



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

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St. Augustine, FL 32085

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From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

March 2025

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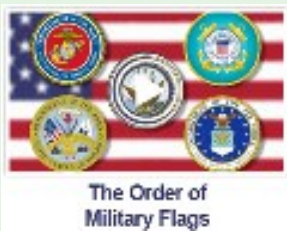
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Fellow Veterans,

I was honored last Friday to meet with the students in training at the St. Johns County Fire and Rescue Public Training Center. I met with the students in training for EMT and Pararescue for nearly 4 hours listening to their stories of how they selected this chosen career field, their individual backgrounds, and their career ambitions. I also had the opportunity to share with them my background in both military and civilian life. The instructor brought 4 students into the training room for a 20 min session with each group of students for approximately a four-hour period. It was a most enjoyable morning, and I plan to continue visiting the Training Center for the next several

months. I was extremely impressed with the quality of the students and the instructors. The Public Safety Center is a state of the art facility and we are fortunate to have such a training facility in SJC.

This week a team from the Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee visited St. Augustine at my invitation to tour the St. Augustine National Cemetery. Alison Simpson, FLANG Command Historian was on hand to give them a historical tour of the cemetery and all the interesting history of this magnificent grounds where our brave soldiers from previous battles rest. The purpose of the trip was to perform an inspection of the condition of the cemetery and observe the many repairs that are badly needed on this aging national treasure. The Veterans Council has reg-



istered numerous conditions that need attention with the NCA over the past several years and we are hoping that these will soon be addressed.

Saturday, March 29 will be a day of remembrance for the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. There will be numerous events in the local and surrounding area honoring our brave men and women who fought and died in this war. Please plan to attend one of these ceremonies if at all possible, to honor those who served in this war.

Thank you for your service.

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

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



Upcoming Speakers

March 27

Dr George Ann Rice, Patriots to Education, Zoom presentation

and Anne Kazel, Author of West Point '41

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

April 24

Matt Mildorf, Outreach Recruiting Mgr, Warrior Scholar

Ron Howard, the National Pathfinders Assoc. Mission

May 29

Rich Possert, Operation New Uniform

James Smith, Holly Powers, St. Augustine Lighthouse

June 26

Maggie Beckerman, VP/Trainer, K9Line, Inc.

Kelly McDavid, Haven Hospice

A Summary of the Council's Activities for 2024

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

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

Each year, the VCSJC working with the local MOAA Chapter conducts a Memorial Day Service at the St. Augustine National Cemetery. We also host a Veterans Day program each Nov. 11 at Anastasia Baptist Church that is attended by well over 1000 attendees.

In December each year we conduct the Wreaths Across America program at SANC that usually has about 500 in attendance.

The Veterans Council was responsible for establishing a Veterans Treatment Court about 8 years ago that has been highly successful. We have graduated 116 veterans from the program to date. We currently have 40 veterans in the pipeline.

In March of this year, the VCSJC in collaboration with Home Again St. Johns purchased a motel in St. Augustine and have repurposed it into a homeless shelter for veterans. This has provided us with the ability to remove over 20 homeless veterans from the street.

In addition to the above activities, the VCSJC meets with needy veterans on a very regular basis to provide them with help with their financial needs such as rent, food, insurance, car payments, house and automobile repairs, utility payments, security deposits and first month rent when moving into apartments or a house. We also purchase gas cards as well as food cards for those veterans who are in need of gas and food. We conduct a monthly visit to Aldi's to restock the food pantry at the local VSO office. The Veterans Council has a goodly amount of donated clothing and household furniture that we pro



vide those veterans and their family who are in need of such. 2024's total expenses for veterans assistance was \$130,733.

In addition to the above items that all have a financial implication, we assist veterans with assistance in arranging for honor guards for funerals, Memorial services, and other similar needs by family members.

We support two local high schools JROTC program honor cadets with a \$1000 scholarship each year at graduation. We recently made a \$1000 donation to the Young Marines in Jacksonville to help with their upcoming trip to Pearl Harbor. We also participate in the St. Joseph's Academy Veteran's Heritage Project and donate \$1000 to support this program each year.

The secretary of the Veterans Council provided a Thanksgiving meal to all the veterans housed at Veterans Village as well as each of the staff.

The Veterans Council provided two donated vehicles to veterans during the year as well as several bicycles and E-Bikes.

A huge assortment of donated clothing was provided to hurricane victims in Western North Carolina and more will be donated as we accumulate a sufficient quantity.

Our income for the Council comes from donations from local organizations, various grant programs, individual donations, estate settlements, and gifts in kind. Our income for 2024 was slightly over \$144,000

Our Board is made up of all volunteers and no member of our Board receives any compensation.

Bill Dudley

Chairman

Veterans Council of St. Johns County. Inc.

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

January 30, 2025



CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dudley

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS: Chairman Dudley

PLEDGE: Chairman Dudley

INVOCATION: Chaplain Jefferson

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

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Minutes of last meeting conducted December 19, 2024, were presented by Chairman Dudley. Copies of the Minutes are available on the sign-in table and were sent to members electronically by the Secretary. The minutes were approved by voice vote with no changes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Mountcastle presented the Treasurer's Report to the Council. As of December 31, 2024, the Council's total liquid cash balance was \$171,258.50. Treasurer Mountcastle went over the Treasurer's Report including all incoming funds and expenses going out. The floor was open for any questions. The Treasurer's Report was approved by voice vote with no changes.

SPEAKERS:

ROBERT SPETA, US NAVY VETERAN, FIRST COAST NEWS TV METEOROLOGIST

Mr. Speta gave his background history of serving in the US Navy and his current

position with First Coast News as a Meteorologist. While serving in the Navy, Mr. Speta worked in Operational Forecasting for over 15 years and gave forecasts in 17 countries throughout the world. Mr. Speta gave his history of working in Meteorology since returning to the United States until accepting his current position in Jacksonville with First Coast News.

The floor was open for questions and answers.

KATIE ELLER, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, HORSEPLAY THERAPY CENTER

Ms. Eller introduced herself and gave her background as a speech pathologist. She is now the Director of Development for the 501(c)3 Horseplay Therapy Center that is located off SR207 here in St. Augustine. Horseplay Therapy Center does therapy sessions for children dealing with special needs – the Triple Crown Program. In 2021, the Rise Up for Veterans program was launched for Veterans dealing with PTSD, anxiety, TBI, and families that need marriage counseling due to these disorders by utilizing the interaction with horses. The program provides licensed mental health therapy for Veterans in need. The horses are used as a tool to help provide this therapy. In the few years since inception, the Rise Up program has been extremely successful.

The floor was open for questions and answers.

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE, MAC MCDERMOTT

Mr. McDermott spoke that he and Chairman Dudley meet once a month with Dr. Keck and the administrator at the Veterans Clinic here in St. Augustine. Currently the CBOC sees approximately 9,450 and they project that by the end of year the CBOC will see over 10,000. Meetings are held to look ahead and make sure that facilities are available to continue to provide service to our Veterans.

Mr. McDermott spoke of the May 1st meeting that will be held with the Citizens Committee of SJC to discuss what the VSO provides for our Veterans such as the nursing home, Patriots Village, and all the things that the Veterans organizations do for the county.

The VSO is trying to hire another person to replace the one that did not meet the criteria needed for the position. Interviews are taking place and if nothing occurs with the interviews, the job position will have to be advertised again. The Service Officer has to be certified by the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs and the process of making sure someone is ready to file the claims for our Veterans is intense. The hope is to get the new Service Officer in and ready and get the VSO back where Mr. McDermott wants it to be able to aid our Veterans. The floor was open for questions and answers.

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT, JOHN LESLIE

Mr. Leslie introduced himself and gave the history of and what the Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) does for our Veterans in the legal system. The VTC is now in its ninth year. Mr. Leslie gave an update on the VTC and the number of participants the VTC has helped through the legal system process, there are currently 40 Veterans inflow. Mr. Leslie also spoke of the community service requirements needed to complete the VTC. There is always a need for mentors to help with the VTC program. Everyone was invited to attend the new Court Hearing for the VTC on February 1st, at 10:00am in the Annex. The floor was open to questions.

UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Dudley spoke of the Military Ball that was recently held at the Armory. MOAA presented the Ball for the first time, and it was a remarkable suc

cess. Vice Chairman Birchall also spoke of the past and present Military Balls and the need for St. Augustine to have an annual Military Ball. This year the Military Ball honored Judge Howard McGillin, who is a retired 06 Colonel, JAG. Judge McGillin, in his comments, identified the wonderful job the VTC has performed in St. Johns County. The proceeds of the Military Ball will be directed to the JRROTC programs in St. Johns County at St. Augustine, Bartram Trail, and Nease High Schools. This Ball was dedicated to the Future Leaders of our Great Country. This upcoming year's Military Ball will be promoted in the Fall. It is by invitation only but want to include all that are interested in attending.

Chairman Dudley spoke of the SR16 project, and it is nearing completion. The Certificate of Occupancy is expected around the first of March. It will be a tremendous help to all the homeless people and Veterans in need.

Veterans Village has finally come to an agreement with the contractor and all that needs to be done to help Veterans Village assist in the needs of our homeless Veterans. A volunteer organization is going to paint the outside of the building and Home Depot has donated all the paint and supplies needed to complete this task. The hot water heater for the facility had to be replaced at an expense of \$18,000. Chairman Dudley has been impressed by the support and volunteers that help with Veterans Village and the needs there.

The floor was open for questions and new business.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William Dudley, Chairman

Class of 2024 Inducted Into Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame

February 7, 2025

TALLAHASSEE – Twenty Florida Veterans were formally inducted into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame during ceremonies here, Feb. 7. The Class of 2024 is the 12th class of inductees to enter the Hall of Fame.

The inductees include:

Augustus Aikens, Colonel, Florida Army National Guard (Ret)

Ronald Beasley, Captain, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Jennifer S. Carroll, Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Thomas Corey, U.S. Army Veteran – Deceased

Arthur F. (Chip) Diehl III, Brigadier General, U.S. Air Force (Ret)

Loretta Ford, U.S. Army Veteran – Deceased

Lorraine Holland, Major, U.S. Army (Ret)

Beatrice Love-Moore, Chief Yeoman, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Lionel Lowry, U.S. Air Force Veteran

John McGee, Major, U.S. Army (Ret)

Carl Miller, U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

Charles Mohr, Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)

Jerry Neff, Brigadier General, Florida Army National Guard (Ret)

Ronald Rook, Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret) – Deceased

Karen “Sue” Roper, Commander, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Steven Saladino, U.S. Army Veteran

Kurt Schuh, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Ret)

Jon Shebel, U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

James Stavridis, Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Harold Youmans, Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)



Stories of Service: Navy's Strike Group visits Nease High School

Part of the Navy's recruitment efforts brought its Strike Group immersive simulators to Nease High School.

Author: Rich Donnelly, First Coast News

PONTEVEDRA BEACH, Fla. — It's an immersive experience that gives kids the chance to learn what life is like on an aircraft carrier, but in a completely virtual setting.



Recently, the Navy brought its Strike Group mobile mixed-reality experience to St. Johns County to give kids at Nease High School an experience that they'll never forget. Most Americans will never come close to flying a fighter jet, but students at Nease High School got as close as you can without actually stepping in a plane.

"It's an opportunity for people to see a day in the life of what it's like to be in the Navy, be a sailor or pilot, be on a ship," said Commanders Joseph Collins, callsign "MoJo," who is a Navy recruiter based out of Jacksonville. "So, it's pretty cool for people to interact and see what it's like to be in the Navy."

Strike Group travels the country to bring these immersive VR experiences to schools as part of the Navy recruiting push to bring in future sailors with an interest in the STEM field.

