



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

P.O. Box 2117

St. Augustine, FL 32085

Bill Dudley, Publisher

Michael Rothfeld, Editor

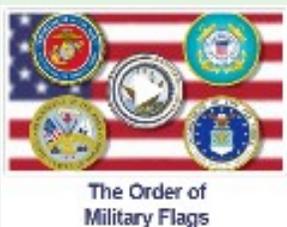
Volume 9, Issue 10

Message from the Chairman

October 2020

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Fellow Veterans.

Finally...this past week the Veterans Council received the word it has been waiting for months to receive. We were notified that the US Senate through Senator Rubio and Senator Scott's office that the naming of our VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) for Leo C. Chase Jr had been approved. Days following that announcement, we were informed that a companion bill had cleared the US House sponsored by Congressmen John Rutherford and Michael Waltz. The bill was then sent to President Trump's office for signature on Thursday and hopefully was signed by the President on Friday. Once the President has signed the bill it will then be sent to the VA assuring that all signage on the building when it opens next year will bear the name of Leo C. Chase Jr. This was a very important milestone for the veterans of St. Johns County who had recommended last year that the CBOC be named for one of our local heroes who gave his life in the service of our country.

The CBOC is making tremendous progress in the construction phase. Progress pictures appear in this addition of the Patriot Reader. Barring any unforeseen delays, the opening of the clinic is on track for mid-summer next year.

The Veterans Council resumed live meetings this month utilizing the St. Johns County Administration Building main auditorium as the venue. Our two speakers were Vicky Oakes, St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections and Gayle Ballard, St. Augustine Lighthouse Director of Interpretative Division. Both ladies gave a very interesting, informative, and educational presentation. The Veterans Council will continue meeting at this location for the foreseeable future and would like to thank the County Commissioners and County Administration for the use of this wonderful facility.

The documentary being produced by the Veterans Council for release on Veterans Day this year is progressing very well. The documentary will honor all our veterans on Nov.11 and will feature 5 of our local Korean War veterans on the 70th anniversary of the



beginning of the action in Korea. Given the restrictions for large gatherings placed on us from the Governor's office due to the COVID-19 virus, we felt this was the best way to honor all our veterans this year and look forward to next year when hopefully we can again thank our veterans with a live program.

On Thurs. Sept. 10, the Veterans Council held a brief ceremony to honor the veterans whose names appear on the Confederate monument before it was relocated to a new location at a park at Trout Creek. The ceremony was conducted on the waterfront in downtown St. Augustine at the City Pier area before it was loaded on a barge to be transported to its final destination.

Bill Dudley
Chairman
Veterans Council of
St. Johns County

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



Clyde E Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home has begun welcoming in “essential caregivers” (AKA families)! It’s a learning process and slow going, but we’re excited to be moving forward!



Although we’re able to receive some “essential caregivers” into the building, we continue to offer our porch visits as well as our teleconferencing visits. We’re still celebrating birthdays!





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



The Support Committee invites everyone to attend its **next scheduled meeting**. The meeting will be at **6:00pm**. The meeting will take place at Community Hospice, **4266 Sunbeam Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32257 in Conference Room A.**

**Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee Meetings for 2018
At Community Hospice of NE FL.
4266 Sunbeam Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257
Hadlow Bldg – Conference Room A 6:00pm**

**DATES OF 2020 SC at JNC MEETINGS, All on Mondays
Oct 5th, Nov 2nd, Dec 7th**

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA 2020 - Saturday, December 19th.

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

Chairman: Steve Spickelmier

Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley, Treasurer: Pat Welch

Secretary: Kathy Church, Judge Advocate: Don Guthrie

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

Chaplain: Pat Archuleta, Public Affairs: Pat Mulvihill

**The Veterans Council of St. Johns County meets
on the last Thursday of the month, all are invited
to attend. We meet at the County Administration
Building, 500 San Sebastian View, at 7 pm**



The next Council meeting will be Thursday October 29

All SJC Health Guidelines will be followed.

Please stay safe.

Bill Dudley, Chairman, VC of SJC



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



The Veterans Council of St. Johns County will be publishing a Special Edition of the Patriot

Reader in November.

The Nov. issue will feature stories, memories, pictures, of Florida veterans from all services who served during war or peace time.

Stories and articles should be in Word format one page or less, and pictures should be in jpg format with a brief description. Submission deadline is Sunday, October 25. The Veterans Council of St. Johns County will be publishing a Special Edition of the Patriot Reader in November.

The Nov. issue will feature stories, memories, pictures, of Florida veterans from all services who served during war or peace time.

Stories and articles should be in Word format one page or less, and pictures should be in jpg format with a brief description. Submission deadline is Sunday, October 25.

In conjunction with this November Veterans Edition of the Patriot Reader there will be a link to a new, never before seen Korean War documentary featuring five local KWVA members.

We ask you to forward this message to all your veteran friends and organizations.

Please help us make this unusual Veterans Day 2020 Celebration one to remember.

All questions should be directed to editor Michael Rothfeld

rothfeldm@gmail.com



For Immediate Release
Contact: Alex Lanfranconi
AlexL@mail.house.gov

September 23, 2020
(202) 225-2501

Rutherford, Waltz Hail Passage of Bill to Name St. Augustine VA Clinic After Vietnam War Hero
Bipartisan legislation now heads to president's desk for signature

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House of Representatives passed legislation, first introduced by Congressman John Rutherford (FL-04) and Congressman Michael Waltz (FL-06), to name a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) clinic in St. Johns County after Army Private First Class Leo C. Chase, Jr., the first man from St. Johns County to be killed in the Vietnam War. The new VA outpatient clinic will be located at 207 Stratton Road in St. Augustine, and will be designated the “Leo C. Chase, Jr. Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic.”

“Private First Class Leo C. Chase, Jr., is an American hero,” said Rutherford. “Northeast Florida is proud to tell the story of his courage in the face of battle and to honor his sacrifice on behalf of our country and freedom. I look forward to President Trump signing this legislation into law, ensuring every person walking into the St. Augustine VA clinic remembers the life and legacy of Private First Class Leo C. Chase, Jr.”

“Army Private First Class Leo C. Chase Jr. is an inspiration to America and to our community,” said Waltz. “He was only five days from finishing his tour of duty in Vietnam when he and other troopers were airlifted to South Vietnam, where Chase lost his life. He fought and died for our country. It is more than fitting to have this new VA clinic providing top-notch care named in his honor, so all who enter will know his name and his story.”

Army Private First Class Leo C. Chase, Jr., was killed on November 15, 1965, in the Ia Drang battle dramatized in the book and film, *We Were Soldiers*. Chase was a rifleman in Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry. He flew into landing zone X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley of South Vietnam, near the Cambodian border. The helicopter troops were immediately attacked by thousands of soldiers of the 320th, 33rd, and 66th regiments of the North Vietnamese Army in a battle that lasted four days. Outnumbered nearly ten to one, Chase and the other members of his platoon bravely repulsed many massive ground assaults from the Viet Cong, all the while taking fire from enemy snipers.

In the end, Chase and many other members of his platoon lost their lives, but not without accomplishing their objective. The American lines held because of the courage and sheer determination of the Seventh Cavalry.

**County Veterans hold ceremony men named Confederate memorial ceremony honors
Confederate veterans before memorial is put on barge**

**Prayers, playing of taps part of event for men listed on city memorial; crews move
structure onto barge**

Sheldon Gardner, St. Augustine Record

A barge carrying St. Augustine's Confederate monument passes through the Bridge of Lions in the city on Thursday. The structure was being taken up the Intercoastal Waterway and down the St. Johns River to Trout Creek Fish Camp on State Road 13 in western St. Johns County. The monument was moved from the Plaza de la Constitucion on Wednesday.

The Confederate monument that was removed from the Plaza de la Constitucion in St. Augustine is loaded onto a barge Thursday. It will be shipped to its new home at Trout Creek Fish Camp.

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County holds a ceremony on Thursday morning on the bayfront next to St. Augustine's Confederate memorial to honor the men listed on the structure before it was loaded onto a barge. Crews planned to take the memorial up the Intercoastal Waterway and down the St. Johns River to Trout Creek Fish Camp on State Road 13 in western St. Johns County. The memorial was moved from the Plaza de la Constitucion on Wednesday. The City Commission voted 3-2 in June to remove the memorial from the Plaza.

Veterans Council of St. Johns County Chairman Bill Dudley speaks on the bayfront next to St. Augustine's Confederate memorial during a ceremony on Thursday that honored the men listed on the structure. Crews planned to load the memorial on a barge that day so it could be taken up the Intracoastal Waterway and down the St. Johns River to Trout Creek Fish Camp on State Road 13 in western St. Johns County. The memorial was moved from the Plaza de la Constitucion on Wednesday.

A small group of veterans gathered Thursday morning for a ceremony in honor of the men listed on St. Augustine's Confederate memorial.

The ceremony included the playing of taps, prayers and remarks by veterans and a priest.

Crews removed the memorial from the Plaza de la Constitucion on Wednesday. It was still in two pieces on Thursday morning near the St. Augustine Municipal Marina.

Crews moved it onto a barge in the afternoon so it could be taken via local waterways to Trout Creek Fish Camp on State Road 13 in St. Johns County.

The memorial lists names of local men who died serving the Confederacy. It had been in the Plaza for more than 140 years.

The ceremony drew a small crowd that included the press, city officials, members of the moving crew

and relatives of men listed on the memorial.

Jill Pacetti, who is related to one of the soldiers, called the memorial's removal "heartbreaking."

