

The Patriot Reader

VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

CHAIRMAN BILL DUDLEY

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TREASURER GEORGE MCCREA

Newsletter Editor Michael Rothfeld

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Message from the Chairman



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Fellow Veterans,

The quality of our Veterans Council newsletter, *The Patriot Reader*, continues to improve with each edition thanks to the many articles that are being submitted by our various veterans organizations.

This past month the Veterans Council was very pleased to honor a local hero. Mr. Ben Tucker, Security Guard at our local Veterans Clinic successfully averted what could have been a real personal tragedy by his quick thinking and instant reaction. A very troubled Veteran

Johns Co. Veterans Council. The plaque was presented to him by retired USA Sgt. Major Ray Quinn on behalf of the Veterans Council. Mr. Tucker is a retired Chief Petty Officer, US Navy. In speaking with Ben about the incident, he was very humble and stating the same metaphor of nearly all our heroes, "I was just doing my job. I was just in the right place and my training kicked in and I reacted as I had been trained to do" We are very fortunate to have dedicated security personnel such as Ben Tucker in the employ of our Veterans Clinic. [See pictures in the newsletter of the awards ceremony.] We thank Ben for his service to our country and to the Veterans of St. Johns County.

We are growing closer to the June 9 date for our Battle of Midway Commemorative Dinner. If you haven't purchased your tickets yet you need to do so very soon. We are expecting over 1000 people to attend this years annual dinner as we gather for the 70th anniversary to honor these National Treasure's in the turning point battle of the Pacific in WW II. The BOM committee has invited the CNO, Admiral Jonathan Greenert as this years keynote speaker. We are also expecting several Medal of Honor recipients along with veterans from the USS Yorktown, Battle of Normandy, WW II and Vietnam POW's, Wounded Warriors, and other WW II veterans. If you would like to join us for this years incredible evening as we gather to pay tribute to these heroes, tickets are available by contacting me at 904-806-4712 or email: anuday00@aol.com. I still have tickets but they will go very fast

in the next couple of weeks and they are on a first come-first served basis.

It's not too early to place your order for Wreaths Across America. Dan Blackman and his committee are doing an outstanding job of getting this years program underway. I met with his committee last week and was very impressed with how organized they are and how they are reaching out to every corner of the community to make this years program the most successful ever since the inception of the Wreaths Across America program.

A big Bravo Zulu to the folks at Business Solutions Unlimited, LLC and the St. Johns Co. Chamber of Commerce for their very generous donation to the Veterans council last month. On Thurs. 22 March, Joe McDermott, George April and myself met with Ms. Bridget Van Landingham from Business Solutions Unlimited to receive a check in the amount of \$1854. This was a very benevolent gift from the folks at Business Solutions and we will be sure it is used for the purposes of supporting our Veterans in St. Johns County which were the conditions of the donation.

Thank you for your service to our country and your support of our Veterans Council.

Bill Dudley
Chairman
Veterans Council of St. Johns Co., Inc.



requesting to see one of the Clinics doctors, himself and the doctor with gasoline smuggled into the clinic on his person. After a first failed attempt to ignite the gasoline with a match, he was overpowered by Mr. Tucker while attempting to strike the second match which would have certainly caused serious bodily injury to himself, the doctor and possibly the clinic.



Mr Tucker was honored at last months County Commission meeting by Chairman Mark Miner with a proclamation from St. Johns County. After the reading of the proclamation, Ben was also honored by receiving a plaque from the St.



Special points of interest:

- Jacksonville National Cemetery
- VA Online References
- Chase/Rescorla Scholarships
- Wreaths Across America

Battle of Midway Commemorative Dinner

Keynote Speaker, ADM Jonathan W. Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations



ADM Greenert

Event will be held at The Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village.

June 9, 2012, Cocktails begin at 6 PM, Dinner at 7 PM.

Reserved seating. Hosted by The Mayport Council Navy League of the United States

And you are invited! Tickets are now on sale, Ticket Information, Ticket costs are: Active Duty E-6 and below, \$25; E-7 to 03, \$35, 04 to 05, \$45, 06 and above, civilians, and retirees, \$60.

**Tickets available from the following- NAVY LEAGUE MAYPORT POC Bob Price Phone (904)246-9982
E-mail - bpricex4@Comcast.net**

NAVY LEAGUE ST AUGUSTINE: POC Bill Dudley, Phone (904)806-4712 , E-mail - anuday00@aol.com

Make Checks payable to NAVY LEAGUE MIDWAY

**The Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village,
Special Room Rate - \$69.00, (includes 2 breakfast vouchers)**



YOU MUST INCLUDE: The Battle of Midway or Navy League to receive the above discounted rate, Hotel reservations must be made by calling Phone 1-800-266-9432 Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.



Christopher Thompson, CFP®, CRPC®
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A Short History of the Battle of Midway

4-7 June 1942



The Battle of Midway, fought over and near the tiny U.S. mid-Pacific base at Midway atoll, represents the strategic high water mark of Japan's Pacific Ocean war. Prior to this action, Japan possessed general naval superiority over the United States and could usually choose where and when to attack. After Midway, the two opposing fleets were essentially equals, and the United States soon took the offensive.

Japanese Combined Fleet commander Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto moved on Midway in an effort to draw out and destroy the U.S. Pacific Fleet's aircraft carrier striking forces, which had embarrassed the Japanese Navy in the mid-April Doolittle Raid on Japan's home islands and at the Battle of Coral Sea in early May. He planned to quickly knock down Midway's defenses, follow up with an invasion of the atoll's two small islands and establish a Japanese air base there. He expected the U.S. carriers to come out and fight, but to arrive too late to save Midway and in insufficient strength to avoid defeat by his own well-tested carrier air power.

Yamamoto's intended surprise was thwarted by superior American communications intelligence, which deduced his scheme well before battle was joined. This allowed Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, the U.S. Pacific Fleet commander, to establish an ambush by having his carriers ready and waiting for the Japanese. On 4 June 1942, in the second of the Pacific War's great carrier battles, the trap was sprung. The perseverance, sacrifice and skill of U.S. Navy aviators, plus a great deal of good luck on the American side, cost Japan four irreplaceable fleet carriers, while only one of the three U.S. carriers present was lost. The base at Midway, though damaged by Japanese air attack, remained operational and later became a vital component in the American trans-Pacific offensive.

Visit our Web Site at <http://www.midwaydinner.org/> for photos and more information

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



As you know, the residents at Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing home have fun at all holiday occasions. March was no exception! In fact, we had a few...our St. Patrick's Day Celebration and our Spring Bubble Party held out in the courtyard.

St. Patrick's Day was celebrated with lots of goofiness and lots of green. Everyone had green leprechaun hats and one person was even spotted with green hair. Games were played, prizes given and of course there was green food eaten. Our beautiful Florida weather didn't disappoint on the day of our Spring Bubble Party in the courtyard. Lots of memories of our childhoods as well as those of raising our own children were

brought to mind as we enjoyed the beautiful day and blew lots of bubbles....our bubble machine helped.

We also snuck in an Oreo Stacking Contest to celebrate the 100th birthday of Oreos. Congratulations to Mrs. Clara Sullivan. She stacked 18 Oreos! Guess what her prize was?