"Just getting to experience the flight simulator and getting to experience the flight deck and the simulator over there, it's interesting to see how everyone talks about it like being on an aircraft carrier, but being able to experience that through the simulator is really cool," said Noah Pedreiro, who is a cadet and Nease High School student. Pedreiro took full advantage of the Strike Group simulators and also said he wants to become a Navy pilot.

"This one was the flight simulator" said Pedreiro while pointing to the different simulators. "I was the F-35 pilot and I got the highest score on that. And this one was you're out on the aircraft carrier and you're directing the aircraft where you need to be, and you get to be the one sending off the aircraft."

A fun experience for the kids, but an important recruiting tool for the Navy.

"It's leveraging technology and things kids are interested in," said Collins. "Seeing how they can interact and see how they can use technology going forward for this new generation."

"I think people who go on it, and see the technology and how fun it is, and experience that could see it as a career opportunity for sure," said Pedreiro.

Strike Group will come soon back to the First Coast, and will be at the Daytona International Speedway from Wednesday through Sunday.

If you have a Story of Service that you would like First Coast News to profile, send an email to:

storiesofservice@firstcoastnews.com

From Today's Daily Briefing by Lucia Viti in the St. Augustine Record

Megan Wall, managing attorney for JAX Legal Aid, requested The Daily Briefing to share a feel-good story of one of its own, Judge Howard McGillin, who initiated a treatment court for veterans and was honored for doing so.

Wall wrote: Judge Howard McGillin started a treatment court for Veterans, instead of incarceration. McGillin, a retired Colonel and graduate of West Point, started the Veterans Treatment Court in conjunction with Bill Dudley and the St Johns County Veterans Council in 2014. The Military Officers Association Ancient City Chapter honored Judge McGillin at an awards' banquet on Jan. 25 at the National Guard Armory.

A quote from his speech said, "Recidivism, committing another crime once released, for the untreated incarcerated population is 71% and the rate for those going through Veterans Treatment Courts is 17%, now that is a staggering statistic, and it demonstrates these treatment courts work! And they do it at half the cost of traditional courts and incarceration!"

"Thank you for telling this feel-good story of hope, treatment, recovery, and success through our amazing judge and court system! Judge Alexander Christine runs the other treatment court, the Drug Court, and that is also an amazing success."



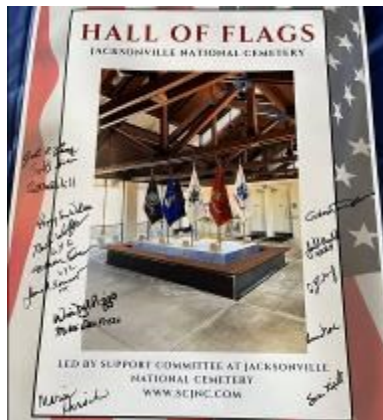
Judge McGillin and his wife Anne on the right are flanked by friends John and Mrs. Leslie (John Leslie is the mentor coordinator for the Veterans Treatment Court) during a banquet held in McGillin's honor at the St. Augustine Armory

Megan Wall

DEDICATION CEREMONY AT HALLOWED GROUNDS

30 January 2025, 1100 Hours

Approximately 50 attendees were at the Hall of Flags Dedication Ceremony which was held on a beautiful sunny Florida day at the Cemetery Administration Building. After an opening prayer by Chaplain AJ Pellegrino, Pledge of Allegiance, Cadets under the leadership of U.S. Navy Retired CWO4 Allan Layne from the First Coast High School U.S. Navy JR ROTC were the Color Guard who paraded & posted eight flags which now are permanently displayed within the Hall. The Support Committee Chairman, Pat Welch, was the Master of Ceremonies and presented, along with the Jacksonville National Cemetery Director, Christopher Morris, thank you-appreciation plaques to the Teams of Donors who made this Hall construction possible: AARP; Dasher-Hurst Architects; Eligius Metal Works; Lamb's Yacht Center; Palmyra Marble; VFW Post 7909 Auxiliary; VyStar Credit Union; and Yes-Deer Construction. Also, the Support Committee Members who formed the following Special Team were thanked for their time and dedication in planning for and executing this project: Win & Mike DelPizzo; Dani Hernandez; Maria Hirsch; Pat Mulvihill; Anna Noe; and Pat Welch, Team Leader.



REVISED FLYER WITH PARKING INFORMATION

Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield

Retiree Appreciation Day

March 22, 2025

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

Presentations From:

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

Registration begins 8:00 A.M.; **Presentations** begin at 9:00 A.M. **Meet representatives from the different agencies during the RAD Information Fair, 1000 - 1200 hours**



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

Please use Garage/Parking Lot H

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

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

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

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

Archeologists believe they've discovered evidence of a British Fort in St. Augustine

This discovery could enhance the understanding of history.

author: Jessica Clark

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. — Archaeologists in St. Augustine discovered what they believe is evidence of a British fort from the 1700's.

The discovery was made at a vacant lot in the Lincolnville neighborhood of St. Augustine, close to downtown. The team with the City of St. Augustine Archaeology Program discovered what they believe is archaeological evidence of a small British fort, known as a redoubt.

Seven redoubts are written about in historic documents, but no one knew where they were, until now.

"They show up on maps. There are documentary references to them, but no one has found one archaeologically," city archaeologist Andrea White told First Coast News.

White's team was doing a routine dig when they found very large soil stains in the ground. Archaeologists found two large dark soil discolorations that are several feet long and 15-feet apart, indicating, they believe, the edges of a moat around the small fort.

The small fort, or redoubt, may have looked like the replica of the one on Orange Street in downtown St. Augustine.

"So it would have been a gun platform or someplace where people could have used to shoot at their enemy," White explained. "Or even just a lookout and have people or soldiers stationed at them."

She said there is no documentation to indicate the redoubts' construction material, but it may have been wood or dirt.

According to maps and historic documents, there were seven of these British redoubts in St. Augustine when Florida was a British colony in the 1700s.

Archaeologist Katherine Sims said there's evidence the redoubt was built in 1781. She even pointed to it on two different historical maps.

"However, in every map, it's in a slightly different place and they're all different shapes," Sims noted. "Which has contributed to why it's been so hard to find them archaeologically."

So what happened to that redoubt? It was only built two years before the British pulled out of St. Augustine and Florida became a colony of Spain again. White said there's no real documentation that the Spanish even used the British redoubts in the western part of St. Augustine.

"We're assuming [the redoubt] probably fell into abandonment and disrepair," White noted. "And so over time the earth just kind of started to ooze back through, and rain flooded the moat."

This discovery could enhance the understanding of history.

"Because we have located one of the redoubts, it can help us pinpoint more accurately the location of the other six redoubts," White said.

Sims, commenting on this discovery, said, "It's a testament that even though we've been doing archaeology for over 30 years in St. Augustine, there's still more to find. There's always more to find, and you never really know until you put a shovel in the ground."



From Home Again St. Johns

The **St. Augustine Elks Lodge 829** headed up a project at **Veterans Village** to supply “Welcome Home” baskets for each of our veterans valued at \$400.

Each veteran could select the first 10 items they liked off the list, and the Elks did the rest! Home Again St Johns is grateful for the generosity of the Elks and their unwavering support! Thanks to the entire team that put this project together!





JOIN US AS WE HONOR OUR BRAVE TROOPS

***50th Anniversary Remembrance
of the end of the***

VIETNAM WAR

***Saturday, March 29, 10 am
915 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, FL***

"Never again will one generation abandon another."

***Questions/Donations
904-269-1857***

Al Bagocius is at UNF Adam W. Herbert University Center, Jacksonville

Old time vets need a corpsman, too.

Meet Robert "Doc" Hernandez, Benefits Advocate, Disabled American Veterans.

Doc is only a phone call away @ 904.524.2714

A corpsman is incredibly important to a Marine because they serve as the primary medical provider on the battlefield, providing immediate emergency care and life-saving treatment when Marines are injured in combat.

Essentially acting as their "doc" and ensuring their survival in dangerous situations.

Corpsmen are considered an integral part of the Marine unit and often build strong bonds with the Marines they serve with.

Key points about a corpsman's role with Marines:

Immediate medical attention:

Corpsmen are trained to administer first aid, treat wounds, stabilize injuries, and perform emergency procedures in combat environments.

Lifesaving capability:

In situations where access to a hospital is limited, a corpsman can be the difference between life and death for a wounded Marine.

Psychological support:

Beyond medical care, corpsmen often provide emotional support and reassurance to Marines during stressful situations.

Integrated with the unit:

Corpsmen are typically assigned directly to Marine units, meaning they operate alongside their Marines in the field.

Specialized training:

Corpsmen undergo extensive medical training specifically designed to prepare them for combat scenarios.

#SemperFi



Free disabled veteran parking privileges restored at Jacksonville International Airport

By Kiley Miller, Action News Jax

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — The Jacksonville International Airport is reverting its recent changes to disabled veteran parking

While people with handicap tags were able to park in the valet and elsewhere for free, disabled veterans whose tags don't have the wheelchair symbol were not.

Airport spokesperson Michael Stewart said the construction of a third garage was making it harder for everyone to find parking. Veterans we spoke with at the time accused the airport of moving them out of the lots to make more money on paying parkers.

Now, those with a regular disabled veteran tag will be able to park for free in the Economy Lots, Daily Garage, and Daily Surface Lot. City Councilman Nick Howland says Hourly Garage privileges will be restored when construction there is complete.

Disabled veterans that have tags with the wheelchair symbol can park anywhere they want for free.

In a post to social media, Howland continued, saying, "Thank you to Chair Michelle Barnett, CEO Mark Vanloh, and the Airport team for honoring our heroes!"



**NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY
WEEKEND IN JACKSONVILLE FLORIDA**

A Very Special Ceremony Open To The Public



Where: Jacksonville National Cemetery

Date: Thursday 27 March 2025

Time: 9:30 am / Arrive 9:00 am

Address: 4083 Lannie Rd. JAX

Please join us at this annual observance ceremony-flyover-wreath laying to remember & honor the courage of those who served in the Vietnam War. They sacrificed, as did their families and caregivers. More than 58,000 Americans made the ultimate sacrifice. Over 300,000 more were wounded and injured, and more than 1,500 service members are still missing in action. These MIAs are not forgotten. Our Nation's efforts to bring them home will never stop- Jacksonville is the home to the National POW-MIA Memorial & Museum at Cecil Commerce Center. For more information contact our Public Information Officer:

pem@axisp.com / www.SCJNC.com

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Fort Liberty is back to Fort Bragg, but with a different origin story

Bragg is back, By Miguel Ortiz, *We are the Mighty Military News*

Fort Bragg is the home of Army Special Operation Command and the 82nd Airborne Division (U.S. Army)

Yes, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, is back. On June 2, 2023, Fort Bragg was officially re-named Fort Liberty; the post was originally named for Confederate General Braxton Bragg. While the renaming removed the Confederate connection from the post, it deviated from the Army practice of naming installations for Army heroes and leaders. It also caused confusion for people trying to remember the (old) new name for the Home of the Airborne and Special Operations Forces.

On February 10, 2025, the Department of Defense announced via press release that Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth signed a memorandum renaming Fort Liberty in North Carolina to Fort Roland L. Bragg. The release notes that SecDef signed the memo aboard a C-17 en route to Stuttgart, Germany, from Joint Base Andrews.

“The new name pays tribute to Pfc. Roland L. Bragg, a World War II hero who earned the Silver Star and Purple Heart for his exceptional courage during the Battle of the Bulge,” the DoD release states. “This change underscores the installation’s legacy of recognizing those who have demonstrated extraordinary service and sacrifice for the nation.”

Private First Class Bragg served as a mechanic with the 17th Airborne during the fighting in Belgium. In John Eisenhower’s 1969 book recounting the battle, *The Bitter Woods*, Bragg is credited with saving a wounded soldier’s life by stealing a German ambulance to get him to a hospital.



