



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

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St. Augustine, FL 32085

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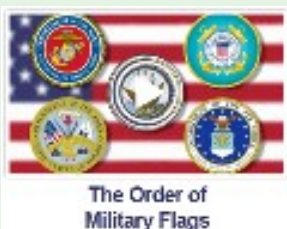
Volume 10, Issue 3

Message from the Chairman

March 2021

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Fellow Veterans:

Your Veterans Council has been heavily engaged this month in assisting the VA and SJC in arranging candidates to receive their COVID-19 vaccinations. The Veterans Council was engaged in helping select the local VFW Post for a satellite operation for administering the COVID vaccinations for our veterans. It has been very successful and has improved the efficiency of the inoculation program by stepping up the number of veterans receiving their shots. A big shout out to members of the VFW Post 2391 for volunteering and especially to Post Commander Bob Daugherty and George McCrea for making the Post available for the

COVID-19 vaccination program.

You have no doubt seen the excellent progress that is being made on our new CBOC on CR 207. In the last few weeks it has taken on the form of a nearly completed building from the outside. There is still much work to complete interior furnishings but the contractor is tracking to the scheduled completion date in early summer. As we near the completion date, I will invite Dr. Thomas McKenzie, VA CMO and Mr. Craig Pasanen, VA Support Specialist and Project Manager to attend our Veterans Council meeting and give us an update on the new CBOC and the improvements in services and capabilities.

The Veterans Council has made its selection for the



Col. Ed Taylor award for 2020. We are pleased to announce that Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker has been selected for the Veterans Council most prestigious award for his outstanding leadership and support for the veterans of St. Johns County. Commissioner Blocker will be honored at our February meeting and presented with a plaque for his exemplary service to our County, the Nation and his continued support of our veterans.

Bill Dudley
Chairman
Veterans Council of St. Johns County

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



The first pic shown is the Crowning of our elected Queen of Lassen Ms. Nellie Powell! The second picture is the Crowning of our King of Lassen, Mr. Vincent Erato. They will hold the crowns for one year at which they will vote for a new King and Queen next Valentines Day!!

This pic is of the king and queen together after they received their crowns. They were both SO surprised they were picked!!

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine – The Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine (St. Johns County) opened to residents in 2010. The 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. Call (904) 940-2193 for more information. Address: 4650 State Road 16, St. Augustine, FL 32092

The VA is required to provide nursing home care to any veteran who:

- needs nursing home care because of a service-connected disability.
- has a combined disability rating of 70% or more, or.
- has a disability rating of at least 60% and is: deemed unemployable, or. has been rated permanently and totally disabled.



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 be at **6:00pm**. 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 2018

At Community Hospice of NE FL.

4266 Sunbeam Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257

Hadlow Bldg – Conference Room A 6:00 pm

DATES OF 2021 SC at JNC MEETINGS

Monday, March 1, 2021

+++++2020 Officers of the SCJNC+++++

Chairman: Steve Spickelmier

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 Administration Building,

500 San Sebastian View, at 7 pm

All SJC Health Guidelines will be followed.

Please stay safe, Bill Dudley, Chairman, VC of SJC



Upcoming Veterans Council Meetings Speakers

February 25, Sean Riley, Community Outreach Director, Gratitude America

March 25, Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial & Museum, Buddy Harris

April 29, Danielle Tapia, General Caregiver Support Services Coordinator

and Jessica Bradstreet, Local Recovery Coordinator

2021 Meeting Dates: February 25, March 25, April 29, May 27, June 24

July 29, August 26, September 30, October 28, November 18, December 30

**1945-2021: K9s for Warriors veterans nonprofit
founder Shari Duval dies**

'She pioneered how to love on our warriors'

by Beth Reese Cravey, Florida Times-Union



Shari Duval, who founded and built the Ponte Vedra-based K9s for Warriors veterans nonprofit into a national presence, has died after a battle with cancer.

She was 75.

"I'm heartbroken," CEO Rory Diamond wrote on Twitter. "She had been valiantly fighting cancer over and over and winning and this last bout was just too much."

Mrs. Duval founded K9s For Warriors in 2011 to train shelter dogs as service dogs and pair them with veterans suffering service-connected post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury and military sexual trauma. As of January the nonprofit has "rescued" 1,268 dogs and 650 veterans, according to the website, at no charge to the veterans.

"Shari created K9's for Warriors through sheer grit, love and a tenacity that I've never knew existed," wrote Diamond, who is also a Jacksonville City Council member. "She pioneered how to love on our warriors and stop veteran suicide. Like so many others, she changed my life forever. . . . As one of our warriors just said, 'St. Peter is standing at the Pearly Gates and when he sees Shari he will surely open wide the gates of heaven and say 'no introduction is needed to a saint such as yourself.'"

Mrs. Duval's husband of 25 years, retired PGA Champions Tour golfer Bob Duval, said she "had an impact on everybody that surrounded her." Even in her last days, she impressed hospice staff with her strength, as she held on days longer than expected, he said.

"She wouldn't give up," he said. "She had something else to do. I don't know what it was, but I'm sure she got it done."

*The Veterans Council spoke and recorded a day with Shari Duval, here is the K9s For Warriors story as posted on the FL PBS website: **Unleashing the Underdogs: The K9s For Warriors Story***

<http://www.floridastoriesofservice.org/unleashing-the-underdogs-the-ks-for-warriors-story/>

"Today's generation of warriors have been deployed more than any other before, this documentary highlights a unique program that pairs dogs and veterans in a training program, and ultimately as companions, to show appreciation and assist in healing of PTSD. Directed by Dr. Nadia Ramoutar, produced by Michael Rothfeld, Dr. Nadia Ramoutar, Bill Dudley and the Veterans Council of St. Johns County."

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



During the Vietnam War, the US created a highly classified unit that still influences modern special operations

As the US's involvement in Vietnam steadily grew with more conventional troops, so did its secret war. To counter the Viet Cong's guerrilla campaign, supported by the North Vietnamese army (NVA), raging inside South Vietnam, the Pentagon established a highly secretive special operations organization in 1964.



The Military Assistance Command Vietnam-Studies and Observations Group (MACV-SOG) was tasked with taking the fight to the enemy regardless of where they were. Cross-border operations in Cambodia, Laos, and North Vietnam—where US troops weren't supposed to be—became SOG's specialty.

Special-operations pioneers

Composed of Green Berets, Navy SEALs, Recon Marines, Air Commandos, and their indigenous allies, SOG primarily conducted reconnaissance and direct action operations, such as ambushes, in South Vietnam and across the border.

Cross-border recon missions often led to epic gunfights, as the small SOG teams would be compromised and hunted down by devastatingly superior enemy forces. It was more common than not for a recon team to be extracted under fire and with their perimeter minutes, if not seconds, away from being overrun.

"SOG operations hurt the NVA [and] impeded the shipment of supplies/soldiers south on the Ho Chi Minh Trail," John Stryker Meyer, a legendary SOG operator, told Insider.

"There were also major intel coups. For example, Operation Tailwind, which saved the CIA in Thailand, produced troves of key NVA intel. There was also Bargewell, who found valuable intel on an NVA base camp despite having been shot in the chest," Meyer added, referring to Eldon Bargewell, who went on to be a renowned general and commander in the Army's Delta Force.

Just one day with SOG could produce a lifetime of stories. For Meyer, a veteran of two SOG deployments who has written about his hair-raising experiences, it was hard to pick the most notable moment. Despite a late-night and personal encounter with an NVA soldier in the field, Meyer's most memorable operation was when his recon team went against three NVA divisions — 30,000 men — Thanksgiving Day.

