

The Patriot Reader

VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

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Newsletter Editor Michael Rothfeld



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Volume 2, Issue 3

Newsletter Date: March, 2013

Message from the Chairman

Dear Fellow Veterans,
Wednesday, Feb 20, 2013 was a day of joy and sadness. On Feb. 20 . at 1600, the Veterans Council was honored to present the Colonel Ed Taylor award to the Clyde E. Lassen Veterans State Nursing Home. This award, named for one of Lassen's residents, was celebrated by many of our local Veterans, executives from FDVA in Tallahassee, several of our local County Commissioners, Command level from the Fla. National Guard as well as the staff and residents of the Lassen Nursing Home. It was a rare opportunity to not only honor the Lassen Nursing Home staff, but to also pay tribute to

the man for whom the award was named. Colonel Ed Taylor was on hand as we paid tribute to him for his years of military service and his service to the Veterans of St. Johns County. We could not be prouder of anything that we have been a part of than our involvement in helping get this great facility located here in St. Johns County to provide a place of care for our Veterans. And two of the people who have lead the fight for Veterans needs in this county, Col. Ed Taylor and Ben Meggitt were at the tip of the spear in bringing this to fruition. It was indeed a joyous occasion.

But the joy was short lived as I received a phone call later that evening informing me that Ben Meggitt had just passed away. It was a real low for me after such an exciting and inspiring day. Ben Meggitt was truly the quintessential veteran. Involved in nearly every veteran activity in this county, holding an office of leader-

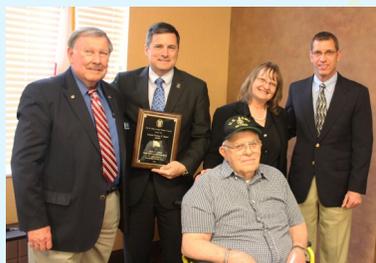


ship in most of them, and providing inspiration to everyone in these organizations. Ben never shirked from the mission set out before him. Until debilitating illness finally took it's toll on his ability to provide leadership, he still stood the watch by making roll call at all the organizations he was a member of.

A much more detailed article appears in our Patriot Reader newsletter about Ben. A man short in physical stature, but as tall as they come in heart and spirit, he will be forever missed by his fellow comrades who have worn the cloth of this nation.

BEN... WE ALL SALUTE YOU.

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



From left: Bill Dudley, COL Prendergast, COL Ed Taylor, Director Diane King, Dwyn Taylor

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

Patriotism is our motto



February was a very busy month at the Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home. Below are some of the activities and special events we celebrated.



The bellringers from the Allegro Retirement Community providing entertainment for our residents.



Andi Bower's therapy pet students are now visiting our residents



John enjoying his visit from the therapy dogs



Our Valentine's Day Celebration included a "kissing the goat" fundraiser



We bundled up and braved chilly weather to watch the wonderful Clay County Community Band



Diane King and Colonel Mike Prendergast receiving the Colonel Ed Taylor Award from Bill Dudley





IN REMEMBRANCE
Reuben A. "Ben" Meggitt



If you ever visited with Ben at his home, the saying "Sometimes we talk and rock, sometimes we just rock" will bring back great memories.

Reuben A. "Ben" Meggitt, 83, a stalwart pillar of St. Johns County Veterans, passed quietly on Feb. 20, 2013.

Ben was born in Cheboygan, MI on Nov. 26, 1929. He and his wife, Niti "Nicky" Bast, of Copenhagen, Denmark, were married on August 3, 1971.

He was an Army Veteran serving from Dec. 22, 1947 to Dec. 3, 1953 and Sept. 16, 1954 to Apr. 30, 1971 retiring at the rank of MSgt. Upon retirement from the Army he served 20 years in the Department of Veteran Affairs as a Field Examiner serving elderly Veterans until he retired.

Ben was active in many Veteran organization capacities including, Chairman (two terms), Veterans Council of St. Johns County; Commander, DAV chapter 6 (two terms) and treasurer many terms; & Commander, American Legion Post 37.

Ben was instrumental in getting the Veteran Nursing home located at its present site on SR16; he had the honor of cutting the ribbon at the opening ceremonies. He was almost single handedly responsible for getting new DAV vans to transport veterans to their appointments at the VAMC in Gainesville, FL.