I REMEMBER....Thomas Noonan, USMC

I remember the first time I saw Tommy Noonan. It was on a flag football field at Hunter College. It was 1965, the Bronx, during a flag football championship game. Tommy was on the "Super Seniors"

team, a team consisting of older

students who for whatever reason didn't graduate in the normal 4 years. Tommy was a block of stone, all muscle, seldom smiled, and to be avoided at all costs. He played offensive and defensive line and our team tried to avoid Tommy's side. He was that good. Indestructible, unmovable, and deadly. He could stop a runner in his tracks. Although I was not very friendly with Tommy, I recall him saying that he was going to go into the Marines after he graduated and help end the war in Vietnam..

This is from Wikipedia: Noonan was born on November 18, 1943 in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from Grover Cleveland High School in Ridgewood, New York in June 1961 and attended Hunter College in the Bronx, New York, graduating with a B.A. degree in Physical Education in June 1966. Coincidentally, he grew up with Sergeant Robert Emmett O'Malley, who would also be awarded the Medal of Honor in Vietnam. The two attended school and church together and were friends throughout childhood. After Noonan's death in Vietnam, O'Malley remained in contact with the Noonan family and visited Noonan's mother every year on Memorial Day.

Tom enlisted in the U. S. Marine Corps Reserve in Brooklyn, New York on December 26, 1967 and was subsequently discharged to enlist in the Regular Marine Corps on January 31, 1968.

Private Noonan completed recruit training with the 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina in April 1968, and was promoted to private first class on April 1, 1968.

Transferred to the Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, he underwent individual combat training with the 1st Battalion, 1st Infantry Training Regiment.

Ordered to the Republic of Vietnam in July 1968, he was assigned duty as mortar man with H&S Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Marines, 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF. In August, he was reassigned to the 3rd Marine Division where he saw combat as a rifleman, M-79 Man with Company G, 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on January 1, 1969.

Noonan was killed in action on February 5, 1969, while participating in action against the enemy south of Vandegrift Combat Base in Quang Tri Province.

Medal of Honor Citation

The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pride in presenting the **MEDAL OF HONOR** posthumously to: **LANCE CORPORAL THOMAS P. NOONAN, JR., UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS** for service as set forth in the following CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Fire Team Leader with Company G, Second Battalion, Ninth Marines, Third Marine Division, in operations against the enemy in Quang Tri Province in the Republic of Vietnam. On February 5, 1969, Company G was directed to move from a position which they had been holding southeast of the Vandegrift Combat Base in A Shau Valley to an alternate location. As the Marines commenced a slow and difficult descent down the side of the hill, made extremely slippery by the heavy rains, the leading element came under a heavy fire from a North Vietnamese Army unit occupying well-concealed positions in the rocky terrain. Four men were wounded, and repeated attempts to recover them failed because of the intense hostile fire. Lance Corporal Noonan moved from his position of relative security and, maneuvering down the treacherous slope to a location near the injured men, took cover behind some rocks. Shouting words of encouragement to the wounded men to restore their confidence, he dashed across the hazardous terrain and commenced dragging the most seriously wounded man away from the fire-swept area. Although wounded and knocked to the ground by an enemy round, Lance Corporal Noonan recovered rapidly and resumed dragging the man toward the marginal security of a rock. He was however, mortally wounded before he could reach his destination. His heroic actions inspired his fellow Marines to such aggressiveness that they initiated a spirited assault which forced the enemy soldiers to withdraw. Lance Corporal Noonan's indomitable courage inspiring initiative and selfless devotion to duty upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

Lance Corporate Thomas P. Noonan has a playground named in his honor in Sunnyside, Queens, NY.

The Thomas P. Noonan Jr. VA Community Clinic in Sunnyside, NY is named in his honor.





St. Francis Barracks, 1890

St. Francis Barracks is a historic structure constructed of coquina stone located on Marine Street in St. Augustine, Florida named in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. The barracks were constructed between 1724 - 1755 by monks of the Order of St. Francis to replace a series of previous wooden buildings which were de-



St. Francis Barracks today

stroyed by the ravages of the Florida sub-tropical climate and by fire, both accidental and intentional when the city was razed by the English in 1702.

The barracks were turned into a military structure by the British in 1763 after Florida became a British territory by treaty after the French and Indian War. The Franciscan monks vacated the city along with the majority of the Spanish citizens of St. Augustine.

The name *St. Francis Barracks* also came to be applied to the military reservation which was developed around the barracks after it's conversion for military purposes. Included in this military reservation on the shore of the Matanzas River are several historic structures including The King's Bakery, believed to be the only extant structure in St. Augustine constructed entirely within the British period of occupation.

Today the St. Francis Barracks serves as the Florida State Arsenal, headquarters for the Florida National Guard. A portion of the area is the site of St. Augustine National Cemetery.

From Wikipedia

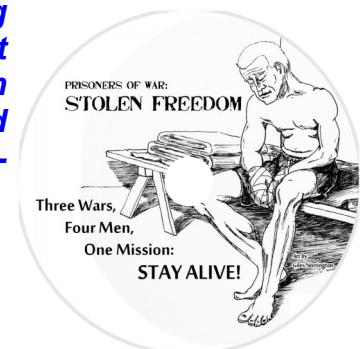


Harry Manford

The Coquina Crossing Homeowners Association, Florida Veterans Programs & Projects, Inc. and the Coquina Veterans hosted a showing of the documentary, "Prisoners of War: Stolen Freedom" in the Coquina Crossing Clubhouse. This event was moderated by Harry Manford, Board member of FVPPI and Commander of the Coquina Veterans.

Producer Michael Rothfeld started the evening with a short history of FVPPI and its Not for Profit Mission Goals: 1. to support overseas troops in war zones with supplies and 2. to record and educate the public about the sacrifices local veterans have made through their service.

There was a question and answer session after the documentary and ice cream was served courtesy of the Coquina Crossing Homeowners Association.



Florida Veterans Programs & Projects, Inc. in association with Rolling Thunder Florida are making available free copies of its "Prisoners of War Stolen Freedom" documentary to all Veterans Groups. Just contact Michael at: 904-829-0381 or mrothfeld@AnyVeteran.org and I will mail them or meet you to give you as many free copies as you need. Our goal is to have as many people see the documentary as possible.

Memorial Day Observance, Monday, May 28, 2012 at 14:00 Hrs

Progress continues at our facilities at the **Jacksonville National Veterans Cemetery**. This solemn resting place is serving north Florida and south Georgia veterans and their families. The Jacksonville National Cemetery is located south of the Jacksonville International Airport at 4803 Lannie Road, Jacksonville, Florida and is approximately 18 miles from Interstate 295. Please come and join us on Memorial Day, May 28, 2012 at 14:00 Hrs to pay tribute to those that have given the supreme sacrifice. We currently have over 5000 veterans that have been laid to rest there.



The work at the **Jacksonville National Cemetery** continues and we currently have 3 ongoing projects:

1. Installation of the 40 ft Carillion Bell Tower
2. Veterans Memorial Center and Museum
3. New road into the National Cemetery from I95

So please come and join us and tour your very own beautiful Jacksonville National Cemetery.