Old Warriors: Retiring the American Flag

By Rick McAllister

VFW Life Member

First City Honor Guard Member

Vietnam Veteran



According to the U.S. Flag Code, adopted by Congress in 1998, there are three suggested methods to decommission and retire an American flag. All are to be conducted with dignity and respect. They are:

- 1. Recycled (not done much because of the materials flags are now made of).**
- 2. Folded and placed in a wooden box and then buried in the ground.**
- 3. Burning the flag in a ceremony that renders honor, dignity, and military tradition to the flag (s).**



Here in St. Johns County over the past couple of years, the majority of flag retirements are conducted by the First City Honor Guard of VFW Post 2391. Flags are collected from a number of drop-off locations around the county and a retirement ceremony is conducted at the Post's recently upgraded site located at the rear of their property. Flag drop-off bins are also located there.

The ceremony starts with one flag being selected from those being retired and raised on the flag pole. Honors are rendered by the honor guard unit as the flag is raised. At the same time, the following is read

by the First City Honor Guard Commander:

“This flag has served its nation long and well. It has worn to a condition in which it should no longer be used to represent the nation. This flag represents all the flags collected and being retired from service today. The honor we show here today for this one flag we show for all the flags, even those not physically here.”

This is followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Next, the four retirement barrels are lit and then, one by one, the flags are retrieved from the storage bins and placed in the barrels with dignity and respect. The barrels themselves are custom designed and constructed, and burn at around 1,300 degrees. Safety protocols are strictly monitored and adhered to.



When all the collected flags have been retired, that one flag that was raised at the start of the ceremony is lowered with honors and becomes the last flag retired.

For the year 2024, the First City Honor Guard retired 11,650 flags, averaging almost 1,000 flags per month. They come in all sizes and condition including those very large ones you see flying at the car dealerships.

“We take a great deal of pride in retiring perhaps the most prophetic symbol of this country and that for which it stands. It is one of our three primary missions and gives our veteran members the opportunity to render one last special honor to the symbol that guided their service,” says honor guard commander Dan Weir.

This ceremony is the third Saturday of every month and the public is welcome to join us. If you have a family flag that you believe needs to

be retired, bring it to the ceremony and personally participate in its retirement. The event starts at 9:00am at the ceremony site located at the rear of VFW Post 2391 located at 6184 US Highway 1, South. You can't miss the Army tank guarding the entrance to the Post.



Two old warriors resting in the shade of a tree,
Both a little tattered and both a little worn.
Their bond grew early and remains to this day,
Their scars go deep as they both led the way.

Standing for the pledge with hand over heart,
And singing before the first pitch by dawns early light.
We all took an oath to follow her lead,
And she kept us going when we started to bleed.

My grandkids are learning from the stories I tell,
And I pray that they'll never have to pass through my hell.
She'll go with honor, with dignity and with pride,
But right now she rests right here by my side.

Two old warriors resting in the shade of a tree,
Both a little tattered and both a little worn.
Warriors on land, in the air and on the sea,
Share a few moments in the shade of a tree.

Underground Combat: Tunnel Rats in Vietnam

By: Rick McAllister

VFW Life Member

First City Honor Guard Member

Vietnam Veteran



Underground tunnels and bunkers have been a part of the Vietnamese military history for a long time. Going back to the Japanese occupation during World War II, the French colonial occupation during the 50's, and then the arrival of American and allied forces in the 60's and 70's, these underground complexes have, in many ways, altered traditional military combat strategies, giving the Vietnamese certain advantages at times.

When the Americans arrived, we knew they were there, however, we had no idea how extensive the tunnel networks were, in many cases we didn't actually know where they were located, and then how to destroy them or take them out of the combat equation.

For the most part, these underground structures could be identified in 4 categories; (1) storage bunkers, (2) pop-up ambush and fighting holes, (3) trench and bunker units, and finally (4) the more complex tunnel structures.

The storage bunkers (1) were usually shallow, dug-out pits that were used to store supplies that could be quickly retrieved like rice and ammo. They were mostly found in or near villages and usually had some light camouflage covering over the

top. Many were found under the floor of a hooch.

Pop-up ambush and fighting holes (2), sometimes referred to as spider-holes, created havoc for infantry units on patrol through more densely foliated vegetation. These were usually one man pits, sometimes connected underground with small storage rooms connected as well. When American patrols would be near, an enemy soldier would pop-up, ambush the patrol, and then disappear back underground. Often referred to as the “ghost fighters” as one minute they



were there and the next they were gone. Extra ammo was stored underground for them and they could hide under there for several days if necessary.

The trench and bunker units (3) were very similar to those used by the Germans in World War II and the Chinese in the Korean War. Open trenches were dug within firing distance of a Fire Support Base where the enemy could fire hand-held weapons or crew-served weapons like small to medium size mortars. During daylight hours, they were frequently covered with foliage to blend into the immediate vegetation.

The last type of these underground structures, the tunnel complexes (4), were really amazing structures with ingenious and creative twists and turns, no pun intended. For the most part, they were dug by the early Viet Minh and later the VC, along with the ever present peasant farmer and his family. They were hand-dug with crude tools and implements, yet they had the sophistication to support underground kitchens, hospitals and operating rooms, sleeping dorms, weapon and ammo storage, and command and operational centers. They were deep enough to withstand bomb and rocket saturation, and vented with water and air shafts to reduce the exposure to gas and concussion. The tunnel complexes located in the Cu Chi area between Saigon and Cambodia were over 100 miles in total length. Worst

of all, they were booby-trapped and they SMELLED “off the chart.”

So, as a result of these complexes and the impact they had on the local jungle warfare, along came the “tunnel rat.” While there is no Army MOS for tunnel rat, and while many who entered these frightful environments were just regular “grunts,” an effort was made early on to train individuals to enter these subterranean hell-holds. Most were combat engineers with extensive training in explosive detonation and in defusing explosives, most were small in stature for obvious reasons, and generally worked in 3 to 5 man teams. Australian units seem to have a lust for this job, and are credited with coining the phrase “tunnel rat.”

The initial person to enter the “black echo” was the “explorer.” He was sent in to discover what was there. Fifty per cent of these guys did not make it home. If available, a second would follow as protection. Ultimately, a demolition engineer went in to do his thing and render the tunnel useless.



Destroying a tunnel was always a challenge. The options included:

Air strike with bombs or rockets

Grenades to close entrances and exits

Gas and flames

Hand delivered explosives including C-4

Personally, I was with Echo Company, 1/502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division in I Corps. I arrived late December 1969 and caught my Freedom Bird home on Christmas Day, December 25, 1970. I was not a trained tunnel rat. . . I was just small (145 lbs soaking wet and 5’ 6”). I was, however, in good shape and pretty flexible.

I spent time with an 81mm mortar team at FSB Birmingham, time with a security and patrol team at Pohl Bridge on the Perfume River, and then with HHC and our Recon unit collecting data for a MACV/S.O.G. unit operating between Hue and Phu Bai. One of their missions was to collect intelligence from captured VC on the arrival of supplies and personnel coming off the Ho Chi Minh Trail and into our AO, and if so, where were they hiding or being stored. This was 1970 and word of Nixon's Vietnamization Program was spreading; the Americans were cutting back and more responsibility was going to be laid upon the ARVN's. Accordingly, the NVA's 4th, 5th, and 6th Infantry Regiments and the VC were looking to build up for future offensive opportunities as they had little respect for the ARVN soldier.

In the process of monitoring this activity, we discovered 8 bunker/tunnel complexes. Four were basic standard supply bunkers with some substantial hard and soft supplies. Two were pop-up ambush sites with minimal storage, and the other two were legitimate tunnel systems.

The most complex of the tunnels we discovered from a forward observation outpost outside the village of Huong Tho along the Perfume River and not far from Pohl Bridge. Under a pig pen canopy, we observed farmers (men, women and children) walking out into a plowed field where it appeared they were dropping dirt from shoulder-strapped side seed sacks. We also noticed at a pagoda about 300 yards away, villagers were going into the pagoda and shrine without taking off their shoes (the normal custom). On a patrol over to the pig pen we discovered the entrance to a tunnel underneath the metal livestock feeder. The villagers were rounded up, secured, and we discussed our options. Previously, it was decided with my agreement that if we discovered a tunnel, I would go in since I was the only one who could fit through most of the tunnel openings. We had a supply kit prepared for that option.

I used green duct tape to tape my pants tight around my legs, striped down to my green t-shirt, put on black knee and elbow pads and fingerless gloves. I selected

a .38 Cal. S&W handgun with a screw-on suppressor, a right angled flashlight with a red lens, a K-Bar style knife, a 3-foot probing stick, a black rubber gas mask in a pouch at my hip, 2 smoke grenades and a CS grenade. I also carried a spool of white plastic tape which looked a little like the crime scene tape of today. This fed out behind me from the spool which was attached to a belt loop on my pants and created a safety line for me to get back out. I ultimately took the suppressor off because it made the revolver barrel tip heavy and drop slightly when firing.

Once I dropped into the entrance shaft, about 5 feet deep, the tunnel veered off horizontally in 2 directions. One turned out to be an air shaft for concussion suppression while the main tunnel gradually dropped another 5 feet or so. About 75 yards in, I crawled through a small section that was shorn up with bamboo and wood planks. It turned out that this section was under Highway 547 and frequently caved in (hence the need to periodically take dirt out and dispose of it in the plowed field).

During the dark crawl through the next 200 yards, the smell got so bad that I actually vomited. There are no words to describe that smell that still haunts me to this day other than to say it was a combination of human excrement and death. I unearthed 2 punji stake pit booby traps and one dead viper that had been tied to a line and hung from the tunnel ceiling.

I had been in the tunnel for about 2 hours and it was getting harder and harder to breathe as the oxygen level under there was virtually depleted. After struggling to actually turn myself around, I barely made my way back out.

Command decided we would go up where we thought the tunnel might end, the pagoda sitting at the end of a foot path. Sure enough, after an hour of exploration on the side of the hill, we found another entrance. Rather than go back in immediately, we set up a night position to monitor the spider hole with a plan to go in the next day.

Because this entrance shaft was much deeper than the one under the pig feeder, I had to be lowered in head-first with a line around my ankles and 3 troops manning the lines. As I approached the bottom of the shaft, I signaled to the handlers to stop for a moment so I could just listen. And then I heard it. . .a slight rustling in the dirt and the sound of cloth. I waited and waited and finally the tip of a long gun came around the corner. I dropped down quickly and hard, and fired. I was lucky.

Moving past the VC, I entered what appeared to be a kitchen and before I could make any kind of an assessment, a second VC appeared at another tunnel entrance across the room. I fired 2 rounds before he could get one off, and I immediately reloaded (SOP was to reload after 3 shots fired). That was enough for me. I went back to the entrance shaft and got pulled out.

Explosive experts with the 101st at Phu Bai were called in and destroyed the complex with delayed charges at both entrances and grenades dropped down the ventilation shafts.

My Commanding Officer had no problem letting me retire from the “Black Echo.” I was getting to be a “short-timer” anyway, and I really wanted to go home.



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HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED AND ARE SERVING

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Credit Union

SATURDAY, MARCH 15
9 A.M. - 2 P.M.