In the end, the US lost the war despite the herculean efforts of SOG and its contribution to the fight.

"There were contributions that we never learned about. For example, we pulled off a few wiretaps [in the Ho Chi Minh Trail], but we never heard back from the CIA on results," Meyer said. "Getting honest answers from the Communists about SOG's impact is impossible, but you take a case like October 5, 1968, when Recon Team Alabama and its air assets were responsible for 9,000 enemy troops KIA or WIA—that had an impact on troops moving south."



As direct US involvement in the war shrank, SOG became less needed, and in 1972, it was deactivated. "Like anything else, politics interfered. Our command structure often had to fight to keep close air support units assigned to support SOG, such as the A-1 Skyraider support," Meyer said of why SOG wasn't kept after Vietnam. But SOG alumni continued to serve, which would prove key for the future of US special-operations forces.

Paving the way for JSOC

Eight years after MACV-SOG was deactivated, the Pentagon was forced to create a similar organization. Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) was born after the failure to rescue the American hostages from Iran during Operation Eagle Claw.

Col. Charlie Beckwith, the founder of Delta Force and ground force commander during the mission, argued for a joint command that would bring together America's special operators. Beckwith had served in SOG and thus already had an idea of what such a command could look like, despite the enemy now being terrorists and not the NVA.

As a result, the Pentagon created US Special Operations Command, its subordinate service commands, and JSOC.

JSOC contains the military's tier-one units and is considered a national strategic asset. Initially, Delta Force and SEAL Team 6, which were JSOC's counterterrorism direct-action units, were predominately manned with Vietnam veterans, several of whom had served in SOG.

Although the conditions under which JSOC was created were completely different from those in which SOG worked, they share lots of similarities.

Both organizations are joint, meaning that their units came from across the military and not just from one service. Additionally, they focus on both covert and clandestine operations. They also share a close relationship with the intelligence community, often working directly for it, like on the Osama bin Laden raid, during which the SEAL Team 6 operators were nominally under CIA control.

There are divergences as well. A significant difference between the two organizations—and between the times in which they fought—is their relationship with risk. SOG leaders and operators didn't hesitate to take an extreme risk in their fight against the North Vietnamese. Indeed, several SOG operations could be considered suicidal.

Whether it was when a SOG team went after three NVA divisions or when a reinforced SOG company went deep into Laos to help the CIA, SOG operations were characterized by their high-risk level. That was reflected in SOG's 100% casualty rate, meaning every operator was either wounded, often multiple times, or killed.

Conversely, today there is a risk-averse culture, even in the most elite special-operations organizations. "You can't even enter the room if you carry a CONOP [concept of operations] similar to SOG's," a former Delta Force operator told Insider. "There is no way anyone would approve that today."

"The SAR window plays a big part in that," the Delta operator said, referring to the military's requirement that troops — commandos or not — be within range of a search-and-rescue asset in case their mission goes south.

"But, to be fair, it's a very different environment. We aren't engaged in a major war like Vietnam, and our organizations are different. We're the national mission force. We can't afford the casualty rate these guys had." SOG operators agree with that view.

"Every spec-ops operator I've met in recent years from today's conflicts all agree that many of the missions we ran would never be allowed today due to threat levels," Meyer added.

In the end, policy limitations notwithstanding, JSOC is continuing SOG's special-operations legacy.

From *The Insider* by Stavros Atlamazoglou is a defense journalist specializing in special operations, a Hellenic Army veteran (National Service with the 575th Marine Battalion and Army HQ), and a Johns Hopkins University graduate.

Veterans Art Exhibit

“THEN & NOW” OVERVIEW Jan 14, 2021

THEN & NOW: 50 YEARS OF VETERAN EXPERIENCES

demonstrates the potential healing power of creative expression in a display of artistic endeavors working through the trauma and grief these 8 artists have incurred through their military service. St. Augustine Art Association is proud to provide a voice and stage for the Veterans to share their experiences from subtle murmurs of anguish; to riveting, raw and emotionally-charged cries for support and understanding. The exhibit merges St. Augustine's rich art and history with today's global military awareness and experiences, providing both an educational narrative and broad outreach to society.



THEN & NOW is a special “Shout Out” to Army Major (RET) Theodore Gostas, a former POW held in captivity for over five years, 4.5 years of this spent in solitary confinement. A special installation will be constructed depicting his five-by-eight foot solitary confinement cell. It also speaks to a special relation between two “Foxhole Buddies” (Gostas & Domask) healing and helping each other over a half century transiting from THEN to NOW.

The artists represent more than 50 years of military history, from the Cold War to the present Middle East hostilities. They have served around the world; including the U.S., Europe, Vietnam, GTMO (Cuba), Iraq, Japan, Afghanistan, Korea, Persian Gulf for Desert Shield/Storm and Bosnia.

The veterans represent all the Services and are divided equally between female and male. It is one of the first known times a National Veterans Art Exhibit has equal representation among the sexes. It was not planned this way! They earned it! Each artist's body of work was examined in-depth and selected solely on this criteria - the strength of their work. The female veterans will knock your socks off based upon their military accomplishments, distinguished creative accomplishments in multiple mediums, and their subsequent leadership role in giving back to the mental wellness of their veteran brothers. Another unusual and most rewarding participant is the inclusion of a Navy Chaplain (RET) Ron Moses Camarda. He served in places that could be described as “Heaven and Hell”! He inspires, informs and educates through his religious narrative the life cycle of life and death in a combat zone. He personalizes these observations through his ministry in his words, prayers, observations and visuals.

In summary, THEN & NOW experiences are filled with racing emotions, challenging perspectives and exploring denials in seeking clarity for a path forward with enlightenment and hope. It is our hope that through this exhibit we raise awareness and sensitivity of our veteran's service and the importance of their mental health, while demonstrating how the power of creativity may be used as a tool for help to heal a broken spirit.

Jerome H. Domask, Vietnam Veteran, Army (RET), Artist, Guest Curator

NOTE: Four of the veteran artists are from Florida; two from Jacksonville, and one each from Palatka and St. Petersburg.

The History Of Women In The Navy Dates Back To 1942, When They Were Called The WAVES from The Veterans Site



“WAVES.”, the term was used for the women’s branch of the United States Navy Reserve. That was the beginning of a new chapter of our U.S. Military history books.

The Navy WAVES were established in 1942 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Public Law 689, allowing women to serve in the various military branches. The original intent at that time was to bring women into the military services to free men up to be assigned to front line MOSs in both the European and Pacific Theaters of WWII. As you will hear, they took up clerical jobs, air traffic control, hospital corpsman positions and the like. 350,000 women responded to this call and became a vital element of the military efforts during WWII.

After the war, the recognition of the contributions of women in the war effort made it possible for President Harry S. Truman to sign the Women’s Armed Services Act in July 1948. The temporary status and ability of women to serve uniform in all of the military services was replaced by the ability now to serve in all of the branches as full members of each of the services.

The WAVES were officially disestablished in 1972, and women in the Navy then became officially U.S. Navy sailors like their male counterparts. They still served in similar MOSs as they had before in both enlisted and officer ranks. Today’s women can now serve in almost every single MOS in the military services.

These U.S. Navy nurses have training and skills that match or surpass their civilian counterparts. They handle the full scope of medical duties and are able to use the most sophisticated equipment and technologies in some of the most difficult of situations, especially in warfighting environments. Often what they encounter and do is beyond the scope of the average civilian medical environments.