Yours through veterans,

Dan Hughes, Chairman:
Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee



Artist's rendition of the proposed Veterans Memorial Center and Museum

Motorcycle Rides sponsored by local Veterans groups



Vet Fest Poker Run, April 14 and April 15

<http://www.veteranscouncilofstjohns.org/VetFestPR.pdf>

Combat Vets Association, May 12, 2012

for the Residents of the Clyde E. Lassen Veterans Nursing Home

<http://www.veteranscouncilofstjohns.org/Flyers.html>



Rolling Thunder Flame of Freedom, Armed Forces Day, May 19, 2012

<http://www.veteranscouncilofstjohns.org/Flyers.html>



Link to the "Stops & Stays" for the *Flame of Freedom* route:

<http://www.rtflameoffreedom.com/events.html>

This information can also be seen at: <http://www.veteranscouncilofstjohns.org>
just click on Event Flyers under the Newsletter button



News Release

References for Veterans

Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide: www.FloridaVets.org -- then click on "Benefits Guide"

Federal Benefits for Veterans & Dependents Guide: http://www1.va.gov/OPA/publications/benefits_book.asp

Florida Veterans Foundation: www.FloridaVeteransFoundation.org

Employ Florida Vets - veteran employment resources: <http://veterans.employflorida.com/portals/veteran/>

Florida's Veteran Service Organizations: www.floridavets.org/organization/commanders.asp

Florida Department of Military Affairs: <http://dma.myflorida.com/>

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA): www.va.gov

Returning OEF/OIF/OND Veterans (VA): <http://www.oefoif.va.gov/>

National Resource Directory - for wounded warriors: <http://www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov/>

Post-9/11 G.I. Bill and Veteran Education Benefits: www.gibill.va.gov

National VA Homeless Hotline - 24 Hour: Toll Free at 1-877-424-3838

Veterans Crisis Line - 24 Hour: Toll Free at 1-800-273-8255, Press 1: www.mentalhealth.va.gov

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve: www.esgr.mil

Florida Veterans' Business Assistance: www.floridasbdc.com, www.fptac.org

Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses: www.osd.dms.state.fl.us

Center for Women Veterans: <http://www1.va.gov/womenvet/>

GUESS WHO?



PFC Jack Wentz (left on left), Coquina Crossing resident, at K 47/Chunchon Air Force Base, South Korea in February 1954. Jack is seen here with a visiting entertainer, can you guess who she is??

On right, Jack is being interviewed for a locally produced documentary: "Korea, Forgotten War, Remembered Heroes".



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

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

Send to: mrothfeld@anyveteran.org



St. Augustine National Cemetery

Important Online Veterans Links:

National Association of Senior Veterans:

<http://veteranssupportcenter.org>

Military.com: largest online military destination offering free resources

Florida Dept. of Veterans Affairs:

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

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

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

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

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

**The St. Johns County Veterans Council meets the last
Thursday of the month at 7 pm at the Elks Lodge,
1420 A1A So., St. Augustine.**

Visit our Website: www.veteranscouncilofstjohns.org
(please note the NEW web address)

Veterans Service Office
1955 US 1 South, Suite 550
St. Augustine, FL 32086

(physical location)

The VSO Office is located in the St. Johns County Health and Human Services complex, behind the VA Clinic.

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, CVSO
Rick Rees, Assistant VSO
Heather Andrews, Assistant VSO
Tammy Shirley, Office Specialist



Then and Now, Paul Heagy








Hospital Corpsman
1st Class
Chu Lai, Vietnam
1966



Retired US
Navy, 1984, Master
Chief Hospital
Corpsman worked
at Grumman until
1984, now volun-
teers in the
Flagler Hospital
Emergency Room




COMBAT VETERANS MOTORCYCLE ASSOCIATION


2nd Annual Poker Run May 12, 2012, for the Residents of the Clyde E Lassen State Veteran's Nursing Home!!!

Registration begins at
the VFW Post 2391 at
0930, KSU at 1100.

\$10.00 per rider or \$15.00 per rider and passenger

Breakfast will be offered at \$5.00 a plate.
(Pancakes, scrambled eggs, w/choice of sausage or bacon)
50/50, Raffle, and Music

Poker Cards will be given out at:

- VFW Post 2391, 6184 US-1 South, St. Augustine, FL 32086 (904) 797-5267
- AMVETS #45, 1030 East SR206 St. Augustine, FL 32086 (904) 217-4848
- AMVETS Post #59, 5859 North Oceanshore Blvd Palm Coast, FL 32137 (386) 597-2917
- VFW Post 8696, 47 Old Kings Road North Palm Coast, FL 32137 (386) 446-8696
- AMVETS #113, 2525 N US Highway 1 Suite A Bunnell, FL 32110 (386) 263-2972

!!!This event is open to all riders!!!

"NO ATTITUDES"~NO DRAMA~
"NO MISBEHAVING"



We are an Association of Combat Veterans from all branches of the United States Armed Forces who ride motorcycles as a hobby. Our mission now is to support and defend those who have defended our country and our freedoms. Our focus is to help veteran care facilities provide a warm meal, clothing, shelter, and guidance, or simply to say "Thank You." and "Welcome Home."

Our membership is comprised of Full Members (those with verified combat service) and Supporter Members (those who have non-combat military service, and have a sincere dedication to helping veterans). We have members from nearly all 50 states and living abroad. Many members continue to serve in our Armed Forces, with several serving in combat areas now.

We sponsor and/or participate in many motorcycle-related charity events each year, and as a non-profit organization, donate to various veteran care facilities and veteran charities.

It was a busy year for the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association Chapter 20-2. We have donated to or participated in many programs including the Florida Veterans Programs and Projects, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Clyde E. Lassen Veterans Nursing Home, and the St. Augustine Homeless Veterans Stand-Down.

We also donated to the Healing Heroes Network, Joe's Sock Fund for Homeless Veterans, VFW Post 54 and VFW Post 4833. For 2012, we have already donated to the USO of North Carolina for the Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home which will be on March 31, 2012.

The Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association – Veterans Helping Veterans.

VETERANS STAND TOGETHER DAY

Washington, D.C., July 27, 2012

TO ALL VETERANS: It is time we stand together and show the leaders of this country that we (the Veterans) mean business. With the ending of the Iraq War, we should have seen parades and celebration. Instead we heard "the country is not ready". Yet, the Super Bowl winners got a parade. The man who picks up trash on the side of the road is called a hero. The people who do not deserve the spotlight, headlines, and to be called a hero, all get their 15 minutes of fame. However, the real Heroes who arrive home from defending this country are lucky to get the back page of the Penny Saver. This is only the beginning of the end and will get much worse. When the Afghanistan War ends our leaders will brush everything aside dealing with Veterans. They will say "the country is not ready". St. Louis, MO felt their city was ready. The Warriors will be ready and so should this country's leadership.