Clay County Fairgrounds
2463 SR 16 West, Green Cove Springs

If you'd like to get involved, please fill out this form:
<https://wkf.ms/3W3DSaS>



From Rick McAllister

Ethos of a Veteran

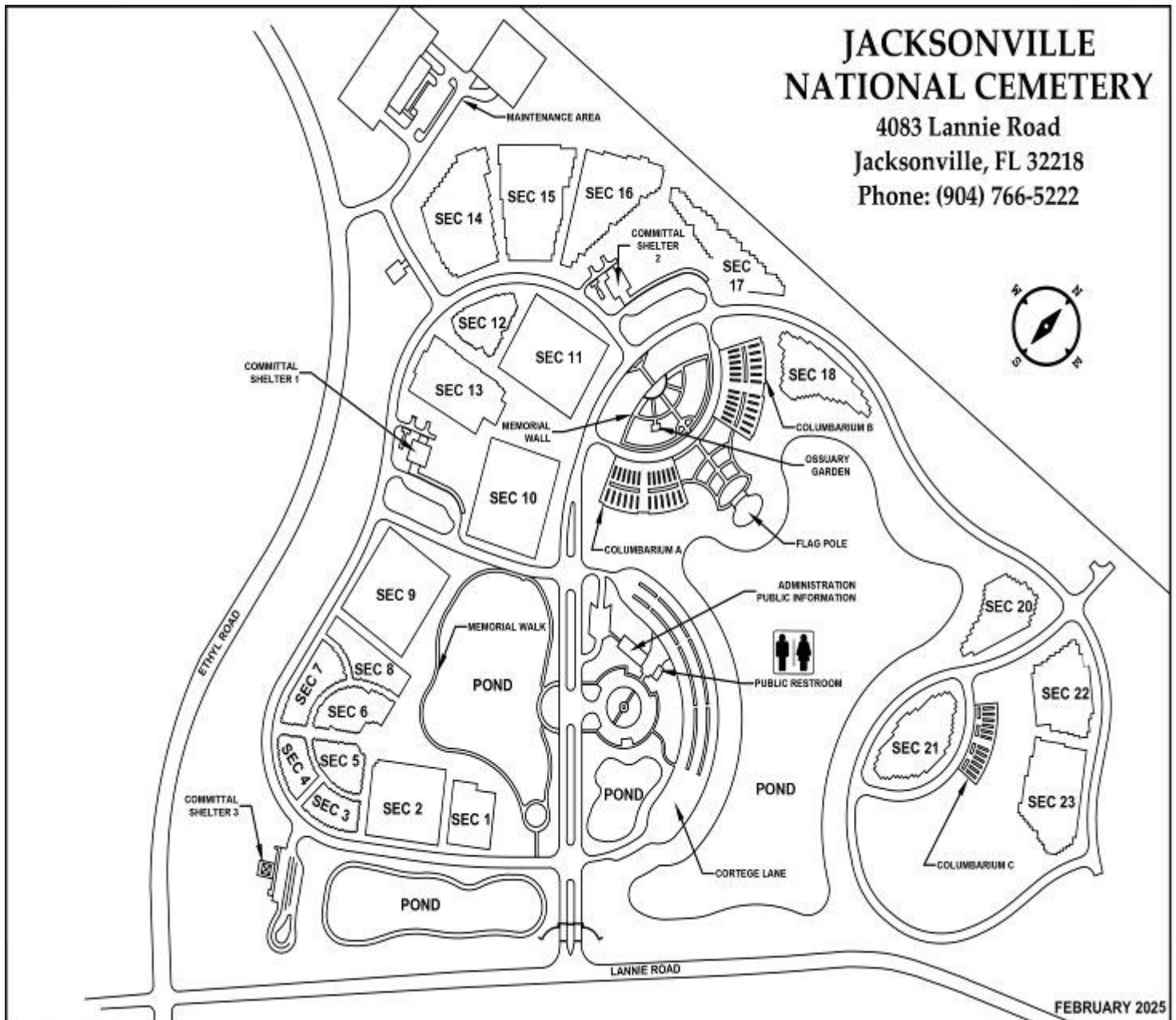
- 1. Always honor the Oath.**
- 2. Stand with Pride.**
- 3. Serve your Community.**
- 4. Guide the Youth.**
- 5. Protect the Vulnerable.**
- 6. Vote for your Freedoms.**
- 7. Salute the Stars and Stripes.**
- 8. Never break the Bond.**
- 9. Replenish your Path.**
- 10. Celebrate life and death with honor, dignity and respect.**

Jacksonville National Cemetery, Updated Map / 12 February 2025

Mapping Technicians have updated all key areas/reference points on the attached.. This will be useful for those who are unfamiliar with the cemetery and to provide better customer service to our Veterans and their families. Please reach out to pem@axisp.com if there are questions.

Padraic E. "Pat" Mulvihill, Public Information Officer

4083 Lannie Road JAX 32218, 904.534.0035 / www.SCJNC.com



Military aircraft land at Boston Logan for funeral of ‘true American hero’ who spent 6-plus years in captivity during Vietnam War

by RICK SOBEY, BOSTON HERALD

U.S. military aircraft were spotted landing at Boston Logan International Airport on Friday ahead of a funeral for a “true American hero” who spent more than six years in captivity during the Vietnam War.

Captain Richard Stratton, a Vietnam War Navy veteran from Quincy, died in mid-January. He was 93. Before his funeral on Saturday, military aircraft were arriving at Boston Logan, and Gov. Maura Healey issued a citation in memory of Stratton.



An interment flag was also flown over the State House this week. “It is an honor to deliver this citation and interment flag to the family of Captain Stratton in recognition of his remarkable life and service to our nation,” Healey said in a statement.

“A proud Quincy native, Captain Stratton valiantly served in the Vietnam War and persisted through more than six years of captivity. “His service didn’t end there – he came home to help other soldiers and civilians suffering from trauma and addiction as a social worker,” the governor added. “We are in awe of his bravery, his resilience, and his deep compassion for others. He is a true American hero, and our deepest condolences go out to his loved ones and community.”

Stratton served in the Massachusetts Army National Guard, spent years at the Catholic Seminary of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and graduated from Georgetown University.

He joined the U.S. Navy Aviation Officer Candidate Program and was designated

as a Naval Aviator in 1957, while also being assigned to Stanford University and earning a master's degree in international relations.

He was deployed to Southeast Asia with CVW-19 aboard the aircraft carrier USS Ticonderoga in 1966 until he was shot down and forced to eject over North Vietnam. He was taken as a Prisoner of War on Jan. 5, 1967, and spent 2,251 days in captivity, "enduring inhumane treatment including torture," his obituary reads.



He was released during Operation Homecoming on March 4, 1973, and later awarded the Silver Star for Valor, Purple Heart, and P.O.W. medal among many other military decorations and awards.

When he returned home, he continued to hold various positions and commands across the country.

After his retirement from the Navy, he practiced as a clinical social worker, specializing in psychological trauma and addictions, served as President of NAM-POWs, and was the Chairman of the Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Prisoners of War.

"He stayed active in many veteran organizations ensuring their voices continued to be heard and their legacies honored," his obituary reads. He's survived by his wife Alice, three sons, six granddaughters, and several nieces and nephews.

Source - Stars and Stripes

The American Revolution Experience traveling exhibit is on display in St. Augustine

Pop-up exhibition connects with people and places of the Revolutionary War

Lucia Viti, St. Augustine Record

The American Revolution Experience traveling exhibit is on display in St. Augustine

Pop-up exhibition connects with people and places of the Revolutionary War

Lucia Viti, St. Augustine Record

The American Revolution Experience, a traveling exhibit, is on display at the Oldest House Museum in St. Augustine, Florida until February 21st.

The exhibit features panels, interactive digital kiosks, and illustrations that highlight individuals and locations impacted by the Revolutionary War.

The exhibit has previously been displayed at over 65 venues and will continue to tour the United States in 2025.

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American Battlefield Trust, Maria Jefferson, Sofia Fleming and the Ponte Vedra Chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution have collaborated to display the American Revolution Experience exhibit at the Oldest House Museum/St. Augustine Historical Society.

The pop-up exhibition, filled with panels and interactive digital kiosks, connects audiences with the individuals and sites that witnessed the birth of America. Twelve panels spotlight individuals who were “deeply touched by the Revolutionary War.” Three digital kiosks display contextual information, and the online and on-site American Revolution Experience illustrations were completed by artist Dale Watson.

Trust President David Duncan said the exhibit connects viewers to those whose sacrifices shaped our nation’s spirit.

“The spirit of the American Revolution wasn’t confined to halls of power where independence was declared — it lived in the Patriot soldiers and the everyday people whose courage shaped the America we know today,” he said in a news release.

The traveling exhibit, which will be on display until Feb. 21, has already visited more than 65 American venues.

Magen Alice, the St. Augustine Historical Society’s executive director, has welcomed the exhibit “with open arms.”

“We could not be more excited to welcome the American Revolution Experience to the Oldest House Museum.”

“With our country’s 250th anniversary on the horizon, there is no better time to share the harrowing stories of the brave men and women who fought for this great nation,” U.S. Rep. John Rutherford, R-Jacksonville, said in the release. “The invaluable work of the American Battlefield Trust and our local DAR chapters is giving us the chance to connect with our past and how it informs our present and future.”

Americans can visit the American Revolution Experience as it travels the United States in 2025. A static installation of the exhibit remains at the DAR’s national headquarters in Washington, D.C.

According to the release, the American Revolution Experience’s first digital iteration won the Bronze Award in the Education, Art, & Culture division at the second annual Anthem Awards, an initiative of the Webby Awards. It also won finalist in the “People’s Choice” category of the Webby Awards.

The project is funded the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution and a matching grant from the federal American Battlefield Protection Program.

History of The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution

The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in the 1890s to promote historic preservation, education and patriotism. Members are descended from individuals who battled for American independence during the Revolutionary War. Sporting almost 190,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters worldwide, DAR is one of the world’s largest and most active service organizations.

American Battlefield Trust

According to a release, American Battlefield Trust, a grassroots organization launched 30 years ago, is one of the most successful private heritage land preservation organizations in the nation.

“The Trust is dedicated to preserving America’s hallowed battlegrounds and educating the public about what happened and why it matters,” they said. “The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization has protected more than 58,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War, representing more than 160 sites in 25 states.”



From the VA

VA has announced a new policy limiting the display of flags at VA facilities, effective immediately. The policy is intended to establish consistency across the department and aligns with longstanding Department of Defense guidelines.

Under the new directive, only specific flags may be publicly displayed or depicted at VA facilities. These include the United States flag, flags of U.S. states and territories, military service flags, VA flags and official flags of U.S. agencies. Additionally, flags representing prisoner of war/missing in action (POW/MIA), Senior Executive Service (SES), military command units and burial flags for honoring Veterans and reservists are permitted.

The policy applies to all VA facilities, including offices, government vehicles, medical centers, common areas and parking lots. However, it does not prohibit the inclusion of unauthorized flags in museum exhibits, state-issued license plates, grave sites, historical displays or works of art, provided they do not imply official endorsement by the department.

This guidance supersedes VA's previous memorandum on displaying flags during Pride Month, issued in May 2024. However, it does not affect existing policies governing national cemeteries.

"All Veterans and VA beneficiaries will always be welcome at all VA facilities to receive the benefits and services they have earned under the law," Secretary of Veterans Affairs Doug Collins said in an email to all employees. "This policy will bring consistency and simplicity to the display of flags throughout the department, ensuring a singular focus on serving the needs of Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors."

VA's implementation follows similar policies maintained by the Department of Defense since the previous Trump administration and upheld during the Biden administration.



The National Purple Heart Honor Mission



Since its founding in 1997 as the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor Inc., the National Purple Heart Honor Mission has been dedicated to paying tribute to our nation's combat wounded through special outreach and educational programs. The organization was the driving force behind the establishment and later the expansion of the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor located just north of West Point, NY near the historic site where General George Washington first awarded the Badge of Military Merit in 1782.

The organization also played a significant role in the creation of the Purple Heart Forever stamp passed by the U.S. Congress and issued by the U.S. Postal Service in 2014. In 2020, the National Purple Heart Honor Mission led the effort to pass the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor Commemorative Coin Act through Congress and have it signed by the President. This historic effort created the nation's first official commemorative coin honoring our Purple Heart heroes, which were minted by the U.S. Treasury in 2022.

