

# The Patriot Reader

## VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

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Volume 2, Issue 1

Newsletter Date: February, 2013

## Message from the Chairman



Fellow Veterans,

Our new year is speeding by and your Veterans Council is off to a busy start. At last months meeting, our speaker was John Holzbaur. John is a retired US Navy Commander and is currently with the Veterans Outreach, Fourth Judicial Circuit in Duval Co. The mission of this outreach program is to help redirect Veterans into the Veterans Court system in Duval Co. and surrounding area.

Last week I invited John to join Ray Quinn, Joe McDermott and myself to attend a meeting with the local St. Johns County Co. jail authorities to discuss a similar program for some of our Veterans who are incarcerated, many suffering from PTSD. John was accompanied by Charlotte Matthews, DVA and Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator. I will speak about this in more detail at our January meeting but I

am very pleased with the opportunities we have to reach out to many of our Veterans who are in need of help and mentoring.

A date has been set for our Col Ed Taylor Award which was announced last month. The recipient is the Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home. The award ceremony will take place on 20 Feb at 1600 (4 PM ) at the Lassen Nursing Home. We cordially invite all our Veterans to join us to help honor this years recipient. An added bonus is Col. Ed who is a home guest at the Lassen Nursing Home will be on hand to participate in the awards ceremony as will Mr. Mike Prendergast, Executive Director, FDVA and Steve Murray, Director of Public Affairs, FDVA.

Thanks to all who came out to help last Saturday with the wreath cleanup at our St. Augustine National Cemetery. Our WAA program was a huge success and we have a great start on our

2013 program with over 300 wreaths already sold against our goal of 1218.

Also, I encourage everyone to plan to attend this years Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Dinner on March 16 at the Elks Lodge. There is more about the program in this edition of our newsletter and Mike Pullium will speak at our next Veterans Council meeting about the program. Guest speaker will be Capt. Giles Norrington, USN ( Ret). For those who have never heard Giles speak about his days in captivity as a POW in Vietnam should not miss the opportunity and help a great cause in helping support the scholarship program for some very deserving and needy students who would like to further their education.

*Bill Dudley*  
Chairman  
St. Johns Co. Veterans Council

# Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

*Patriotism is our motto*



## Lassen Veterans Attend Mustang Club Event



Thank you to the Mustang Club for holding a Car Show for the residents of Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



Howard Hammond reminiscing about his own Mustang during the Car Show



Members of the Mustang Club enjoy the wonderful weather while chatting with a resident of Clyde E. Lassen

**Re-Creation, sponsored by the Elk's Lodge, a well known musical troupe touring the country performing for veterans, had a great show for Lassen veterans!**



All enjoyed this music from each decade



Residents and staff alike joined in the dancing



Another resident enjoying the attention of the group



In January the Support Committee at the Jacksonville National Cemetery held its elections for new officers. I was humbled to be elected as the Chair of the Committee replacing Dan Hughes after many years of dedicated faithful service. Immediately after the elections, the Committee voted to name Dan Chairman Emeritus. Everyone on the committee hopes



Chairman Howard McGillin

that Dan and his wife Sue will continue to work with us and other Veterans Groups to improve the Jacksonville National Cemetery. Dan and Sue have been the moving force behind this committee; many feel sure there might not even be a Jacksonville National Cemetery had it not been for Dan's personal efforts.

As Dan is irreplaceable I do not intend to try to replace him! In addition, I cannot attempt to match the passion and dedication Dan brought to the Committee. With the help of a great team, and with God's grace, I hope to lead the Committee as the focus of the Cemetery itself changes from construction to maintenance. The Committee will continue to serve its primary function of coordinating dignified ceremonies for the Memorial Day observance and other appropriate occasions, supporting the day-to-day efforts of the Jacksonville ladies, and serving as a focal point for efforts in support of the Cemetery.

The remainder of our new team is as follows:

Vice-Chair: Pat Mulvihill

Secretary: Sharan Bernier

Treasurer: John Mountcastle

Sergeant at Arms: Dan Blackmun

Chaplain: John Hugus

Judge Advocate: Patrick Bennett

Next month we will update you on current internment statistics at the Cemetery. I hope also to bring you regular news of the volunteers at the Cemetery. Most are veterans helping veterans. A few are family of veterans and a few more are good Americans who honor the memory of those who have served and those who have passed.

There are a number of projects underway to add memorials to the Cemetery. As many of those projects are being conducted by other Veterans, Civic and educational organizations, I have no intention of stealing the limelight that is rightfully theirs. However, as we become aware of those activities, we will also bring you news of them to highlight and to thank those other groups.

In Service to Veterans and their Families:

Howard O. McGillin, Jr.

Colonel, US Army (Retired)



## **Honoring Coquina WW II Veterans At Coquina Crossing**

**World War II is like no other in American history.**

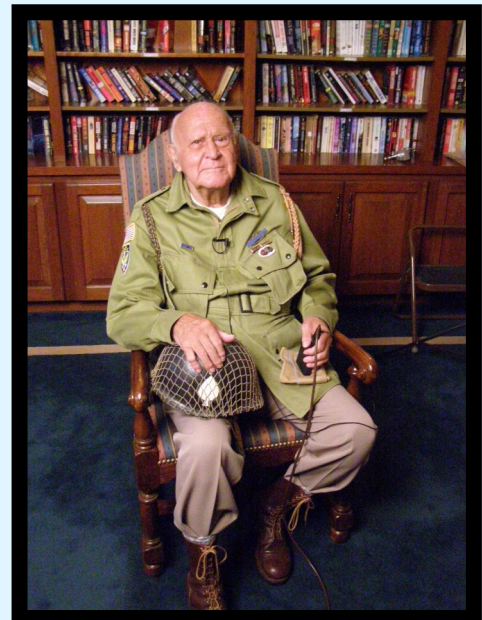
**The United States was slowly being drawn in by Hitler in the European front. On the Pacific side, we were subsequently attacked by the Japanese. So, on both sides of our continent, we were forced into war –World War II.**

**Not only were we involuntarily drawn into this world war from two different nations, this war was a game changer. Had we not entered war, and had we not been victorious, it's entirely conceivable we would either be speaking German or Japanese today. But the resolute American fabric prevented this. Neither did Hitler nor the Japanese emperor count on the determination, resourcefulness, and courage of the American to not stand for their designs.**

**This is where Coquina Crossing comes into play. In 2007, a DVD of our WW II Coquina Veterans was produced, and at that time Coquina Crossing had 34 WW II veterans. By any measure, a concentration of this many WW II veterans all at one location is highly unusual. So much so, that any other community similar in size typically has only a handful of WW II veterans. Coquina Crossing is truly blessed. And to hear some of the history making events our vets did boggles the mind! When you say history, their experiences are recorded in schoolroom history books, newspapers, magazines, and TV.**

**To commemorate Coquina Crossing's WW II veterans, a special program is planned to honor and recognize them. The original DVD, which has aired many times on Public Broadcast TV Stations, has been repackaged by Florida Veterans Programs and Projects, Inc., complete with dust cover and insert in a formal shrink-wrapped package. Each Coquina Crossing WW II vet and the spouse of each deceased Coquina WW II vet will receive a personal copy at this special event on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013.**

**This program is co-sponsored by the Coquina Veterans and Florida Veterans Programs and Projects, Inc., a Coquina Crossing non-profit corporation designed to educate schools and the public of military matters. The entire Coquina Crossing community, the Chairman of the St. Johns County Veterans Council, and the St. Johns County Commissioners are to be invited. Refreshments at no cost will be served afterwards.**





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Colonel, US Army (Retired)  
Attorney and Civil Mediator

**Fairbanks & McGillin PL Attorneys and Counselors at Law**

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***“Veterans and Family  
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## Wreaths Across America Program 2012

The Wreaths Across America Program for 2012 was very successful due to the many volunteers that donated thousands of dollars and their time. The St. Augustine VA National Cemetery has 1218 graves and markers in this historic location. The citizens of greater St. Augustine donated approximately \$13,500 to ensure that every grave and marker would be adorned with a Holiday Wreath on 15 December 2012. During the wreath laying ceremony, there were approximately 300 citizens and veterans in attendance.



