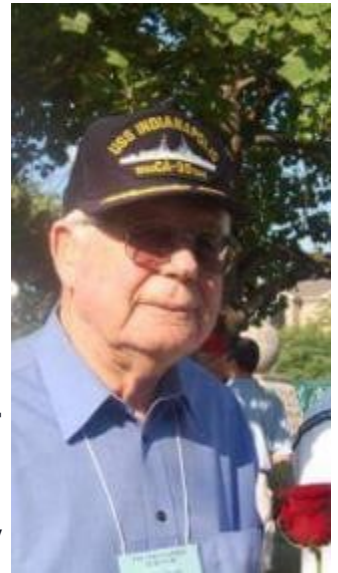
He would have been 90 years old next month.

Mr Outland, along with Survivor Giles McCoy, worked so hard to organize the first Survivors Reunion in 1960.

Because of his efforts, the USS Indianapolis Family was united over 55 years ago!

Please keep him and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Rest in peace, brave hero.



More sad news today, within just 24 hours.... Another survivor, Paul McGinnis of West Virginia passed away.

He just celebrated his 90th birthday in December.

Such a sweet and humble hero. Please keep him and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Rest in peace, gone but never forgotten.

Sincerely,

Maria Eck Bullard

Daughter of USS Indianapolis Survivor Harold Eck

Chairman, USS Indianapolis CA-35 Second Watch Organization

World War II 'Hero of Iwo Jima' John Keith Wells dies

America has lost a hero of Iwo Jima.



First Lieutenant John Keith Wells, USMC, 94, John Keith Wells, who led one of the most decorated infantry platoons to come out of a single engagement and the first to raise a flag over the Japanese island of Iwo Jima during World War II.

Wells was 94.

Wells, who received the Navy Cross, Bronze Star and Purple Heart, commanded the 3rd Platoon, Easy Co., 28th Marine Regiment, during the Battle of Iwo Jima. The 3rd Platoon was part of the invasion force, landing on February 19, 1945. It was a key unit in the frontal assault on Mt. Suribachi.

Wells, thinking the frontal assault order from higher up was pure suicide, refused to give his marines the order to assault. Without the supporting fire that had been promised, he simply rose from his shell hole, waived his rifle over his head and began running up the mountain. The rest of his Marines followed.

He didn't make it to the top, because he was shot multiple times by the Japanese, but he was still able to direct his men on their mission. They raised the first flag on the mountain.

A few hours later, a second group of Marines replaced that flag with a larger one.

The second flag raising was memorialized in a photograph that was destined to become one of the most iconic war photos of all time.

Thank you for your service, sir.

May you rest in peace. Our thoughts and prayers are with your family and friends.

Here is a link to those interested in issues involving Military Survivor Families, please enjoy the Survivor Outreach Services Winter 2016 Newsletter for Northeast Florida.

Very Respectfully, Keith Ham

Survivor Outreach Services Support Coordinator HRCI

Contractor

310 Charlotte St. , St. Augustine, FL 32084 Office: 904-823-0157, Cell: 904-472-7689,

keith.e.ham.ctr@mail.mil



<file:///C:/Users/Owner/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/6XXVSKMT/FL%20Winter%202016.pdf>

Taken from the Vietnam Veterans of America Facebook page:

The following information is presented “as is” as a public service.

9,087,000 military personnel served on active duty during the official Vietnam era from August 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975.

2,709,918 Americans served in uniform in Vietnam.

Vietnam Veterans represented 9.7% of their generation....

240 men were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War.

The first man to die in Vietnam was James Davis, in 1961. He was with the 509th Radio Research Station. Davis Station in Saigon was named for him.

58,148 were killed in Vietnam.

75,000 were severely disabled.

23,214 were 100% disabled.

5,283 lost limbs.

1,081 sustained multiple amputations.

Of those killed, 61% were younger than 21.

11,465 of those killed were younger than 20 years old.

Of those killed, 17,539 were married.

Average age of men killed: 23.1 years.

Five men killed in Vietnam were only 16 years old.

The oldest man killed was 62 years old.

Rolling Thunder Washington, DC Inc.

“American Indians have proudly worn our nation’s uniform in every one of our conflicts... American Indians per capita—have had the highest percentage of their people in military service, exceeding every American ethnic group.” - Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Colorado



Today, Rolling Thunder Washington, DC, Inc., recognizes, honors and salutes Native Americans for their long and distinguished service to our great nation.