The National Purple Heart Honor Mission's various awareness and tribute programs aim to ensure that those who sacrificed for our country are never forgotten.

Through the expansion of a national Purple Heart Roll of Honor, Purple Heart Patriot Project missions, the celebration of National Purple Heart Day and other programming, we engage people of all ages in showing respect for our nation's heroes.

The Honor Mission is an approved 501(c)3 national non-profit organization.



SAFE Project
Stop the Addiction Fatality Epidemic

SAFE Project is an organization that has developed programs to connect veterans, active-duty service

members, and their families to the resources they need to address mental health challenges and substance use disorders. In 2019, the SAFE Project created a military-connected prevention and wellness program through the assistance of funding and support from the Wounded Warrior Project and Walmart. The firearm industry has partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and AFSP to create a safe firearm storage toolkit designed to help prevent suicide among veterans.

www.safeproject.us+2

If you've served in the military or know someone who has, you'll understand why SAFE Veterans is close to our hearts. A veteran is twice as likely to die from an accidental overdose than any other member of society, and for veterans and their families, the transition to civilian life can be particularly difficult, often losing the sense of purpose, camaraderie, and identity central to their military experience. Military culture also values self-reliance, which can lead to the perception that "getting help" is a weakness.

Our programs focus on prevention by addressing these concerns and preparing service members and their families with tools to move from coping to thriving.

Need Help Right Now?

Dial or text 988 on your phone for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

When you reach out, you'll hear an automated message featuring additional options while your call is routed. A trained crisis worker at your local center will answer the phone. This person will listen to you, understand how your problem is affecting you, provide support, and get you the help you need.



Scramble - Four-person Team
Palatka Golf Club
26 April 2025 – 0900 Shotgun
Register: www.libertytreegolf.com



Details



Liberty Tree Golf Tournament – April 26, 2025

Golf Registration Form

Make all Checks payable to: **Sons of the American Revolution Liberty Tree Golf**

Address: **Sons of the American Revolution**

c/o Robert E. Gearing

522 Johns Creek Pkwy

St Augustine, FL 32092



Or payment through **Zeffy** by Credit Card, Debit Card, ACH, Apple & Google Pay, PayPal, Check, and other direct payment programs. Zeffy is a vetted payment processor/provider to Not-for-Profit organizations:

www.zeffy.com/ticketing/2025-liberty-tree-golf-tournament

Please send a copy in PDF format to Robert Gearing at gearing@bellsouth.net by April 12, 2025. For more information contact Phil Perry at 302.559.4786

All Tournament activities at \$95.00/golfer

All Tournament activities at \$360/foursome

Name/Title _____

Payment Method: Zeffy _____ Check _____

Company Address: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Names of Golfers & Handicap:

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

The Liberty Tree Golf Tournament is a **Charity Event sponsored by the Sons of the American Revolution** and a 501©3 organization



Liberty Tree Golf Tournament

2025 Sponsorship Form

Please complete this form and send your check to: **Liberty Tree Golf Tournament (LTGT) c/o Robert E. Gearing, Treasurer – Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) Mail: 522 Johns Creek Pkwy, St Augustine, FL 32092** Email: gearing@bellsouth.net

Company/Organization Name: (as you would like it to appear on our website as well as, promotional and media materials) please include your logo, if practical:

Official Name: _____

Contact Person: _____ Contact Title: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Yes, my organization would like to be a sponsor of the Liberty Tree Golf Tournament. Please mark the sponsorship level below (the LTGT is a charitable 501©3 activity of the St Augustine Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution):

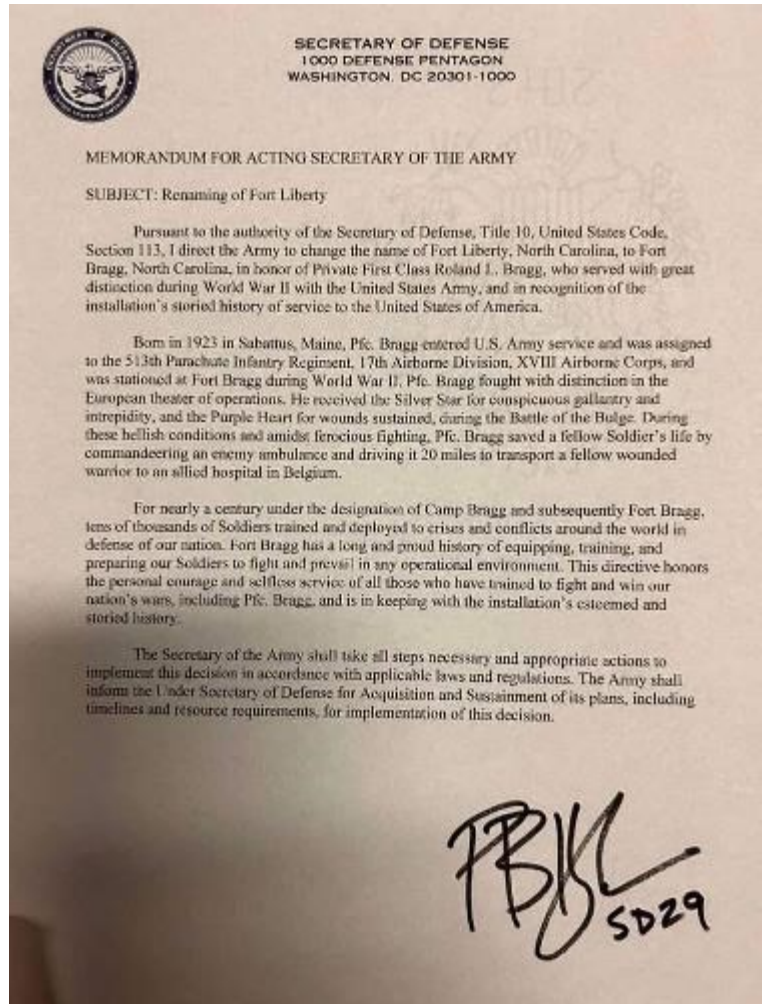
Tournament Sponsor

- Platinum** "Title" Sponsor - \$10,000.00 (1 available)
- Gold** Sponsor - \$5,000.00
- Silver** Sponsor - \$1,500.00
- Bronze** Sponsor - \$500.00
- Patron** - \$250.00

Special Event Sponsor

- Hole-in-One** - \$500.00 (1 available)
- Longest Drive** - \$250.00 (2 available)
- Closest to the Pin** - \$250.00 (2 available)
- I am unable to be a sponsor this year but would like to donate:
 - \$ _____ donation to the Liberty Tree Golf Tournament
 - Gift "in kind" donation to the Auction or Raffle

From Ron Howard, Treasurer,
National Pathfinder Association
Former 82nd ABN Division
Pathfinders
First In, Last Out





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featuring:

- ★ 2,000+ Veteran interviews and stories
- ★ Monthly Veteran Benefits Hour with expert panelists
- ★ Small business highlights
- ★ Artists, musicians, authors, and more!

Every Veteran has a story to tell.
Listen to stories of service from all branches, all eras.

Listen live or stream the podcast!

Veterans Radio is a 501(c)3 non-profit.



Save the DATE

Saturday, 5 April 2025



(0900-1500)

#WeAreAFSA

What?

- **Northeast Florida/SE Georgia Annual Military Retiree Seminar**

Where?

- **River Cove Center – NAS JAX on Mustin Rd across from the Golf Club.**
- **Also Available via Facebook Live on the NAS Jacksonville Facebook page (www.facebook.com/NASJacksonville/events)**

Who?

- ❖ **ALL Military retirees**
- ❖ **All Retiree Family members**
- ❖ **Active/Reserve Personnel planning to retire**

Presentations on:

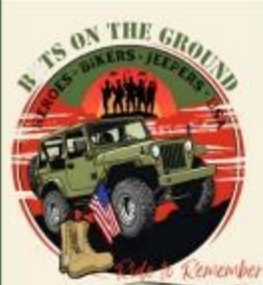
- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ TRICARE/TRICARE for Life | ✓ FEDVIP Insurance |
| ✓ Scams Targeting Seniors | ✓ Advisory Support Available to Retirees |
| ✓ Military Medical Support | ✓ VA Programs |
| ✓ Defense Finance & Accounting Service (DFAS) | ✓ Financial/Legal Advice |



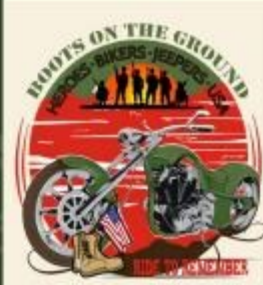
There will be a Health & Wellness Fair on-site as well as numerous experts at Info Tables with even More Information

Check for periodic updates on the [NAS Jacksonville Facebook Page](#)

For Further Information Contact the Jacksonville Retired Activities Office: **904-542-5790**



BOOTS ON THE GROUND



Ride to Remember

MEMORIAL DISPLAY

Over 3,000 Boots with a Picture and Bio of a fallen soldier or first responder since 9/11 and an American Flag line the streets

POKER RUN

Florida's LARGEST Poker Run with over 1,000 registered to participate. 15 Routes, 44 Poker Stops, Flyover at KSU

CONCERT

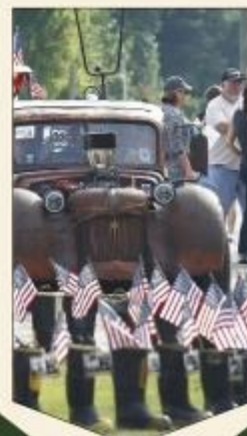
Live Music begins the night before the event, During the event there are several bands that perform throughout the day

VENUE ACTIVITIES

Silent Auctions - Military Displays - Several Vendors Raffles - and More

JEEP PARTY

Jeeps line up at the main venue and then parade through the Memorial Display as they make their way to American Legion Post 9 for an unforgettable party. Live Music, More Vendors, Food Trucks and More!



FLAMINGO LAKE
RV RESORT



SATURDAY MAY 10TH, 2025

GATES OPEN 8:00AM - KSU 11:00AM

3640 Newcomb Road Jacksonville, FL 32218

WWW.ALPOST9FL.ORG/BOOTS-ON-THE-GROUND

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

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

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

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

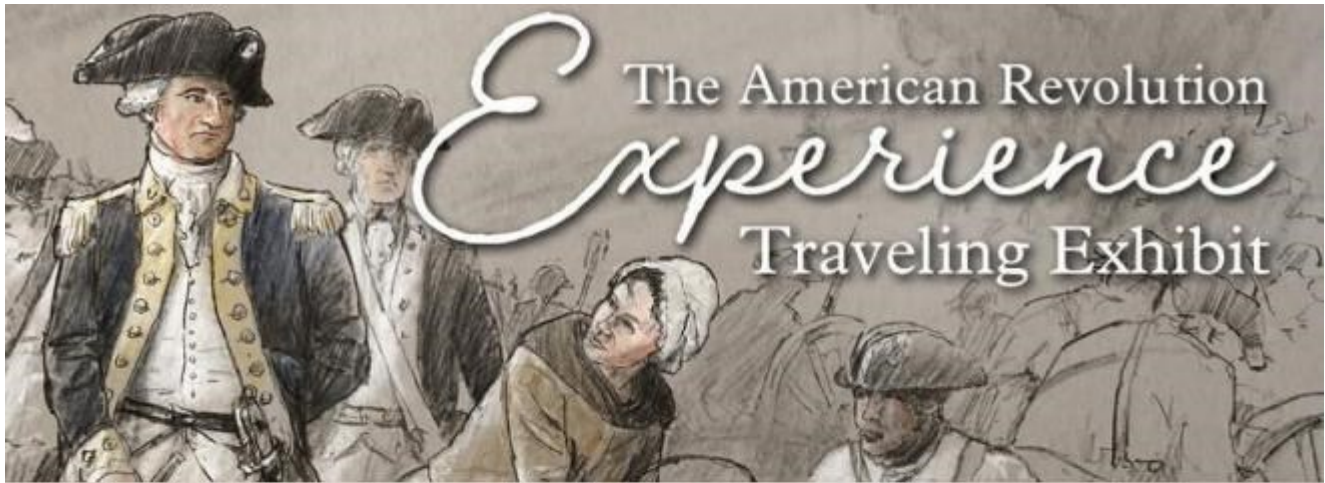


\$20
*minimal proceeds used for
campus beautification

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

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

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



February 22 - March 3, 2025

Discover the story of the American Revolution in a captivating blend of biography and geography at the American Revolution Experience exhibit. Dive into the lives of the people and places that shaped America's fight for independence through a remarkable collaboration between the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the American Battlefield Trust. By combining DAR's extensive archival documents with the Trust's cutting-edge digital content, this traveling exhibit brings to life the stories of everyday individuals who experienced the birth of a new nation.