St Augustine National Cemetery  
Photo courtesy of George Gardner

The wreaths remained in place until 26 January 2013 when a committee of volunteers, Marine Corps League, Legacy Motorcycle Club, Nease HS NJROTC, Coquina Crossing members, Civil Air Patrol, and many others helped pick up the wreaths for disposal.

Our thanks to all who donated and our very special thanks to major contributors:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Two-Men and A Truck-                         | Mrs. Danielle McQuarry                                 |
| Deutsche Bank- Mr. Donald Gauthier           | Coquina Crossing- Members                              |
| Marine Corp League #383- Members             | The Elks Lodge #829- Members                           |
| St. Augustine Hyundai- Mr. Andrew Difeo      | VFW Post #2391- Members                                |
| Prudential Reality Network- Members          | Bank of St. St. Augustine- Members                     |
| John Mountcastle Family                      | Vietnam Vet/Legacy Vets Motor Cycle Club Chapter N     |
| Haven Hospice- Members                       | Mr. and Mrs. Sal Green                                 |
| Rolling Thunder Inc., Florida Chapter 4      | Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 808         |
| Seminole Electric Corp Inc.- Members         | St. Johns County Sheriff's Office- Sheriff David Shoar |
| UDC of St. Augustine Chapter 2232- Members   | The St. Augustine Garrison- Members                    |
| The NCO Club of St. Augustine- Members       | Herbie Wiles Insurance- Members                        |
| Florida Veterans Program & Projects- Members | American Legion Post 37- Members                       |
| American Legion Auxiliary Post 37- members   | American Legion Auxiliary Post 233- members            |
| Winn Dixie Stores                            | Bryan Tutton Post 2391 LAVFW                           |
| Sonny's BBQ of St. Augustine, FL             | Mr. and Mrs. Harry Metz                                |
| Advanced Disposal Corporation-               | Col (Ret) Charles Appleby                              |

Please forgive us if we omitted your name or fail to recognize your contribution to this project without which we could not have been successful.



On behalf of Veterans Council Chairman Mr. William Dudley and Vice Chairman Dan Blackman thank you again for a successful 2012.

The 2013 Wreaths Across America Project will get underway 1 March 2013, anyone interested in serving on the committee please contact Dan Blackman. We have a carryover of approximately 329 wreaths from 2012 which means we need approximately 889 wreaths for this year.

Dan Blackman





## Association of the United States Army

VOICE FOR THE ARMY – SUPPORT FOR THE SOLDIER

### AUSA, First Militia Chapter

FMC February 2013 General Meeting & Dinner

FIRST MILITIA CHAPTER (FMC), AUSA

#### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING & DINNER

THURSDAY, 21 February 2013

Social @ 6:00 p.m. followed by Dinner @ 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Officers' Club, Saint Francis Barracks

82 Marine St., St. Augustine, Florida



Cost: \$14.00 Dress: Casual

Guest Speaker:

**Dr. (COL) Hal Kushner (Ret.)**

**Former POW of Vietnam Conflict**



**Program: Dr. (COL) (Ret.) Kushner's "Personal Story"**

Chapter Business Reports , 50/50 Drawing

Dinner Menu:

BBQ Chicken and Ribs, Potato Salad,  
Green Beans, Roll, Iced Tea & Lemonade  
Dessert: Homemade Apple Pie

**All are invited to attend**

**DUE TO THE MENU**

**"ADVANCED PAID RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED"**

Please submit your reservations and payment to arrive no later than 15 February 2013

Make checks payable to: First Militia Chapter and mail to: First Militia Chapter, AUSA

P.O. Box 3883, St. Augustine, FL 32085-3883. For additional information, please call

(904)823-0646 or email [rebecca.j.gibson@us.army.mil](mailto:rebecca.j.gibson@us.army.mil)

CLICK HERE FOR FLYER [http://images.magnetmail.net/images/clients//attach/FMC\\_21\\_Feb\\_13\\_Dinner\\_Flyer.pdf](http://images.magnetmail.net/images/clients//attach/FMC_21_Feb_13_Dinner_Flyer.pdf)

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Your generous gift will assist us in continuing to provide scholarships for hard working students who may otherwise not be able to further their education. You and/or your organization will receive recognition for your contribution in a variety of media and social outlets.

The 2013 Chase-Rescorla Scholarships annual dinner will be held March 16th at the Elks Lodge , St. Augustine. Scholarships will be presented and guests will enjoy a reception, dinner and an address by Honoree, Capt. Giles Norrington, US Navy ret. Sponsors will be recognized at the gala.

### Medal of Honor

#### Presidential

**\$ 1500**

Recognition On Website  
 Full Page in Program  
 Logo on Poster  
 Print and Social Media  
 Announcement  
 Table for Eight at Presentation  
 Dinner

**\$ 2500**

Recognition On Home Page  
 of Website/with Link  
 Full Page in Program  
 Logo on All Print Media  
 Multiple Print and Social  
 Media Announcements  
 Table for Eight At  
 Presentation Dinner

#### Command

**\$ 1000**

Recognition On Website  
 Half Page in Program  
 Logo on Poster  
 Print and Social Media  
 Announcement  
 Eight Tickets to Presentation  
 Dinner

**Pfc.**



Leo C. Chase, Jr.

#### Patriot

**\$ 500**

Recognition on Website  
 Quarter Page in Program  
 Logo on Poster  
 Print and Social Media  
 Announcement  
 Four Tickets to Presentation  
 Dinner

#### Salute

**\$ 250**

Recognition on Website  
 Listing in Program  
 Social Media  
 Announcement  
 Two Tickets to Presentation  
 Dinner

**Lieutenant**



Rick Rescorla



**\$ 40**

Single Presentation Dinner Ticket

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 # ATTENDING: \_\_\_\_\_ #DONATED TICKETS \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL GIFT AMOUNT: \_\_\_\_\_

The Annual Dinner provides an opportunity for comradery, fun and special recognition of our award recipients and the wonderful contributors who make a difference in our lives.

Please join me for this momentous occasion,  
 2013 Keynote Speaker

**Captain Giles Norrington, U.S.  
 Navy RET.**



The Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund is a 501 c3 non profit  
 organization, information available on our website  
[www.ChaseRescorlaFund.org](http://www.ChaseRescorlaFund.org)

**INFORMATION:** Cheryl Jefferson, 904-642-2929  
**CHECK PAYABLE TO:** Chase Rescorla Scholarship Fund  
**Mail to:** 2465 US 1 South, PMB # 72, St. Augustine, FL 32086





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Michael Isam, from [examiner.com](http://examiner.com)*

## ***Women in Combat Roles: An idea whose time has come?***

By Michael Isam

The Department of Defense (DoD) and the Pentagon has announced that women will be allowed to serve in combat roles. Not today, or tomorrow, but sometime between now and 2016.

Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta directed the military departments to “submit detailed plans by May 15, 2013, for the implementation of this change, and to move ahead expeditiously to integrate women into previously closed positions.” The secretary’s direction is for this process to be complete by Jan. 1, 2016.

According to DoD news release No. 037-13 issued January 24, 2013, “Women have shown great courage and sacrifice on and off the battlefield, contributed in unprecedented ways to the military’s mission and proven their ability to serve in an expanding number of roles. The Department’s goal in rescinding the rule is to ensure that the mission is met with the best-qualified and most capable people, regardless of gender.”

The news release went on to state, “It builds on a February 2012 decision to open more than 14,000 additional positions to women by rescinding the co-location restriction and allowing women to be assigned to select positions in ground combat units at the battalion level.” “Today, women make up approximately 15 percent, or nearly 202,400, of the U.S. military’s 1.4 million active personnel. Over the course of the past decade, more than 280,000 women have deployed in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

Veterans in and around St. Johns County were contacted for their reaction.

As expected, the physical strength of men vs. women came to the forefront several times.

“Women are just as able, willing and brave as any male soldier or Marine,” said Vietnam veteran, Peter Guinta. “Their training, leadership, and ability to command also can be equal. But they lack strength and endurance. Even the strongest woman is NOT going to be able to shoulder-carry a 200-pound wounded comrade to safety.” “Why should that casualty not deserve a person next to him who can do so?”

“As long as the requirements remain the same for men and women,” said Dave Hrynda. “As long as they can pass all of the physical qualifications as well as the mental aspect of their duties, the same that men have to do.”

Women veterans of Iraq and the Gulf war also offered their opinions.