Those Warriors coming back, just as the Warriors before will be forgotten. It is time that we as Veterans; as Warriors, stand together and show our leaders that we are strong. It does not matter if you are Democrat, Republican, Independent, or what era you fought in. This is about us and not them. Sure there are groups who represent Veterans with their lobbyist. Yet, what do we really see from it. There are still homeless Veterans sleeping in the streets. There are still Veterans killing themselves after they come home. Family members who stop working to take care of their Warrior because they cannot make the faces and noises stop in their head. Warriors who still today, even after 40 plus years, still do not feel normal at home and have pills shoved down their throat. Veterans dying because they cannot get medical care because their illness was not service connected or better yet the VA says it is not service connected.

They do not want to write the checks to cover our Veterans. Yet that check we all wrote when we went in, giving our lives to this country if needed, would have been cashed with no questions asked as long as they did not have to serve and risk death themselves. I say enough is enough and we finally stand up together and make the leaders of America do as they promised to do and to take care of our Warriors. No more of "it is his fault" or "their fault". When those bullets, rockets, IEDs, trip wires, punji stakes, and booby traps did its job; it did not care who you voted for or what side of the aisle you were on. It took that check and sent it back to America in the form of a coffin draped with an American Flag with a note that read "One American Warrior" and somebody stamped it "CASHED".

I know we all would go back and fight for this Country with our heads held high and that blank check in our hand. We would not even change what happened to us because it protected America and her people. How many more of our Warrior has to go untreated and die back home. How many more have to go without eating or sleep without a roof over their heads. Every Warrior out there should get 10% off at any place you go, a special seat at every restaurant, first in line no matter when you show up, a roof over their head, food in their stomach, and by God a place to call HOME.

On July 27, 2012, I want all of us, to gather in Washington, D.C. atop Capitol Hill at the eastern end of the National Mall at the steps of the Capital Building. I want our leaders to see what can be done when we the Veterans stand together. That we can make or break their political career if something is not done and done now about our Veterans. We will show them we have enough votes to fire the lot of them and elect someone else and if they do not take care of Veterans and this Country. We will fire them and start anew. We can do this and we can stand together as we have never stood before and help all Veterans, no matter when you fought. No I am not running for some office or political role. I am a Combat Medic who is just tired of seeing his Brothers and Sisters struggle and not get the respect they deserve and earned.

Let every Veteran, Veterans Group, News, Veterans Family, and our leadership see this and read it. Post it everywhere you can and let's show the leaders of America, that we are what has kept America safe and we are who keeps America free.

Sincerely, SSG Michael "Doc Reaper" James (ret), CVMA FL 20-2,

Executive Officer, james854223@bellsouth.net

Going to Washington D.C. July 27, 2012, to stand with my fellow Veterans:

Doc Reaper Combat Medic, Iraq (03/04) and Afghanistan (05/06), CVMA FL 20-2

Recon Doc Combat Medic, Vietnam 1965/1966, CVMA FL 20-2

John "Blackfoot" Johnson, NSA Da Nang Hospital, RVN 69/70, CVMA

G. L. "DragonSlayer" Aldrich, CVMA

Don "freebird" Fulton, CVMA PA

Mike "Maytag" Bradley, Vietnam, CVMA FL 20-2

HMC(SCW/FMF) Larry Conway USN (RET) Southwest Asia, Yugoslavia, Afghan, CVMA FL 20-2

Don "Phantom" Wilson, Viet Nam 68/69, CVMA 20-1

Steven "Skull" Schulman CVMA 20-2

CAN WE COUNT ON YOU??

The Chase/Rescorla Foundation

The Chase-Rescorla Foundation was established to honor two heroes, Leo C. Chase, Jr. of St. Augustine and Rick Rescorla of Hayle, Cornwall, England who both sacrificed their lives in service to our country. Army Pfc. Leo C. Chase, Jr., at 21 years old, was killed while serving in Vietnam. Rick Rescorla, a Vietnam veteran, lost his life on September 11, 2001. He was the Vice President of Security for Morgan Stanley/ Dean Witter, a tenant in the World trade Center. His actions on the day of the attack, along with his preparation and foresight, saved the lives of 2,700 people.

In recognition of their sacrifices and to honor them, the Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund will annually assist selected underprivileged students with college or specialized professional trade school tuition or books. St. Johns County School guidance counselors will be asked to recommend candidates for the Chase- Rescorla Scholarships. The Not for Profit Board will then select appropriate recipients.

It is the intent of the Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund to perpetuate the memory of Leo and Rick with a scholarship program awarding scholarships annually through generous gifts and donations.

The 6th Annual Fundraiser Scholarship dinner was held on Saturday evening March 24th at the Elks Lodge. This year's Keynote speaker was Holsey A. Moorman, Brigadier General, USA ret. BG Moorman is a former Deputy Adjutant General of New Jersey, appointed in 1994 by Governor Christine Todd Whitman. Ray Quinn, SGM, USA ret. served as MC and Michael Pullium, President of the Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund served as host.

The 2012 Chase-Rescorla Scholarship recipients were: Keturah Carswell \$1,000, Lavonshia Evans \$500, Kayla Hanel \$1,000, Christina Nicklo \$500, Tarek Odom \$500, Steven Packo \$1,000, Jayde Robinson \$500, Amber Savard \$500, Kelsea Weesner \$1,000, Devon Williams \$1,000, and Shetia Williams \$500.

The new scholars received \$1,000 and returning scholars received \$500.

President Michael Pullium gave special thanks to Allied Veterans of the World & Affiliates , Inc., and the Scheidel Foundation for their continued generosity and support of the Chase-Rescorla Scholarship. Lisa Pappas, Communications Director of Allied Veterans received recognition for the financial support and BG Moorman and SGM Ray Quinn received plaques for their continued support to veterans causes.



President Pullium and AVW
Lisa Pappas



2012 Chase-Rescorla
Scholarship recipients



Michael Pullium and Board
member Tom Crawford



BG Moorman and
President Pullium



Pres. Pullium presenting plaque
to Ray Quinn, SGM, USA ret.

Ancient City Chapter 2232

United Daughters of the Confederacy

The Ancient City Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy is open to women over the age of 16 who have an ancestor who served in the Confederate Army. It is a heritage organization that has five objectives: Historical, Benevolent, Educational, Patriotic and Memorial.



At the Yard Sale

We take our Patriotic objective very seriously and strive to serve Veterans causes as much as possible. Two current members are veterans. The Chapter recently sponsored a yard sale to benefit the "Wreaths Across America" Project and raised enough money to purchase 10 wreaths this year. Our thanks to SGM Blackman for his support of our sale. Our fall yard sale will benefit our Pal Day Project which the Chapter has supported for the last 9 years. They decorate and fill bags with candy and toys for the children of military personnel who attend Pal Day each year at the Elks Lodge on the first Saturday in December. For further information regarding the Chapter and it's projects, please contact President Judy Davis at 814-4284 or udc2232@att.net.

Submitted by: Judy Davis, 160 Laguna Court, St. Augustine, FL 32086

Home – 797-2686, Cell – 814-4284

From Michael Isam

For daily and up to date news and events that affect veterans go to:

Veterans Today - <http://s11.zetaboards.com/CFLNewsChat/forum/27519/> and

North Florida Veterans Forum - <http://anyveteran.org/smf/index.php>

Are you a veteran? Do you need a job?