In Native American culture veterans are honored and held in a position of honor. This is the way their culture has always been; honoring those who provided protection and preservation of their tribal members. Today, in honor of their service, during Native American ceremonies and gatherings, it is the Native American military veterans who serve as members of the honor guard, carry the flags and lead the opening procession.

In addition, in many cases, military veterans serve in leadership positions within their respective tribes. They've gone through tough times during their military service and the tribe has come to depend upon them for wisdom and sound decision making.

According to the U.S. Department of Defense, Native Americans have served in the country's armed services in greater numbers per capita than any other ethnic group, and for over 200 years, served in every major conflict with pride, honor and distinction.

Involvement in Every U.S. War:

Early Wars (before World War I)

- From the Revolutionary War through the Civil War, American Indians served as auxiliary troops and as scouts.
- The Indian Scouts were established in 1866. This service was active for the remainder of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century.

World War I

- Roughly 12,000 Native Americans served in the military during World War I.
- Four American Indians serving in the 142nd Infantry of the 36th Texas-Oklahoma National Guard Division received the Croix de Guerre medal from France.

World War II

- Over 44,000 Native Americans served between 1941 and 1945. The entire population of Native Americans in the United States was less than 350,000 at the time.
- Native American military personnel worked as cryptologists, using their Native languages to encode messages so that enemy code-breakers could not decipher them.
- Alaska Natives were a significant presence on the Alaska Combat Intelligence Detachment. This outfit was the first ashore on each island occupied by Allied forces in the Aleutian Campaign.

Korean Conflict

- Approximately 10,000 Native Americans served in the military during this period.
- Three were awarded the Medal of Honor.

Vietnam Era

- More than 42,000 Native Americans served in the military in the Vietnam Era, and over 90 percent of these Service members were volunteers.

Post-Vietnam Era

- American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) service members continued to serve in high numbers after the Vietnam Era.
- AIAN service members saw action in Grenada, Panama, Somalia, the Gulf War, and in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation New Dawn (OND).

Source: American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans, September 2012, Department of Veterans Affairs. http://www.va.gov/.../SpecialRepor.../AIAN_Report_FINAL_v2_7.pdf

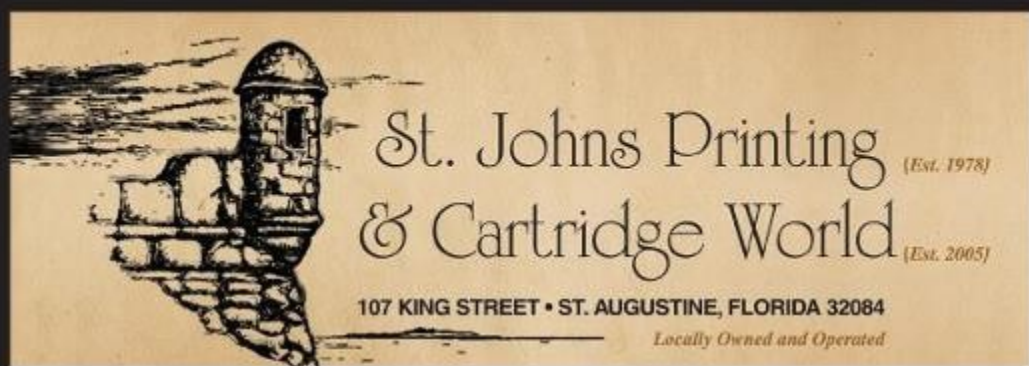
According to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, 32 Native American military members have earned our nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor.

According to the Department of Defense, 42 Native Americans have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in Iraq and 22 while serving in Afghanistan.

As we bring attention to the distinguished service of Native American military personnel, we must never forget to honor and remember the service and sacrifice of all those who defend this great nation.



First Coast TV was delighted and honored to help spread the word on the event "**Honoring Our Veterans**", that took place on Sunday, Nov. 8th at Anastasia Baptist Church. We need to let our community know that that very small percentage of our men and women, who we value because of their service in uniform, must still be valued after they are no longer in uniform. So First Coast.TV was pleased to be asked to help spread the word. We also covered the story of the new and improved VA clinic in St Augustine. For more **news in video format** on our community in St Johns County please go to www.firstcoast.tv to see more stories on what's news at home.