He is survived by his wife, "Nicky"; twin sister Ruby; a second sister and a brother, all of Michigan; two daughters, Paula and Pam, both of Kentucky; adopted daughter Audrey of GA; three grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

Ben never met a stranger and will be sorely missed by all.



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 school-room 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 10th, 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

Practice focusing on Estate Planning (Wills/Trusts), Probate, Elder and Veterans Law and Small Business Law

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DAV to Fundraise to Purchase New Van

By Michael Isam

St. Augustine, Fla. – The Disabled American Veterans of Florida Chapter 6 want to purchase a new van to transport Veterans to appointments at VA Medical Center.

Recently, Bill Day, Vice-President of Rolling Thunder Chapter 4, presented a check to DAV Chapter 6 Commander A. J. Sartin to initiate the fundraising effort.

“The VA Transportation Network decides when a van is to be retired from service,” said Sartin. “We have little or no control over when it happens. We just get a notice that time is getting short.”

The van service from St. Augustine to Gainesville began in February, 2005. “It took a ton of work to get the transportation system going,” said Tom Waskovich. Waskovich was responsible for getting drivers for the van. “If we did not have drivers, there was no reason to have a van. Chuckling, Waskovich remembered some of the incidents around getting drivers qualified through the VA system. “Every driver had to pass a stringent set of protocols before they were allowed to drive the van. We joked that Navy Seals would have a hard time passing the protocols, let alone a getting a retired person qualified,” said Waskovich. “We finally got the administration to seriously look at the protocols and modify them into some semblance of reality.”

The chapter was responsible for getting the van. “It was a loaner from the VA,” said Chapter Treasurer Ben Meggitt. “It had a little over 180,000 miles on it. We drove the tires off it and we were given another loaner.”

The chapter purchased a new van through a special program sponsored by the Disabled American Veterans National Organization. “The cost of the first one was about \$23,000.00 and the cost has risen about \$2000.00 each year,” said Meggitt.

“The time for the purchases begins in November of every year and we have received our vans the following June or July, said Sartin. “Hurry up and wait!” a statement every veteran knows, still applies.”



Association of the United States Army

VOICE FOR THE ARMY – SUPPORT FOR THE SOLDIER

First Militia Chapter, AUSA

On Thursday, February 21st, the St. Augustine First Militia Chapter of AUSA, held its quarterly dinner meeting at the Officer's Club at historic St. Francis Barracks. The guest speaker was Dr. (COL ret.) Hal Kushner, a former Prisoner of War in the Vietnam conflict. COL Kushner spoke about his capture, time in captivity and his release.



COL Kushner and COL Craig,
President, First Militia Chapter
AUSA

Dr. (COL) Hal Kushner (Ret.) volunteered to be flight surgeon of the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division. As flight surgeons should, he flew numerous combat missions with Cav pilots. On Nov. 30, 1967, on a night flight in a driving rain storm, the helicopter crashed. Recovering consciousness in the burning, inverted helicopter, he freed himself despite a broken left wrist and collarbone and seven broken teeth. While trying to free the pilot, he was hit in the neck and shoulders by exploding ammunition and his hands and buttocks were burned. The pilot was dead, he copilot, mortally injured in the crash, died the third day, the crew chief was sent for help and was later found shot by the enemy. He then left the crash site and was fed by a peasant who later turned him over to an enemy squad. He was shot in the neck because he was unable to lift his splinted broken arm when ordered to surrender. Thus began the tortuous hell of five and a half years as the only medical doctor captured in the Vietnam War.

Tied and beaten, wounded and sick and without boots, he trekked through the mountains. He was held in a series of jungle camps for over three years. In 1971, with the other survivors, he walked 900 kilometers to Vinh; was loaded on a train of cattle cars with thousands of South Vietnamese prisoners and moved the final 180 kilometers to Hanoi.

Conditions in Hanoi's jails were bad, but better than in the jungle camps, where prisoners suffered from jungle diseases and starvation. Twelve of the 27 U.S. prisoners died; some because it was too hard to live. They slept on a large pallet of bamboo where the sick vomited, defecated and urinated on the common bed and other prisoners.