Every week, a new list of available jobs are posted to

FL Jobs for Veterans - <http://s11.zetaboards.com/CFLNewsChat/forum/3008165/>

WANTED: Your War Stories and Pictures, the Editor of this Newsletter is looking for your help & cooperation. We want to tell your story, anecdote, remembrances of your time in service. It can be short or long and please include pictures if you have them. They can be e-mailed to:

mrothfeld@anyveteran.org or mailed to:

Michael Rothfeld, 4905 Los Altos Circle

Elkton, FL 32033

all pictures mailed will be returned



ROLLING THUNDER®, INC.



FLAME OF FREEDOM®



For hundreds of years the light in the distance meant hope. The flickering in the distance of the light high atop the lighthouse tells of nearing land in a heavy fog, the dim light of a front porch says come inside to the warmth of home, and let us not forget the lantern of Paul Revere riding through the streets to warn the British were coming. There was a time long ago that our forefathers fought to provide us with freedom, then came other wars fought to preserve those freedoms. Today we fight to protect that freedom.

FREEDOM IS NOT FREE

For First time the **FLAME OF FREEDOM®** will stop in **FLORIDA** on its **Annual Cross Country pilgrimage to Washington D.C. for Memorial Day.** All Veterans and Patriotic Americans, you are cordially invited to join the members of Rolling Thunder® Friday, 18 May as they escort the **FLAME OF FREEDOM®** from the Florida/Georgia State line south on US 19 to US 27 reaching our final destination, Leesburg, and on Saturday, 19 May as we celebrate **NATIONAL ARMED FORCES DAY.**

19 May 2012 **FLAME OF FREEDOM®'s ARMED FORCES DAY** Celebration

8:30 am – Police escorted **NATIONAL ARMED FORCES FREEDOM RIDE** departs GATOR Harley Davidson for the Villages Veteran Memorial and back.

12:00 noon – Dedication of the Veterans Memorial at Fountain Park

2:00 pm – Rolling Thunder's **FLAME OF FREEDOM®** POW/MIA Missing Man Table Ceremony at TOWN SQUARE Park in downtown Leesburg.

Contacts for additional information on all activities including escort routes;

Kathy McLaughlin
Rolling Thunder Chapter 6
President
352 816 7864
whitetailchsr2@aol.com

Randy West
Rolling Thunder Chapter 3
President
352 494 2780
crazycompass@hotmail.com

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BIKERS FOR AMERICA'S BRAVEST

Veterans Organizations, Motorcycle Clubs

Our Hero's need your help

In honor of the 343 firefighters who lost their lives in the name of freedom on September 11, the Tunnel to Towers Foundation will be organizing 343 motorcycle runs across America on the weekend prior to Sept 11th. The proceeds from these runs will support our ongoing project "Building homes for America's Bravest," During 2012 we will be building 12 Smart accessible homes for quad and triple amputee Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans. This is no easy task and cannot be accomplished alone.

We are reaching out to Veterans Organizations to host these runs across America. The Foundation will guide the hosting organization thru the process with our procedure guide. Our graphic design department is available to design your flyers and banners for your event. With 11 years experience in hosting one of NYC Largest 5k runs, we are confident that with the support of Veteran's organizations we will achieve our goal.

If you are interested in hosting a motorcycle run in your town, please click on the hosting event link below and fill out the application or call us at 718-987-1931

2361 Hylan Boulevard ~ Staten Island ~ New York 10306

Office: 718.987.1931 Fax: 718.987.3909

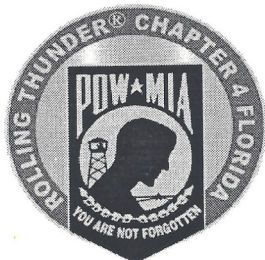
www.tunneltotowers.org

SAVE THE DATE

HELP THE STEPHEN SILLER
TUNNEL TO TOWER
FOUNDATION
AND THE
GARY SINISE FOUNDATION
"BUILDING FOR
AMERICA'S BRAVEST"



All proceeds from this run will
help build a smart home for our
local hero, triple amputee
Cpl Todd Love, USMC



Rolling Thunder
Chapter 4 Florida
Is Hosting a

"Bikers for America's Bravest"

343 Run-Jacksonville FL

Run on September 9th, 2012

Registration kicks off at 9:11 AM

For more details go to www.tunneltotowers.org
Contact Mitch 904-614-1024 or Lee 904-838-8309

From Jim Vanairsdale, LTC, USMC, ret. I was stationed on Guam 1961-1963 (WOW!! That's a Loooong time ago.)

Naturally, the island was loaded with stuff from WW II--including lots of unexploded ordnance. I found one of the most interesting things was the Marine war dog cemetery.

If you google on "Marine war dog cemetery Guam" you will find a large number of sites on the cemetery. Marines were developing/training war dogs before WW II started and they were used in the earliest Marine operations. They saved a great number of lives--400-500 on Guam alone. They have always been beloved to Marines and are treated with the same respect as any Marine.



War Dog Memorial



World War II Canine "soldiers" resting place. Guam, an American possession, was invaded by the Japanese soon after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The small Pacific island had little capabilities to defend itself but managed to hold out for several days. A brutal almost three year occupation followed. The Marines returned in 1944 and in their ranks was a full compliment of dogs, the 3rd Dog Platoon (Devil Dogs) especially trained for jungle warfare. They could search out the occupiers from their hiding place in the dense overgrowth, detect mines and traps, alert troops to approaching Japanese while carrying messages, ammunition and medical supplies. They guarded exhausted sleeping troops in foxholes preventing infiltration. Among the many Marine casualties were the exposed handlers of the canine along with some 25 dogs mostly Dobermans. Upon their deaths, the dogs were taken back to the initial invasion beach at Asan and interred in a small section of the Marine Cemetery. Later small white headstones with their names were erected and it became known as "The War Dog Cemetery Guam." Legacy: Elaborate monuments to war dogs dot the country...March Air force Base, Riverside, California has a 16 foot tall granite and bronze monument located at their museum. The East Coast National War Dog Memorial is at Fort Benning, Georgia located in front of the National Infantry Museum. The famous Hartsdale Pet Cemetery, Hartsdale, New York has an early endeavor with an impressive monument located on the grounds. Small towns like Streamwood, Illinois has a tribute in the form of a memorial called, "Guardians."

The War Dog Memorial and Cemetery on Guam is the most unique of all the dog memorials because it encompasses an actual cemetery developed as the animals became fatalities then interred in one spot during the islands liberation in World War II. Dr. William W. Putney now a retired Veteran/Veterinarian who was the commanding officer of the 3rd Dog Platoon, made a nostalgic visit to Guam in 1989. He was barely able to find the cemetery as the jungle had reclaimed the site. A personal campaign persuaded the military commander of the Naval Air Station to designate a new site and the cemetery with the dog remains and markers was relocated in 1994 to the Air Station and would now be maintained by the military. Finally with an ally, the "United Doberman Club" which furnished most of the dogs for the dog platoon, commissioned a memorial and statue which was created by Susan Bahary, noted artist of animal themes and a dog enthusiast. The finished monument was erected and dedicated at the Guam gravesite in 1998 with great fanfare. Dr. Putney joined his dogs, passing away on March 21, 2003 but was able to see the completion of his mission. The monument has the chiseled names of the fallen canines with monikers like Skipper, Missy, Cappy, Silver, KoKo and Blitz.