It is a fact that military medicine is often years ahead of the civilian medical community in terms of new medical treatments, trauma care and the use of technological advancements. You will see in this video the variety medical facilities these modern Navy nurses work in and how much pride they take in that work.

They are an integral part to making our military the best in the world.

The Veterans Site honors the service of all those women who have served since WWII. We send our deepest thanks to all of the women now serving in every capacity in our U.S. Armed Services. To those who are serving in the United States Navy we say, “Fair Winds and Following Seas.”

The Jacksonville Semper Fidelis Society

ABOUT The Semper Fidelis Society

MISSION STATEMENT

The Semper Fidelis Society is an association of Marines whose purpose is to maintain the camaraderie, esprit-de-corps and sense of purpose that identifies us as United States Marines. We believe that the Marine Corps values of honor, courage and commitment, coupled with the historical tenacity of Marines to accomplish their mission are traits that are worthy of respect and emulation. In the interest of Marines taking care of Marines and sharing our values within our community, we will provide a forum/fraternity of Marines that will foster an atmosphere of friendship and cooperation with the intent of providing a network of Marines who will work towards the goal of Marines taking care of Marines and establishing a set of connections that can benefit Marines, Navy FMF Corpsmen and their families.



VISION STATEMENT

Ensure that Marines and Navy FMF Corpsmen are respected and recognized for their services, always receive their benefits and entitlements; are recognized for the sacrifices they and their families made on behalf of this nation.

Thank you for considering Semper Fidelis Society of Jacksonville for a charitable contribution. All Officers and board members are non-compensated volunteers, so all of our money goes right back into supporting our mission. Our largest expenses as an organization include the annual Gung Ho Awards, Annual Marine and FMF Corpsmen Memorial, Annual Leadership Awards to NJROTC Units and website maintenance/organizing.

Over 100+ Members Strong

The Jacksonville Semper Fidelis Society has sustained steady membership growth with over 100 members, half of those forming a solid core of "active" members.

Since 1999

Founded in December of 1999 in Jacksonville, FL., in the same spirit the Marine Corps First Commandant, Samuel Nichols, recruited his Marines at Tun Tavern, the Semper Fidelis Society was born.

MEETINGS

PLEASE NOTE: Meetings are now the 3rd Saturday of the Months of January, March, May and September. They are breakfast meetings starting at 1000 and ending at 1200.

Hidden Hills Country Club, 3901 Monument Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32225

Medal of Honor Recipient

The Semper Fidelis Society is honored to have as one of its members Corpsman Robert Ingram USN. Bob served as Corpsman with Company C, First Battalion, Seventh Marines in Vietnam.

Marine Alumni

“Once a Marine, Always a Marine”



Takes on special significance because of the Semper Fidelis Society, an organization that provides a venue, in a predominantly Navy community, for Marines and FMF Corps to share in the camaraderie they knew while on active duty. The Semper Fidelis Society is an organization that brings together those who still practice and believe in values like, honor, courage and commitment. The core values that are the foundation of the character of Marines and those who serve with the Marines.

SEMPER FIDELIS IS MORE THAN A MOTTO,

IT'S A WAY OF LIFE!

IN THE SPIRIT OF SEMPER FIDELIS, THE SEMPER FIDELIS SOCIETY MARINES AND FMF CORPSMEN...

PRESENT A MARINE OFFICERS SWORD ANNUALLY TO THE TOP MARINE OPTION GRADUATES FROM THE JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY NROTC PROGRAM.

PRESENT A \$500 SCHOLARSHIP AND LEADERSHIP AWARD TO LOCAL HS NJROTC PROGRAMS IN HONOR OF SEMPER FIDELIS MEMBER, FORMER FMF CORPSMEN AND KOREAN WAR VETERAN DOCTOR HERB PEARCE MD, USN.

PRESENT GUNG HO AWARDS ANNUALLY TO MARINES, CORPSMEN FROM THE LOCAL ACTIVE DUTY AND RESERVE UNITS IN THE NE FLORIDA AREA AND LOCAL FIRST RESPONDERS.

DEDICATED A MARINE AND NAVY FMF CORPSMEN MEMORIAL AT EVERGREEN CEMETERY ON NOVEMBER 10TH 2004

CONDUCT AN ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE AT THE EVERGREEN CEMETERY EVERY NOVEMBER 10TH IN HONOR OF THE MARINES AND FMF CORPSMEN WHO SERVED AND SACRIFICED.

DEDICATED A MARINE AND FMF NAVY CORPSMEN MEMORIAL AT THE JACKSONVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY NOVEMBER 10, 2012.

ADDED MARBLE MARKERS WITH NAMES OF FALLEN FROM NE FLORIDA TO THE MARINE AND FMF CORPSMEN MEMORIAL ON NOV 10TH 2015.

CREATED,MANAGES AND FUNDS THE VETS4VETS MOVMENT IN NORTH EAST FLORIDA

DEDICATED A MEMORIAL IN HONOR OF BEIRUT BOMBING VICTIMS

Tax Deductible Contributions can be sent toL

Semper Fidelis Society

PO Box 28188

Jacksonville, FL 32225



IN
COLLABORATION
WITH
VETS2INDUSTRY



VIRTUAL

CAREER and EDUCATION FAIR

**FOR TRANSITIONING ACTIVE & RESERVE
SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS,
THEIR SPOUSES AND CARE GIVERS**



CALLING ALL CANDIDATES

**GET YOUR RESUME SEEN BY EMPLOYERS AND
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS ALL OVER THE GLOBE**

**WEDNESDAY
MARCH 24
9AM-4PM / ET**

**THURSDAY
MARCH 25
NOON-5PM / ET**

- **THE NATION'S LARGEST VIRTUAL FAIR FOR TRANSITIONING MILITARY FROM ALL SERVICE BRANCHES INCLUDING VETERANS, THEIR SPOUSES AND CARE GIVERS.**
- **WORLD-WIDE OPPORTUNITIES**
- **LOG IN FROM YOUR PHONE, TABLET OR COMPUTER**
- **INTERACTIVE HIRING ROOMS**

USVCC Career and Education Fair

**REGISTRATION
BEGINS
FEBRUARY
15**



SPONSORED BY UNITED STATES VETERANS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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.

The virtual Wall of Faces features a page dedicated to honoring and remembering every person whose name is inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Of the 58,279 names inscribed on The Wall, fewer than 100 photos are needed to complete the effort!

As we get closer to completing the Wall of Faces, we are enlisting in the public's help to find additional high-quality photos. Approximately 20% of the photos presently displayed are considered poor quality, yet each service member deserves to have the best photo available. To search and see what photos are still needed, and for whom better photos are needed, an advanced search can be done at: vvmf.org/wall-of-faces.

VVMF thanks the hundreds of volunteers around the country who have been instrumental in locating these photos. Because of their tenacious effort, more than 58,000 service members who sacrificed their lives in Vietnam now have photos posted to the Wall of Faces.



One a Day in Tampa Bay: Tragedy at McGill Air Force Base

Situated strategically four miles south of Tampa, Florida, at the end of a peninsula that separates Old Tampa Bay from Hillsborough Bay is MacDill Air Force Base. Established on May 24, 1939, for the Army Air Corps, it was originally called Southeast Air Base, Tampa. The base has overseen a variety of missions that continue today. This article, however, focuses on only a short period of time at the outbreak of World War II.