Kushner was offered a better life working in a hospital; he refused. He was forbidden to practice medicine, but at great personal risk found ways to alleviate suffering and save lives. A fellow prisoner, Frank Anton, said: "Kushner never quit; attempting always to motivate us to keep fighting, keep trying." Another, David Harker, said: "Dr. Kushner never lost his will to practice medicine. In the end he would simply hold dying prisoners in his arms and saw them through to the other side."

Kushner said: "It was a terrible experience but some good came from it. I learned about the human spirit. I learned about loyalty to your country and its ideals - to put your friends and comrades first."

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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
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 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



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



Rick Rescorla

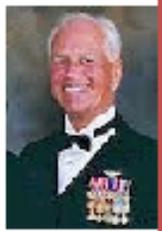
\$ 40

Single Presentation Dinner Ticket

CONTACT: _____
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 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.**



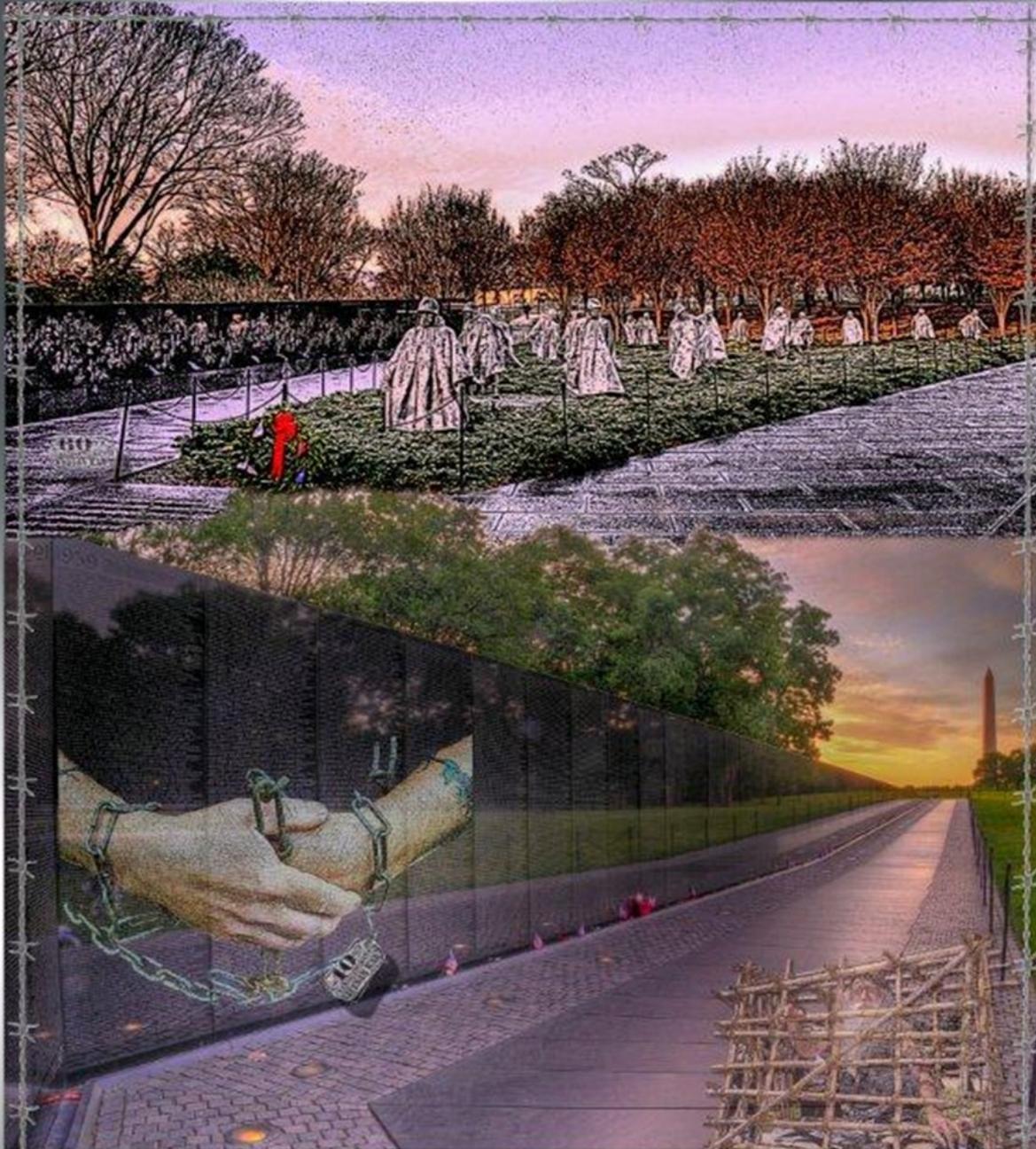
The Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund is a 501 c3 non profit organization, information available on our website www.ChaseRescorlaFund.org