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Congratulations!

CW5 Jerry Dedge, the Florida National Guard's Command Chief Warrant Officer, received the Meritorious Service Medal and the Florida Distinguished Service Medal during a quick ceremony at Saint Francis Barracks. He also received a plaque recognizing his contributions and dedicated service while serving as the State Aviation Safety Manager.



VetFriends is a website that will help you find old buddies you served with:

https://www.vetfriends.com/new_member/index-catalog.cfm?Source=Facebook&keyword=buddies_looking_2016



Snow covered Korean War Memorial, Washington, DC.

To all our Korean War Veterans, thank you for your service and Welcome Home!
To the 7,826 military personnel, unaccounted for from the Korean War, you are not forgotten.





"These American heroes are owed a debt we can never fully repay, but we are passionate about making a significant difference in their lives."

-Lewis Jordan, Founder, & CEO



GratitudeAmerica

Join Forces With GratitudeAmerica

We are a 501 c 3 nonprofit that organizes and holds 4-day retreats at NO COST for veterans and their primary support persons/spouses. Our retreats provide a supportive environment in which veterans can connect with their peers, gain critical coping skills and interact with licensed counselors to begin healing where needed. Our retreats provide various activities including, for example, nature-based recreation, tai chi, breath awareness, kayaking, and dolphin interactions. In many cases our retreats act as a gateway for deeper levels of care. Evidence from a Kansas State University study, using validated metrics over the last two years, demonstrated that our retreat model created positive trends in reducing PTSD related reintegration challenges, and improved relationships between veterans and their spouses.



As shocking as it may seem...

It has been reported that America's service members are committing suicide at a rate of 22 every day and are getting divorced at a rate of 80 every day. We are now building an alliance and are asking you to join forces with us to help reverse these trends. Every \$1000 donated provides at least one service member with the opportunity to attend a retreat with his/her primary support person, become empowered, and make changes to improve their lives. If you would like to make a financial contribution to support GratitudeAmerica's efforts, please visit GratitudeAmerica.org or send a donation, large or small, to GratitudeAmerica at PO Box 16956 Fernandina Beach, FL 32035.

"Having war injuries can be very isolating, lonely, and hard for many to understand. Being surrounded by others who can completely understand your issues, fully relate, and offer support works better than years of therapy. In a few short days, a group of strangers was able to bond and become family. Knowing we have connected with 15 service members and 15 caregivers allows us to be hopeful and optimistic we do not have to go through this alone."

➤ SPOUSE OF VETERAN WITH 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

➤ CONTACT US

John November Esq.

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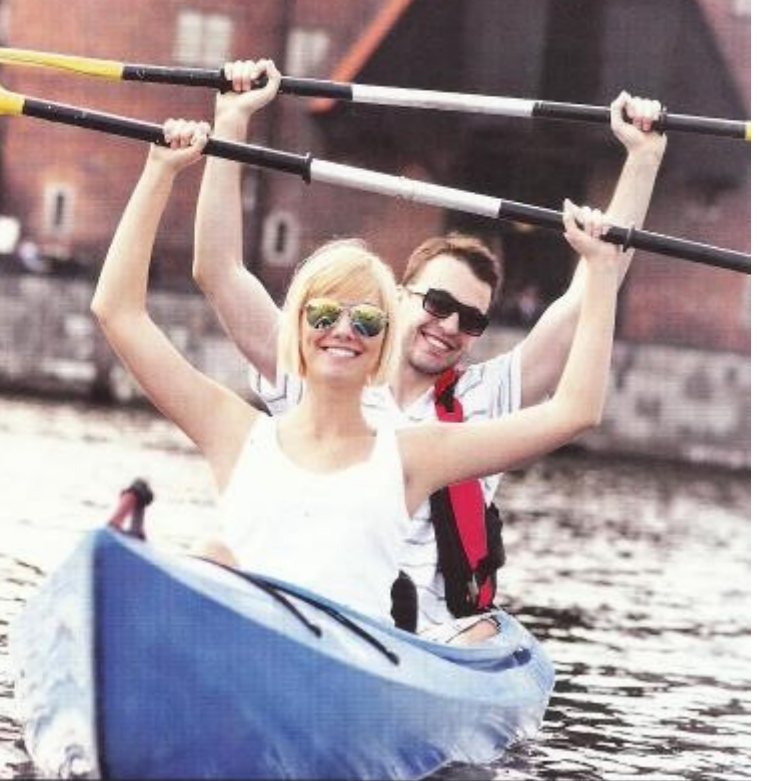
jnovember@gratitudeamerica.org

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Fernandina Beach, FL 32035



ARE YOU inTANDEM WITH YOUR TYPE 1 DIABETES OPTIONS?