Shaqueen Vanzant, who served two tours in Iraq in the Air Police, said “It’s clearly evident that there is a difference between men and women, not just in sex but also in strength and mental capacity to endure the things that come with war



and being a front line soldier.” “So if a women believes that she can, and she can go through the same training and endure the obstacles that her male counter parts endure and still handle her own challenges that come with being a women. Then I say let her do it. Over the years women have surprised many, including themselves, of the things she can accomplish.”

A woman veteran of Gulf War timeframe said, “I think it is about time that women are allowed to hold those positions since a lot of women were, and are, doing it. They do not appear on the rosters because they “were banned from that job because they were female.” The bad guys aren't going to stop firing just because they see a women there, it hasn't happened up to now and this declaration isn't going to change that.”

Another woman veteran said, “There are examples of women who have been in combat throughout history and the result has been overwhelmingly victorious and inspiring. There is a caveat; women will need to have additional training to qualify for such roles to compensate for the differences in upper body strength whereas leg strength is not a problem. Women are equal in intellect, leadership capabilities, and esprit de corps.

One lesser mentioned, but of very large concern, is brought forward by SGM Ray Quinn, FLANG, ret. “Today's military is plagued with sexual harassment and sexual assault. It has reached epidemic proportions and every branch is trying to get the situation under control. One can do a little research and find overwhelming evidence to support my statements.” Quinn added, “Moving females into close quarter combat units in my opinion will escalate an already embarrassing and degrading situation. Our military must find the answer now.”

Other comments referenced were: “sexual tension,” “a man's natural capacity to protect women as a gross propensity to forget the prime mission,” “women are a distraction.”

Adjutant General of Florida Maj. Gen. Emmett Titshaw Jr. issued a release stating “The Florida National Guard supports this historic decision concerning lifting the ban on women in combat specialties.” “Our formations in Florida are combat tested and all Soldiers and Airmen, women and men alike, have served dutifully and with distinction in any task given.

Women serving in the Florida National Guard have already served on the frontlines in combat zones in Iraq and Afghanistan, and are currently serving in support of operations in Southwest Asia and around the globe. According to additional information supplied by MSgt Thomas Kielbasa of the Public Affairs office of the Florida National Guard, “The number of women in the Florida Army National Guard is 1,503 or 15.1 percent of the total strength.”

Currently there are 12 Military Occupational Specialties in the Florida Army National Guard that are not available to women. These include Infantry, Field Artillery, and Special Forces.

No matter how one looks at it, a Vietnam veteran reminded all of a universal military truth; “Anyone who wants to be an 11 Bravo (Infantry Rifleman) should get their mental state checked.”



## Veterans Court, Jacksonville

**T**he mission of the Fourth Judicial Circuit Veterans Treatment Court is to provide an interagency collaborative non-adversarial treatment strategy for Veterans in the criminal justice system who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), psychological issues, sexual trauma, or substance abuse problems that are

identified as service-connected conditions that manifested themselves while the Veteran was in military service.

Veterans Court is a treatment court designed to identify individuals with qualifying criminal charges who currently serve or who have an honorable or general (under honorable conditions) discharge from military service and also may have a documented mental health diagnosis including but not limited to post-traumatic stress syndrome and/or traumatic brain injury. The court is designed to provide intensive supervision and treatment services for Veterans as well as offer a peer support/mentoring program designed specifically to enhance the recovery process and to reduce recidivism rate for Veteran offenders. Veterans Court is not only an appropriate manner with which to support those who have served our country, it also provides multilevel benefits to the community including substantial monetary savings as well as a projected lower recidivism rate for Veterans Court participants.<sup>[1]</sup>

Veterans Court strives to:

- Divert qualified Veterans from jail to treatment programs and VA or community-based services
- Maintain treatment, housing, benefits, supervision, and community support
- Provide qualified Veterans peer mentor support
- Promote public safety by treating and providing close supervision and monitoring of Veterans with qualifying criminal charges and mental health diagnoses.

**John Holzbaur, LCDR, USN (ret)**

**Director, Veterans and Military Affairs**

**Office of the Public Defender, Fourth Judicial Circuit**

**407 N. Laura Street**

**Jacksonville, FL 32202**

**[jsh@pd4.coj.net](mailto:jsh@pd4.coj.net)**



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<sup>[1]</sup> Statistics, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, Palm Beach County Veterans Court Overview, November 10, 2011. Cost of pre-trial incarceration was reduced by 73% for the first 51 Veterans who entered the Criminal Justice System in Palm Beach County Pretrial Services in 2009.



## The Greatest Generation: Local stories of World War II Veterans-Richard Wilson

*In the first week of the New Year I received a phone call from Richard (Dick) Wilson. Dick lives two houses from me in Coquina Crossing. Dick invited me over to his house to show me something he thought I would be interested in. Dick showed me his copy of a new book entitled, **Fairwing Brazil-World War II Tales of the South Atlantic**, by John R. Harrison, [johnharrison24@gmail.com](mailto:johnharrison24@gmail.com). The following is reprinted with the permission of the author.*

Dick Wilson was born and grew up in northwestern Pennsylvania in a small town near Jamestown, New York. He enlisted in the US Navy in September 1942 and after boot camp at Great Lakes, he received training as a radioman and aerial gunner in Jacksonville, Florida. In May of 1943 he joined VB-107 at Norfolk, VA just as they were being equipped with new PB4Y (B-24D) airplanes....

Dick flew several months in Dan Dieber's B-8 crew both off Ascension Island and out of Natal when planes were rotated. While on leave in Rio de Janeiro, Dick also enjoyed wearing "civvies" for a few days.



Richard Wilson, 1943

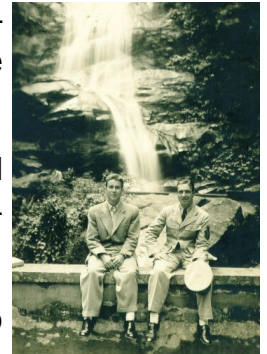
On January 1, 1944, to his surprise, Dick Wilson's request to go to flight school to become a navy pilot was approved and he left VB-107 to go to Connecticut for preparation prior to further training. After completing that phase he proceeded to be trained in flying small planes (Aeroncas and Piper Cubs) and was sent to Chapel Hill, North Carolina for final pre-flight schooling about July 1944.

At this time the US Navy decided that it had too many pilots in training and was not going to need all of them. This decision was probably sparked by what had happened at the Battle of the Philippine Sea (among other things). During that famous lop-sided battle, ...the famous "Marianas Turkey Shoot" showed we were well on our way to destroying Japanese naval air power .... As a result many of those in pilot training (including Dick Wilson) were told they could either resign and go back to their enlisted ratings and duties or they could be flunked out.

Dick Wilson chose to resign his officer in training status and went to Hutchinson, Kansas Naval Facility as a radioman to train new flight crews.

In the spring of 1945 the Navy reversed course and recalled Dick into the pilot training program and sent him to the University of Iowa to finish his pre-flight training. Next he was sent for primary flight training at Memphis Naval Air Facility and flew in the "Yellow Peril", Stearman trainers. The Navy had probably changed their course because of what happened at Iwo Jima and particularly because of the extensive damages caused by the Kamikazes in Okinawa....Dick's

plans were to change again after the use of the atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the surrender of the Japanese. When that did occur, the renewed pilot training program was curtailed again. Dick would then serve as a Radioman in New Orleans, San Diego, Guam, and in Carrier Air-



Dick, on the left in civvies in Argentina 1943



1944 Dick Wilson receiving his medal

craft Service Unit (CASU) in the Philippines before leaving the service in February 1946.

After the war, Dick returned to upstate Pennsylvania where his parents, brothers and sisters resided. Subsequently he spent 39 years in electronics related business and became vice president of sales for a small company in that area. The camaraderie that Dick experienced in being with his VB-107 squadron mates in combat had led him to be a key participant in some of the many reunions that personnel of that squadron had held annually over the course of the years since 1966. In 1997, the squadron reunion was held in Natal. It apparently was a memorable occasion and Dick was a primary host.

The wartime experiences prompted him in 1993 to write two editions of an illustrated history of VP-83 and VB-107. He became the squadron historian and continues to collect information about the squadron and Fairwing 16. Dick has helped the author of *Fairwing-Brazil* by supplying information and photographs. Dick and his wife Billie live in Coquina Crossing, Elkton, Florida.