"You go from angry to sad, back to angry again," she said. "You know, it has every right to be there ... And it's sad to see what's happening all over the country. I didn't think St. Augustine would have come to that, but here we are. And we just pray that it doesn't create a domino effect. So we're here to pay our respects to the veterans that are listed, and we just move forward."

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County opposed the memorial's removal and — along with Pacetti, other descendants and another veterans group — sued the city in an attempt to get the city's Historic Architectural Review Board to review the removal plans.

Before the move began, city officials said they would preserve the memorial.

The lawsuit was dismissed, but the city's contractor, Progressive Construction, has moved forward carefully to preserve the memorial.

The Veterans Council arranged Thursday's ceremony.

"The Veterans Council felt that it would be appropriate that we would ... give them the respect and the honor that they deserve before (the monument is) relocated to another location," said Bill Dudley, chairman of the Veterans Council.

Some in the community see the memorial as a reminder of slavery and racism because it honors Confederate soldiers. Protesters sought its removal over the past few years.

During the ceremony, Dudley said the crowd was gathered not to judge the men but to honor their service.

Don Kabrich, a U.S. Army veteran and senior adults pastor at Anastasia Baptist Church, shared similar thoughts.

"When faced with certain death, they overcame fear and lived their last moments courageously," he said. "No matter who we are, as warriors past or present knowing this does something to us. We all consider that a warrior's courage, bravery and sacrifice are honorable. We may not honor the cause, but we can't help but honor the individual warrior."

Kabrich said they were ordinary men with families at home and were "not meant to be forgotten."

"We are carrying away a symbol that causes pain, but we must not forget these lives. Continue to rest, warriors, for we truly understand your sacrifice," Kabrich said. "We'll always honor it. On the wrong side of history you found yourselves, but on the right side of a warrior's virtue you can be counted."

After three volleys were fired eastward at the edge of the Matanzas River, and after a man in uniform

played taps, the Rev. Tom Willis, of the Cathedral Basilica, said a prayer.

After the ceremony ended, Glenda Frawley stopped for brief interview.

Frawley said she is related to some of the Menorcans listed on the memorial.

Menorcans are descended from an 18th century "group of contract workers — indentured servants — who had been recruited from several Mediterranean venues by Dr. Andrew Turnbull," according to historian Susan Parker.

They were brought to East Florida to work for Turnbull and endured harsh conditions. Survivors came to St. Augustine for refuge.

Many of the more than 40 men listed on the Confederate memorial "were of Menorcan or Spanish descent," according to a plaque created for the memorial.

Frawley said it was sad to see the memorial removed, but she expressed gratitude for the ceremony.

"I thought it was beautiful," she said. "I appreciate that the veterans came and did that and gave a sendoff, so at least we have something in their honor."



St. Augustine New CBOC Progress Pictures

Submitted by Craig Pasanan

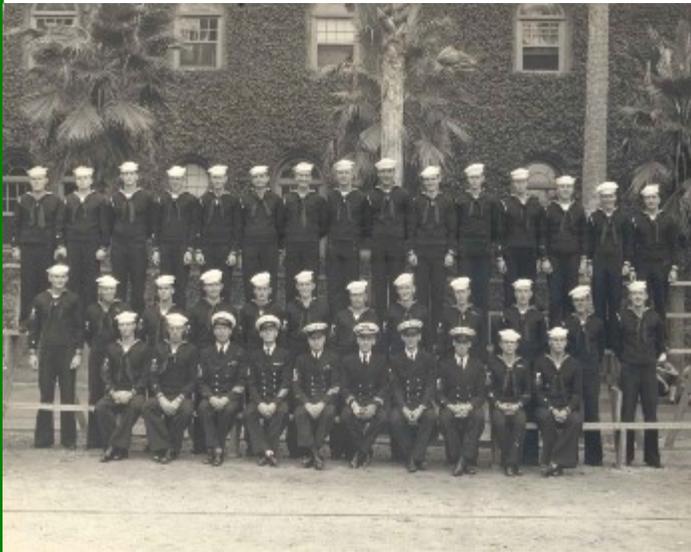


World War II's Impact on America's First Coast

Part Five: All Quiet on the American Front

By Rick Cain

By the summer of 1942, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Beach Patrol was patrolling our local shoreline, and the USCG Station at St. Augustine was sending sailors to various duty stations around the globe as the first classes held their graduation ceremonies on the lawns of the Hotel Ponce de Leon. Some graduates remained here in St. Augustine serving in various capacities.



By the summer of 1942, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Beach Patrol was patrolling our local shoreline, and the USCG Station at St. Augustine was sending sailors to various duty stations around the globe as the first classes held their graduation ceremonies on the lawns of the Hotel Ponce de Leon. Some graduates remained here in St. Augustine serving in various capacities.

Graduates of the training centers were also sent to other locations in Florida for advanced training. Many would learn to conn Higgins Boats, the landing craft that delivered troops to the beaches of France during Operation Overlord, the codename for the D-Day Invasion of Europe on June 6, 1944. Camp Gordon Johnston located in the Panhandle of Florida in Carrabelle was one of several training camps for D-Day. Florida's beaches provided the ideal terrain for the task. Coast Guard boat pilots practiced maneuvers designed to mimic what they would encounter during landings in Normandy.



St. Augustine became a favorite weekend leave destination for the nearly 2 million men and women who trained for World War II at locations across Florida. African American training centers were located in Daytona Beach and Deland, within close travel distance to St. Augustine. African American men and women took advantage of Butler Beach, an all-black beach located just south of St. Augustine Beach on A1A.



Photo above: Segregation forced whites and blacks to frequent separate beaches. Butler Beach provided African Americans a private beach to enjoy the water and sun. African American servicemen and women from all over Florida came to Butler Beach to take leave and enjoy some “fun in the sun.” (Source: St. Augustine Historical Society Research Library) Photos below: the servicemen found time for fishing as well as comradery among the men living and training together.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt encouraged the branches of service to form sports teams with the trainees and compete against each other. The USCG Training Center had a baseball and basketball team that competed against other training centers. In some cases, the men who played here went on to fame as major league players, such as Doyle Ladd who played on the Coast Guard baseball team and went on to pitch for the Chicago Cubs after the war. Other trainees, both men and women, enjoyed the beaches and fishing. Despite the war, the men and women would remember their time spent here with great fondness.





Photo above left: The SPARs enjoyed getting to know one another while also visiting the historic sites around the town. Here they gathered for a picture around one of the monuments on the plaza. Photos above right: Leagues formed among the military branches competed from around the state in baseball and basketball.

As World War II continued, Americans on the homefront looked for ways to support the war effort. Citizens who could not serve, often volunteered in some capacity such as in Civil Defense or the American Red Cross. Housewives formed the American Red Cross Ambulance Corps in St. Augustine and both men and women volunteered for Lookout Duty: sitting at the top of a wooden tower reporting any aircraft that flew overhead. School children joined in “the cause” by competing with other states in collecting scrap metal. These scrap metal drives collected over 30 million tons of metal for the war industries.



Photo left: Cities and neighborhoods launched scrap metal and rubber drives to collect vital material for wartime industries. Here a family poses next to their accumulated material. (Source: Florida Memory)

Florida became the site of several German prisoner-of-war camps. In total, 500 prisoner-of-war camps were established in Florida able to house 378,000 prisoners. The camps provided prisoners with English lessons along with table tennis, pianos, mess halls, sleeping quarters and latrines. The ranking Nazi Party members were identified and separated from the rank and file soldiers who spent most of their days working in the orange groves.

Camp Blanding in nearby Starke, Florida, was one of the locations of a German prisoner of war camp.

The impact of World War II on the state of Florida and still bears visible reminders. St. Augustine's Plaza de la Constitución contains a monument that pays homage to the men from the city who served and died in World War II.



Photos above: The War Memorial stands by the old market on the Plaza in downtown St. Augustine. The tablet (right) contains the names of servicemen from St. Augustine who have given the ultimate sacrifice for their country. (Source: www.staugustine.com)

On the property of the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum (SALMM), there are two small buildings on the northern end of the site: the garage and the Coastal Lookout Building. These reminders stand as a tribute to the determination, dedication and sacrifice borne by the men and women of the United States in all branches of service.

On August 1, 2020, the Museum opened a new exhibit entitled “Guardians of the First Coast: Building Readiness for World War II.” The exhibit focuses on the opening days of the war and how the First Coast responded to start of the world-wide conflict. We at the Museum are proud to honor, remember, and most importantly share the stories of our veterans. We will continue to commemorate the sacrifice of so many to protect the freedoms that we enjoy today.



ST. AUGUSTINE
LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM

Fire Watch invites residents to help fight veteran suicide

The Ponte Vedra Recorder, By Shaun Ryan

It's no secret that the veteran suicide rate is on the rise. That's why the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has been investing more money in mental health each year.

In Northeast Florida, five counties have joined together to combat this trend regionally. Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties signed an interlocal agreement in November 2019 creating The Fire Watch, a program designed to get at-risk veterans the support they need while there's still time.

"We certainly have a crisis," said Fire Watch Executive Director Nick Howland. "We have a crisis that is growing. We have a crisis where traditional methods do not seem to work. We're at a point where, if we don't figure out how to reverse the trend now, it's only going to get worse."

Indeed, the rate of veteran suicide is 1.5 times that of civilian suicide.

"We've lost over 6,000 veterans to suicide every year since 2008," Howland said.

In 2017 — the latest year for which data is available — 6,139 U.S. military veterans took their own lives. The highest number was in the over-55 age group, but the highest rate was in the 18-to-34 category.