The American Revolution Experience will travel to libraries, historical societies and museums in the US through 2025, but this is your only chance to see it in our area!

To compliment the exhibit the **Ormond Beach Historical Society** has planned a host of fun and informative events throughout the 10 days:

- Daily viewing of the exhibit - **FREE** and open to the public
- Washington's Birthday Party - a ticketed event
- Not Only in Boston Tea Party - a ticketed event
- Free programs featuring experts on Florida's role in the Revolution; the role of women in gaining freedom from Great Britain; stories from local descendants of Revolutionary Era Patriots; and reenactors



**Anderson Price Memorial Building
42 N. Beach Street, Ormond Beach**

Visit our website for more details!

www.OrmondHistory.org

Free parking, handicap accessible





3 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Wear Your Camo to Honor Vets & St. Patrick's Day

**ALL YOU CAN EAT BBQ
& SPADES TOURNAMENT**

Brought to you by

Sho' Nuff Smokin Good BBQ at The Legion



Call (912) 492-2358 to Sign Up for Spades
1029 PEARL STREET IN WEST AUGUSTINE



A few facts about the Vietnam wall.

There are 58,267 names on the wall.

39,996 were just 22 or younger.

8,283 were 19. 33,103 were 18.

12 were 17 years old.

5 soldiers were 16.

There are 3 sets of fathers and sons on the wall.

31 sets of parents lost 2 of their sons.

997 were killed their first day.

1,448 were killed on their last day.

8 women were on the wall, nurses.

244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor during the war and 153 of them are on the wall.

GREEN BERET CHARITY



GOLF TOURNAMENT

10th Annual Green Beret Charity Golf Tournament

The Golf Club at South Hampton, 315 S. Hampton Club Way, St. Augustine, FL 32092
Friday, May 16, 2025

Special Forces Association Chapter 88 is a non-profit 501(c)(19) veteran service organization in Northeast Florida serving the greater Jacksonville area. One of our primary missions is to promote and support the general welfare of the U.S. Army Special Forces community, active, retired and veteran. Our annual charity fundraiser helps provides financial assistance to eligible members, spouses, children and grand-children in times of natural and unexpected disasters. We also award scholarship funds to graduating area high school JROTC seniors, and to support other area veterans and 501(c) support service organizations.

One of the Jacksonville area's best golf tournaments by far!

Golf Packages:

- **Foursome \$600** Includes 4 Golfers on a Foursome Team, golf fees, range balls, entry for door prizes, reception and a great BBQ dinner.
- **Individual Golfer \$150** Includes golf fees, range balls, entry for door prizes, reception and a great BBQ dinner. You will be paired up other single players.

Bonus opportunities also include Door Prizes, Longest Drive and Closest to the Pin contests, and a Possible Hole in One prize (Car).

Fire a real M-4 rifle modified to shoot your golf ball 400 yards downrange on Hole 9 and 17 (\$5 a shot) as an alternate to hitting your ball. There is no stroke penalty for using this fun tee-off alternate. A 2 to 3 stroke saver!

The BBQ Dinner is open to spouses and non-golfing friends (visit our golf registration website for tickets).

Sponsorship Packages:

- **Title Sponsor \$8,000** Includes 8 Golfers in 2 Foursome Teams, Company Banner
- **Platinum Sponsor \$5,000** Includes 8 Golfers in 2 Foursome Teams Company Signage
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- **Closest to the Pin Sponsor \$500** Full color signage on the hole
- **Long Drive Sponsor \$500** Full color signage on the hole.
- **Putting Contest Sponsor \$300** Full color signage on putting green.
- **Hole Sponsor \$100** Full color signage at the golf course



For Golfer and Sponsor Information contact Mr. Wade Carroll at wdc Carroll9@comcast.net or call (904) 868-3861
 Or Mr. Steve Meeks at stephen_meeks@yahoo.com or call (904) 669-1628

Tournament Agenda

Registration and Range Opens
 Proceed to Carts
 Shotgun Tee-Off
 Fire M-4 tee shot on holes 9 and 17 (\$5.00 a shot)
 Longest Drive Hole
 Closest to the pin on all Par 3's
 Putting Contest
 Reception
 Awards and Prize Ceremony
 BBQ Dinner

Time

9:30 AM
 12:00 PM
 12:30 PM
 On Course
 On Course
 On Course
 At Turn
 After Tournament
 Club House
 Club House

Conveniently located an easy 3.6 miles west of I-95 at Exit 329 in north Saint Johns County



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 Or go online to: greenberetcharitygolf.com

By Mail, download a form and mail it to us.

Submitted by: David Treffinger

President, Vietnam Veterans of America

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

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

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

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

TAPS Monument Fact Sheet

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Diamond Etching/Engraving

Charles Custom Memorials, Lake City

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

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

Bricks Pavers: Stone Plus, Inc., Middleburg

Brick Pavers Engraving

Monument Services, Daytona Beach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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904.255.5524 // tmorales@coj.net



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TTY 255-5475, or email your
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Information about FL veterans organizations by county