Interesting footnote...Plans are afoot for a proposed National War Dog Memorial in Washington D.C. Activists behind the endeavor have circulated a flyer asking for donations entitled, "Courage at both ends of the leash" with an image of the Vietnam War Memorial wall and a German Shepherd sitting and looking on patiently.



Wreath Sponsorship Form

*Sponsored wreaths are placed on the grave markers at state, national veterans cemeteries as well as local cemeteries each December. Wreaths may be purchased online at www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org If you wish to make your sponsorship with a credit card please visit our website for a secure online transaction.

Name:		Cemetery ID Number FLSNSA
Address:		
City:		
State:	Zip :	Sponsoring Group ID Number FLVCSJC01
Phone: ()		
Email:		

Cemetery Designation: **St. Augustine National Cemetery**

Sponsoring Group Contact: Daniel Blackman sgm500@gmail.com or 904-669-6423

Sponsorship	Price	Quantity	Total
Individual= 1 Wreath	\$15.00		
Family= 4 Wreaths	\$60.00		
Small Business= 10 Wreaths	\$150.00		
Corporate= 100 Wreaths or more	\$15.00 each wreath		
Grand Total			

****WE REGRET WE ARE UNABLE TO ACCEPT GRAVE-SPECIFIC REQUESTS****

Please make checks payable to: **Wreaths Across America™**

**Mail check and form to: c/o Daniel Blackman (WAA), St. Johns County Veterans Service Office
P.O. Box 2117, St. Augustine, FL 32085-2117**

Questions? Call (904) 669-6423 or (904) 540-1630

Thank you for your Sponsorship and joining us in our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach!

Please note that **all** sponsorships are sent directly to the location and
no wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA is an IRC§501(c)(3) exempt non-profit Maine corporation, FEIN 20-8362270, registered (# CH34722) with the Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Contributions are deductible from taxable federal income as charitable donations under IRC§170 and/or IRC§6115. Wreaths Across America does not use professional solicitors. 100% of funds received benefit the mission: to purchase wreaths to lay at the gravestones of Veterans. More information can be obtained from our website [http:// www.wreathsafteramerica.org](http://www.wreathsafteramerica.org).
A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING 800-HELP-FLA (435-7352)—calling from within the State of Florida or (850) 488-2221—calling from outside Florida. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

This article is used with the permission of Matt Soergel of the Times Union. Mario Patruno currently lives in Coquina Crossing, Elkton.

**D-Day: Former paratrooper carries memories, scars of war to this day.
Mario Patruno dived into World War II as a young paratrooper in 1944.**

By [Matt Soergel](#) jacksonville.com [Copyright 2011 The Florida Times-Union. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without prior permission.](#) June 6, 2011



Mario, second from left, over the English Channel on his way to Normandy and his jump into history



D-Day: Former paratrooper carries memories, scars of war to this day, Army Pfc. Mario Patruno was 23, tough and fit. He'd fought in the ring as a youth boxer, and in the streets of Holyoke, Mass., with a brawling gang called the Bond Street Rovers.

On the dark morning of June 6, 1944, he'd need all the toughness he possessed if he wanted to see June 7. Flying over Normandy under heavy fire, his plane was going low and too fast when he jumped from 400 feet, landing far from his intended landing spot. His parachute riddled with holes, he tumbled to a rough landing, all alone.

It was 1:20 a.m. on D-Day. Patruno — nicknamed Gus — was a member of Company F of the Army's 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, recently a focus of HBO's "Band of Brothers." His job: to help hold a causeway at Utah Beach. In the confusion, he never made it to the causeway, but for the next month he would endure a series of skirmishes and firefights across France — bloody, nasty moments that still cause him to cry out at night. Now 90, he lives with his wife Ruth in a senior community southwest of St. Augustine. The exact order of the days after D-Day are a little fuzzy for him today, but his memories of specific events are vivid.

Focused on survival

He was born April 8, 1921, in Massachusetts to Italian immigrants. After World War II started, a recruiter sold him on the paratroopers. "He said, 'We got this new outfit: You don't walk, you ride in planes, it pays 100 bucks a month.' I said, 'Sign me up.'" In 1943, the 506th arrived in England to prepare for the invasion of Europe. Before it came, there was some time for sightseeing. Patruno was cheeky: He once tried to take an ancient brick from Roman ruins in Wales, but the authorities stopped him. "I told them I was Italian, I was related to Julius Caesar," he said. They didn't buy it.

Rumors and stories flew in the weeks before D-Day. He knew it was going to be big. Patruno remembers what a beautiful sight it was late at night, flying low over hundreds of ships making their way across the English Channel.

After landing alone, Patruno met a guy from the 501st. His gun stock was broken, but Patruno repaired it with medical tape. Within half an hour, they stumbled on a lieutenant from the 82nd Airborne and about 15 men. They joined up with them as they marched toward Utah Beach, but Patruno split off as the group from the 82nd went their own way. He was itching to join his own men. The area was thick with Germans, and all his senses were focused on survival. "Every bush was a German, every sound.

You were on pins and needles," he said. "If you touched me, you were dead." Outside a village, he stopped a Frenchman on a bike and asked him for directions. The local was reluctant to answer, and the reason became clear as three truckloads of Germans came over a hill. Patruno dived into hedgerows as the Frenchman tried to stop the Germans, frantically pointing to the Yank's hiding place. The trucks kept going, though, bound for someplace more important. A little later, Patruno saw the Frenchmen, still riding his bicycle. He aimed at him and shot him, he says, right off the bike. He doesn't know if he was dead, but he knows the bike ended up in a ditch. Early the next morning, or the one after that, he spotted five beautiful horses in a field next to a barn. He sneaked into the barn, which was guarded by two Germans. He stealthily took down a bridle, went back outside and chose the most beautiful horse. It was huge. It was white. He couldn't mount the horse — not with a bag of grenades and his heavy pack — so he coaxed it over to a water trough, stood on top, and heaved himself up. Just before dawn, he and the horse sauntered by a couple of German soldiers who waved hello to him. He waved back. In the dark, they couldn't quite see what uniform he had on. Besides, what would a Yank be doing riding by on a big white horse? And he was riding his white horse when he caught up with the men of Company F. It was quite the entrance. "They said: 'Patruno, what are you doing? Hey Gus, there's a war going on.'"

Tommy's final words

Almost seven decades later, Patruno tears up repeatedly as he speaks of his buddy Tommy Wolford, a corporal who'd been with him since their training days in the States. Patruno was at his side in Normandy as Wolford raised his grenade launcher against an approaching tank. "I'll get that tank," he told Patruno. Those were his last words. As the tank fired, Patruno jumped into a shallow foxhole, then shot and wounded a German who approached his hiding spot. The man fell on top of Patruno, coating him in blood. As Patruno struggled to get out from under him, two unarmed German medics came to collect their comrade. Patruno had no problems with that — at least not until the medics, whom he held at rifle-point, loaded him on to a stretcher and carted him out of the busy firefight. Patruno later went back to find Wolford. His friend was lying there, his arms underneath him, his face peaceful, with a smile on his face. Not a mark on him. It may have been the blast concussion that killed him.