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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NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY

September 19-21 Americus/Andersonville, Georgia

Join us as we HONOR and THANK those who
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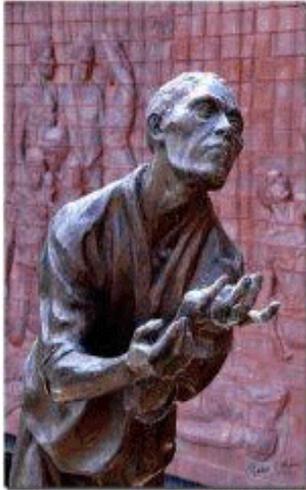


The Ride Home, Inc.
Honoring ALL Former Prisoners of War
Remembering those still Missing in Action

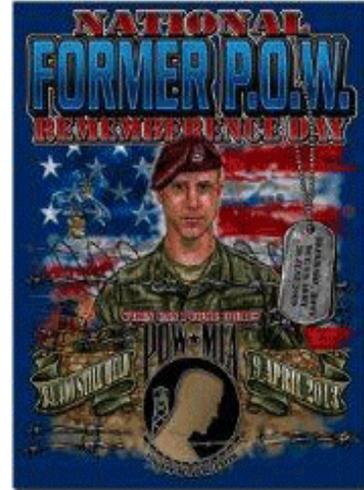
<http://theridehome.com>

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9
APRIL
2013



Join us at the

*"After Vietnam We said Never Again
Did We Mean It?"*

National Mall Washington, D.C.
for the
POW/MIA FREEDOM MARCH

- WORLD WAR I - 3,344 Americans STILL wait to come HOME!**
- WORLD WAR II - 73,677 Americans STILL wait to come HOME!**
- KOREAN WAR - 7,926 Americans STILL wait to come HOME!**
- COLD WAR - 126 Americans STILL wait to come HOME!**
- VIETNAM WAR - 1,654 Americans STILL wait to come HOME!**
- WAR on TERROR - 6 Americans STILL wait to come HOME!**

It's time to march for those who cannot march for themselves!

When: Tuesday 9 April 2013 Where: Vietnam Memorial, National Mall
Time: 1000 hrs. March begins
Route: Vietnam, Korean, World War II, Constitution Ave to the Capitol
Time: 1130 hrs. DEMONSTRATION begins at Capitol Building

Biographies on Prisoners of War and Missing in Action [POW/MIA] from the Vietnam Conflict

The list of **ALL** those declared POW/MIA during the Vietnam Conflict, beginning in 1952. Includes those declared Prisoner of War (POW), declared Missing In Action (MIA), Presumed Dead (PFOD), Killed in Action/Body Not Recovered (KIA/BNR), Died In Captivity (DIC), escapees, and returnees - includes civilians and foreign nationals. Based on the PMSEA used by USG officials. The biographies available may be only the START of information available on any POW/MIA listed. Leave e-mail if more information is desired. We will search our archive and email any further information found. *Biographies are updated here as soon as new information is received. PLEASE notify us of any errors found.*

NOTE: ALL data in the statistical area of the biography is based on determination AT TIME OF LOSS, including rank and status. Since then, promotions may have occurred and ALL POW/MIAs have been declared "presumed" dead (PFOD) with a Presumptive Finding Of Death hearing or declared "Killed in Action/Body not Recovered" (KIA/BNR), including those "last known alive." The Department of Defense uses one of the main data bases [PMSEA] for this program to verify legitimacy of a former Vietnam Prisoner of War. If a name does not appear on the PMSEA or in the index of names -- the "P.O.W." may be a wannabe or PHONY. Info on "how to" contact a returnee, return a bracelet, send a loveletter to a family.

[Vietnam dog tags not MIAs](#)

INDEX of POW/MIA NAMES

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Each indexed name is linked to further information if it is available.