That's significant, because that's the age at which members of the military are transitioning out of active duty.

While many of the conditions that precipitate veteran suicide are the same as for non-veterans, untreated depression, life-changing events and feelings of hopelessness and loneliness are made worse by long deployments, exposure to conflict, long periods of isolation and PTSD.

And, due to COVID-19 and the isolation brought on by social distancing, Howland ex

pects the numbers for 2020 to be extraordinarily high.

In addition to identifying and resolving weaknesses in the continuum of local resources, The Fire Watch conducts considerable community outreach. One of the key components is the Watch Stander Program, which educates members of the community about risk signs and resources available to veterans.

This is one way area residents can do their part to help those who have served their nation.

To join the effort, all one has to do is go to thefirewatch.org, click on Watch Standers and enroll. The process takes about 45 minutes, and those completing it will receive a wristband, car sticker and a wallet card that tells where to go for help.

Right now, The Fire Watch has a few hundred Watch Standers already signed up. The goal is 10,000, and Howland is encouraging people to get involved.

“Everybody has a role to play in ending this national tragedy,” he said.

In the 10 months since The Fire Watch was first formed, many people have stepped up to help the cause.

“We’ve had just amazing support from the community,” said Howland, “from our elected leaders, from the business community and, most importantly, from our other veteran service organizations.”

In particular, K9s For Warriors, the Cohen Veterans Network, the Wounded Warrior Project and the United Way have been especially supportive.

To learn more about The Fire Watch or to see a list of 400 resources available to Northeast Florida veterans, go to thefirewatch.org



For Immediate Release
Friday, September 18, 2020
[View Online](#)

Contact: Dan Holler
202-224-3041

RUBIO, SCOTT APPLAUD SENATE PASSAGE OF BILL TO NAME ST. AUGUSTINE VA FACILITY AFTER VIETNAM WAR HERO

Washington, D.C. — U.S. Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Rick Scott (R-FL) applauded the Senate passage of legislation to name a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) clinic in St. Johns County Florida after Private First Class Leo C. Chase, Jr., the first man from St. Johns County to be killed in the Vietnam War. This new VA outpatient clinic is located at 207 Stratton Road, St. Augustine, Florida, and, if signed by the President, would be designated as the “Leo C. Chase, Jr. Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic.” Rubio introduced this legislation in May 2019 alongside Representatives John Rutherford (R-FL) and Michael Waltz (R-FL), who introduced companion legislation in the House of Representatives. The bill now heads to the U.S. House of Representatives for consideration.

“At 23 years old Private Chase was killed while serving with an Airmobile unit in Vietnam just five days before he would have gone home. Private Chase’s life served as an inspiration to others before and after his death,” **Rubio said.** “While we can never repay his sacrifice to our nation, I am proud that the Senate has passed legislation that will name the new VA clinic in St. Augustine after an American hero who made the ultimate sacrifice.”

“We can never truly express our gratitude for the men and women who serve our nation, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedoms,” **Scott said.** “I’m proud to honor the life and service of Private First Class Leo C. Chase, Jr. with this legislation, and I applaud its passage in the Senate.”

Army Private First Class Leo C. Chase, Jr. was killed on November 15, 1965 in the Ia Drang battle dramatized in the book and film, *We Were Soldiers*. Chase was a rifleman in Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry. He flew into landing zone X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley of South Vietnam, near the Cambodian border. The helicopter troops were immediately attacked by thousands of soldiers of the 320th, 33rd, and 66th regiments of the North Vietnamese Army in a battle that lasted four days. Outnumbered nearly ten to one, Chase and the other members of his platoon bravely repulsed many

massive ground assaults from the Viet Cong, all the while taking fire from enemy snipers.

In the end, Chase and many other members of his platoon lost their lives, but not without accomplishing their objective. The American lines held because of the courage and sheer determination of the Seventh Cavalry.

###

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Meet the Collections and Curators



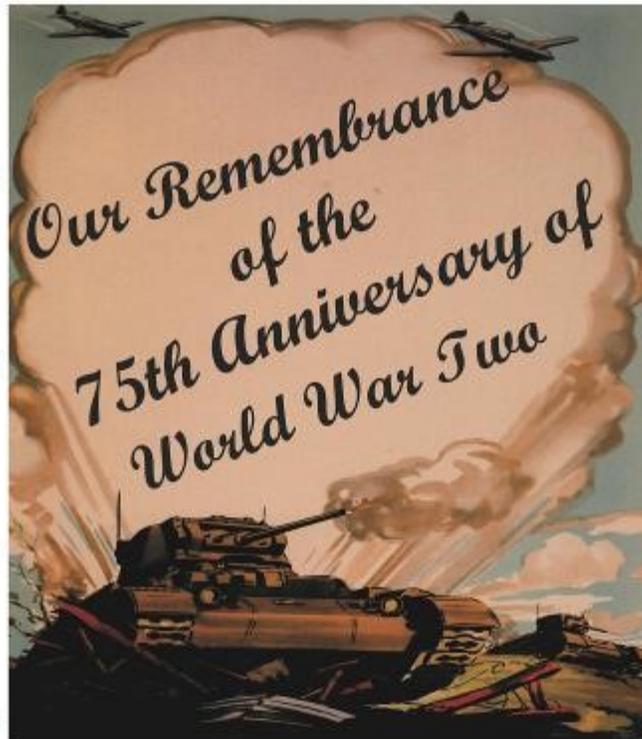
presents



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Friday, November 6, 2020

1p.m. to 7p.m.

Lightner Museum

St. Augustine, FL

For more information and how to register to attend: <https://library.flagler.edu/lightner-event>

The Story Behind The Most Revered Naval Tradition Of Them All: Burial At Sea

BY DAN DOYLE, THEVETERANSSITE.COM BLOG

This video brings home the power, the dignity, and the grace of the ancient naval tradition of burial at sea. It is offered to give you a sense of the drama and the majesty of the final salute for those who have fallen and who have served in peacetime or in war at sea on our nation's United States Navy ships

It is a simple service done with profound respect.

In war, burial at sea is a necessity. It is often done in the lull that follows an intense sea battle where there have been many casualties.

The chaos of war, as was seen in the huge naval battles of WWII, and the swiftness with which another air attack, or ship to ship combat came upon those who served in the fleet, especially in the Pacific, made it necessary to bury the dead at sea in the time honored tradition. It is clear in this video that, on occasion, burial at sea can be requested by those who have served and is honored by the Navy.

This service takes place on the aircraft carrier, USS Stennis (CVN-74). The ship's company is present, the chaplain conducts the service, and the ship's honor guard is there to provide the three rifle volleys of the Final Salute.

As the name of the person being buried is spoken by the chaplain, the remains of that person are committed to the sea.

With this simple yet dignified service, carried out with the pomp and circumstance of military precision, you are brought into the great mystery of death. It is carried out in the vastness of the sea. You get a clear sense of one's smallness in the immensity of creation, yet you also sense the intimacy of the One Who Created it

Remember those who have fallen, both in this video and all those who have fallen and been buried at sea in service to this country in times of war and in times of peace. We shall never forget. May the peace that surpasses all understanding be with them and their families.



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U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Disaster Resources Available to Veterans

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

Health Care Assistance

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

Debt Relief

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

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

Other Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Disaster Distress Helpline - The Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster.

Free Help for Homeless Veterans

Dial 1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838) for 24/7 access to VA services for homeless, displaced and at-risk Veterans

Homeless Veteran Chat Confidential, 24/7 online support for homeless Veterans and friends

Visit <https://www.va.gov/homeless/> for more information

California Specific Resources:

State of Texas Hurricane Center

Texas Division of Emergency Management Resource Page

Houston Combined Arms

Whether you're just getting out of the service or you've been a civilian for years now, the VA Welcome Kit can help guide you to the benefits and services you've earned.

Print out your VA Welcome Kit

You have received this message because you are subscribed to Veterans Affairs. Access your Subscriber Preferences to make changes to your subscription or Unsubscribe. Get this as a forward? Sign Up to receive updates from Veterans Affairs. Having questions or problems? Please visit subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com for assistance. If you are in crisis and need immediate help, please call 1-800-273-8255 and (PRESS 1) or visit <http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>.

Sent to jemjax2@att.net on behalf of US Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW · Washington, DC 20420

The above information is for all Veterans.

Semper Fi, Anthony(Tony)D'Aleo

President Nicholas J. Cutinha

VVA Chapter 1046, Cell # 904-910-2386



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Leo C. Chase Jr. Chapter #1084, Vietnam Veterans of America

The dust has settled following our 20 July 2020 Memorial Golf Tournament at The Palencia Club. All profits from our our fundraisers goes back to our county and state charitable organizations ranging from veterans of all ages in need, the homeless regardless of veteran status or age, and to community outreach organizations for families and to our many youth programs. Posted are two photos, one of our President John Leslie presenting a \$500 donation to Ellen Waldron from “Home Again St. Augustine,” and the other to Sgt. English representing the St Johns Sheriff’s Office “Explorers Post 911,” also for \$500. Other donations of equal value have been sent to the “First Coast Honor Flight,” The St Gerard Campus, the Epilepsy Foundation, the Boy Scouts of America, the Florida Vietnam Veterans Assistance Foundation, Marine Corps League Toys4Tots Program, and the Florida Council, Auxiliary Vietnam Veterans of America. More to follow - we are not finished donating yet!