The war lives in him

These days, Patruno speaks frankly of the terrible things he saw and the terrible things he had to do. "We had it drilled into our minds to kill those Nazis," he said. "We had a saying: Come face to face with the enemy, kill him, eat his rations and take his watch for a souvenir." He once took the ring off the rotting finger of a giant German soldier, dead on the side of the road. Another time he took a hunk of black bread from another dead German's knapsack: The bullet that killed him had gone through his chest, out his back and finally stopped in the bread. Patruno said he ate the loaf, then spat the bullet out. Orders were to take no prisoners, he said, so soldiers on both sides routinely killed them instead. "My friends, they gave their prisoners cigarettes first. I never gave my prisoners a cigarette. I didn't smoke, and it was bad for their health." Once, though, as hardened as he was, he just couldn't pull the trigger. The German was an older man, perhaps 45, half-balding. He held his hands at his side and bowed his head as he prayed loudly, waiting for the bullet. "He looked like my father!" Patruno exclaimed. "Like my father. So I turned around and walked away." In September 1944, Patruno would be among the waves of paratroopers dropping into the Netherlands in Operation Market Garden, a bloody operation that ended his war. A ricocheting bullet hit him in the face, breaking some teeth and lodging in his tonsils. The scar is with him still, and so is the war; he sometimes cries out in his sleep, his wife says — not actual words, just moans and groans. "Anything you see in the movies, he said, it was worse," Ruth Patruno said.

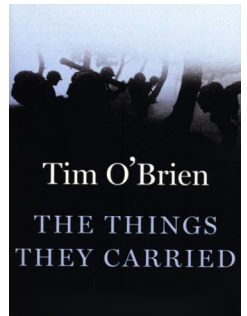
After the war he worked in a wire factory back home in Holyoke, became a brick mason, had six children and moved to St. Augustine in 1986 to raise horses. In 2004, at 83, he parachuted again during a reunion with his surviving comrades in Toccoa, Ga., where they had trained. And in 2006, Patruno went back to Normandy one last time. He found the grave of Tommy Wolford and knelt down next to the marker honoring his old friend, who had looked so peaceful after he died.



Start Here. Go Anywhere.

Contacts: JPL: Kathy Lussier, APR, (904) 630-7595-office
(904) 759-5643-cell, KLussier@coj.net

WJCT: Circe LeNoble, (904) 358.6329, CLeNoble@wjct.org



AWARD-WINNING NOVEL, "THE THINGS THEY CARRIED," SELECTED FOR JAX READS

Five weeks of events lead up to author's Jacksonville appearance

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., March 16, 2012 – The Jacksonville Public Library, WJCT Public Broadcasting, Players by the Sea and the University of North Florida invite Jacksonville residents to read the same book as a community as part of [Jax Reads](#). The featured book for Jax Reads is ["The Things They Carried,"](#) an award-winning collection of interrelated stories by [Tim O'Brien](#) about a platoon of American soldiers during the Vietnam War. The community is invited to read the book and share their experiences through several events and programs from March 26 through April 26. Jax Reads is in support of [Cultural Fusion's](#) focus for 2012 on supporting our military and troops. Cultural Fusion is a collaboration of arts, entertainment and community.

According to O'Brien, the book is "partly a story about what happens to men in a war, but more deeply it touches people to actually look at their own lives and childhoods." The book is a semi-autobiographical account of O'Brien's tour of duty from 1969-70. It is available for check out in print, e-book, and audio book formats at [all library locations](#) thanks to the generous support of [The Friends of the Jacksonville Public Library](#).

Originally published in 1990, the book received France's Prix du Meilleur Livre Étranger (Best Foreign Book Prize) and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award. The title story was selected for "The Best American Short Stories of the Century," edited by John Updike. The book is on the recommended reading list for several area high schools and is being read by The Florida Times-Union Book Blog group. To join the group, send an email to Mike Clark, editorial page editor, at mike.clark@jacksonville.com.

Several programs to enrich the community's experience while reading the book will be offered during Jax Reads, beginning with The American Place Theatre's Literature to Life® stage presentation of the book March 30 at FSCJ's Wilson Center for the Arts, presented by [Players by the Sea](#) and Lender Processing Services in partnership with Florida State College Jacksonville. WJCT Public Broadcasting will offer radio and TV programming throughout Jax Reads. The five-week community read culminates with presentations April 26 by O'Brien at UNF and the Main Library. A complete listing of programs, a [reader's guide](#) and other resources are available at www.wjct.org/events.

About the Author

Tim O'Brien is from small town Minnesota. He was born in Austin, Minnesota, on Oct. 1, 1946, a birth date he shares with several of his characters, and grew up in Worthington, the "Turkey Capital of the World." He matriculated at Macalester College. Graduation in 1968 found him with a BA in political science and a draft notice.

O'Brien was against the war but reported for service and was sent to Vietnam with what has been called the "unlucky" 23rd Infantry Division (Americal) due to its involvement in the My Lai massacre in 1968. O'Brien was assigned to 3rd Platoon, A Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, as an infantry foot soldier. His tour of duty was 1969-70.

After Vietnam, he became a graduate student at Harvard. Following an internship at The Washington Post, he eventually left Harvard to become a newspaper reporter. O'Brien's career as a reporter gave way to his fiction writing after publication of his memoir, "If I Die in a Combat Zone, Box Me Up and Send Me Home."

O'Brien is now a visiting professor and endowed chair in the Master's of Fine Arts Creative Writing Program at Texas State University-San Marcos. He is also on the advisory board for The Ridenhour Prizes. O'Brien's archive is held by the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas.

Find out more about O'Brien and his works at www.AuthorTimOBrien.com.

About the Jacksonville Public Library

The Jacksonville Public Library provided more than 10,000 programs and services last year to Duval County residents at the Main Library and 20 branch locations. Nearly 5 million people visited Jacksonville Public Libraries and checked out almost 9 million items. For more information about the Jacksonville Public Library, call 630-BOOK (2665) or visit jaxpublibrary.org.

NOTE TO EDITORS: images of the book and author are available on the library's Flickr page at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/yourticket/sets/72157629548794561/>



Tim O'Brien



Florida's CFO Launches On Guard for Seniors

By Jeff Atwater, Chief Financial Officer

TALLAHASSEE – Any of us can fall victim to financial fraud. As Florida's CFO, it is my responsibility to protect Floridians' hard-earned dollars. Through my years in the financial services community and as an elected representative, I've learned that more often than not it is our seniors who are most vulnerable to financial fraud. Every day seniors are inundated with investment offers and requests for charitable contributions and are thereby being exposed to targeted fraud opportunities. As a result, financial decisions can be overwhelming. That is why my Department of Financial Services has launched *On Guard for Seniors*, a website dedicated to help seniors, family members or caregivers identify the right questions to ask to avoid becoming a victim of fraud or misleading sales tactics. The *On Guard for Seniors* website, www.MyFloridaCFO.com/OnGuard, includes information about annuities, reverse mortgages, long-term care insurance and identity theft as well as success stories about seniors who sought help from my office on these topics. Last year, the Department's Division of Consumer Services helped recover more than \$22 million for Florida consumers. It is my goal through this initiative to help recover more for Floridians and protect our seniors from falling victim to fraud. Florida has about 730,000 veterans over the age of 65.