ORGANIZATION	PHONE	PAGE	ORGANIZATION	PHONE	PAGE	ORGANIZATION	PHONE	PAGE			
POLK (Veteran Pop. 88,159) 1st CAVALRY 'A' TROOP meets @ VFW 2093 2nd Tues. AMERICAN LEGION POST 3 (863)633-8883 1575 HWY 17 S., Bartow, Fl. 33830 4 Lakes Veteran Ctrp 590 La Quinta Blvd, Winter Haven, Fl. 33881 AMERICAN LEGION POST 4 (863) 883-8710 1375 Ariana St., Lakeland, Fl. 33803 AMERICAN LEGION POST 8 (863) 283-7029 p 33 300 Ave. M. NW, Winter Haven, Fl. 33881 AMERICAN LEGION POST 34 (863)422-8840 107 11th St. N., Haines City, Fl. 33845 AMERICAN LEGION POST 71 863-689-6689 P.O. Box 442, Ft. Meade, Fl. 33841 American Legion POST 72 (863) 425-0644 1500 SR 37 N., Mulberry, Fl. AMVETS POST 32 (863) 688-3413 1339 E. Gary Rd., Lakeland, Fl. 33801 KOREAN WAR VETERANS Chapt. 158 (863) 533-7374 Buck Rogers 863-858-3558 buckrogers66@earthlink.net meets @ Amer. Leg. Post3, HWY 17S, Bartow 3rd Saturday MARINE CORPS LEAGUE HEART OF FL #1107 863-207-4200 meets @ A.L. Post 6, 300 AVE. M, Winter Haven, Fl. 4th Thursday at 1830 hrs (6:30 PM) Military Order of Purple Heart Chptr 535-FL-4 407-350-0224 Azaloe pk 1325 Grasslands Blvd, Lakeland, 33803 1st mon 6 POLK VETERANS COALITION 2938 Grasslands Dr., Lakeland, Fl. 33803 US Mil. Vets Motorcycles (863)294-5810 VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE Polk City. (863)634-6220 1290 Golfview Ave. Ste 116, BARTON FL 33851 VETERANS OF BATTLE OF BULGE 32 (863) 886-2121 330 E. Palm Dr., Lakeland, Fl. 33803 VA OUTPATIENT (866) 838-4400 p 86 2080 Meadowland Park., Lakeland, Fl. 33805 VFW POST 2297 (863) 687-5148 306 N. Central Ave., Lakeland, Fl. 33815 VFW POST 2420 (863) 678-9166 200 Central, Lake Wales, Fl. 33855 VFW POST 4288 (863) 293-7469 2441 7th St. SW., Winter Haven, Fl. 33880 VFW POST 6002 (863) 815-4777 9096 US 98N., Lakeland, Fl. 33810 PO 328, Kathleen 33849 PUTNAM Veteran Population 6,697 AMERICAN LEGION POST 45 386-328-8867 316 Osceola St., Palatka, Fl. 32177 AMERICAN LEGION 293 386-684-4464 145 S CR 315, Interlachen, Fl. 32148 FLEET RESERVE Branch 153 386-684-6289 207 Commonwealth Ave., Interlachen, Fl. 32148 PUTNAM COUNTY VETS SVC OFC. (904) 329-0327 PO Box 771, 2809 Cril Ave, Palatka, Fl. 32177 VFW POST 3349 386-328-2893 3201 Reid St., Palatka, Fl. 32177 VFW POST 10164 386-684-0839 1034 SR 20, Interlachen, Fl. 32148 (ALSO Amvets 1064)			SEMINOLE (Veteran Pop. 39,000) American Legion Post 53 407 678 9854 2544 Park Dr. Sanford, Fl. 32773 American Legion Post 183 (407) 831-8004 2708 Wells Ave. Fern Park, Fl. 32730 American Legion Memorial Post 243 http://videokelg.org/ 491 W Broadway St, Oviedo, Fl. 32765 AMVETS POST 17 (407) 322-2886 915 W. 11th Street, Sanford 32771 CASSELLBERRY VETERANS CLUB 407 260-1404 200 N. Concord St., Casselberry FL 32707 DAV 30 (407) 323-2710 3512 S. Orlando Dr., Sanford, Fl. 32773 FLEET RESERVE BRANCH 147 407-330-1706 3040 W. SR 46, Sanford, Fl. 32771 MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART Chapter 400 2651 Peony Dr., Oviedo, Fl. 32765 (407) 378-4560 PARALYZED VETS OF AMERICA (407) 328-7041 2711 S. Design Court, Sanford @200 N. Concord St., Casselberry, Fl. 3rd Sat @ 10am SEMINOLE CTY VETERANS SERVICES (407) 685-2347 520 W. Lake Mary Blvd Suite 100, Sanford, Fl. 32773 US SUBMARINE VETS (407) 222-8181 mtg @ Casselberry Vet, 200 Concord Cr Casselberry 32707 VA OUTPATIENT (386) 496-2080 p 55 2583 S. Volusia Ave. Ste 300, Orange City, Fl. 32763 VFW POST 5405 (407) 327-3151 420 N. Edgemoor Ave., Winter Springs, Fl. 32708 VFW POST 8207 (407) 339-6016 1520 N. Ronald Reagan Blvd, CR 427, Longwood, Fl. 32750 VFW POST 10139 (407) 883-9615 300 Lake Mills Rd, Chuluota, Fl. 32768 post10139@flvfw.com St. Johns (Veteran Pop. 17,554) AMERICAN LEGION POST 57 alp37adjutant@gmail.com PO Box 2204 St. Augustine, Fl. 32084 AMERICAN LEGION POST 235 (904) 285-2484 590 N. Wilderness TR., Ponte Vedra Beach, Fl. 32082 AMERICAN LEGION POST 194 (304) 412-1325 1029 Pearl St., St. Augustine, Fl. 32084 VFW POST 2391 (904) 797-5267 6184 US 1 S., St. Augustine, FL 32086 VFW POST 8096 (904) 446-8695 47 Old Kings Rd., Palm Coast, Fl. 32137 ST. JOHNS COUNTY VETS SVC OFC. (904) 209-6160 1955 US 1 S., Ste. 550, St. Augustine, Fl. 32086 VVA Leo C. Chase chapter 1084 Pres. James Campeau St. Johns Co. campeauxjames@gmail.com 904-315-6167 VVA Leo C. Chase chapter 1084 Pres. James Campeau St. LUCIE (Veteran Pop. 36,852) AIR FORCE 3073, ASSOC 364 772-871-8687 1150 SW California Blvd, Port St. Lucie, Fl. 34953 AMERICAN LEGION POST 40 (772) 461-1280 810 US HWY 1, Ft. Pierce, Fl. 34950 AMERICAN LEGION POST 171 (772) 595-8798 1814 N 21st St., Ft. Pierce, Fl. 34960 AMERICAN LEGION 355 (772) 871-6667 1150 SW California, Blvd., Ft. St. Lucie, Fl. 34968-0427 AMERICAN LEGION 358 (772) 595-8858 4350 Oleander Ave., Ft Pierce, 34982 AMVETS POST 15 (772) 464-7751 2024 SOUTH US 1, Ft. Pierce, Fl. 34950 Disabled American Veterans, Chap 113 772-671-6667 1150 SW California Blvd., Port St. Lucie, Fl. 34953 Jewish War Veterans, Chapter 705 772-871-6667 1150 SW California Blvd., Port St. Lucie, Fl. 34953 Korean War Veterans, Chapter 106 772-871-6667 1150 SW California Blvd., Port St. Lucie, Fl. 34953 MARINE CORPS LEAGUE DET. 688 1150 SW California, Ft. St. Lucie, Fl. 34953 PO Box 1785 (3475 Douglas Rd.), Ft. Pierce, Fl. 34981 VVA 566 (772) 579-5730 PO BOX 7365, Ft. St. Lucie, Fl. 34985 VFW POST 8058 (772) 464-1675 PO Box 1785 (3475 Douglas Rd.), Ft. Pierce, Fl. 34981 VVA 566 (772) 579-5730 PO BOX 7365, Ft. St. Lucie, Fl. 34985 SUMNER (Veteran Pop. 8,905) AMERICAN LEGION POST 18 401 E. Gulf Atlantic HWY, Wildwood, Fl. 34785 AMERICAN LEGION POST 62 (352) 444-2184 2287 North Cr 479 Lake Panasofflee, Fl AMERICAN LEGION POST 101 352 660-0201 PO BOX 101, 2881 E-C-48, Bushnell, Fl. 33581 AMVETS POST 793 (352) 793-2054 @VFW POST 10084 CR 470, Lake Panasofflee BUSHNELL VA NATIONAL CEMETERY (352) 793-7740 6502 SW 102nd Ave., Bushnell, Fl. 33513 Sumter County Veterans Service Offices 352-689-4450 7375 Powell Rd., Wildwood, Fl. 34785 VFW POST 10084 (Lake Panasofflee) (352) 793-2054 PO BOX 391, Lake Panasofflee, Fl. 33538 VFW POST 10137 (352) 793-8511 6036 CR 618, Veterans Memorial Hwy., Bushnell, Fl. 33513 VOLUSIA (Veteran Pop. 60,090) AMERICAN LEGION POST 6 386-740-0622 1087 Biscayne Blvd, Deland, Fl. 32724 AMERICAN LEGION POST # 17 (386) 427-9007 819 W. Canal St., New Smyrna Bch, Fl. 32168 AMERICAN LEGION POST 120 386-258-5275 481 Walker St. Holly Hill, Fl. 32117 AMERICAN LEGION POST 2915 321-696-8272 or 386-532-7915 www.alp.255deltona.org			AMERICAN LEGION POST # 267 (386) 672-7676 156 New Britain Ave., Ormond Bch, Fl. 32174 AMERICAN LEGION POST # 270 (386) 788-8800 119 Howes St., Port Orange, Fl. 32127 AMERICAN LEGION POST 295 386-210-4926 4497 US HWY 1, Edgewater, Fl. 32141 AMERICAN LEGION POST # 361 (386) 780-3887 PO Box 4581, 2848 S. Ridgewood, S. Daytona, Fl. 32121 AMVETS POST 2 386-402-7602 120B S. Ridgewood, Edgewater, Fl. 32132 AMVETS POST 13 (386) 943-9311 645 W. New York Ave., Deland, Fl. 32720 AMVETS POST 911 (386) 788-1014 5624 S. Ridgewood Ave. Pt. Orange, Fl. 32127 The West Volusia MOAA Chapter 388 479 3400Mtg monthly. Call Maj Curt Voebel or gtorci@gmail.com Thomas Jackson OWA USA (RET) Thomas Jackson@outlook.com Military Order of the Purple Heart Chptr 316 386-690-9533Mtg. @ VA Home, 1520 Mason Ave., Daytona Bch., July 7th 1pm VA OUTPATIENT (386) 323-7600 p 65 551 National Healthcare Dr., Daytona Bch, Fl. 32117 VET CENTER OF DAYTONA BEACH (386) 366-6600 1620 Mason Ave ste C, Daytona Bch, Fl. 32117 VA Deltona Community Based Outpatient Clinic p 65 1200 Deltona Blvd., Deltona, Fl. 32725 386-575-5000 VFW POST # 1590 (386) 252-5844 1013 Veterans Ct, Daytona Bch 32114 VFW POST # 2380 (386) 738-2380 510 S. Alabama Ave, DeLand 32724 VFW POST # 3282 (386) 761-7217 6810 S Williamson Blvd Port Orange 32134 VFW POST # 4250 (386) 423-1789 2350 Sunset Dr. New Smyrna Bch. 32168 VFW POST 8093 (386) 668-8648 351 S. Charles Richard Beal Blvd (17792), DeBary, Fl. 32713 VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHAPTER 1048 386-690-8553 PO Box 290262 Port Orange, Fl. 32128 Volusia County Veterans Service Office 386-740-6102 123 W. Indiana Ave., DeLand, Fl. 32720			 www.FemaleVeteransNetwork.org Cynthia Henderson Founder/President 2015 cynthia@femaleveteransnetwork.org 2719 Woodbrook St. Lecanto, FL 34601 (H) 352-628-6481 (O) 352-613-3215	Meetings are September - May at 1:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month at Faith Lutheran Church fellowship hall 935 S. Crystal Glen Drive, Lecanto, FL. Female Veterans Network is selling commemorative pins recognizing Female Veterans. Pins are available at Mac-I Signs, 7068 Grover Cleveland, Homosassa and Citrus County Radio Stations 964 Crystal Glen Drive, Lecanto Call Cynthia Henderson: 352-628-6481	 she wore these. It's our job to give her the best care anywhere. WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE
SARASOTA (Veteran Pop. 90,352) Air Force Association Sarasota-Manatee SARASOTA-memabee.afafaloria.org (941-371-0375) AMERICAN LEGION POST #30 (941) 350-8719 4015 Lookwood Ridge Rd., Sarasota, Fl. 34234 AMERICAN LEGION POST 159 (941) 485-4748 1770 E. Venice Ave., Venice, Fl. 34292-3190 AMERICAN LEGION POST 284 (941) 423-7311 8648 Tarneytown St. North Port, Fl. 34287-0915 AMERICAN LEGION POST #298 (941) 371-1526 5201 Richardson Rd, Sarasota, Fl. 34232 AMVETS POST 312 (941) 429-6403 p 31 7050 Chancellor, North Port, Fl. 34287 AMVETS Post 2030 (941) 429-1999 401 Ortiz Blvd., N. Port, Fl. 34287-1332 DAV CHPTR. 101 (941) 489-4500 MARINE CORPS LEAGUE DET. 643 941-406-7450 meets @ 600 E. Colonia Ln., Nokomis, Fl. 34275-2725 DAV CHAPTER 97 (941) 371-7844 7177 Bee Ridge Rd., Sarasota, Fl. 34241 FLORIDA VETERANS FOR COMMON SENSE Mike Bums/ former POW, 654 Siesta Dr., Sarasota, FL OPERATION ECO VETS - (941) 219-8715 Vet Services - 359 Braden Ave, Sarasota, 34243 SARASOTA COUNTY VETERAN Commission 941-544-8306 PO BOX 2055 Sarasota, Fl. 34230 president@scvo@gmail.com SARASOTA CTY VETERAN SERVICES (941) 861-2899 2200 Ringling Blvd., St. Ste. 125 Sarasota Fl, 34237 SARASOTA CTY VETERAN SERVICES (941) 861-3047 4000 S. Tamiami Trail, Ste. 139 Venice, Fl. 3482 SARASOTA COUNTY VETERAN SERVICES N. PORT (941) 429-7214 4970 City Hall Blvd., Room 264 N. Port, Fl. 34286 (941) 861-2899 JEWISH WAR VETERANS (941) 355-1227 4026 78th Pl. E. Sarasota, Fl. 34242 SARASOTA VA NATIONAL CEMETERY 941-861-6040 or toll free 877-851-8640 9510 SR72, Sarasota, FL 34241 UKRAINIAN AMERICAN VETS Post 40 941-587-3024 4100 S. Biscayne Dr., N. Port, Fl. 34297 SARASOTA VET CENTER 941-927-8286 ext.23186 4801 Swift Rd., Suite A, Sarasota, Fl. 34231 SRQ VETS.org = 941-777-8387 Mtg. at DAV Post 37, 7377 Bee Ridge Rd Sarasota, Fl. 34241. mail to:SRQ2 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota, Fl. 34233 email info@srqvets.org), VAOPC SARASOTA (941) 371-3349 p 65 5682 Bee Ridge Rd., #100, Sarasota, Fl. 34233 VFW POST 3233 941-365-1918 124 S. Tuttle Ave., Sarasota, Fl. 34262 VFW POST 8118 (941) 484-0118 832 E. Venice Ave., Venice, Fl. 34235											

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THE PLAYERS is proud of its longstanding tradition of honoring service members, veterans and their families.

Military Appreciation Day | Tuesday, March 11, 2025
Ceremony & Concert
4:30 p.m. | TPC Sawgrass | 17th Hole

Military Tickets

Complimentary admission will be offered to active-duty, retired, reserve, and National Guard members, along with one dependent, on Tuesday, March 11, and Wednesday, March 12, as well as one competition day (Thursday, March 13, to Sunday, March 16), while supplies last. Valid identification and credentials are required. Each ticket also includes a \$20 digital voucher, valid for food and nonalcoholic beverages on-site.

Veteran Tickets

Discounted admission will be offered to veterans and one dependent on Tuesday, March 11, and Wednesday, March 12, as well as one competition day (Thursday, March 13, to Sunday, March 16), while supplies last. Valid identification and credentials are required. Each ticket also includes a \$20 digital voucher, valid for food and nonalcoholic beverages on-site.

Patriots' Outpost presented by CSX

Service members, veterans and their families will have complimentary access to the Patriots' Outpost presented by CSX, an exclusive military lounge with complimentary snacks and beverages.

Fan Shop Discount

On Tuesday, March 11, active-duty, retired, and reserve service members will receive a 20% discount at the PGA TOUR Fan Shop in Stadium Village. This offer is valid on Tuesday only and requires a valid military ID at checkout.