A new clinical research trial is now studying an investigational oral product inTANDEM with your current insulin regimen.

YOU MAY QUALIFY IF YOU:

- Are 18 years old or older
- Have a confirmed diagnosis of Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus
- Have A1C levels 7 - 10%



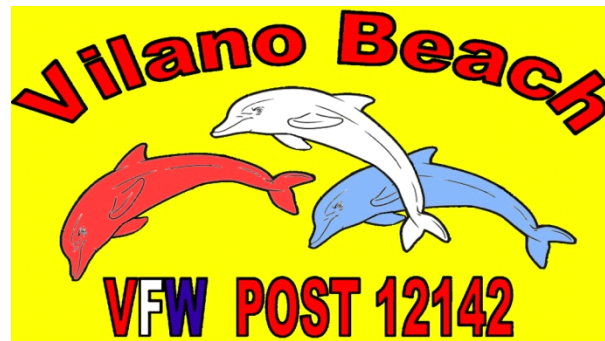
Lisa Thomas, BS, CCRC
President

Telephone (904) 619-8157
Facsimile (904) 683-4916
Mobile (904) 755-1374

lisa.thomas@jaxadvresearch.com
www.jaxadvresearch.com

Solutions Through Advanced Research, Inc.
10175 Fortune Parkway, Suite 1201, Jacksonville, Florida 32256

www.inTANDEM4trial.com



Vilano Beach VFW now has 3 Wheelchairs available for St. Johns County Veterans



1.

2.

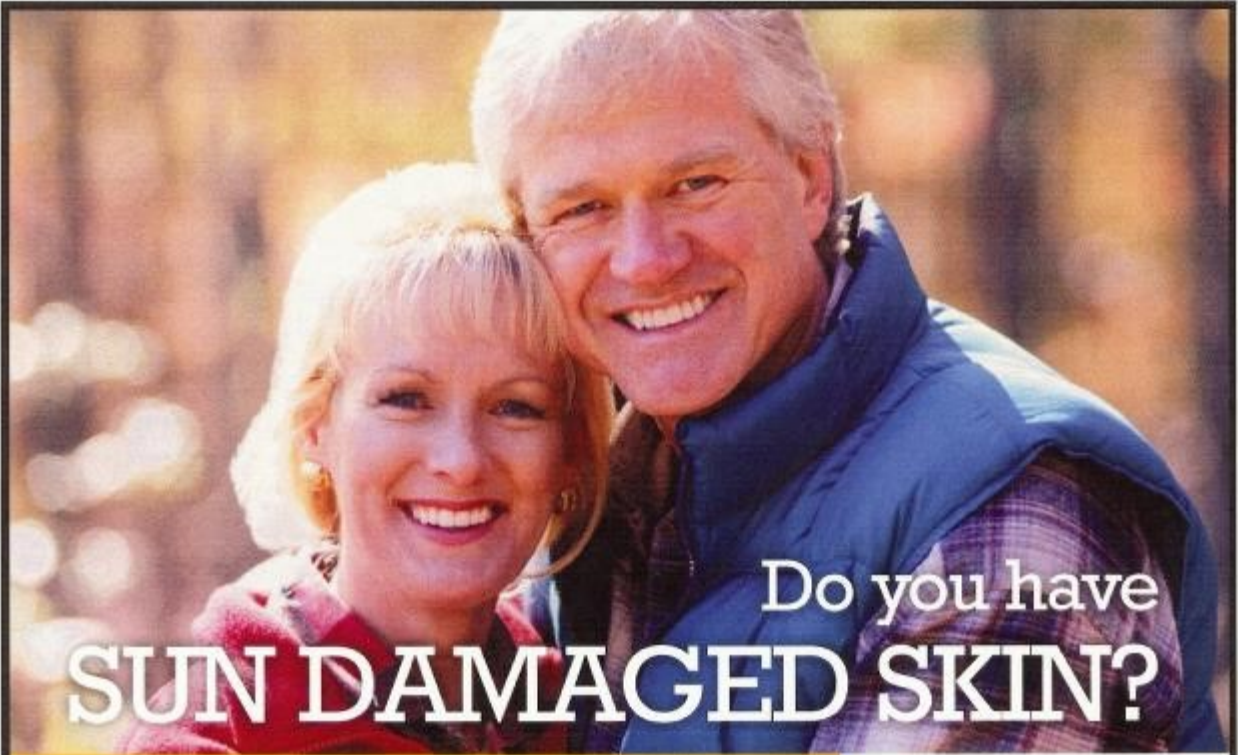
3.