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Alton Green Memorial American Legion Post 194

Veterans Centennial Park

BUY A BRICK

Lend a Hand & Leave a Legacy

The central graphic features a hand holding a brick with the text "YOUR NAME HERE" on it. The background is a red brick wall. On the left, there is an aerial map of the park with several circular callouts showing different areas. At the bottom left of the map, an arrow points to a specific area. In the bottom right corner of the brick wall, there is the American Legion logo and a yellow sign that says "Kids Safe Zone".



ST. AUGUSTINE
LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM

Here is a link to a short video from the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum, Introducing: “Guardians of the First Coast: Building Readiness for World War 2”

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

The Press Release for this very important interesting event follows on the next few pages.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Media Contact: Gayle Ballard, 904-829-0745 ext. 208,
gballard@staugustinelighthouse.org**

**ST. AUGUSTINE, FL – The St. Augustine
Lighthouse & Maritime Museum proudly**



announces the opening of a new exhibit, “Guardians of the First Coast: Building Readiness for World War II,” on August 1, 2020. This exhibition, housed in the Museum’s 1941 Coastal Lookout Building, honors the brave men and women who defended our coast as World War II began.

The exhibit showcases firsthand stories, letters, photographs and videos collected from those who served in World War II. While local men and women served around the world, the war also came to local shores. The Hotel Ponce de Leon closed to guests and reopened as the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Training Center, preparing men and women for service around the world. In addition, beginning in Winter 1942, German U-boats patrolled off the coast of Florida attacking the shipping lanes that provided the Allies with supplies. Florida citizens including local shrimpers formed boat patrols to report any U-boat sightings in the local waters.

Additional WWII history continues in the restored 1936 garage used by the USCG Beach Patrol. These armed men vigilantly patrolled in Jeeps to guard miles of coastline against enemy landings. Today the garage features not only the Tin Pickle, a gedunk (snack bar) featuring unique WWII-inspired snacks, but also additional artifacts and stories about wartime St. Augustine.

“These precious artifacts are treasures that tell a story of dedication

and sacrifice,” said CAPT Bob Buehn, US Navy Retired, and Chairperson of the Museum Board of Trustees. He continued, “We are proud to bring this story to the public, and we want to thank the donors who made the exhibit possible. Special thanks are due to the Questers of Ponte Vedra Beach and to the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Historical Resources. We also thank the St. Johns County Veterans Council for sharing stories of service and bravery.”

“We have some powerful stories that brings to life the cultural diversity and unique perspectives reflected in local first-hand experiences,” said Kathy Fleming, the Museum Executive Director. The exhibit is offered at no additional charge when paying regular admission. The Museum offers discounts to schools, seniors, and veterans, and admission is always free to active military and first responders. St. Johns County residents pay once and come all year long. “We invite everyone to visit and learn about our local WWII history; it is truly eye-opening,” said Fleming.

“Every admission or donation helps our non-profit save more of these veterans’ stories,” added Buehn. “We honor those who served, and there is more to come.”

To donate to this project and help save veterans’ stories please contact Gayle Ballard at: gballard@staugustinelighthouse.org or call 904/829-0745 ext. 208.

For more details about the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum, visit www.staugustinelighthouse.org or call 904/829-0745.

Stay updated on social media at facebook.com/staugustinelighthouse,

[Instagram.com/stauglighthouse](https://www.instagram.com/stauglighthouse), and twitter.com/firstlighthouse.

Use the hashtag, #LoveYourLighthouse.

###

ABOUT THE ST. AUGUSTINE LIGHTHOUSE & MARITIME MUSEUM:

A pivotal navigation tool and unique landmark of St. Augustine for 145 years, the St. Augustine Light Station is host to centuries of history in the Nation's Oldest Port®. Through interactive exhibits, guided tours and maritime research, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum is on a mission to discover, preserve, present and keep alive the stories of the Nation's Oldest Port® as symbolized by our working lighthouse. We are the parent organization to the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program (LAMP) and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. (StAugustineLighthouse.org)

ABOUT THE AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF MUSEUMS:

The St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the highest national recognition afforded the nation's museums. The American Alliance of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. As the ultimate mark of distinction in the museum field, accreditation signifies excellence and credibility. Accreditation helps to ensure the integrity and accessibility of museum collections, and reinforces the education and public service roles of museums and promote good governance practices and ethical behavior. Representing more than 35,000 individual museum professionals and volunteers, institutions, and corporate partners serving the museum field, the Alliance stands for the broad scope of the museum community. (www.aam-us.org).



MARINE CORP LEAGUE #383
**FOURTH ANNUAL CHARITY
GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Friday, October 2th, 2020
At St. Johns Golf and County Club

Benefiting Toys for Tots of St. Johns County



Event Day Contests

- 4 hole-in-one PRIZES on all par 3 holes
- Closest to the hole - Deep sea fishing trip PRIZE
- \$1,000 Putting Contest
- Skirts Fore Steaks

Sponsored by

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DRIVEN TO *inspire*



We encourage you to bring toys to the event!

Register Now at mclt4t.com



You sacrificed for our country.

AT SILVER CREEK,
FREEDOM IS YOURS.

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

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

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



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National POW/MIA Recognition Day

In 1979, after the families of more than 2,500 Vietnam War POW/MIAs pushed for full accountability, President Jimmy Carter, signed a proclamation establishing National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

Since then, each subsequent president has issued an annual proclamation commemorating the third Friday in September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. This year, in remembrance of the 81,900 POWs/MIAs still unaccounted for, National POW/MIA Recognition Day will be recognized on Friday, Sept 18th.

Traditionally, a national-level ceremony is held at the Pentagon and features members from each branch of military service and participation from high-ranking officials. Currently, due to COVID, a decision has not been made if a ceremony will be held.

Number of personnel still unaccounted for from:

* WW II - 72,583

* Korean War - 7,579

* Vietnam War - 1,586

* Cold War - 126

* Gulf War - 5

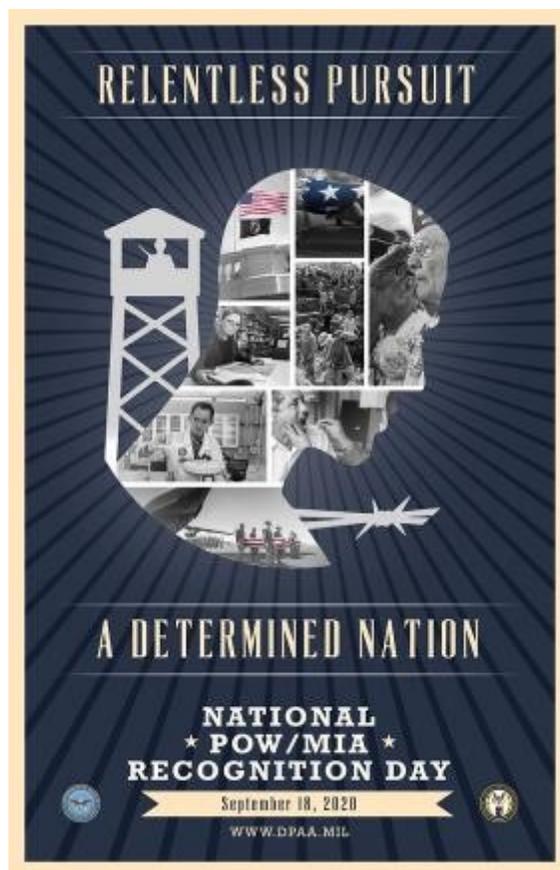
* El Dorado Canyon - 1

(source: <https://www.dpaa.mil/Our-Missing/Past-Conflicts/>)

The Defense Department remembers and honors those Americans who were prisoners of war and those who served and never returned home. DOD's POW/MIA Accounting Agency continues the search for the missing, fulfilling the nation's promise to leave no service member behind.

To all who have made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of this great nation, may they continue to rest in peace.

To learn more about the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, click here: <https://www.dpaa.mil/>



Effort continues for homeless vets facility

“Under current Covid conditions, there has been some diminishment of effort,” says Veterans Council Chair Bill Dudley, “but we’re still pursuing the repurposing of the temporary facility once the VA vacates.”

Dudley is working with county officials and the current property owners of the temporary clinic location on Southpark Blvd. and of its modular units on terms of lease or purchase of the temporary facility.

The Veterans Council began working earlier this year with the County, State, and Veterans Administration to convert those modular units of the temporary clinic into a Homeless Veterans facility.

“This would satisfy a long sought-after solution to the veteran homeless problem we have pursued for several years,” Dudley noted at the time. “St. Johns County has no suitable facilities for our homeless veterans and must relocate them to either Duval or Volusia Counties.”