For more information, please visit www.MyFloridaCFO.com or call 1-877-My-FL-CFO.



Start Here. Go Anywhere.



THE THINGS THEY CARRIED
by Tim O'Brien
A Community Reading Event
March 26 to April 26

Blues Horizon Special

March 26, 11:00 pm, WJCT 89.9 FM

American Place Theatre's Production of
"The Things They Carried"

March 30, Reception 6:30 pm, Performance 8:00 pm
FSCJ Wilson Center, General admission: \$15
(Visit playersbythesea.org/events.aspx for details)

Long Road Home, April 4, 11:00 pm
WJCT Channel 7.1

Women in War, April 5, 10:30 pm
WJCT Channel 7.1

Women in War, April 8, 11:00 pm
WJCT Channel 7.1

Electro Lounge Special, April 10, 9:00 pm
WJCT 89.9FM

Book Discussion for Teens, April 11, 5:00 pm
Jacksonville Public Library, Main Library, Teen Department

Women in War, April 12, 9:30 pm
WJCT Channel 7.1

Theresa Nolan Kriner, author of "Your Personal Soldier", April 14, 11:00 am
Southeast Regional Library

Book Discussion, April 16, 6:00 pm
Jacksonville Public Library, Main Library, Rm 219

We Were Soldiers, April 17, 3:00 pm

A film about the first major battle of the American phase of the Vietnam War.
Starring Mel Gibson and Madeleine Stowe; rated R
Southeast Regional Library

Vietnam: Service, Sacrifice & Courage
April 20, 9:00 pm, WJCT Channel 7.1

War Stories from the First Coast
April 20, 10:00 pm, WJCT Channel 7.1

POW: Stolen Freedom
April 20, 11:00 pm, WJCT Channel 7.1

Theresa Nolan Kriner, author of "Your Personal Soldier", April 21, 3:00 pm
Pablo Creek Regional Library

Tim O'Brien speaks about "The Things They Carried", April 26, 3:00 pm
University of North Florida, Student Union Ballroom

Tim O'Brien speaks about, "The Things They Carried", April 26, Presentation 7:00 pm, Book Signing, 8:00 pm
Jacksonville Public Library, Main Library, Hicks Auditorium

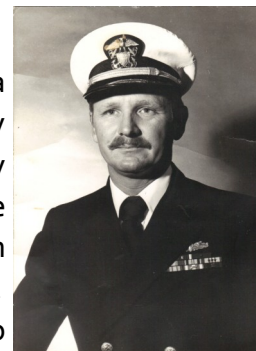
Secrets of the Dead: Secrets of the Airmen and the Headhunters, April 26, 11:00 pm, WJCT Channel 7.1

For event information: wjct.org/events

**ALL EVENTS ARE FREE AND OPEN
TO THE PUBLIC UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**

From the Navy to Flagler College

I went from Naval Reserve service as the lowest of the lowly, a Seaman Apprentice, commencing in high school to what ultimately culminated in an unexpected 31-year career. It wasn't until at my retirement, my Master Chief had tabulated and announced the precise number of days I'd served that I suddenly realized I'd not only given up my youth, but a very significant part of my older years. Similarly, I went from a guy painting the waterline on a destroyer to the guy solely responsible for the welfare of the crew on a similar ship finding myself concerned with issues such as "do we have sufficient toilet paper to cross the Atlantic, to what's the crew's movie tonight" - albeit, many years, and many experiences later. It was an interesting, and generally fulfilling and rewarding career. We did, on a routine basis things that would take far too long to explain to the average man-in-the-street. People ask me now, "do I miss the military". The answer remains uniformly the same: "hell no!" That was a heck of a lot of work, but I truly do miss the quality of people I had the pleasure to be associated with. It has been, and always will be - about the people; thousands of recollections and a handful of still-good friends with whom I still remain in touch. There are things we can talk about that would require a translator for the average civilian.



Lt Commander,
USS Talbot,
(FFG-4) 1986

It's true. My wife came in to it all late in my career. She rapidly became assimilated as if it had been in her planning all along. She complimented my career and allowed me to be successful, because I knew things were being well-handled in my absence. But once Michael, in all candor returning from a Persian Gulf deployment which culminated a thirteen-month separation with only five weeks at home; the sight and anticipation on the faces of my two-year old son and one-year old daughter waiting to greet me on the flight deck of our destroyer hurt me to the core. I honestly wasn't certain my young daughter would recognize me. Then, I consciously made up my mind that the family must come first. Enough of this sailing-off stuff. Subsequently, assigned to DC, and driving around the Virginia beltway my son spotted a communications relay tower with all it's antenna and masts; he said: "look dad, there's part of your ship..." I didn't share it, but it genuinely hurt me.

My last assignment sent me from Naval Intelligence Command in Washington, DC to take over a service school in Orlando which had lost it's accreditation. Upon reestablishing the credentials for re-accreditation - actually gaining "A Model School" accolade; I suddenly discovered something that was not only important, but significantly personally, and professionally satisfying. With the eminent prospect of a return to the mixing-bowl of DC duty, I elected to retire. Upon retirement I sought and obtained several challenging and well-paying vocations, but nothing offering the personal satisfaction, or a means of obtaining the ever elusive "Quality of Life" I sought. Twelve years ago I started teaching at Flagler College. The association with some of our nation's very finest youth, and a dedicated faculty

and administrative staff has more than adequately provided those sought after, but elusive attributes.

In summation, there's my career.

I compete and intermingle on a daily basis with delightful, educated people possessing a host of academic credentials. I've never been happier, or more mentally challenged, but never mentioned, and always in the back of my mind is the thought: while they were earning their PhD ; I was undergoing the more rigid and lengthier syllabus for "Command at Sea". To me, it's kind of nice being equally as successful in the current realm as well. Telling them what they missed; the challenges, and sometimes the particular satisfactions of a job well done, would require far too much background information. Let 'em live in blissful, insular ignorance - a well-protected ignorance and peace to pursue their own aspirations and goals because of the sacrifices of people such as you and I, and millions of others have provided. Back to what we said in the first paragraph; it's all about the people... I don't regret a moment. Might do things slightly differently, but I'd do it again.

"Bravo Zulu" my friends, Ern (Ernest) Driscoll



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Please don't forget to send your articles or Veteran organization information for the Veterans Council of St. Johns County Newsletter to Editor Michael Rothfeld at: mrothfeld@anyveteran.org

We want to tell everyone about where you served, who you served with, any interesting or exciting battles you were in, etc. We also want to know what you are doing now, what veterans groups you belong to, how to join, when they meet and what they do.

This is your Newsletter, please contribute.