Photo Above: Southeast Air Base, Tampa (MacDill Field) under construction, June 1939

With the end of World War I in November of 1918, Germany began a slow and secret military rearming. The feeling that the war had not been lost on the battlefield, but that they had been “stabbed in the back” by civilian leaders who agreed to the armistice agreement was very prevalent. It was then that Adolph Hitler began his rise to power. By 1933 Hitler was named Chancellor of Germany, the number two position of power in the country. Because of infighting and struggles for power among the various political parties, and acts of violence resulting from them, Hitler was given ultimate power with the passage of The Enabling Act that same year. The act allowed him to pass laws without the approval of Hindenburg or the vote of parliament. During four days the next year, in what became known as “The Night of the Long Knives,” Hitler’s Nazi Party members, SS, and Gestapo Police force, rounded up and killed all of the opposition party leaders in Germany with estimates of between 85 to as many as 400 people arrested and shot. It was now that Germany’s military rearmament began in earnest and became visible to the outside world.

The Great Depression in America affected the German economy negatively as well, so Hitler put people to work building his war machine. The only way to rebuild Germany, Hitler said, and guarantee its survival, was to regain lands lost in the first world war, and take lands to the east that were rich in raw materials and oil. While German engineers were designing new and improved ships, submarines, and aircraft for war, American engineers were focused on peacetime planning, and nothing demonstrated this better than in the field of

aviation. The German Luftwaffe was developing medium and long-range bombers, while America was designing civilian monoplane airliners. Prior to 1933, most of the American military was still flying bi-planes which were slower and less maneuverable. But when German rearmament became known, the world powers scrambled to catch up, America included.



Photo Top Left: German Heinkel HE 111, a mid-range bomber designed in the early 1930's in violation of the Treaty of Versailles; Photo Top Right: American Bellanca 77-140 Medium Bomber 1934; Photo Bottom: American Curtiss A-3 Falcon 1924-1937

The development of the well-known B-17 Flying Fortress came from a request by the Army Air Corps in early 1934 and had its first test flight in 1935. The later version was only built in two groups of 40 planes, one each in 1939 and 1940. Following more design changes, and America formally entering the war in 1941, the B-17 model F/G that we know so well was built from an order of over 3,000, but not until 1942. We were very late to the game and corners would be cut. One of the most tragic played out here in Florida.



Photo Left: American B-17 F/G Flying Fortress 1942

In March of 1939, just six months before Hitler's troops invaded Poland, the U.S. Army Air Corps put out another call, this time for a medium bomber to be developed. It would need to be fast, only have two engines, and be capable of carrying 2,000 pounds of bombs; essentially a fighter-bomber that could reach speeds of 350 mph and have a range of 3,000 miles. The Glen L. Martin Company answered the call with their design of the B-26 Martin Marauder. The army was so impressed with the design on paper, that they purchased an order of 206 of the planes without one plane having been built or tested.



Photos Above: B-26 Martin Marauder

Ultimately, the primary flight training center for Marauder crews would be MacDill Field in Tampa. But when the eager new pilots arrived and got their first look at their planes, there was disbelief. It had a fat, cigar-shaped fuselage, only two engines, and very short wings. As training proceeded, problems began to be realized with one engine frequently failing on takeoff. Maintenance of the pitch control on the props attached to the two Pratt & Whitney engines was highly technical and the new ground crews could not maintain them. Improper prop adjustment would literally cause the props to disintegrate at takeoff speeds. Upon the plane's arrival, the Army also began loading extra armament and plating on the plane which increased the aircraft's weight beyond what was safe for the wing length and power plant capabilities. The Marauder required a high landing speed of between 130-150 mph that many pilots were not used to. All of these issues combined to cause a high fatality rate for the new bomber crews. It became so bad that the plane was given the nicknames of "Widowmaker," and "Flying Coffin." The phrase, "One a day in Tampa Bay" was mumbled throughout air bases around the country. Pilots and crews began to apply for transfers in record numbers. Fifteen crashes in one thirty-day period happened at MacDill. Pilots didn't believe that the plane could be flown on one engine. The Army Air Corps brought in Colonel Jimmy Doolittle, famous for his B-25 raid over Tokyo, to prove that it could be done. They also brought in 17 female "WASP" pilots to fly the plane, to shame the male pilot's fears.



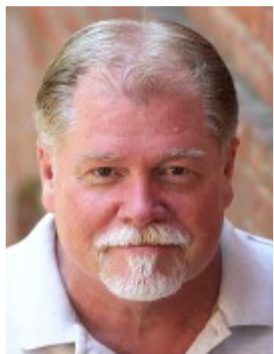
*Photo Left: Patrol boats out of MacDill operated daily in the bay and Gulf of Mexico to pick up downed airmen
Photo Right: Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP's) flying the B-26 in Laredo, Texas*

Ultimately, mechanics from the Martin Company were brought to MacDill to train the ground crews on caring for the aircraft. Back at the factory, three feet of length was added to each wing and the vertical stabilizer (tail). The nose landing gear, known to have a high failure rate, was improved. After these changes, the B-26 came into its own. With a crew of six, they went on to serve with distinction in every theater of WWII, first in the South Pacific, then North Africa, and finally Europe. They flew at bombing altitudes of 10,000 to 15,000 feet, much lower than the heavy bombers, which put the B-26 at greater risk from both enemy fighters and flak damage. But flying in tight formations of six planes for mutual protection, and able to fly at higher speeds, the U.S. 9th Air Force reported their B-26 units as having the lowest loss rate of any aircraft flying in the European Theater. The nightmare in Tampa Bay had come to an end. Finally flying out of bases in liberated France, the B-26 crews helped bring an end to the war by knocking out enemy supply lines deep in Nazi Germany, especially during the Battle of the Bulge in the winter of 1944-45. The “Widowmaker” came home a hero of the war, along with the crews that flew them, but many had given their lives in the process of making them flight worthy.



Photo Above: B-26 Flight Crew Inspection at MacDill Field

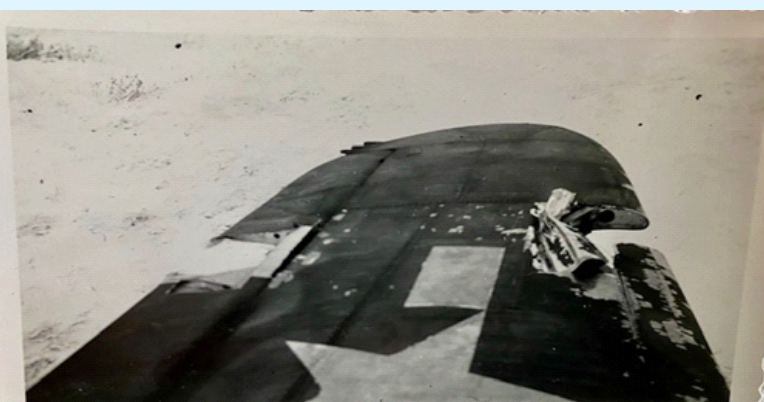
Most B-26 Marauders were destroyed at war’s end, so they are rare planes to find today. But you can see one of the few remaining at Fantasy of Flight Air Museum in Polk City, Florida, and you can get an up-close and personal look at the nose section of “Flak Bait” at the National Air & Space Museum in Washington, D.C. The B-26, the plane that made MacDill Field one of the most famous of the war.



**ST. AUGUSTINE
LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM**

About the author: Rick Cain

Rick Cain has worked for the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum for 18 years after a 20-year career as a health care professional. He serves on the Board of Directors of the American Lighthouse Council and is Immediate Past Chair of the Florida Attractions Association. He also works closely with the United States Coast Guard to maintain their historical ties to the Museum.