Vietnam Veterans of America

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



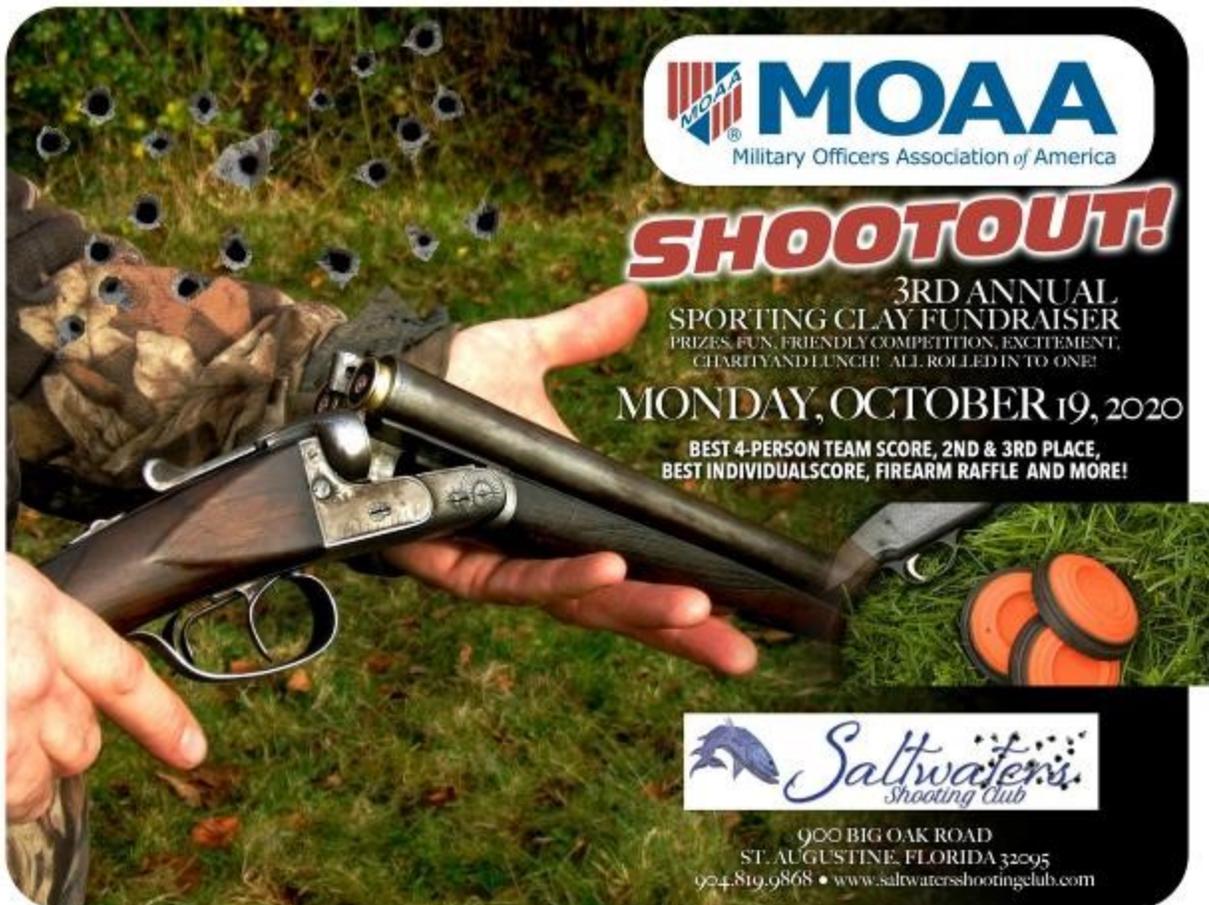
Chapter/President/email/Location

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

MOAAS 3rd Annual Clay Shootout

Contact Person: Jim Cargilo, 1st LT USMD (fmr)

jjcarg@gmail.com

A promotional poster for the MOAAS 3rd Annual Clay Shootout. The background is a photograph of a person in camouflage gear holding a shotgun, with several holes in a target visible in the upper left. The MOAAS logo is in the top right, followed by the word 'SHOOTOUT!' in large, bold, red letters. Below that, it says '3RD ANNUAL SPORTING CLAY FUNDRAISER' and lists prizes: 'PRIZES, FUN, FRIENDLY COMPETITION, EXCITEMENT, CHARITY AND LUNCH! ALL ROLLED INTO ONE!'. The date 'MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020' is prominently displayed. At the bottom, it lists prizes: 'BEST 4-PERSON TEAM SCORE, 2ND & 3RD PLACE, BEST INDIVIDUAL SCORE, FIREARM RAFFLE AND MORE!'. The Saltwaters Shooting Club logo is at the bottom right, with their address and website: '900 BIG OAK ROAD ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA 32095 904.819.9868 • www.saltwatersshootingclub.com'.

MOAAS
Military Officers Association of America

SHOOTOUT!

3RD ANNUAL
SPORTING CLAY FUNDRAISER
PRIZES, FUN, FRIENDLY COMPETITION, EXCITEMENT,
CHARITY AND LUNCH! ALL ROLLED INTO ONE!

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020

BEST 4-PERSON TEAM SCORE, 2ND & 3RD PLACE,
BEST INDIVIDUAL SCORE, FIREARM RAFFLE AND MORE!

Saltwaters
Shooting Club

900 BIG OAK ROAD
ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA 32095
904.819.9868 • www.saltwatersshootingclub.com



Ancient City Chapter
P.O. Box 4571, St. Augustine, Florida 32085



MOAA-Ancient City Chapter is pleased to present the...
3rd Annual Sporting Clay Shootout



Would you agree...

A little *healthy competition* never hurt anyone!

As a matter of fact, we think it promotes

Comradery - Team Spirit - Pride - Status - Fun and of course, Bragging Rights!

The Military Officers of America Association, Ancient City Chapter

is proud to announce its

3rd Annual Sporting Clay Shootout Fundraiser

October 19, 2020

MOAA-ACC has a vision - a vision of using a major portion of the 2020 Shootout proceeds to honor, educate, and support *High School JROTC Cadets*, our newest members of the Military family and *The Honor Flight Network*, whose mission is to transport America's veterans to visit the memorials dedicated to honoring those who have served and sacrificed for our great country.

Other proceeds will be used to support patriotic opportunities for Youth and Veterans alike.

MOAA Ancient City Chapter is a fully accredited 501(3)c organization

Please review the enclosed Brochure and please consider Sponsoring 4 - 8 or more Shooters and join in the fun!

Thank you for your generosity,

Jim Cargilo

1st Lt. USMC (Frm)

Shootout Chairperson



First Coast Honor Flight's (FCHF) mission is to take World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam Veterans to visit their War Memorials in Washington D.C. This is a unique opportunity to show our gratitude to these Heroes who made it possible for us to enjoy the freedoms we have today.

Our trip's priorities are to ensure the safety and dignity of our Veterans! To enhance the experience each Veteran is paired with a Guardian escort and has a wheelchair available. This is a long day and there is a fair amount of walking. In addition, we travel with several staff members to include a medical doctor and videographer.

Applications are available online, for <https://firstcoasthonorflight.org/>
applications
Guardians
Veterans
Volunteers

Selena Hernandez-Haines, President

Toll Free 888-400-1185

Website: www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

email: info@firstcoasthonorflight.org

Mail: First Coast Honor Flight , PO Box 600785

St. Johns, FL 32260

Please support and donate where you can



First Coast Honor Flight Donation

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

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

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

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

www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

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

Name of Organization _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____ Email _____

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

Name _____

Address _____

Veteran? Yes _____ No _____ Relationship _____

Branch _____ Dates Served _____

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



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

Veterans Ascend

Here it is, the **BIG ANNOUNCEMENT** you have all been waiting for!

Our Military Family Service is now up and running!

You can create a **FREE** profile and be matched to jobs in your area, **NO RESUME REQUIRED!**

#veteransascend #militaryspouse #veterans



The banner features a dark blue background with a central white box containing the Veterans Ascend logo. The logo consists of a stylized figure with arms raised, composed of blue and red geometric shapes, above the text "Veterans ASCEND" and the tagline "Connecting Employers and Military Talent". On either side of the central box are red rectangular buttons with the word "LIVE" in white. Below the central box, the text "We've Made Some Great Changes!" is followed by "FEATURING" and two columns of text describing new features. At the bottom, it encourages creating a free profile and provides the website URL.

LIVE

LIVE

Veterans ASCEND
Connecting Employers and Military Talent

We've Made Some Great Changes!

FEATURING

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

New features for Service Member and Veteran Accounts
You can now add civilian occupations, tax credit eligibility, travel and shifts among a few other enhancements

Create your FREE profile today
www.veteransascend.com
NO RESUME REQUIRED

These Navy Personnel Honor the Semper Fidelis Code of The Marine Corps

BY DAN DOYLE from TheVeterans Site.com Blog

There are some Navy Hospital Corpsmen who serve alongside their Marine brothers and sisters on the battlefield. They form a unique relationship, a bond that is like no other. But this video is about those Navy, Fleet Marine Corps, Hospital Corpsmen, Nurses and Doctors who care for their Marines in the front line field hospitals, in this case in Afghanistan.

You will see the conditions under which these medical professionals do their very important work.

Their emergency rooms and operating rooms don't look like those that you usually think of in a modern hospital. These are constructed of basic materials that are easily transported and quickly put up. But these units are as important to the care and survival of Marines wounded on the battlefield as any other element they will encounter in their healing process.

The quality of care, the medical skills of these Corpsmen, nurses and doctors who work in these forward field hospitals, is second to none.

What they do here in these places has everything to do with the speed and effectiveness of a wounded Marine's full recovery to health down the line.

The training of modern Corpsmen is so much more advanced than when I was a Corpsman 50 years ago in Vietnam. Their knowledge, their equipment, is far more sophisticated. It is because of this that our wounded warriors are surviving injuries that would have been, more often than not, fatal back in my time.

The Veterans Site honors the Navy Hospital Corpsmen, Nurses and Doctors who dedicate their service and their medical skills to bring our wounded warriors home to us. Thanks and respect are due.

You are truly Semper Fidelis to your Marine brothers and sisters. OooRah!



Andersonville National Historic Site

Why is the National Prisoner of War Museum designed the way that it is? Why does it look the way that it does?

Opened in 1998, the design of the National Prisoner of War Museum was purposeful and meaningful. Approaching the building, visitors see a solid maroon brick building, punctuated by three gray towers, used to evoke a feeling reminiscent of prisons. The museum builds upon themes that are common to all prisoner of war stories: towers, gates, and confinement. The sidewalk leading the building narrows, forcing visitors to approach single file or in pairs, reflective of how prisoners have been marched throughout history.