Dick being interviewed by PBS in the Coquina Crossing Clubhouse



### **“I’m not a Veteran!” by Harry Manford**

You don’t know how many times “I’m not a Veteran.” has been leveled at me.

My reply, “Did you ever wear a uniform?” Typically, the answer is, “yes.” Then you are a veteran.

Their comeback is, “I didn’t do anything important. All I did was drive a jeep.” Or, “I had an office job moving papers from one pile to another.” And then you hear they were stationed in some obscure place that others have never heard of. This type of litany goes on and on and on.

But the biggest response for not qualifying is, **“I wasn’t in combat.”**

Not having the unfortunate experience of combat or performing duties perceived as menial are not a basis for this thinking at all. Someone has to drive that jeep, do KP in the mess hall, push a pencil, or learn how to shoot an azimuth. And combat is not the ultimate qualifier. Look at those veterans who served during peacetime and never had to go to a front line or perform some duty to support that line. They each raised their right hand, took an oath, and readily agreed to go to that forward position should they receive the call to do so. Without question they would.

I blame a lot of this attitude on their command, both commissioned and enlisted. I once went aboard a nuclear submarine, and at one point the commanding officer and his E-9 spoke to us. Their driving point was that this vessel and its crew is the mightiest boat (yes, the Navy calls a submarine a “boat”) in the whole Navy fleet! Now how reassuring do you think this crew feels about their work? Even the most humble of work aboard is made to be important. And it is.

It is an honor and a privilege to wear a uniform, any uniform. Perhaps this has never been drilled into them, and typically when you remind them, they have a change of attitude about themselves. They regain a sense of pride about themselves and their service to this nation.

**We all are veterans! And don’t doubt it.**

For Immediate Release

Contact: Len Loving, COO

Nancy Denney

Allied Veterans Center

The McCormick Agency

904-723-5950 (O)

904-982-9029 (C)

*Once homeless, First Class Petty Officer Randy Wolffis has new lease on life*

*Allied Veterans Center hosts celebration as resident graduates Passport to Independence Program and moves into newly renovated transitional home*

**Jacksonville, Fla.** – November 2012 – A Graduation Celebration Lunch was planned for Tuesday, November 20, 2012 from 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. at Allied Veterans Center in honor of First Class Petty Officer Randy Wolffis. Local officials and Jacksonville Jaguar players will be participating as a Thanksgiving meal is served and surprises unravel.

Randy Wolffis is only one of the thousands of homeless veterans whose numbers are rapidly increasing throughout United States. His story is not unlike others who find themselves wandering from shelter to shelter for a night of sleep away from the elements and hopefully one meal to sustain the hunger pains.

“Operation Enduring Freedom” ushered in the final tour for Randy Wolffis. A specialist of Combat Lifesaving, Wolffis became unable to cope with the emotional toll of war. Especially haunting to him was an attack at Camp Fallujah. Rockets blew open the doors to his sleeping quarters hurling debris at a deadly speed. As rocket fire intensified, Wolffis caught sight of a 21 year old warrior lying alone in the street. He ran to the young man to bring him to safety only to realize it was too late. Wolffis had many such experiences as his deployment lingered.

Wolffis struggled daily to accept his life being spared during the throes of war while others were not. During this same time, Wolffis’ wife filed for divorce and his home was foreclosed.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder descended upon Wolffis debilitating his efforts to survive. He began taking his prescription sleeping pills with alcohol in hopes of much needed sleep. His dependency grew until his insomnia and alcoholism began to overwhelm him.

Wolffis continued his visits to the VA hospital every month for treatment to survive PTSD and depression. He eventually lost visitation rights with his children.

During a visit at the VA, Wolffis told his physician, Dr. Bady he was living in a tent in a stranger’s yard. A social worker told Wolffis about Allied Veterans Center (AVC) for homeless veterans.

A worn-down and defeated man, Wolffis walked into Allied Veterans Center and introduced himself



to Colonial (Ret.) Len Loving, COO of Allied Veterans Center.

Wolffis moved into a private bedroom at AVC and courageously began his journey in the Center's "Passport to Independence" reintegration program. This program includes VA benefit analysis, career counseling, skills assessment, financial recommendations, balanced dietary meals, case management and reintegration assistance.

The same strong will and determination that led to Wolffis' success in the military compelled him to turn his life around. Randy finished his culinary education and secured employment at Fleet Landing as a chef with the help of AVC.

Wolffis is now drug and alcohol free and enjoys full-time employment, benefits and a career as a chef. Wolffis proclaims, "If it wasn't for Allied Veterans Center and their Passport to Independence Program, I would not have survived. The Center made it possible for me to start my life over again."

"A veteran like Randy Wolffis is exactly the reason we worked so hard to open Allied Veterans Center in 2011. We may have provided the program, but it was his own perseverance that changed his life. He is an example of the post-9/11 veterans who need our help. Wolffis is an honorable man who deserves our respect and compassion. It's our duty to provide our veterans in need a chance to excel in life and become a successful member of society again. I could not be more proud of a fellow veteran."

Wolffis plans to "pay it forward." He has already initiated a mentoring program at the Center and has volunteered to be the first veteran mentor. "It's a privilege and a blessing to be able to give back to the organization that gave me my life back. I am beyond grateful for Col. Loving and the program at the Allied Veterans Center. Obviously, God had a plan for my life. Now, it's time for me to step up to the plate and give back," Wolffis concluded.

###

### **About Allied Veterans Center**

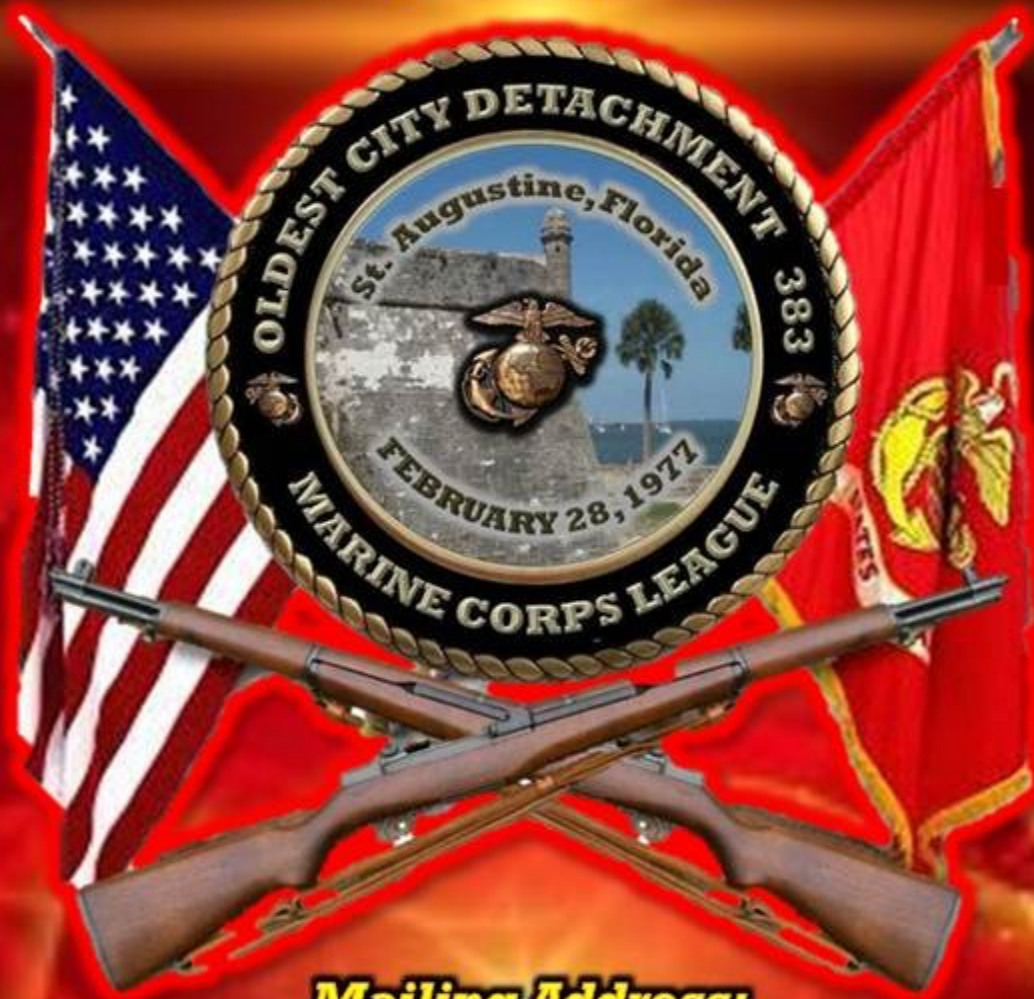
Allied Veterans Center opened in December, 2011 and is dedicated to meeting the physical and emotional needs of homeless veterans throughout Northeast Florida. These veterans are offered the opportunity to achieve independence, self-sufficiency and an improved quality of life. Housing Support Services, Employment Assistance and Health and Wellness Services have been instrumental in the lives of the veterans who are currently living at the Center. To date, Allied Veterans Center has a 100% success rate for assisting the live-in veterans who are eligible for employment find full-time jobs.