“Firebird,” (Photo Top Left) a B-26 with the 394th Squadron flying out of Cambrai, France, piloted by my father-in-law, Maj. Willis “Bill” Huebner, over Germany during the Battle of the Bulge, December 1944. His unit was nicknamed the “Bridge Busters.” He would later belly-land this aircraft in low visibility after his nose gear was heavily damaged by enemy flak, saving his entire crew. The feat earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross. All of the photos on this page are from his personal collection. He piloted a total of 38 missions in four different planes between October of 1944 and May of 1945. He then continued to fly supply missions with American post-war occupation forces between France and Germany before returning home to Strawberry Point, IA, to marry his high school sweetheart, Rosalee.

REQUIREMENTS

MILITARY

SERVED MINIMUM 90 DAYS ACTIVE DUTY,
1 DAY DURING WARTIME, WITH AN
HONORABLE DISCHARGE

MEDICAL

NEED FOR ASSISTANCE WITH ACTIVITIES OF DAILY
LIVING (ADLS) DUE TO A NON-SERVICE CONNECTED
DISABILITY

FINANCIAL

INCOME AND EXPENSES IN RELATION
TO MEDICAL EXPENSES

VA RECOGNIZED WAR PERIODS	BEGINNING	ENDING
WORLD WAR II	Dec 7, 1941	Dec. 31, 1946
KOREAN CONFLICT	June 27, 1950	Jan. 31, 1955
VIETNAM ERA	Aug. 5, 1964	May 7, 1975
PERSIAN GULF WAR	Aug 2, 1990	End date to be set by law or Presidential Proclamation

MEDICAL SCREENING

The Veteran or surviving spouse must have a medical condition causing the need for assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs), such as bathing, dressing, grooming, using the toilet, preparing meals, and moving about safely).

MONETARY SCREENING

The veteran and or veteran plus spouse can have a maximum of \$129,094 in liquid assets. A primary residence and auto are not counted as part of the total liquid assets. Ongoing non-reimbursable medical expenses may reduce the annual countable income.

MAXIMUM PENSION AMOUNTS	PER MONTH	ANNUALLY
SURVIVING SPOUSE	\$1,244	\$14,928
VETERAN	\$1,936	\$23,232
COUPLE	\$2,295	\$27,540

From Lynn M Geiser
Here are the Aid & Attendance requirements and qualifications for 2021. This is for veterans and their spouses who qualify and need assistance with their Activities of Daily Living (ADL's).

VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

MEMBERSHIP MEETING 28 JANUARY 2021



WELCOME: CHAIRMAN BILL DUDLEY

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: RAY QUINN

OPENING REMARKS:

CHAIRMAN DUDLEY WELCOMED ALL TO THE FIRST MEETING OF 2021. HE EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR THE ATTENDANCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONDITIONS THE PANDEMIC HAS CAUSED.

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MEETING:

CHAIRMAN DUDLEY ASKED IF ALL IN ATTENDANCE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO READ LAST MONTHS MINUTES AND ALSO ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY QUESTIONS. HEARING NONE HE ASKED FOR A MOTION TO ACCEPT AS PRESENTED. MOTIONS MADE AND UNANIMOUS ACCEPTANCE WAS RECEIVED.

FINANCE REPORT:

CHAIRMAN DUDLEY REQUESTED JOHN MOUNTCASTLE THE COUNCIL FINANCE CHAIR TO PRESENT THE CURRENT FINANCE REPORT. IT WAS REPORTED THAT THE CURRENT BALANCE IS: \$58,571.97

JOHN REPORTED ON EXPENDITURES THAT TOOK PLACE OVER THE RECENT HOLIDAYS. THERE WERE EXPENDITURES TO REPAIR VETERAN'S HEATING AND AIR, CHECKS WERE PRESENTED TO SOLDIERS AND VETERANS TO ENSURE THERE WAS A CHRISTMAS IN THEIR HOME.

WE CAN BE HEROES FOUNDATION:

CAPT RYAN SHOAF PRESENTED A BRIEFING ON THE "WE CAN BE HEROES FOUNDATION". THE FOUNDATION IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT ASSISTS OTHER NON-PROFITS IN RECOGNIZING THE UNSUNG HEROES OF OUR COMMUNITY. AS HE POINTED OUT THERE ARE UNSUNG HEROES WALKING AMONG US EVERYDAY. THEY MAY BE VETERANS, FIRST RESPONDERS, AND MEDICAL PERSONNEL, TO THE CUSTODIAL STAFF WHO CLEAN UP AFTER THE DOCTORS AND NURSES ARE DONE.

THIS GREAT SYSTEM ALLOWS THOSE THAT ARE AWARE OF AN UNSUNG HERO TO DIRECTLY NOMINATE THAT PERSON FOR RECOGNITION. IMAGINE PLACING A BEAUTIFUL SIGN IN THE YARD OF THE HONOREE THAT STATES AN UNSUNG HERO LIVES HERE. GREAT FEELING FOR ALL CONCERNED.

HE ALSO DESCRIBED THE PARTNERSHIP THEY HAVE WITH THE CLARA WHITE ORGANIZA-

TION. THEY SERVE THE HOMELESS WITH SHOWERS, LAUNDRY AND MEALS. THEY ARE ALSO OFFERED DITTY BAGS AND CLOTHING AS WELL.

MORE INFORMATION MAY BE FOUND AT THEIR WEBSITE: WECANBEHEROESFOUNDATION.ORG

FIREWATCH:

THERE WERE TWO PRESENTERS FOR THE FIREWATCH PRESENTATION. WE WERE HONORED TO HAVE BRIGADIER GENERAL (RET) MIKE FLEMING AND NICK HOWLAND OFFER AN OVERVIEW OF FIREWATCH AND WHAT IT MEANS TO THE VETERANS OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA.

HE STATED WE ALL MUST UNDERSTAND WE OWN THE CHALLENGE OF SUICIDE.

EDUCATING OUR COMMUNITIES AS TO THE NEED OF SUICIDE AWARENESS IS THE GOAL OF FIREWATCH. THE FIREWATCH OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA HAS A GOAL OF EDUCATING AND QUALIFYING 10,000 STANDING WATCH. CURRENTLY THERE ARE 350 AND THE GOAL BY END OF YEAR IS 3,000.

THERE ARE MANY, MANY COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND THEY CAN BE INTEGRATED INTO THE FIREWATCH PROGRAM TO HELP IT GROW. THE STEPS TO BECOME A WATCH STANDER ARE: VIEW A 30 MINUTE TRAINING VIDEO, EXPLORE THE RESOURCE GUIDE, SIGN A PLEDGE AND STAND WATCH.

OUR VICTIMS ARE MOST OFTEN IN THE 18-34 AGE BRACKET AND ARE OVERWHELMING MALE. IF OUR GOALS ARE REACHED THEIR WILL BE 10,000 STANDING AGAINST SUICIDE.

YOU MAY FIND MORE INFORMATION AT: INFO@THEFIREWATCH.ORG

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE REPORT:

CSM (Ret) JOE MCDERMOTT PROVIDED AN UPDATE ON THE ACTIONS OF THE VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE. HE STATED THAT DUE TO THE PANDEMIC AND THE HOLIDAYS THE OFFICE IS ACTUALLY A LITTLE BEHIND BUT CATCHING UP QUICKLY.

HE ANNOUNCED THAT RICK REES A LONG TIME DEDICATED SERVICE OFFICER RETIRED IN DECEMBER AND LEFT A VOID. HE HAD MUCH GOOD TO SAY ABOUT RICK'S SERVICE TO OUR VETERANS AND THE OFFICE WILL MISS HIM.