The Bios of some Returnees now contain current photos -- Sources of data below.

Many links to "more info" in the bios have become temporarily disabled due to a change in servers at www.veterantributes.com. We are working to edit the hundreds of links....



All of the NAM-POW tributes can be found in this section:

http://www.veterantributes.org/NAM_POWS.php

All of the Son Tay Raiders can be found in this section:

http://www.veterantributes.org/Son_Tay_Raiders.php

All of the categories can be viewed on this page:

<http://www.veterantributes.org/Tributes.php>

Florida man finally gets medal for his Korean War Service

A Florida retiree has received a Prisoner of War medal for two years he spent in captivity during the Korean War. US Rep Bill Posey, R-Fla., presented the medal Friday, Feb. 22nd to 80 year old Gordon Petro. Petro served 27 years in the Army and retired as a Command Sergeant Major. He joined the Army while still in high school to fight in the Korean War. He was captured in 1951 and held for two years. After his retirement, Petro pursued a career teaching Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps in California.



Florida Today reports that Petro cried as he accepted the medal. He said he hadn't known the medal existed until staff at a Melbourne hotel where he stayed after his wife's death learned about his military service and contacted Posey.





Veterans Court, Jacksonville

The 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.^[1]

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



^[1] 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.



Missing in America Project Honors Forgotten Veterans

By Michael Isam, **Cremains found on closet shelf**



Photo by Michael Isam
Steve Spickelmier and
Kathy Church field
questions about MIAP

A man answers his phone to hear his daughter says, "Dad, I'm cleaning out a shed and I just found a bag containing the cremains of a Veteran and his wife. It has been here for a long time. What do I do?"

The above is a story shared by Kathy Church, the FL State Coordinator for the Missing In America Project (MIAP) during a presentation before the Veterans Council of St. Johns County and other such organizations. It gets worse.

According to information on the MIAP organization website, volunteers have visited more than 2,700 funeral homes and found over 16,000 cremains with 3500 in one institution and more than 2,000 between two funeral homes in Missouri. They have identified 2,044 cremains and interred over 1800 Veterans and family members.

The mission statement for MIAP states "The purpose of the MIA Project is to locate, identify, and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American Veterans through the joint efforts of private, state, and federal organizations. To provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes."

I caught Church for a phone interview between getting repairs on her car and just before she was scheduled to run to another meeting.

According to Church, "While the numbers are not as bleak here in Northeast Florida as they are nationwide, they are still somewhat shocking." She adds "In one funeral home alone, there are 12 locations used to store items. In those locations are 588 unclaimed cremains." Not all are Veterans or family members of Veterans.

"It is a slow process." said Church. "Before we can do anything, we have to have permission from a funeral home to even touch anything." "There are very strict liability laws in Florida that could cause a funeral home to lose its license." "This is why all our volunteers are covered under our blanket insurance policy." More information on this is the subject of another article.

Many times a funeral home will provide MIAP volunteers with copies of the records for them to do their job. "We begin by going through BOXES of records, folder by folder, looking at all the information in them to determine if this person was a Veteran of a family member."

It is sometimes an easy task as an actual copy of the DD-214 is in the records or the information may be on the death certificate.

All records are copied and the data is entered into a database. Information on a male is sent to the Department of Veterans Affairs to determine eligibility. Unless there is direct information that a female is a veteran, their information is sent to a genealogist to determine if the person was married to a veteran. In rare cases, some under 18 years of age dependents are discovered and the same process is afforded them as they are eligible to be interred with their parent(s).

Once the determination of status is complete, a notice to locate any next of kin is posted in the paper for a minimum of 30 days. If the person is not claimed, then the process moves forward to interment in a National Cemetery.

The first Veteran cremains in NE Florida were discovered by a demolition workman when a retirement home was to be converted to apartments. He found them on a shelf in a closet. Tom O'Berry, NE Florida Coordinator for MIAP at the time, was responsible for getting the veteran recognized and interred. The Veteran was Clarence H. Hill, Jr. Mr. Hill was a USAF Korean War Veteran. He was an Airman First Class, A1C who served honorably from December 1950 to October 1957.

Discoveries of cremains are not necessarily recent. In New York, the cremains of a Buffalo Soldier and four Civil War Veterans have been discovered.