Visit [www.alliedvetscenter.org](http://www.alliedvetscenter.org)



Allied Veterans National  
Commander, Jerry Bass

**Meeting:**  
**First Tuesday of each month**  
**Time: 1900**  
**St. Augustine Elks Lodge #829**  
**1420 A1A South**  
**St. Augustine, FL 32080**



**Mailing Address:**  
**MCL #383**  
**P.O. Box 1752**  
**St. Augustine, FL 32085**  
**Telephone: (904) 461 – 0139**  
**[www.mclfl.org](http://www.mclfl.org)**



***"...anyone else would have done the same."***

### **A Marine Hero's Speech!**

On Saturday evening December 13<sup>th</sup> 2012 representatives of the Oldest City Detachment #383, Marine Corps League, St. Augustine attended the Navy League's Banquet in honor of Medal of Honor recipient Corporal Duane E. Dewey, USMC, Korea 51' - 52'.

When a Medal of Honor recipient takes your right hand in his, looks into your eyes and then presents you with his personal coin issued by the Congressional Medal of Honor Society; what do you say? The "thank you" in my voice seemed to just dissipate into the air, but what words are there to speak in such an honorable once in a lifetime moment? Cpl. Dewey went on to present every Marine Veteran in attendance with his personal coin.

When it came to the dreaded speech segment that comes along with all banquets, not a sound was heard throughout the building when it came to Cpl. Dewey's introduction. The anticipation of hearing the details of his actions filled the room like a heavy fog. One could only envision those black and white war movies as we waited for Cpl. Dewey to provide the action packed script. With his speech that lasted ten seconds, if that long, Cpl. Dewey uttered the words: *"...anyone else would have done the same"* and then he sat down. Yes, only seven words.

Cpl. Dewey earned the Medal of Honor on April 16, 1952, near Panmunjom, Korea, while serving as leader of a machine gun squad with Company E, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. He had been wounded by a grenade that had exploded at his feet,<sup>[1]</sup> and was being treated by a Navy medical corpsman when an enemy grenade landed at the squad's position. Yanking the corpsman to the ground, and warning members of the squad, Cpl. Dewey flung himself on the grenade shouting, "Doc, I got it in my hip pocket!" The grenade exploded, lifting him off the ground and inflicting "gaping shrapnel wounds throughout the lower part of his body".<sup>[1]</sup> In addition, he sustained a bullet wound to the stomach.

After treatment of his wounds at the front, Dewey was evacuated to the U.S. Naval Hospital in Yokosuka, Japan, and then to the U.S. Naval Hospitals at Mare Island, California, and Great Lakes, Illinois. Following his recuperation at Great Lakes, he was released from active duty on August 19, 1952.

Cpl. Dewey was the first person to receive the Medal of Honor from President Dwight D. Eisenhower. After presenting the award on March 12, 1953 at the White House, Eisenhower told him, "You must have a body of steel."  
(bio source: WIKIPEDIA)

*In Cpl. Dewey's words: "anyone else would have done the same."*



**L/r: Lt. Col. Jim Vanairsdale, Det. Commandant Jim Bellamy, Tom Crawford, Det. Chaplain Woody Rodgers, Cpl. Dewey, Det. Jr. Vice-Commandant Skip Peterson, Det. Adjutant Charlie Myers, Det. Judge Advocate Harry Manford.**



***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](mailto:mrothfeld@anyveteran.org)



**Important Online Veterans Link:**  
**USMC, Oldest City Detachment 383**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**<http://www.mclfl383.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](http://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*

The locally produced *Vietnam documentary, Service, Sacrifice and Courage* has received **91,483** views to date on YouTube.

You can view part of it at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8Cs6Th7VNC>



***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](mailto: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.***

## Septimus Connor

Flying at tree top level being exposed to enemy small arms fire; sniper attacks during convoys from Dian to Quan Loi; conducting defoliation operations; conducting burning missions at Thunder 1 and Dait Tieng; furnishing personnel to the 2<sup>nd</sup> brigade to fly “Sniffer” missions; dispatching personnel to Lai Lai and Chon Thanh to transport CS for drops; and being assigned to the motor pool, spray rig and ammo point. These could be the topics Vietnam veteran, Septimus C. Connor II would use to tell of this experience during his tour of duty in Vietnam.

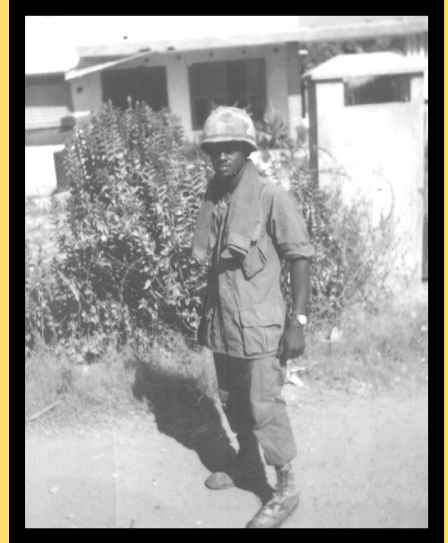
Connor was drafted into the US military April 1968 and served until 1970. His basic training was done at Fort Benning, Georgia and from there he was sent to Fort McClellan, Alabama where he completed training and become a specialist in chemical decontamination. While serving in Vietnam, Connor was a member of the 266<sup>th</sup> Chemical Platoon/1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division.

After being discharged in 1970, Connor joined the American Legion Post 194, where he has dedicated the past 25 years working faithfully toward living their motto, “For God and Country” – striving diligently, with God’s help, to fulfill their mission to serve the needs of all veterans and their families, and to fulfill their commitment to community, state and nation. He has served in various positions at Post 194 and since 2005, has served as the Post Commander.

In 1985, Connor was employed by Grumman Corporation, now known as Northrop Grumman where he worked for 17 years. He retired in 2002 as a senior mechanic.

Connor and his wife, Wyverne have been married for 38 years; parents of three children and grandparents of six.

*Medals: National Defense Service Medal, two Overseas Service Bars, Expert Badge (M16), Marksman Badge (M-14), 2d Class-Grenade, Vietnam Service Medal w/Four Bronze Stars, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal w/Device (1960), Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross w/Palm Unit Citation Badge, Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Honor Medal, Army commendation Medal for Meritorious Service, First Class Unit Citation Badge, Testimonial Certificate of Appreciation from General Westmoreland.*



## Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund



The Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund (CRSF) proudly announces that scholarship applications are now available for the 7<sup>th</sup> year. Deadline for submittal of applications was January 15, 2013, and application forms are available from high school guidance counselors, The Boys and Girls Club of St. Augustine and on the website [www.chaserescorlafund.org](http://www.chaserescorlafund.org). The website also contains background information on the CRSF and the previous scholars and has downloadable forms for donation information, table registration and tickets.