A place of reflection and contemplation for the difficult stories that the museum tells is also a necessary component of the museum. That space is provided with the American Ex-Prisoners of War sculpture, “The Price of Freedom Fully Paid.” The three carved brick panels contain 25 figures depicting the suffering of a POW. The meandering water feature reminds visitors of the vitality of water to a prisoner of any war. A bronze figure stands in front of the brick panels, representing someone who has escaped imprisonment, drank freely from the water below, and is looking upward in thanksgiving, finally having reached freedom, fully paid.



Vietnam Helicopter Pilots: We Owe These Men A Sacred Debt

BY DAN DOYLE

Ever since Vietnam, the distinctive sound of helicopter rotors in the distance causes me and every other Vietnam or War on Terror combat veteran to look up. That sound has an often inexpressible meaning to us.

When we found ourselves in trouble out in the bush and needed support, or a way out of hell, these helicopters, their pilots and crews were our guardian angels, our medivac heroes, our gun support, our observers keeping an eye on the enemy and calling in further support.

That sound and all the memories associated with it never leaves us. It always lifted our hopes and our courage when we were in the middle of all-hell-broke-loose. We knew that we were not alone, that those brave pilots and crews would do anything to protect us, to supply us, or to get us out of the danger zone. We knew that they would not hesitate to come into the kill zone to pick up our wounded, to drop off more ammunition, or to provide aerial weapons support to keep the enemy off of us.

They came in all kinds and sizes. The big, double bladed 46s and 47s would transport us in or take us out of the field. The Hueys and sleek Cobras could offer heavy, aerial, fire support. The Hueys would be especially effective medivac transports. Then there were the small, lightly armed aerial observers that would give us “eyes-in-the-sky” and help call in other support if necessary.

None of those helicopters were armored in any significant way. They were thin skinned, which made them lighter and more maneuverable. Some were armed with rockets and heavy machine guns. Some only had a door-gunner with a 60cal. machine gun, but those pilots and crews did not hesitate to come down into the middle of a fight to get their wounded brothers out of the fight and back to medical help. It was common that they could get the wounded back to more sophisticated medical help within the “golden hour” that made their survival from the more serious wounds more possible. Their bravery saved a greater percentage of the wounded than in any previous wars. And they do so with even more efficiency and skill now in our present war zone situations.

We who benefitted from their courage and dedication to duty really do owe a sacred debt to those brave men. 4,095 pilots and crew members were killed in action in Vietnam. They were always going against the odds of survival when they came to our aid under fire. But they did so unhesitatingly. These were unusually courageous and heroic men. Our sense of brotherhood toward them is imperishable. We will never forget what they did for us.





Photo courtesy of public domain
taken by Lance Cpl. Brian Bolin

Invisible wounds and recovery – the roles of medicine, lifestyle and community

By Nathan Dinger, Veteran

Life with a mental health disorder is often a lifelong challenge. One filled with briar patches and snares set not by an unseen enemy, but by the individual suffering from the illness. I should know, as I have experienced this psychological warfare since returning from Afghanistan in 2016. My experience there was no different, nor more dramatic than anyone else's. At least that's what I told myself for the first few months, and that's what prevented me from seeking treatment right away. After just three months, I knew that something was seriously wrong and began seeing a mental health counselor. I felt anxious constantly, depressed, distant, and I avoided anyone who reminded me of the military. I learned quickly how to justify these behaviors as normal and buried them. It was not until 2019 that I visited a psychiatrist looking for additional help with my symptoms. My counselor believed it would help, and explained that often talk therapy, or counseling are not enough. She further explained how many people in my situation, under the guidance of a qualified physician, add anti-depressants and/or anxiolytic (anti-anxiety) medication to the treatment plan.

My psychiatrist diagnosed me with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), and soon after Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). He prescribed me medication to help with my treatment. I had a very hard time accepting these diagnoses and medication. I have served in the military for more than 17 years, and the idea that my peers may now see me as weak, or broken was extremely difficult.

The stigma I experienced, and that is encountered by individuals seeking mental health care, can be absolutely crippling. Internal shame that often comes with this stigma can prevent or disrupt the treatment of legitimate psychological wounds. Some individuals effected prefer to self-treat with alcohol and drugs. Alcohol and drugs only increase negative thinking, depression, and anxiety and very often lead to additional physiological disorders. Additionally, these substances often lead to a mental health emergency, drug overdose, and death.

According to President Donald Trump, “each year, an estimated 8 million adults experience PTSD¹.” Without adequate treatment, this psychological injury often intensifies and leads to self-harm, alcohol-use disorder, and suicide. For this reason the identification and treatment of PTSD has become a major priority for the U.S. military. In addition, the diagnosis of other mental health disorders including anxiety and depression are growing within the ranks. According to the Veterans Affairs Office, approximately 60,000 veterans committed suicide during the period of 2008-2017. This number exceeds all U.S. service members killed during the Vietnam War by 2,000.

Those diagnosed with PTSD, anxiety, and depression undergo intense psychotherapy and are often prescribed psychotropic medications that have been shown to help the therapeutic process. Treatment is hugely beneficial to those who pursue it, however, due to the negative stigma associated with mental healthcare, many choose to go it alone or self-medicate with illicit drugs and alcohol. According to Professor Graham Thornicroft, Institute of Psychiatry at King’s College London, “stigma has a toxic effect that prevents people from seeking help for mental health problems.²” The use of drugs and alcohol only compounds the symptoms of mental health disorders by exacerbating the symptoms of depression, anxiety, and PTSD.

Some military personnel suffering from PTSD and/or Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) are prescribed benzodiazepines (“benzos”). Commonly known benzodiazepines such as Xanax, Klonopin, and Ativan are anxiolytic medications, that when taken under the strict supervision of a qualified physician, can be extremely beneficial for short-term treatment of severe psychological distress. Benzodiazepines, however, are not designed for long-term use when treating PTSD or anxiety. They have a high potential for addiction and become less effective over time. “In most cases of benzodiazepine dependence, and addiction begins with a legitimate prescription,” says Tiffany Jones-Rouse, an LCSW and substance use counselor based in the Baltimore, Washington³. Additionally, benzodiazepines are also very dangerous when mixed with alcohol. Alcohol and benzodiazepines are both depressants and affect the central nervous system in the same way. They can intensify the effects on the body and lead to other health problems including dependence, addiction, overdose, and an increased risk of developing other mental health disorders when combined. Due to these risks, benzodiazepines should be used short-term and only under the guidance of a qualified mental health professional.

The mental health community has identified physical activity as a beneficial alternative treatment option for those suffering from mental health disorders. The Navy initiated a three-year study that includes military members diagnosed with Major Depression, GAD, and/or PTSD. These members participate in psychotherapy and outdoor activities including surfing and hiking. Initial reports indicate that the implementation of physical activities as part of the treatment plan, have created an environment conducive to open dialogue, camaraderie, and trust among participants.

Engaging in mental health programs that encourage open non-judgmental conversations, peer support, and when needed, medication assistance, is the first step in healing invisible wounds. According to Dr. Stephanie S. Covington, PHD, LCSW, “part of the process of healing trauma, like recovering from addiction, is developing connection and support with others.⁴” If you are suffering from PTSD, or another mental health disorder, know that you are not alone and help is available. In a crisis call 911 or the Veterans Crisis Hotline 1-800-273-8255, Opt 1, or text 838255). For Florida National Guardsmen, call 1-855-910-5000 to reach a psychological health coordinator, For more information about mental health treatment options in your area, contact your local Veteran’s Affairs Clinic.

Sources:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/presidential-message-post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd-awareness-day-2019/>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/nurturing-self-compassion/201805/eradicating-mental-health-stigma-in-the-military-and-beyond>

<https://health.usnews.com/health-news/patient-advice/articles/2015/02/19/benzodiazepines-helpful-or-harmful>

<https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/3868172-beyond-trauma-workbook>

From the St. Augustine Report, published by former Mayor George Gardner

History's Highlight: Matanzas Slaughter— an Analysis

Historians have debated for centuries the wisdom of Pedro Menendez' decision to put to the sword survivors of the French fleet destroyed in a hurricane while Menendez seized the French Fort Caroline in September 1565.

Sister M. Adele Francis Gorman, O.S.F., historian for the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, considers arguments in the debate.

Spanish Ambassador Francisco de Alava listed five reasons why Menendez was justified in putting the French to death: there was not enough food for both French and Spanish in Florida; the French were not regular soldiers, therefore they met pirates' deaths; they were preaching evil doctrines to the natives; they outnumbered the Spanish, therefore, it was a matter of survival, and, there were not enough ships to send them home.

There are facts which nullify what Ambassador Alava called the necessity of Menendez's brutality. For the Spanish there was food sufficient to last, with rationing, until January 1566, and Menendez had already sent to Spain for more supplies. In addition, the rich supplies brought by (Jean) Ribault to Fort Caroline were still in the fort until after the first massacre when Menendez ordered the burning of the fort. That Menendez thought the French to be pirates cannot be denied and, of course, pirates could claim no protection under any flag. The presence of ministers also seemed to verify Menendez's belief that the intruders were preaching evil doctrines.

The minimum number of French saved from Fort Caroline and from shipwrecks south of St. Augustine was 500, including about 440 men. Menendez gave the number for those who traveled with him from Spain to St. Augustine as 800. Of these, 500 were soldiers, 300 of whom were at San Mateo (the new name for Fort Caroline), and 200 were sailors who had remained with the fleet. Therefore, he had approximately 200 men to care for twice as many French captives.