HE ALSO RENDERED A REPORT ON RECENT CHANGES TO SOME OF THE CLAIM PROCESS.

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT AND VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA 1084 JOHN LESLIE RENDERED A REPORT ON THE STATUS OF VETERANS TREATMENT COURT. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST HE STATED THE VTC WAS ENTERING ITS' FIFTH YEAR. MEETINGS OF RECENT HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED BY ZOOM. THIS IS REALLY NOT CONDUCIVE TO THE MISSION AS IT IS DIFFICULT TO MENTOR AND GET A FEEL OF PROGRESS WITHOUT PERSONAL FACE TO FACE CONTACT. HE STATED THERE ARE CURRENTLY 31 PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROGRAM. THERE HAVE BEEN 38

GRADUATES AND UNFORTUNATELY ONE SUICIDE. ONLY 8 HAVE DROPPED OUT OF THE PROGRAM WHICH IS UNFORTUNATE BUT EXPECTED.

JOHN'S REPORT FROM THE VIETNAM VETERANS 1084 INCLUDED INTRODUCING OUR OWN JOHN MCGINTY THE STATE PRESIDENT. JOHN LESLIE STATED THE CHAPTER HAS HAD TO STOP THE VETERANS IN THE CLASSROOM PROGRAM DUE TO THE PANDEMIC. INSTEAD THEY HAVE DEVELOPED A 25 MINUTE CD PRESENTATION TO EDUCATE OUR YOUTH. CURRENT EMPHASIS IS ON THE HISTORY OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR.

THEY ARE ONCE AGAIN CONDUCTING A GOLF TOURNAMENT TO BE HELD AT THE PALENCIA COURSE 24 MAY 21. ON 3 FEB 21 AT CECIL FIELD JACKSONVILLE A SERVICE WILL BE CONDUCTED HONORING THE FOUR CHAPLAINS, THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF DESERT STORM AND RECOGNITION OF THE GOLD STAR FAMILIES.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:

CHAIRMAN BILL ANNOUNCED THAT THE VA CONTACTED HIM TO LET HIM KNOW THERE WERE 20 VACCINATIONS AVAILABLE FOR VETERANS ON SHORT NOTICE. THE CHAIRMAN WAS ABLE TO QUICKLY FIND 20 VETERANS AND THEY DID RECEIVE THEIR FIRST ROUND OF THE VACCINE.

HE IS INTERESTED IN BUILDING A STAND-BY LIST OF THOSE VETERANS THAT MEET THE CRITERIA FOR THE VACCINE.

BILL REPORTS THAT OUR COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC (CBOC) IS COMING ALONG WELL. THERE IS STILL BELIEF THAT IT WILL BE OPEN BY THE MAY – JUN TIME FRAME.

OUR BIGGEST PROJECT LIES AHEAD FOR 2021 AND THAT IS THE CONVERSION OF THE OLD CBOC INTO A FACILITY TO HOUSE HOMELESS VETERANS. IN COORDINATION WITH ST. JOHNS COUNTY THERE WILL BE TWO ACTION TEAMS TO WORK THE ISSUES. A COUNTY EMPLOYEE TEAM AND A VETERAN TEAM. MORE TO FOLLOW ON ESTABLISH OF THESE TEAMS.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF LOSS:

RON BIRCHALL ANNOUNCED THE LOSS OF ONE OF OUR VETERANS. HE ANNOUNCED THE LOSS OF Col RON RADFORD (USAF, Ret). COLONEL RADFORD HEADED UP THE 450TH PLANNING GROUP AND ADDRESSED OUR COUNCIL MANY TIMES. HE WAS A STALWART IN THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION AND HIS LEADERSHIP ALWAYS RESULTED IN SUCCESS. HE WILL BE MISSED.

MINUTES RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

RAY A. QUINN

Veterans Art Exhibit

“THEN & NOW” OVERVIEW Jan 14, 2021

THEN & NOW: 50 YEARS OF VETERAN EXPERIENCES

demonstrates the potential healing power of creative expression in a display of artistic endeavors working through the trauma and grief these 8 artists have incurred through their military service. St. Augustine Art Association is proud to provide a voice and stage for the Veterans to share their experiences from subtle murmurs of anguish; to riveting, raw and emotionally-charged cries for support and understanding. The exhibit merges St. Augustine’s rich art and history with today’s global military awareness and experiences, providing both an educational narrative and broad outreach to society.



THEN & NOW is a special “Shout Out” to Army Major (RET) Theodore Gostas, a former POW held in captivity for over five years, 4.5 years of this spent in solitary confinement. A special installation will be constructed depicting his five-by-eight foot solitary confinement cell. It also speaks to a special relation between two “Foxhole Buddies” (Gostas & Domask) healing and helping each other over a half century transiting from THEN to NOW.

The artists represent more than 50 years of military history, from the Cold War to the present Middle East hostilities. They have served around the world; including the U.S., Europe, Vietnam, GTMO (Cuba), Iraq, Japan, Afghanistan, Korea, Persian Gulf for Desert Shield/Storm and Bosnia.

The veterans represent all the Services and are divided equally between female and male. It is one of the first known times a National Veterans Art Exhibit has equal representation among the sexes. It was not planned this way! They earned it! Each artist’s body of work was examined in-depth and selected solely on this criteria - the strength of their work. The female veterans will knock your socks off based upon their military accomplishments, distinguished creative accomplishments in multiple mediums, and their subsequent leadership role in giving back to the mental wellness of their veteran brothers. Another unusual and most rewarding participant is the inclusion of a Navy Chaplain (RET) Ron Moses Camarda. He served in places that could be described as “Heaven and Hell”! He inspires, informs and educates through his religious narrative the life cycle of life and death in a combat zone. He personalizes these observations through his ministry in his words, prayers, observations and visuals.

In summary, THEN & NOW experiences are filled with racing emotions, challenging perspectives and exploring denials in seeking clarity for a path forward with enlightenment and hope. It is our hope that through this exhibit we raise awareness and sensitivity of our veteran’s service and the importance of their mental health, while demonstrating how the power of creativity may be used as a tool for help to heal a broken spirit.

Jerome H. Domask, Vietnam Veteran, Army (RET), Artist, Guest Curator

NOTE: Four of the veteran artists are from Florida; two from Jacksonville, and one each from Palatka and St. Petersburg.

Women in the Air Force are finally getting body armor that fits

Women have been serving in the Air Force Security Forces since 1976, but it's taken 45 years for the service to finally provide them with body armor that actually fits. At long last, female airmen with the 377th Security Forces Group at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico have become one of the first to get fitted with protective vests designed for them.



Unlike the old armor, which was designed to fit the average male body, the new variant is lighter, has a curved chest plate, a shorter torso size, and an adjustable back corset that tightens to fit the wearer, according to a press release published on Tuesday. The adjustable corset helps the new armor avoid the old version's problem of being 'one size fits all,' which clearly did not fit all, the release explained.

"Our previous gear did not allow for much freedom of movement," said Master Sgt. Brianne N. Trapani, the superintendent for the 377th Security Support Squadron, which received the armor in January. "So if we were in a situation that required us to run or quickly exit a vehicle, it hindered us greatly. It also put us at risk by wearing gear that was not properly fitted to protect us."

Despite the obvious safety risks of the old gear, it took the military nearly ten years of empty promises to actually deliver body armor for women. In that time, women wearing ill-fitted body armor all day were also at risk for developing stress fractures, Army veteran Sen. Tammy Duckworth D-Ill told Task & Purpose in October. Duckworth cosponsored a provision of the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act which could finally get properly-fitted body armor out to women across the military.