The CRSF program has resulted in the awarding of over 35 scholarships totaling in excess of \$36,000 in the past 6 years to deserving St. Johns County students. The Scholarship Fund continues to perpetuate the memory of Leo C. Chase Jr. and Richard C. “Rick” Rescorla, two Vietnam Veterans who both sacrificed their lives in service to our country and who epitomize the character and courage of our greatest citizens. PFC Leo C. Chase, Jr. was killed in action on November 15, 1965, at age 23, just 5 days before he was due to come home. He was the first St. John’s County resident killed in Vietnam. Rick Rescorla was a hero at the Ia Drang Battle and his iconic photo is on the cover of the book “We Were Soldiers Once and Young”. He survived many battles in Vietnam but was deeply affected by the loss of men in war and carried that with him his entire life. He is also known as the “Man who Predicted 9/11” and he gave his life on September 11th when the Towers collapsed due to a terrorist attack. He is credited with saving over 2,700 people by evacuating them from the South tower. He was last seen headed back up the stairs to look for any stragglers and to make sure to leave no man behind. Both men were true heroes, who gave the ultimate sacrifice. “*Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*” (John 15:13).

Students are encouraged to complete an application which will be reviewed by the CRSF Board of Directors and ranked. Scholarships are awarded based on ranking of applicants and available scholarship funds. Selected scholarship winners will be feted at the 7th Annual Dinner held next year on March 16, 2013, at the Elks Lodge #829 on Anastasia Island. Application forms are self-explanatory and discuss the factors involved and criteria in ranking the applicants with special consideration for students who can demonstrate financial need or who are children of veterans or disabled veterans.

The CRSF was created in 2005 as a result of actions by several local veterans including Sherriff David Shoar and members of American Legion Post #194. In recognition of Leo and Rick’s sacrifices and to honor them the CRSF was created to assist underprivileged students with college or professional trade school tuition and books. It is the intent of the Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund to memorialize and honor these heroes with a scholarship program awarding scholarships in their names annually through money raised from gifts and donations.

In 2007, the First Annual Scholarship Dinner was held as a fundraising event and since then a Scholarship Dinner has been held every year featuring leaders and heroes who exemplify the type individual sought in the Scholars. In the past the speakers have included a Medal of Honor recipient, survivors of the 1965 battle at the Ia Drang Valley where Pfc. Leo C. Chase, Jr. was killed as shown in the film “We were Soldiers Once “and distinguished Generals and leaders including St. Augustine’s own Marine Major General Ronald Bailey. Our Keynote Speaker for 2013 is retired Navy Captain Giles Norrington who survived 1,775 days of captivity including several years at the infamous “Hanoi Hilton” in North Vietnam.



Captain Norrington will be honored for his 40 year anniversary of release from captivity. Navy Lt. Norrington was making his 22<sup>nd</sup> reconnaissance flight into North Vietnamese territory when communist rebels shot off the right wing of his RA-5C Vigilante. The plane erupted into a fireball. As Norrington and his navigator tried to escape, Norrington thought, "It's taking a long time to die." For almost 5 years he dreamed of looking at a horizon. "I prayed for the day we would feel a fresh wind on our faces and feel the indescribable sensation of freedom. The thing was to come home with our honor intact." He said when he returned home after 4 years, 10 months and 9 days in a North Vietnamese POW camp, he and other POW's were treated like American heroes. They "Returned with Honor" which was the POW's motto and he has seen the horizon, felt the wind on his face and is now leading a full and happy life as a citizen of a free and responsible nation. All Americans owe these brave men a great debt of gratitude for their sacrifices on our behalf.

Giles Norrington is a former Marine Infantryman, retired naval aviator (after 34 years of service) who was shot down on May 5, 1968 and released March 14, 1973 from the Hanoi Hilton as a result of the Paris Peace Accord. He is the author of a number of articles on ethics and military history and spokesperson for POW's and a variety of service organizations.

The Master of Ceremonies will be retired Army Sergeant Major Ray Quinn. Tickets are available for individuals at \$40.00 per person and tables of 8 for \$320.00 with reserved seating. The Scholarship Fund is non-profit and all donations are 100% tax deductible. Individuals or companies wishing to contribute to the Scholarship Fund can do so by contacting any of the Board of Directors whose contact information is listed on the website. Without strong support from the community and gracious supportive companies the Scholarships would not be possible.

The Board asks that you consider joining us for this great event. It will be an excellent opportunity to hear from those who have so nobly served our country and to participate in supporting this worthwhile charity. Sponsors will be listed on the website, in the Dinner Program and you will receive complimentary tickets for the evening's festivities. We sincerely hope that you will be able to join us for this occasion. However, if you cannot attend but wish to support the fund there are provisions for doing so and are described on the website under Donors.

Please help support the Scholarship Fund either through donation or by participation. You can see pictures of present and former Scholarship winners and listen to two of our Scholars in a personal interview on the website.

**For ticket reservations contact Cheryl Jefferson at 904 642-2929 or**  
**[cheryljefferson14@comcast.net](mailto:cheryljefferson14@comcast.net)**

**Mailing Address:**

**Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund  
2465 U.S. 1 South  
PMB #72  
St. Augustine, FL. 32086**



## CHASE-RESCORLA SCHOLARSHIP FUND



### Seventh Annual Scholarship Dinner

Saturday March 16, 2013

Elks Lodge, 1420 A1A South,  
St. Augustine, FL 32084

Cocktails 6:00 pm  
Dinner 7:00 pm

Master of Ceremonies  
SGM Ray Quinn, FLANG, ret.

Keynote Speaker: Capt.  
Giles Norrington, US Navy, ret

Tables of 8 are \$ 320.

Tickets are \$ 40.00/ person

Contact info:  
Cheryl Jefferson -- (904)-642-2929,  
William Jefferson— (904)-923-7669  
Greg White – (904) 377-4159

Checks payable to:  
Chase Rescorla Scholarship Fund  
2465 US 1 South, PMB # 72  
St Augustine, FL 32086

A 501 C3 Not for Profit Corp.

### Captain Giles Norrington, US Navy.

Navy Lt. Giles Norrington was making his 22nd reconnaissance flight into North Vietnamese territory when communist rebels shot off the right wing of his RA-5C Vigilante. The plane erupted into a fireball. As Norrington and his navigator, Richard Tangeman, tried to escape, Norrington thought, "It's taking a long time to die." Giles Norrington is a former Marine Infantryman, retired (after 34 years of service) naval aviator who spent 1,775 days as a POW in North Vietnam mostly at the "Hanoi Hilton", author of a number

of articles on ethics and military history and spokesperson for POW's and a variety of service organizations including the Salvation Army, executive director of the American Red Cross Chapter in New London Conn., director of the AIDS Service agency in Norfolk, Va., and Vice President of the Rotary Club of Baileys Crossroads in Virginia among others. Please join us to honor this great American hero and to award Scholarships to this year's winners in memory of Leo C. Chase and Rick Rescorla two other heroes of Vietnam and 9/11.

[WWW.CHASERESCORLAFUND.ORG](http://WWW.CHASERESCORLAFUND.ORG)

Chase Rescorla Scholarship Fund, 2465 US Highway 1 South, St. Augustine, FL 32086

*This article is reprinted from the St. Augustine Report and from the Florida Heritage Publications with permission of the Editor, former St. Augustine Mayor, George Gardner (gardner@aug.com)*

## **St. Augustine in the Civil War**

*St. Augustine played no significant role in the Civil War, but traces of its impact can be found throughout the city. This is the first of three highlights on the public spaces, homes, and final resting places of the Civil War period. These excerpts are from [Florida Civil War Heritage Trail](#), a Florida Heritage Publication of the Florida Division of Historical Resources.*

January 10, 1861, Florida seceded from the U.S. to become one of the six original Southern states to form the Confederate States of America; eventually, 11 states would leave the Union.

On the eve of Florida's withdrawal from the Union, under orders from Governor Madison S. Perry, state militia seized the fort without violence. During the first year of the Civil War, several Confederate blockade runners operated out of the port of St. Augustine.

Confederate forces occupied St. Augustine until March 1862 when they withdrew from the city to prevent civilian casualties as Union warships approached. For the duration of the war, St. Augustine was used mainly as a rest center for Union troops.

St. Augustine also became a haven for Unionist refugees and escaped slaves. Nearly 150 local African Americans were recruited for service in the 21st, 33rd, and 34th U.S. Colored Infantry regiments.

### **St. Augustine Lighthouse**

In January 1861, Confederate authorities ordered the St. Augustine Lighthouse to be darkened. Paul Arnau, the St. Augustine Collector of Customs and Superintendent of Lighthouses, oversaw its darkening and the later removal of its lighting apparatus. Elected mayor of St. Augustine in November 1861, Arnau resigned in March 1862 rather than surrender the city to the Union navy.