Finally, Menendez claimed that he had not enough ships to send all the French prisoners back to their country. Two of the Spanish ships had already returned to Europe for more supplies, and two had gone to San Mateo to take the French women and children to Santo Domingo.

None of the French ships had been captured. Reducing the number of captives by the number at San Mateo, and placing a full load of French on the one French ship, would have diminished the unevenness in ratio of French to Spanish.

It is almost impossible to find an unbiased recounting by eyewitnesses; one can only try to adhere to a middle course. A study of the state papers from the various embassies and other sources uncovers a number of discrepancies which might easily alter what appear to be valid conclusions.

Ed. note: Matanzas is Spanish for slaughters)





The Military Support Retreat flyer shows the last retreats for 2020. The retreats are for those post 9/11 vets who have deployed to a war zone and a support person of their choosing.

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

MILITARY SUPPORT RETREATS

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

 Lake Oconee Eatonton, Georgia	★	SEPTEMBER 10-13
 Marineland Florida	★	OCTOBER 1-4
 Amelia Island Fernandina Beach, Florida	★	NOVEMBER 5-8

From Thursday at 5:30pm - Sunday at 2:00pm



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

Strengthen and restore connections, enjoy the natural beauty of each location, be inspired by fun outdoor activities, learn about available support resources, and relax while discovering post-deployment strategies.

- ★ Small, friendly group setting ★
 - ★ All accommodations, food, and activities are provided free of charge ★
 - ★ Facilitated by Vets, VA/DoD experts, and Community Nonprofit Support Organizations ★
- Please note: Must be 18 to attend and no childcare is provided.

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



MICHAEL ANTHONY, CEO
912-674-0332
MICHAEL@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG



The Pathh program is a recurring program that is held the last of the month in Gainesville for only the military or veteran. Pathh is also for post 9/11 vets who have served in a war zone. All costs for the retreats are covered with the exception of travel costs. The Pathh program does cover travel costs ie air and or mileage.



Warrior PATHH (Progressive and Alternative Training for Healing Heroes) is the nation's first non-clinical program designed to cultivate and facilitate Posttraumatic Growth amongst those struggling with PTSD and/or combat stress. Warrior PATHH enables these remarkable men and women to transform times of deep struggle into profound strength and growth. All Warrior PATHH instructors have walked this road from struggle to strength, and the blended team of trained combat veterans and civilians leverage their own experiences to guide attendees. This 18-month program begins with a 7-day retreat, initiating students into the Warrior PATHH. Students are then supported for the following 77 weeks via the myPATHH technology platform, regular Team Video Chats, alumni coaches, and the Warrior PATHH Student Guide and Journal.

Warrior PATHH was created by Boulder Crest, a pioneering nonprofit organization focused on developing transformative programs that ensure combat veterans can be as productive at home as they were on the battlefield. GratitudeAmerica and Boulder Crest have partnered to bring Warrior PATHH to Florida.

The Warrior PATHH is based on the decades-old science of Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) and enable participants to meaningfully and sustainably transform times of deep struggle into profound strength and lifelong growth. As a result, participants experience stronger and deeper relationships, new possibilities, an increased sense of gratitude for life, greater connection to their spiritual or religious life, and a renewed sense of personal strength.

➤ Warrior PATHH is provided at **no cost** for post 9/11 combat veterans.

➤ **No clinical diagnosis** is required to attend.

➤ Programs are offered **monthly** in Gainesville, FL.

CONTACT US

Mike Hilliard, Warrior PATHH Program Director
warriorpathh@gratitudeamerica.org

P.O. Box 16956

Fernandina Beach, FL 32035

770-718-7108



GratitudeAmerica

TO LEARN MORE VISIT:

GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG/WARRIOR-PATHH



PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO MEET VETERANS' UNIQUE NEEDS

Advance Care Planning

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

Palliative Care

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

Hospice Care

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

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

Complementary Therapies

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

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

We Need Volunteers

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

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

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

Rolling Thunder Washington, DC Inc.

In 1979, after the families of more than 2,500 Vietnam War POW/MIA's pushed for full accountability, President Jimmy Carter, signed a proclamation establishing National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

Since then, each subsequent president has issued an annual proclamation commemorating the third Friday in September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. This year, in remembrance of the 81,900 POWs/MIA's still unaccounted for, National POW/MIA Recognition Day will be recognized on Friday, Sept 18th.

Traditionally, a national-level ceremony is held at the Pentagon and features members from each branch of military service and participation from high-ranking officials. Currently, due to COVID, a decision has not been made if a ceremony will be held.

Number of personnel still unaccounted for from:

* WW II - 72,582

* Korean War - 7,578

* Vietnam War - 1,586

* Cold War - 126

* Gulf War - 5

* El Dorado Canyon - 1

(source: <https://www.dpaa.mil/Our-Missing/Past-Conflicts/>)

The Defense Department remembers and honors those Americans who were prisoners of war and those who served and never returned home. DOD's POW/MIA Accounting Agency continues the search for the missing, fulfilling the nation's promise to leave no service member behind.

To all who have made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of this great nation, may they continue to rest in peace.

To learn more about the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, click below:

<https://www.dpaa.mil/>

Compiled by: MSgt Rob Wilkins, USAF, Ret.

President, Rolling Thunder, Washington, DC., Inc.

RELENTLESS PURSUIT



A DETERMINED NATION

NATIONAL
★ POW/MIA ★
RECOGNITION DAY

September 18, 2020

WWW.DPAA.MIL





SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

Strength
built on
Sacrifice

Your Florida SOS Team

St. Augustine Area

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

Tallahassee Area

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

Orlando Area

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

Tampa Bay Area

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

Miami Area

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

Scholarships & Application Deadlines

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

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

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

Application Deadlines for surviving children

Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation

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

Freedom Alliance

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

Fisher House Foundation/ Heroes Legacy Scholarship

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

Special Ops Warrior Foundation

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

Deadline for multiple relationships

Army Emergency Relief Fund

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

Application Deadlines: For surviving spouses

Aspire

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

National Military Family Association

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

Pat Tillman Foundation

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

Application Deadlines: For surviving siblings

Matthew Freeman Project

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

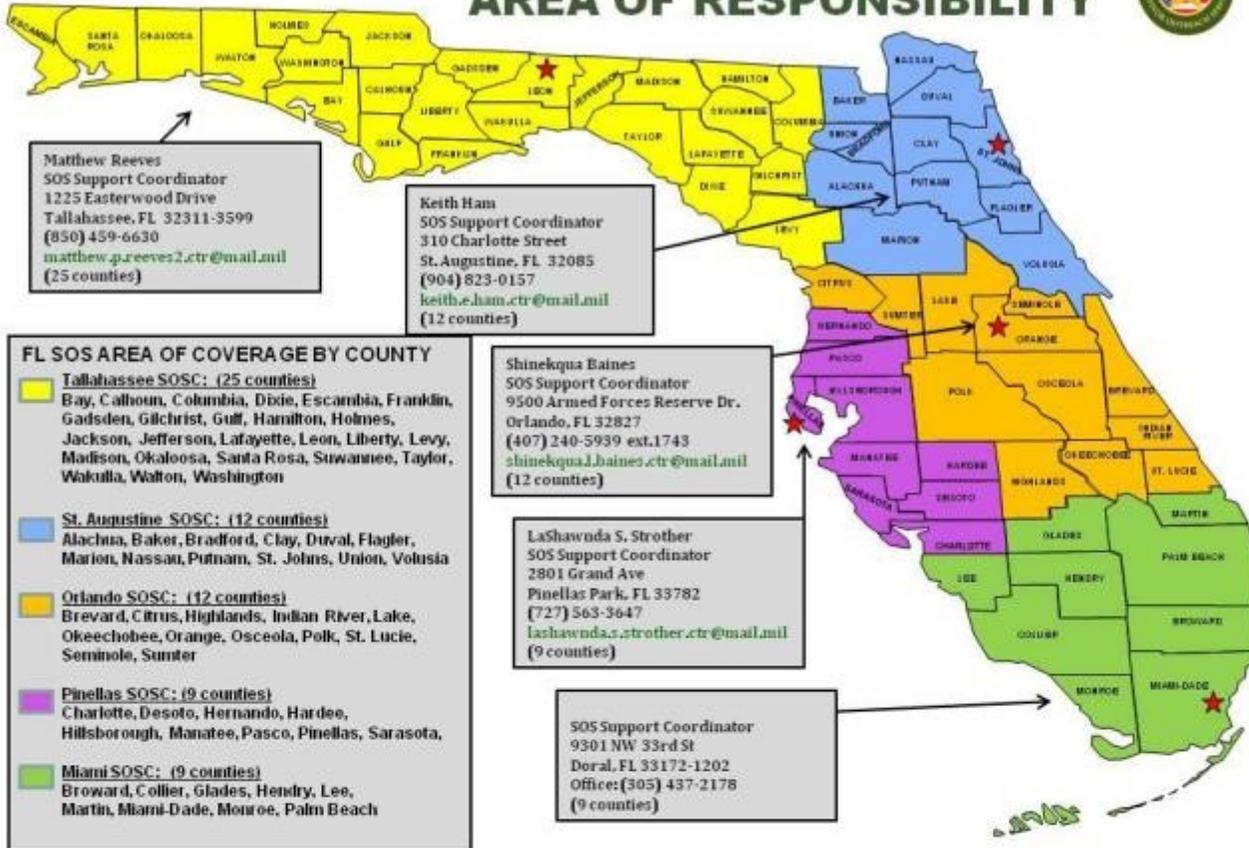
Deadline for multiple relationships

Folds of Honor

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

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

FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



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

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



Here is a good resource for vets who may be experiencing Covid 19 or flu like symptoms. The call center can be reached 24/7 and the vet will be able to reach a nurse. Also for Vets who qualify for the Vet Center they also have a 24/7 call center War Vets 877-927-8387. One of the Vet Center staff will be notified by both text and email to contact and follow-up with the veteran.