From David “Flyboy” Shelton

Fellow PGR, Below is an updated schedule for the Vietnam and War on Terrorism Walls. September will be a busy month, so any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

FL PGR Vietnam & WoT Wall Schedule

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

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

Updated as of:
08/09/24

Date	Time		Duration	Wall(s)	Location	Comments
09/08/24	1200 hrs	Set-Up	7 Days	WOT	VA Hospital Lake Nona 13800 Veterans Way Orlando, FL 32827	Display in hospital main lobby
09/09/24 - 09/13/24		Display				9-11 Remembrance
09/14/25		Take Down				Ceremony 09/11/24 @ 1100 hrs
09/21/24	0900 - 1700 hrs	Set-Up / Display	1 Day	Vietnam / WoT	OB's Restaurant & Lounge 1750 N. Woodland Blvd Deland, FL, 32720	National POW / MIA Recognition Day 2024 CVMA 20-13 Event
09/27/24	1200 hrs	Escort	2 Days	Vietnam / WoT	American Legion Post 72 1500 N. Church Ave. Mulberry, FL, 33860	Fall Festival
	1400 hrs	Set-Up				Vietnam Vets
09/28/24	0900 - 1800 hrs	Display				ALR
10/25/25	1400 hrs	Set-Up	1 Day	Vietnam / WoT	American Legion Post 45 316 Osceola St. Palatka, FL, 32177	
10/26/24	0900 - 1600 hrs	Display / Take Down				
Possible escort of The Walls to the event						
11/02/24	0700 hrs	1700 hrs	1 Day	Vietnam / WoT	City Hall (across the street) 300 W. Plant St Winter Garden, FL, 34757	Challenge 22 Ruck Walk Suicide Awareness
11/10/24	1100 hrs	Escort / Set-Up	2 Days	Vietnam / WoT	Anastasia Baptist Church 1650 A1A S St. Augustine, FL, 32080	Veteran's Day Ceremony
11/11/24	0800 - 1100 hrs	Display / Take Down				Escort from Daytona to St. Augustine
03/29/25	1100 hrs		2 Weeks	Vietnam	VA Hospital Lake Nona 13800 Veterans Way Orlando, FL, 32827	Erect in hospital main lobby Vietnam War Veterans Day
Dates and times to be verified						
05/24/25	0800 hrs	Set-Up / Display	3 Days	Vietnam / WoT	City of Clermont Highland Pavilion Complex 330 3rd St Clermont, FL, 32711	Memorial Day Ceremony
05/25/25	1600 hrs	Take Down				Stage - Home Depot Rt. 50 Clermont, FL
11/10/25	1100 hrs	Escort / Set-Up	2 Days	Vietnam / WoT	Anastasia Baptist Church 1650 A1A S St. Augustine, FL, 32080	Veteran's Day Ceremony
11/11/25	0800 - 1100 hrs	Display / Take Down				Escort from Daytona to St. Augustine
03/28/26	0800 hrs	Escort / Set-Up	2 Days	Vietnam	Florida National Cemetery 6502 SW 102nd Ave. Bustnell, FL, 33513	Vietnam War Veterans Day
03/29/26	To be verified	Display / Take Down				
Dates and times to be verified						

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- ✔ Heal Combat Trauma
- ✔ Prevent Suicides

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Matthew.Burke@10CAN.org

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M79



M60



1911



M14



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M40-A1



M70



M870



M72



M26



M18 CLAYMORE



M67



★ Veterans Food Assistance Program ★

What?

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

How to Apply

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

Veteran Qualifications

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

Other Details

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

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

**Alton Green Memorial
American Legion Post 194**

Save the Date

19 SEPT 2025

77th Anniversary

GOLF
Tournament

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



You've made our country
A BETTER PLACE.

Enjoy your well-earned retirement at Silver Creek.

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

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

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



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



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

Assisted Living Facility #12928

The Fire Watch

Our stand against Veteran suicide took great strides forward in 2024, with The Fire Watch's network of individuals and organizations trained to identify and support Veterans in crisis continuing to grow and have a positive impact throughout Florida – thank you to all the Watch Standers and Veteran Safe Places that have joined our mission to end Veteran suicide in our state!



HOW VA DISABILITY RATINGS WORK

BENEFITS CHART - Each increased level includes all benefits of the previous levels.

SERVICE CONNECTED PERCENTAGE	DESCRIPTION
0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-point Veteran preference in federal hiring • No cost health care and prescription drugs for service-connected disabilities. Small co pays may be applied for inpatient and prescription drugs-Must be enrolled in VA Healthcare • VA Life Insurance guaranteed acceptance up to age 81 up to \$40,000. • Use of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) retail facilities, in-person and online. -Must be enrolled in VA Healthcare • Non-VA Urgent Care visits at \$30/visit including 14-day prescription (in network)-Must be enrolled in VA Healthcare • Non-VA Emergency Room for service-connected conditions or non-service-connected conditions. If you have OHI (Other Health Insurance), but it does not fully cover the costs of treatment, VA may pay certain costs for which you are personally liable – Email to: VHAEmergencyNotification@va.gov OR Call 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842) within 72 hours-Must be enrolled in VA Healthcare • VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP)-Must be enrolled in VA Healthcare
10%-20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cost health care - Must be enrolled in VA Healthcare • Prescription drugs for service-connected disabilities. Small co pays may be applied for inpatient stays and prescription drugs-Must be enrolled in VA Healthcare • Waiver of VA funding fee for home loan • Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (10% with a serious employment handicap) • Burial and plot allowance
30%-40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facility • Additional compensation for eligible dependents (may include aid and attendance for eligible spouse)
50%-90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cost health care and prescription medications – no copays-Must be enrolled in VA Healthcare • Concurrent receipt of military retired pay with 20 years (15 TERA) • Add 3 no cost Non-VA Urgent Care visits including 14-day prescription per calendar year for the Urgent Care visit
100% No restriction to income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cost dental care at the VA • DoD Uniformed Services ID card • Federal student loan forgiveness • Space-A Flights (Cat VI) – Veteran & Dependents INCONUS/Territories --With Permanent & Total (P&T) Status-- • All Non-VA ER – Must contact your VAMC within 72 hours • Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA or CHAPTER 35) • Dependent's healthcare through CHAMPVA–Civilian Health and Medical Program (if not Tricare eligible) • VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) for CHAMPVA eligible dependents
Individual Unemployability – 60%-90%	
Same as 100% except must be unemployable due to service-connected disabilities with part time income restriction \$15,852/year (2024)	
<p>VA Derivative Benefits Eligibility Service-Connected Matrix</p> <p>https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/derivative_sc.asp</p>	

**WANT TO COMPETE AGAINST
AMERICA'S ELITE FORCES?
TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT!**



PRESENTS

MEMORIAL WEEKEND VETERAN GAMES

SATURDAY, MAY 24, 2025

AT SALTWATERS SHOOTING CLUB, ST. AUGUSTINE, FL

REGISTER AT WWW.OPERATIONBARNABAS.COM

\$200 PER INDIVIDUAL

Join us to honor those who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces while competing against RECON, MARSOC, SEALS, ARMY SF, and SWAT.

More Information Call: (850) 814 4320

Photo: Photo.com

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



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

PUBLIC IS ALWAYS INVITED TO ATTEND!

Reunion Date: May 8th—11th, 2025

@ Wickham Park in Melbourne FL

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

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

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

First Responders Honored and Requested to join in!

Scan here for all
of our links!



Family Friendly!

**There will be a
"Kid Zone"**

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



Wickham Park: 2500 Parkway Dr. Melbourne, FL 32935

• Health Care
 • Education
 • Earned Benefits

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

OPERATION STRONG & READY
 A Military Wellness Program

STARTING JULY 30TH , 2024
OSR - VETERANS ONLY!

To register stop by the Welcome center or email EHernandez@fcymca.org!

Program Overview

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

Program Goals

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

Who Can Participate?

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

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

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

Program Cost

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

Program Details

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

The 90-minute OSR session consists of:

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

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



National League of POW/MIA Families

Hello everyone!

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

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

nationalleague@pow-miafamilies.org

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



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

PH ---703/465-7432

www.pow-miafamilies.org

FAX ---703/465-7433

2024 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

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

_____ @\$20/member

_____ Total Amount: _____

IRS EIN# 23-7071242

How to report a Veteran's death to VA

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

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

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

How to report the death of a Veteran

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

Options for reporting:

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

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

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

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

Discharge document (like a DD214)

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

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

Discharge document (like a DD214).

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

Full name.

Social Security Number or VA claim number.

Date of birth.

Date of death.

Branch of service.

Best practices to avoid survivor benefit scams

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Burials and Memorials

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

How to Apply

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

Apply for Pre-Need Burial Eligibility

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

VA Memorial Benefits

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

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

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

The following burial benefits may be provided:

Burial in a VA national cemetery

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

A government furnished grave liner

Perpetual care of the gravesite

A headstone or marker with an inscription

A burial flag

A Presidential Memorial Certificate

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

Burial in a private cemetery

A government headstone, marker, or medallion

A burial flag

A Presidential Memorial Certificate

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

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

VA Requirements

Discharge papers to establish your eligibility for burial services



Stories of Service

St. Johns County Veterans Oral History Project



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

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

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

A sincere thanks to them all.



View the Digital Exhibit:

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



Main: 904-824-2872

Research Library: 904-825-2333

271 Charlotte Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084

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

Surviving Spouse Milestones

Not all milestones apply to every persons situation

One Year Mark:

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

Two Year Mark:

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

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

- Apply for Home of Selection (HOS) extension

Three Year Mark:

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

Spouse Turns 52:

- If disabled, can remain and retain SSA Survivor Benefits

Spouse Turns 55:

- Can remarry and not lose SBP eligibility

Spouse Turns 57:

- Can remarry not lose DIC eligibility

Spouse Turns 60:

- Can remarry and retain SSA Survivor Benefits

Surviving Youth Milestones

Not all milestones apply to every persons situation

Child Turns 16:

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

Child Turns 18:

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

Child Turns 21:

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

Child Turns 22:

- Loss of Child-Only SBP regardless of school enrollment

Child Turns 23:

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

Child Turns 26:

- Loss of TRICARE Young Adult

Child Turns 33:

- Loss of Fry Scholarship eligibility

FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



Vietnam Veterans of America



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

Chapter/President/email/Location

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



REMEMBER WHAT OUR MEDAL STANDS FOR:

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

Veterans Council of Clay County:

President: Ansil Lewis

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

Mission Statement:

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



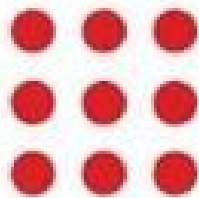
The Veterans Council of St. Johns County is comprised of representatives from various veterans' organizations that work with city and county governments and organizations to assist with matters concerning veterans and veterans' activities.

What the Council has done:

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

SA-0003147064-01

rans
Line



Veterans Crisis Line

73-8255
PRESS 1

1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

Veterans
Crisis Line
00-273-8255 PRESS 1



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

STAND BY THEM

Confidential help for
Veterans and their families

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

Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to (888)339-1111

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



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

Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255



Legal Aid for Veterans

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

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

1.866.486.6161

Call Today!

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



We Can Help With

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

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

Become a Watch Stander with The Fire Watch

Veterans Councils of Northeast Florida



BAKER COUNTY

President: Larry Porterfield

Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

Location:

MacClenny Primitive Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall on North Boulevard

Time : 1800 (6pm)

CLAY COUNTY

President: Ansil Lewis, SgtMaj USMC, ret

Meetings:

First Wednesday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1100 (11am)

904-658-0105

NASSAU COUNTY

President: Mike Doran

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

DUVAL COUNTY

President

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37
Main Building
San Juan Avenue

Time: 1900 (7 pm)

St. Johns County

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

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



We are inviting all veterans to visit our website at:

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

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

Please join our group on Facebook at:

<http://veteranscouncilsjc.org>

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

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

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

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

He can be contacted at webmaster@veteranscouncilsjc.org

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

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

Send to: rothfeldm@gmail.com



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(physical location)

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

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

Service is by appointment.

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

Joseph D. McDermott Director

Lori Chapman Assistant VSO

Shauna Holton Assistant VSO

Jonathan Rojas Assistant VSO

April Manner Administrative Coordinator

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