### **Government House 48 King Street**

On March 11, 1862, a small Union landing party proceeded to Government House, the seat of local government, to inform the St. Augustine City Council of the terms of surrender for the city. After the Federal occupation, the building was used as a military barracks, a hospital and a theater for Union troops.

### **Fort Marion, (Castillo De San Marcos)**

Confederate forces occupied Fort Marion until March 1862, when they evacuated St. Augustine. No Confederate attempt was made to retake the fort.

### **Plaza De La Constitución**

The Plaza includes the Confederate Monument, originally erected in 1872 on private property on St. George Street by the St. Augustine Ladies Memorial Association, then rebuilt in the Plaza in 1879 reusing material from the original monument. The names of 46 Confederate war dead from St. Augustine are listed on the monument.

Mounted in the Plaza are two Civil War 32-pounder rifled cannons and two Civil War 8-inch Columbiad cannons from Fort Marion. The cannons were presented to the city by the U.S. War Department in 1900. In the adjacent Anderson Circle, there is a Civil War seacoast mortar from Fort Marion given to the city by the War Department about the same time.

### **St. Augustine in the Civil War II The houses**

*This is the second of three highlights on the public spaces, homes, and final resting places of the Civil War period. These excerpts are from [Florida Civil War Heritage Trail](#), a Florida Heritage Publication of the Florida Division of Historical Resources.*

### **Dummett House (St. Francis Inn)**

The residence of Anna Dummett, an ardent Confederate supporter. In 1866 she became the first president of the St. Augustine Ladies Memorial Association and led the effort to raise funds for the erection of the city's Confederate monument.



### **Llambias House**

The residence of the Llambias family, whose three sons served in the St. Augustine Blues, 3rd Florida Infantry and whose father was briefly imprisoned in Fort Marion for refusing to take a loyalty oath after Union troops occupied St. Augustine. The Llambias family moved away until after the war, when they found the house had been stripped of its furniture and woodwork, and the ground floor had been used as a stable by Union troops.

### **Markland**

The residence of Dr. Andrew Anderson II, who enlisted in the local Confederate military unit, the St. Augustine Blues, at the outbreak of the war. In early 1862, he paid for a substitute to take his place in the Blues unit (as allowed by Confederate policy) and left Florida to return to medical school at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City. His mother, Clarissa Anderson, a staunch Unionist, remained at Markland during the war and tended to sick and wounded soldiers at the Union army hospital.

### **Segui-Kirby Smith House**

The childhood home of Edmund Kirby Smith, a West Point graduate and the last Confederate general to surrender his command. In early 1863, Union authorities exiled the general's mother, Frances Kirby Smith, from the city for spying. A research library, which includes Civil War period archives, is now maintained at this site by the St. Augustine Historical Society

### **St. Augustine in the Civil War: The Final Rest**

*This is the third of three highlights on the public spaces, homes, and final resting places of the Civil War period. These excerpts are from [Florida Civil War Heritage Trail](#), a Florida Heritage Publication of the Florida Division of Historical Resources.*

### **Loring Memorial 48 King Street**

This monument was erected in 1920 on the Government House grounds by the United Daughters of the Confederacy in honor of Confederate Major General William Wing Loring. His ashes are imbedded in the foundation of the monument.

### **San Lorenzo Cemetery**

This cemetery contains the remains of at least 93 Confederate soldiers and sailors including 3 black Confederate veterans who served as musicians in the 3rd Florida Infantry, and seven black Union soldiers of the US. Colored Troops.

### **St. Augustine National Cemetery**

This cemetery contains at least 33 Union troops and veterans, including Union sailors who died while on duty at Egmont Key and whose remains were relocated here in 1909 as part of the nationwide effort to consolidate military burials. The highest ranking Union officer interred here is Brigadier General Martin D. Hardin of Illinois, who served during the war in the Army of the Potomac and was a personal friend of President Abraham Lincoln. The cemetery also contains the remains of at least two Confederate veterans.

### **St. Francis Barracks**

This building was used as a military barracks first for Confederate troops, and then for Union troops after the Federal occupation of St. Augustine in 1862.

### **Tolomato Cemetery**

This cemetery contains the remains of Union veterans and at least 17 Confederate veterans. Also buried here is Florida Catholic Bishop Augustin Verot, known as the "Rebel Bishop" for his defense of the Confederate cause. After the Civil War, Bishop Verot became an advocate for the rights of freed slaves and oversaw the establishment of a school for their education in St. Augustine by the Sisters of St. Joseph.



## **From the Florida Dept of Veterans Affairs Resources**

The following sites provide resources for veterans and their families.

### **Locate Military Records**

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/>

### **Federal Benefits for Veterans & Dependents Guide**

[http://www1.va.gov/OPA/publications/benefits\\_book.asp](http://www1.va.gov/OPA/publications/benefits_book.asp)

### **Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide**

<http://www.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?m=1509&l=1>

### **Employ Florida Vets**

<https://www.employflorida.com/portals/veteran/>

### **Veterans Retraining Assistance Program**

<http://benefits.va.gov/vow/education.htm>

### **VOW to Hire Heroes Act 2011**

<http://benefits.va.gov/vow/index.htm>

### **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**

[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

### **eBenefits: Gateway to Benefit Information**

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal>

### **VA Claims Information**

<http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA/>

### **Returning Service Members**

<http://www.oefoif.va.gov/>

### **Returning Service Members Mental Health Support**

<http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/returningservicevets.asp>

### **National Resource Directory**

<http://www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov/>

### **Post-9/11 GI Bill and Veteran Education Benefits**

[www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)

### **VA Center for Women Veterans**

<http://www.va.gov/womenvet/>

### **Women Veterans Issues**

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/topics/women/index.htm>

### **Women Veterans Health Care**

<http://www.womenshealth.va.gov/WOMENSHEALTH/about.asp>

### **Homeless Women Veterans**

[http://www.va.gov/homeless/for\\_women\\_veterans.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/for_women_veterans.asp)

### **Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve**

[www.esgr.mil](http://www.esgr.mil)



## AMERICAN LEGION POST 194

### MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

### 7" Portable Google Tablet GIVEAWAY

\$10.00 DONATION

Drawing: Monday 8, April Time: 9 PM Place: 1029 W. Pearl Street,  
Saint Augustine, Fl. 32084

NEW 7" Portable Google Tablet with NVIDIA Quad-core CPU and Jellybean OS. Comes with Android 4.2, 178 wide-viewing angle IPS display, 10.45mm thin and 340g light (\$260.00 value).

Model: NEXUS7 ASUS

Tickets available at the office call: 904 829-8189 / request tickets by mail with check or money order payable to: A.L. Post 194

Need not be present to win



## Camp Blanding / Fort Blanding, Starke, Florida



The Florida Army National Guard's primary training area is Camp Blanding located in north-central Florida. Camp Blanding is a military installation near Jacksonville, Florida that measures approximately 73,000 square acres. The training schedule continues almost year-round to meet the training needs of tens of thousands of National Guardsmen, Active Army and Reserves from all over the United States. On December 15, 1992 the 159th Weather Readiness Training Center and Weather Flight were added to the Florida Air National Guard. Located at Camp Blanding, the school billets and trains Air National Guard members as well as active

duty airmen in their career field of weather predictions. In 1985 the FANG added a non-flying unit with the formation of the 202nd Red Horse Civil Engineering Squadron (RHS). The 202nd was formed to provide a rapidly deployable, highly trained force to accomplish heavy damage repairs to runways, facilities, and utilities of the Air Force worldwide. That unit is located at Camp Blanding, near Starke, Florida. The 202nd RHS is actively involved in Hurricane Relief, Construction Projects for United States Air Force and Army National Guard Units, training for other Air National Guard and Air Force units, and Community Service.

Weapons ranges include: 50 live fire ranges capable of handling all weapons systems organic to a Light Infantry Brigade to include Mortars and Artillery; 5 Automated Ranges for small arms and handgun qualification; a Crew Combat Range; and 4 Platoon/Squad Movement to Contact ranges (400 by 800 meters). Training Areas include three Major Maneuver Areas with a total of 55,000 plus acres of varied topography -- planted pine plantations, swamps, oak hammocks, desert like terrain -- with minimal environmental restrictions, with the capability to support a Light Infantry Brigade plus one Battalion of aggressors. The MOUT Collective Training Facility consists of 16 Buildings, Bridge & Tunnel Trainer.