1 – Pride Jazzy Jet 2 – Heavy Duty Electric Wheelchair with on-board Charger & Manual.

2 – Pride Jazzy Select – Electric Wheelchair with Charger & Manual.

3 – Pride Jazzy 1120 – Electric Wheelchair with on-board Charger & Manual.

Any St. Johns County Veteran needing a chair, contact Vilano Beach VFW @ (904) 669-1946



Do you have SUN DAMAGED SKIN?

Are you in the SUN a lot?

We are now conducting a clinical research study to evaluate an investigational cream and its effect on sun damaged skin (Actinic Keratosis).

Do you have scaly or rough lesions on your face or scalp?

Qualified participants will receive at no cost:
• Study related exams • Study cream or placebo

Qualifying participants will receive financial compensation for their time and travel.

You may be eligible to participate in a clinical research study if you:

- Are you 18 years or age or older
- Have scaly or rough lesions on your face or scalp
- Can visit our office 4 times in 20 weeks

For more information, or to schedule a screening, please contact us at :
Solutions Through Advanced Research, Inc.
12086 Fort Caroline Road
Jacksonville, FL 32225
904-619-8157



“Honoring the Dead by Helping the Living”

For more information,
contact A. J. Sartin (904) 669-1946

Offered by the Vilano Beach VFW Post 12142, VilanoBeachVFW@att.net
Vilano Beach VFW Post 12142 collects Walkers, Wheel Chairs, and Power
Wheel Chairs for distribution to other Veterans in need.

VETERANS HELPING VETERANS

The P320 Travel-Ease Regal has an 18"W x 16"D swivel seat, flip up armrests, headrest and flip-up footboard. The Travel-Ease comes with batteries and runs up to 4.5 mph.

The small footprint is perfect for getting around indoors, but don't be fooled, it's outdoor performance is second to none. The P320 has an excellent torque-range for consistent pulling no matter what the terrain does.



The Merits P320 Travel-Ease Regal is stylish and compact. Its low center of gravity, tight turning radius of 23" and excellent maneuverability makes it extra stable and gives you a high level of freedom.

The P320's 9" Foam-Filled Drive wheels and 8" front casters can take you just about anywhere. Work great indoors and outdoors. The P320 has a maximum speed of 4.5 mph and a range of about 15 miles.

Go-Go Elite Traveller 3-Wheel

by Pride , Model No. SC40E

Lightweight, agile, the Elite Traveller.

18AH battery option for extended drive range

Comes with blue, and red shroud covers

Front frame-mounted seat post offers maximum stability

Key Specs

Top Speed: 4.25 mph

Drive Range: 10.00 miles (this may vary, depending on charge and life of battery)

Heaviest Piece: 28 lbs., Rider Weight capacity: 300 lbs., Weight: 96 lbs.



**Wheelchair Walker Folding Combination, without basket
(pictured on left)**

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

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

Send to: mrothfeld@anyveteran.org

Please send to: mrothfeld@anyveteran.org



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

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

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

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

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

The Veterans Council meetings will now be conducted at the new Health and Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine. The meetings will be held in the Muscovy Room which is directly across from the elevators in the lobby area as you enter the building. This is the building where the Veterans Service Office is located.

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

(physical location)

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

*The office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily,
Monday through Friday excluding holidays.
Closed for lunch daily from 11:30 am 12:30 pm*

Service is by appointment.

Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161

Joseph McDermott, CVSO

Rick Rees, Assistant VSO

Tammy Shirley, Assistant VSO

Lashonda Burns, Office Specialist

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