"Body armor is designed to work flush against the skin, and if that's not happening because women's bodies are shaped differently, it could potentially not function as well," Army veteran Kayla Williams told Task & Purpose in October. It's not just women who are affected by ill-fitting body armor. Williams said that her husband, who is 6 feet, 5 inches tall, also ran into problems because of ill-fitting gear.

"You need to be able to rotate your arm to throw a grenade, or something like that," Williams said. "It really matters that we get this solved."

Now the Air Force is finally working to solve it, and airmen at the 377th are all for it.

“The first thing that came to mind was excitement,” said Senior Airman Kiah C. Cook, who was one of the first at Kirtland to receive the new armor. “This is a historic moment. It shows us that the military is starting to appreciate us females more, especially as cops, and getting us gear that is specifically for us.”

Other units who received the new armor are the 90th Security Forces Squadron at F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. and the 39th Security Forces Squadron at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. The units received theirs on Dec. 11 and Jan. 12, respectively. The hype was real there, too.

“Firing from a prone position is difficult with improper fitting gear and being able to find that sweet spot for the butt of your weapon to sit is oftentimes difficult,” said Master Sgt. Alana Lynn, of the 90th Security Forces Squadron. “However, new body armor designed for women will increase our lethality and allow for a more comfortable and controlled shot.”

The new vests come a month after the Air Force announced changes to its hair standards that allow female airmen to wear their hair longer than before, thereby loosening constraints that many airmen said had resulted in migraines, hair damage, and hair loss.

The new standards allow Air Force and Space Force women to wear their hair in up to two braids or a single ponytail with bulk not exceeding the width of the head and length not extending below a horizontal line running between the top of each sleeve inseam at the underarm through the shoulder blades, according to a press release. In addition, women’s bangs may now touch their eyebrows, but not cover their eyes.

“I have irreversible hair loss from pulling my hair so tight,” wrote one person responding to the news on Facebook. “I cut it all off years ago in an effort to prevent spreading. I wish the military would cover hair transplants to correct this...extremely insecure and self-conscious about it.”

Hip hip hooray to the Air Force for trying to make day-to-day service not literally painful for 21% of its members.

“This is an exciting time filled with progress and changes in the right direction for many initiatives within the military,” said Trapani. “I am happy to see some antiquated issues finally being addressed and resolved.”

By David Rosen

United States Coast Guard Officer & POW Returns Home After 77 Years

By Dan Doyle, The Veterans Site

A very solemn and long awaited ceremony and welcome home was given to Lt. Thomas Crotty at the Niagara Falls Reserve Air Station, New York recently. Crotty was a United States Coast Guard officer who was captured by the Japanese in the early stages of WWII. He died in a Japanese POW camp in the Philippines in 1942.



Shortly after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, they launched their invasion of the Philippines. Coast Guardsman, Lt. Thomas Crotty, was caught up in the desperate retreat of American and Filipino forces down the Bataan Peninsula. The island of Corregidor was the last allied stronghold after the Japanese victory on the Bataan Peninsula. Crotty ended up fighting alongside U.S. Army and Filipino forces in the desperate battle at Corregidor.

When the Americans were finally forced to surrender, he and his fellow American and Filipino soldiers ended up as prisoners in a Japanese POW camp in the Philippines. He was the first United States Coast Guard POW since the War of 1812 and only one of four Coast Guardsmen held as POWs during WWII.

It is well known that the Japanese POW camps were places of true cruelty. POWs under the Japanese were routinely tortured, beaten. They were routinely denied basic human needs. They were notoriously underfed and even basic medical treatment was held back from them.

Thousands of prisoners in Japanese POW camps succumbed to untreated diseases like dysentery, cholera and other contagions that are due to poor sanitary conditions and bad water. They suffered often from untreated malaria and because they were undernourished, and medical supplies were withheld from them they were unable to survive.

COLONEL Ronnie R. Radford, USAF Ret.



On Saturday, January 23, 2021, Ronnie Reginald Radford, loving husband, dedicated father of three children, and Air Force Veteran committed to America's security and success, passed away at the age of 81 surrounded by family at his home in St. Augustine, Florida.

Born March 2, 1939, Ronnie's story is one of achievement. Raised from birth in St. Augustine by his parents, George and Lillian, Ronnie came from very modest means, and he committed himself to success early. He graduated Ketterlinus high school having been the valedictorian of his class, president of his class, captain of the football team, and a multisport varsity athlete.

He leveraged his high school success to earn an academic scholarship to attend Davidson College where he was a walk on football player, majored in math and physics, and held a job as cook to pay obligations beyond his scholarship.

Halfway through his education at Davidson, he received an appointment to attend the United States Naval Academy, joining as a "Plebe" on July 7, 1959. After four years of taking advanced courses due to his two year head start at Davidson, he graduated on June 5, 1963 ranked tenth in his class of 867 graduates. His academic performance garnered the notice of the United States Air Force, who recruited him away from the Navy to attend Stanford University.

Within hours of graduating from the Naval Academy, he married Nancy Hall, daughter of former St. Augustine Fire Chief, Brandon Hall, walking under the swords in Annapolis.

Upon graduation from Stanford, where he earned his Master's Degree in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering, he served his country for twenty-four years as an engineer and program manager supporting crucial Air Force defense initiatives including an Air Force adjunct to the NASA Gemini space program, the F-16 fighter

jet, the Advanced Cruise Missile, and the B-1 Bomber among other programs, rising to the rank of Full Colonel, and in the last two years of his career taking on General Officer roles leading thousands of personnel. These roles took him and his family across the country – north, south, east and west - stationed at Air Force bases and the Pentagon.

After retirement from the Air Force, he continued his service in various leadership and consulting roles in the commercial defense industry until he retired for good to St. Augustine in 2007. For many years he continued to serve by supporting various community initiatives through the Military Officers Association and local elected office among others.

Ronnie was an active father, coaching his children's sports teams, helping out with homework, attending father/daughter dances, and instilling love of country in their hearts. His work ethic was legendary, his rigor for perfection was limitless, and his sharp reasoning skills buoyed his work and wit. He put family and country above all else, and he was known for always doing the right thing regardless of consequence. While he was a serious man, his personal joys included listening to Johnny Cash, golfing with friends, and enjoying a good laugh – he was known to laugh so hard he could not speak for several minutes.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy, his brother, James Radford, his children, Joel Radford (Robin), Laura Radford, and Gina Mangus (Charles), his grandchildren, Brandi Moore (Andy), Browdie Wylie, Lindsay McLean (Justin), Zachary Mclean (Hannah), Nicholas Mangus, Brock Radford and Bradyn Radford, Elena Mangus, and his great grandchildren Browdie, Anna, and James.

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

MILITARY SUPPORT RETREATS

RETREATS FOR FLORIDA AND GEORGIA POST 9-11 COMBAT VETERANS
AND THEIR PRIMARY SUPPORT PERSON



Amelia Island
Florida



FEBRUARY 4-7



Sarasota
Florida



MARCH 4-7



Lake Chatuge
Georgia



APRIL 15-18

From Thursday at 5:30pm – 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 discovering post-deployment strategies.*

★ Small, friendly group setting ★

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

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

Please note: Must be 18 to attend and no childcare is provided.