Billets accommodate 3000 persons, with one Brigade consisting of four Battalion Areas. Each Battalion area has company dining facilities, orderly rooms, Officer/Enlisted barracks, supply building, and Battalion HQ building.

Camp Blanding owes its location on the shore of Kingsley Lake to the US Navy's desire to establish a Naval Air Station (NAS) on the banks of the St. Johns River, south of Jacksonville. The site was already the location of the Florida National Guard's Camp Foster and negotiations were started for a land-swap. In mid 1939, the transaction was accomplished and the state armory board chose as compensation a tract of 30,000 acres in Clay County as a National Guard camp and training site. The National Guard Officers Association of Florida recommended the new camp be named in honor of Lt General Albert H. Blanding. The War Department agreed and Camp Blanding's history began.

General Blanding (9 Nov 1876 - 26 Dec 1970) was one of Florida's most distinguished soldiers. He graduated from the East Florida Seminary (now the University of Florida) in 1894 and began his military service to the state and nation. He was promoted to colonel in 1909 and commanded the 2nd Florida Infantry during the Mexican Border Service in 1916 and 1917. During World War I, he commanded the 53rd Brigade, 27th Division. He was promoted to major general in 1924 and commanded the 31st Infantry Division until 1940. He also served as chief of the National Guard Bureau until his retirement and promotion to lieutenant general in 1940.

In 1940, Camp Blanding was leased to the U.S. Army as an active duty training center. The post was originally used by New England and Southern troops preparing for deployment overseas. However, dur-

ing the course of the war, Camp Blanding served as an infantry replacement training center, as induction center, prisoner of war compound, and a separation center. At the height of the war, thanks to leases with local landowners, Camp Blanding sprawled over more than 170,000 acres. From 1940 to 1945, more than 800,000 soldiers received all or part of their training here.

After the war, the state's 30,000 acres were returned to the armory board and by 1948 most of the buildings were sold or moved off post. In the early 1950s, the Federal Government deeded additional land to the state for use as a National Guard training facility, but until 1970, the post saw only limited use by the military.

In the 1970s an expansion program began upgrading post facilities and in 1981, the federal government redesignated Camp Blanding as a Class A military installation. The designation qualified the post for use by greater numbers of troops with more diversified training.

In 1983, the first 105mm artillery firing points were used since WWII. Tank ranges have been upgraded and Tank Tables I through VI can be fired. In addition to improved facilities and ranges, a parachute drop zone and an airfield have expanded Camp Blanding's training capacity and the Navy utilizes a bombing and strafing target in the southern portion of the post. Upgrading of facilities and training areas continues to this day.

The E. I. Du Pont de Nemours and Co. mines a restricted area on the western edge of the post where ilmenite and other heavy minerals are removed from the soil. The armory board uses the income from the sale of mineral rights and timber products for general post maintenance, operations and improvements. To help preserve the environment, DuPont has instituted a procedure whereby the topsoil is stripped and stockpiled before the mining operation is started. After mining, the topsoil is redistributed.

Parts of the movies "Tigerland" and "G.I. Jane" were filmed at this north Florida base. Filmed in 2000, "Tigerland" was set in 1971 during the Vietnam War, and focused on six young draftees in their final weeks of basic training at a Louisiana boot camp. Filmed in 1995, "G.I. Jane" stars Demi Moore as the first female member of the SEALs, the Navy's elite special operations force. Reality TV joined the Army with "Boot Camp" which premiered in March 2001 on the Fox network. Contestants competed for a \$500,000 grand prize during the eight-episode series filmed at a real military base, the Florida National Guard's Camp Blanding. Real military drill instructors put 16 real civilians through a basic training program. It included an obstacle course, rappelling out of buildings and a hostage rescue mission.

The Black Soldiers Memorial Park was dedicated on 27 February 1998 at Fort Blanding.

Typical of many military reservations, as well as other public lands, since World War II, because of the encroachment of development, agriculture, and silviculture, it has become an island in a sea of suburbanization. This isolated island of viable natural resources habitat supports a diverse population of flora and fauna. CBTS is within the historical range of approximately 100 critically-listed plant and animal species, all requiring various management techniques and procedures. Today, approximately 75% of these species have been identified as occurring on the installation. Among these species, this presentation will examine resource management for the high-profile red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service USFWS list the RCW as endangered). The RCW habitat requirements, status, and affects in the Southeast United States are comparable to the Northern spotted owl situation in the Pacific Northwest. This is a common scenario to "key-stone" or indicator species nation-wide, as well as globally.



HBI PACT for Veterans has added a few new exciting certifications to our existing training. The below free certifications will be provided at HBI proudly located at Allied Veterans Center. The certifications will assist enrolled veterans with more marketable skills to gain meaningful employment or enhance their current employment status. To date HBI PACT for Veterans Jacksonville site have enrolled 42 veterans, provided 27 certifications, assisted in job placement of 11 veterans in Jacksonville and have 5 veterans working while receiving skilled services from HBI, since our start on August 20, 2012. These accomplishments are all due to our community sharing resources for our veterans and opening doors to mentoring, training, community service, donations, tutoring, internships and most importantly **jobs**.

The Military, Public Safety and Security Division of Florida State College at Jacksonville will provide Employee training seminars at HBI for the following:

- HAZCOM in the Workplace (2 hour Seminar)
- Blood Bourne Pathogens (2 hour Seminar)
- OSHA Rights (2 hour Seminar)
- Machine Guarding & Amputation Hazards (2 hour Seminar)
- Electrical Hazards (2 hour Seminar)
- Scaffolding Safety Awareness (2 hour Seminar)
- Back Injury Awareness (2 hour Seminar)
- Construction Hazards (4 hour Seminar)

HBI provided certifications:

- EPA Certification                      OSHA 10
- Pre-Apprenticeship Certification Training in Facilities Maintenance

Jacksonville Urban League has collaborated with HBI to provide our veterans with hands on basic computer training at HBI. Veterans will receive two hour weekly onsite training in the following:

Basic computer training, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Publisher, Microsoft PowerPoint

February will also mark HBI's veterans first community service project with our partner the City of Jacksonville, building handicap accessible ramps for our fellow citizens in need. Job placement partnerships with Veterans Aide Foundation, Inc. Notable continued partnerships and supportive collaboration with Allied Veterans Center, JEA, NEFBA, Jacksonville Urban League, Florida State College at Jacksonville, WorkSource, The Rotary Club of North Jacksonville and many more forthcoming.

Please Like our HBI PACT for Veterans Facebook page. Kindly, spread the word to a Florida veteran that HBI is an open enrollment training site invested in expanding their employability skills in 12 weeks with credible certifications, employability skills specifically for our veteran population, job search/placement assistance for **FREE**. Donations of building supplies for training, flash drives, and laptops are always appreciated. Job opportunities and unpaid internships for our trained veterans are always in need. For additional information about our training and certifications, please email me at [lguillory@hbi.org](mailto:lguillory@hbi.org) or call me at 904-625-3299.

Thank you for your time and unified support in Building Careers for our Florida Veterans!!!

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**A Veteran is someone who...at one time in their life, wrote a check made ..."payable to The United States of America..." for an amount "...up to and including MY LIFE."**

|  |  |                           |         |
|--|--|---------------------------|---------|
| SOLDIER, SEAMAN, AIRMAN, MARINE<br>123 MAIN ST.<br>ANY TOWN, USA             |  | ANY DATE – ANY WAR        | 1001    |
| PAY TO: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA   |  | \$                        | MY LIFE |
| THE ORDER OF   |  |                           |         |
| UP TO AND INCLUDING "MY LIFE" -----  |  | DOLLARS                   |         |
| AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK OF HONOR<br>123 Service St.<br>Pridesville, USA 12345 |  |                           |         |
| MEMO: FOR MY GOD, COUNTRY, DUTY  |  | <i>John Q. Serviceman</i> |         |

**THAT IS HONOR...!!**

**Sadly, too many people in this country no longer understand it...**

**Once a SOLDIER**



**ALWAYS a SOLDIER**

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](mailto: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.

*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.*