Ann McCulliss Johnson LCSW, USA COL (ret)
Clinical Director, 904-864-2885

VA HealthNow^{24/7}
YOUR CLINICAL CONTACT CENTER
1-877-741-3400

VA HEALTH CARE WHERE AND WHEN YOU NEED IT.

Around the Clock Support
Call us at 1-877-741-3400 to receive immediate clinical and administrative support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

No Co-Pays
Veterans who are eligible for VA Care are not subject to co-pays when using the Clinical Contact Center.

Nurse Triage
Connect with a nurse to discuss your health concerns and to determine the best course of action for your care.

Connect with a Provider
Connect with a doctor or nurse practitioner over the phone or by secure video to discuss your care.

***Pharmacy**
Pharmacists are available to assist you and your care team to support your path to healing.

VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center

The VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center is a service of the VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8) - providing 24/7, virtual urgent care to Veterans enrolled for VA Health Care in Florida, South Georgia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Veterans who receive care in the network can call us around the clock to get their health questions or concerns answered from the comfort and convenience of their home, or wherever they may be.

Services include general administrative support, nurse advice and triage, virtual visits with a doctor or nurse practitioner via telephone or VA Video Connect.

There are no co-payments for using the VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center!

Note: The Clinical Contact Center should not be used for emergency situations. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, please dial 911 or visit your closest emergency room.

**Prescription medications may be subject to co-pays.*

To learn more, visit www.visn8.va.gov/ccc.asp.

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8)

Rescheduled!

2nd Annual

Save the Date

Saturday, December 5, 2020

1800 hours: Social Hour
1900 hours: Dinner Dance

Military Ball for All

HONORING FIVE STAR VETERANS CENTER

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ALL proceeds benefit recovering, homeless veterans

A hero's home for the holidays!

That Time a parachuting Airman shot down a Zero with nothing but a Handgun

If you take a peek at a list of pilots who were considered flying aces during WW2, you'll notice that the top of the list is dominated by Luftwaffe pilots, some of whom scored hundreds of aerial victories during the war. While their skill and prowess in the air is undeniable, it's arguable



that the finest display in aerial combat during WW2 was achieved, mostly by luck, by an American B-24 co-pilot when he scored a single enemy kill with nothing but a handgun, at about 4,000-5,000 feet (about 1.3 km) in altitude, and without a plane. This is the story of Owen Baggett.

Born in 1920 in Texas, after finishing high school, Baggett moved to the city of Abilene to enroll in Hardin–Simmons University. While we were unable to discern what Baggett studied from the sparse amount of information available about his early life, the fact that he went to work at Johnson and Company Investment Securities in New York after graduating suggests he studied finance, business, or another similar subject.

Whatever the case, while still working at the investment firm in New York in December of 1941, Baggett volunteered for the Army Air Corps and reported for basic pilot training at the New Columbus Army Flying School.

After graduating from basic training, Baggett reported for duty in India, just a stone's throw away from Japanese occupied Burma with the Tenth Air Force. Baggett eventually became a co-pilot for a B-24 bomber in the 7th Bomb Group based in Pandaveswar and reached the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. During his time with the 7th Bomb Group, Baggett's duties mainly consisted of flying bombing runs into Burma and helping defend allied supply routes between India and China.

Baggett's career was mostly uneventful, or at least as uneventful as it could be given the circumstances, for around a year until he was called upon to take part in a bombing run on March 31, 1943. The mission itself was fairly simple- Baggett and the rest of the 7th Bomb Group were to fly into Burma and destroy a small, but vital railroad bridge near the logging

town of Pyinmana.

However, shortly after taking off, the (unescorted) bombers of the 7th Bomb Group were attacked by a few dozen Japanese Zero fighters. During the ensuing dogfight, the plane's emergency oxygen tanks were hit, severely damaging the craft. Ultimately, 1st Lt. Lloyd Jensen gave the order for the crew to bailout. Baggett relayed the order to the crew using hand signals (since their intercom had also been destroyed) and leapt from the aircraft with the rest of the surviving crew.

Not long after the crew bailed out, the attacking Japanese Zeros began training their guns on the now-defenceless crewman lazily floating towards the ground.

Baggett would later recall seeing some of his crewmates being torn to pieces by gunfire (in total 5 of the 9 aboard the downed bomber were killed). As for himself, a bullet grazed his arm, but he was otherwise fine. In a desperate bid to stay that way, after being shot in the arm, Baggett played possum, hanging limp in his parachute's harness.

According to a 1996 article published in Air Force Magazine, this is when Baggett spotted an enemy pilot lazily flying along almost vertically in mid-air to come check out whether Baggett was dead or not, including having his canopy open to get a better look at Baggett. When the near-stalling plane came within range, Baggett ceased to play dead and pulled out his M1911 from its holster, aimed it at the pilot, and squeezed the trigger four times. The plane soon stalled out and Baggett didn't notice what happened after, thinking little of the incident, being more concerned with the other fighters taking pot shots at he and his crew.

After safely reaching the ground, Baggett regrouped with Lt Jensen and one of the bomber's surviving gunners. Shortly thereafter, all three were captured, at which point Baggett soon found himself being interrogated. After telling the events leading up to his capture to Major General Arimura, commander of the Southeast Asia POW camps, very oddly (as no one else in his little group was given the opportunity), Baggett was given the chance to die with honour by committing harakiri (an offer he refused).

Later, while still a POW, Baggett had a chance encounter with one Col. Harry Melton. Melton informed him that the plane that Baggett had shot at had crashed directly after stalling out near him and (supposedly) the pilot's body had been thrown from the wreckage. When

it was recovered, he appeared to have been killed, or at least seriously injured, via having been shot, at least according to Colonel Melton.

Despite the fact that the plane had crashed after his encounter with it, Baggett was still skeptical that one (or more) of his shots actually landed and figured something else must have happened to cause the crash. Nevertheless, it was speculated by his compatriots that this must have been the reason Baggett alone had been given the chance to die with honour by committing harakiri after being interrogated.

Baggett never really talked about his impressive feat after the fact, remaining skeptical that he'd scored such a lucky shot. He uneventfully served the rest of his time in the war as a POW, dropping from a hearty 180 pounds and change to just over 90 during the near two years he was kept prisoner. The camp he was in was finally liberated on September 7, 1945 by the OSS and he continued to serve in the military for several years after WW2, reaching the rank of colonel.

The full details of his lucky shot were only dug up in 1996 by John L Frisbee of Air Force Magazine. After combing the records looking to verify or disprove the tale, it turned out that while Col. Harry Melton's assertion that the pilot in question had been found with a .45 caliber bullet wound could not be verified by any documented evidence, it was ultimately determined that Baggett must have managed to hit the pilot. You see, the plane in question appears to have stalled at approximately 4,000 to 5,000 feet (so an amazing amount of time for the pilot to have recovered from the stall had he been physically able) and, based on official mission reports by survivors, there were no Allied fighters in the vicinity to have downed the fighter and no references of anyone seeing any friendly fire at the slow moving plane before its ultimately demise. Further, even with some sort of random engine failure, the pilot should have still had some control of the plane, instead of reportedly more or less heading straight down and crashing after the stall.



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The logo consists of the letters 'V4V' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The number '4' is smaller and positioned between the two 'V's. The letters are filled with a pattern of white stars on a dark blue background, reminiscent of the American flag.

Together We are Stronger

**Keeping our Veterans
Informed, Connected, United, and Organized**

V4VFlorida.org

Vets4VetsNJax@gmail.com

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @Vets4VetsNJax

#vets4vetsjax #Jointhevetsmovement #Togetherwearestronger



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
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**Veterans
Crisis Line**

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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

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Confidential help for
Veterans and their families

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



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

Confidential chat at [MilitaryCrisisLine.net](https://www.MilitaryCrisisLine.net) or text 838255

Veterans Councils of Northeast Florida



BAKER COUNTY

President: Larry Porterfield

Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

Location:

MacClenny Primitive Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall on North Boulevard

Time : 1800 (6pm)

CLAY COUNTY

President: Harry Silvers

Meetings:

First Wednesday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1400 (2pm)

DUVAL COUNTY

President Steve Spickelmier

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37
Main Building
San Juan Avenue

Tome: 1900 (7 pm)

NASSAU COUNTY

President: Mike Doran

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

St. Johns County

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

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



We are inviting all veterans to visit our website at:

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

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

Please join our group on Facebook at:

<http://veteranscouncilsjc.org>

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

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

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

You may have noticed the Veterans Council's new logo, it was created by Roy Havekost and his web design company PageAuthors. The VC strongly recommends that you contact Roy, 727-487-6252, if you or your vet group wants to create a website or Facebook page.

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

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

Send to: rothfeldm@gmail.com



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

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

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

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

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

***The Veterans Council will meet at the St.
Johns County Administration Building
500 San Sebastian View
Auditorium, 1st floor***

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

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

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

*Service is by appointment.
Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161
Joseph McDermott, SR VSO
Rick Rees, Assistant VSO
Travis Neidig, Assistant VSO*

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