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



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Save the Date

V4V

Vets 4 Vets

Quarterly Gathering of Veterans

Saturday May 1st 2021

Veterans Memorial Arena

1030 - 1300



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Educate. Honor. Inspire. *Serve.*



K9S FOR WARRIORS

HEROES' GALA BANQUET HONORING YOUR

**UNSUNG
HEROES**

*From your neighborhood to our frontline, unsung heroes walk among us...
let's recognize them. Nominate your hero at WeCanBeHeroesFoundation.org*

SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2021

5:15 p.m. VIP WWII Heroes Reception | 6 p.m. Heroes' Gala Banquet

UNF's Adam W. Herbert University Center
12000 Alumni Dr., Jacksonville, Florida 32224

Tickets Available Soon at WeCanBeHeroesFoundation.org

Your Hero receives:

- Invitation to the March 6th Gala
- Recognition at the Heroes Gala
- "Hero Lives Here" yard sign delivered by the We Can Be Heroes Foundation and K9s for Warriors



WHO ARE UNSUNG HEROES?

From neighbors and volunteers reaching out to care for those at-risk, to the janitors, military, police, firefighters, veterans, grocery clerks, small business owners and many others who deserve our gratitude.

FLORIDA REGISTRATION #CH 48313. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY STATE. This event is not sponsored by The University of North Florida.

WANTED



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U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Disaster Resources Available to Veterans

“Veterans and their families should be focused on their health and safety during the natural disasters,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “VA is taking action to give those with pending debts greater flexibility during these challenging times.”

Health Care Assistance

If you have questions such as where to go for care or how to receive prescribed medications, VA has established a toll-free number for assistance in areas that have been impacted by disasters. Veterans or their families can call the VA Veterans Disaster Response line 24 hours, seven days a week at 1-800-507-4571.

Debt Relief

If you are affected by a natural disaster, have a VBA benefit debt and need temporary financial relief, please contact VA's Debt Management Center at 1-800-827-0648 to request assistance.

If you have questions on Compensation or Pension benefits: Call toll-free 1-800-827-1000 Monday - Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. CST.

Other Resources

Find a VA Vet Center near you 877-WAR-VETS (927-8387) or <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>

Mobile Vet Centers and Vet Center teams are actively responding to disaster-affected areas to offer counseling and grief support as well as connection and referral services to other VA and community resources.

Find a VA facility near you <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>

Call the White House VA Hotline 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-855-948-2311.

Apply for \$500 grant for your damaged primary residence (on a first come, first serve basis subject to funding) from PenFed Foundation.

National Resource Directory - Search for local resources for Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

FEMA - FEMA helps with temporary housing, repair or replacement of existing homes.

American Red Cross - The American Red Cross offers emergency financial assistance to the most impacted counties. Please call 1-800-733-2767 to see if you qualify.

Disaster Assistance – An easy way to determine if your zip code has been declared a disaster and eligible for assistance. The website also allows users to complete an online application and the ability to check FEMA application status.

World War II Resources in Northeast Florida

Be sure to visit our digital exhibit
full of WWII artifacts
and information!



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



Florida veterans and military families have a new resource to receive the care they need thanks to a partnership dedicated to serving this most deserving population.

Centerstone and the Cohen Veterans Network have joined forces to offer compassionate, targeted behavioral health care for Post 9/11 veterans, National Guard, Reservists, their families and active duty family members at the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone, Jacksonville. <https://centerstone.org/cohen-military-family-clinic/jacksonville/>. The clinic’s skilled clinicians and staff have been trained to work specifically with veterans and their families, and some are veterans themselves. Services offered include individual therapy for children, adolescents and adults, couples therapy, family therapy, groups and workshops.

“Military families are some of the most resilient people you will ever encounter, but a life of service often gives way to invisible wounds and unique challenges that are difficult to navigate,” Elizabeth Sherr, clinic director said. “We understand those challenges and stand ready to support our veterans and their loved ones with effective, personalized care right now.”

The clinic’s ability to meet the needs of veterans and their families quickly is vital in today’s mental health environment where gaining access to care can often be daunting - with long wait times and all too common barriers to overcome. The Cohen Clinic at Centerstone is committed to reducing these barriers. Not only are military families currently able to receive same day appointments, the clinic also offers all therapy services via telehealth - breaking down time and distance concerns that can sometimes be problematic.

“We want to make getting help as easy as possible for our veterans and family members,” Brigadier General (ret.) Michael Fleming, the clinic’s outreach director said. “Sometimes just reaching out for help is difficult enough, and we want to ensure we meet this step with compassion and ease.”

For the time being, in an effort to ensure the safety of clients and team members amidst the COVID-19 physical distancing guidelines, that includes conducting all services via CVN Telehealth or telephone. Studies have shown telehealth has the same efficacy as in-person counseling and the clinic’s therapists are well trained in the delivery of this care. Additionally, front desk staff still have complete access to answer the appointment line during business hours, as before, and veterans, military families and outside organizations can continue to call directly for an appointment.

Veterans, National Guard, Reservists, their families and active duty family members may contact the clinic at (904) 431-3500 to schedule appointments. Clinic hours are:

Monday	8:00am – 5:00pm
Tuesday	8:00am – 5:00pm
Wednesday	8:00am – 7:00pm
Thursday	8:00am – 5:00pm
Friday	8:00am - 12:00pm

For more information on clinic services log on to <https://centerstone.org/cohen-military-family-clinic/jacksonville/> or call the appointment line at (904) 431-3500.



You sacrificed for our country.

AT SILVER CREEK,
FREEDOM IS YOURS.

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

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

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

SILVER CREEK

THE FUTURE OF SENIOR LIVING

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



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

Assisted Living Facility #12928

Vietnam Veterans of America

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



Chapter/President/email/Location

1046	Tony D'Aleo	adaleo5579@gmail.com; Duval
1048	Rod Phillips	cobra101st@gmail.com; Daytona
1059	David Treffinger	dtreffinger433@msn.com; Clay
1084	John Leslie	john_leslie15@yahoo.com; St. Johns
1088	Roy (Corky) Rudd	corkstopper50@yahoo.com; Nassau
1092	Forest Hope	foresthope@usa.net; Gainesville
1134	Marvin Lagle	mdlagle@gmail.com; Baker



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.

Over 6,000 U.S. veterans take their lives each year with more than 500 of those occurring in Florida. Almost 1 in 4 Northeast Florida citizens have a connection to the military and as a community we felt we must act on behalf of our veterans and their families. The Fire Watch Council (www.thefirewatch.org) was established by the Counties of Baker, Clay, Nassau, St. Johns and City of Jacksonville as a multi-jurisdictional government entity to address veteran suicide prevention in Northeast Florida. Our Resource Guide provides a comprehensive list of resources for the Northeast Florida military community <https://resources.thefirewatch.org/#!/> and you can stand in the gap for veterans by becoming a Fire Watch Watch Stander <https://www.thefirewatch.org/watch-standers>. We are uniting our War Fighters and allies to swiftly activate local assets, stand watch, and build a life-saving network.



LIVE



LIVE

We've Made Some Great Changes!

FEATURING

The Military Family Module

Our skills-matching technology is now available to the Military Family. You have skills and we connect you directly with employers who need those skills

New features for Service Member and Veteran Accounts

You can now add civilian occupations, tax credit eligibility, travel and shifts among a few other enhancements

Create your FREE profile today
www.veteransascend.com

NO RESUME REQUIRED



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**.



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 and his web design company PageAuthors. The VC strongly recommends that you contact Roy, 727-487-6252, if you or your vet group wants to create a website or Facebook page.

*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 St.
Johns County Administration Building
500 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, SR VSO
Travis Neidig, Assistant VSO*

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.