For more information on the Missing In America Project, check their website at <http://www.miap.us> or contact Kathy Church, the MIAP FL State Coordinator 904-219-3035

MIAP will be begin operating in St. Johns County soon with Becky Blaylock at the helm.

By the way, the results of the story at the beginning of the article turned out very positive. There were so many relatives listed in the obituary that children responded to letters and claimed the couple. They had been looking to find out about their parents for many years.



Dogs On Deployment is a 501(c)(3) national non-profit which provides a central online database for service members to search for individuals or families who are willing to welcome a “Dog On Deployment” into their home for the length of their owner's deployment. -

<http://dogsondeployment.org/>

Military members nation-wide confront a multitude of problems during their career. The last problem they want to worry about is what to do with their beloved family pet when it's time for them to deploy. Many service members have limited, to no options for their pets when they have to go overseas and many have relinquished their pets to shelters when they have nowhere else to go. Dogs On Deployment is a 501(c)(3) national non-profit which provides a central online database for service members to search for individuals or families who are willing to welcome a Dog On Deployment into their home for the length of their owner's deployment.

Dogs on Deployment is a networking site; we do not arrange boarding between Pet Owners and DoD Boarders. It is the responsibility of the Pet Owner to contact DoD Boarders in their area and choose one that will be the right fit for their pet. We highly encourage our DoD Boarders to contact any Pet Owners in your area who you believe might be suitable for. Using our site proactively will increase the chances that all our Pets in Need will find the right DoD Boarder.

If there are Pets in Need in your area or others that are not a good fit for your home, but you still want to help, please help us recruit potential DoD Boarders by helping us get our name out. We have a very active [Facebook page](#) that you can share our Pets in Need, [email our website](#) to your friends and family, mention us to your local pet-services, [print our flyer](#) to place in community places, etc. All these things will help us gain exposure and reach others who may be able to help. Your help in sharing may also help us reach military members who may need our service.



Local Business Leader Recognized for Patriotic Service

By Michael Isam

St. Augustine, Fla. – Danielle McQuarry moves mountains for Veterans in St. Johns County.

“For many years Danielle has been front and center when the need arose,” said Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley. “Every year since the Wreaths Across America campaign began here she has provided a truck and crew to meet the delivery truck at the parking lot of the Flying “J” truck stop to offload wreaths and deliver them for our ceremony at the St. Augustine National Cemetery.”

McQuarry was recognized for her efforts at a recent Veterans Council meeting. “I don’t come from a military family, but I felt I needed to do something for our Veterans, So I do what I do best, transportation,” said McQuarry. “My grandfather was a veteran and I do it in his memory.”

This year was quite a feat. Over 1200 wreaths were delivered. A small battalion of Veterans met the 18-wheeler and off-loaded the boxes so the load could be verified then loaded them on McQuarry’s truck. With no viable storage area at the cemetery for so many wreaths, McQuarry stored them at her business until the morning of the ceremony. After the wreaths were unloaded, the same truck proceeded north to pick up and deliver a load of “Toys For Tots” gathered by the St. Augustine Marine Corps League.

McQuarry is very shy and goes out of her way to avoid publicity and photos. “It is not about me, it is about our veterans, some of whom died so very young and some are still suffering years after the end of the war. It’s for them.”

Photo caption:

l-r, Kayoa Collins and Danielle McQuarry of Two Men and a Truck, Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley, Daniel Blackman, Wreaths Across America Location Leader and Veterans Council Deputy Chairman.



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



Mailing Address:
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St. Augustine, FL 32085
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COL Mike Prendergast, ret
Executive Director FDVA

FDVA RELEASES 2013 FLORIDA VETERANS' BENEFITS GUIDES

February 5, 2013

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs has released the 2013 edition of the *Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide*. FDVA is the premier point of entry for Florida veterans to access earned services, benefits and support.

The 24-page guide, sponsored by the Florida Veterans Foundation, provides information about earned federal and state benefits and how to obtain them.

Bulk copies of the guide are being distributed to county veteran service offices, VA facilities and state colleges and universities.

To view an interactive online version of the guide or request a copy, click [here](#). Or see below

FDVA Benefits Guide

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

To request a hard copy of the Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide, please email the request by clicking [here](#). In the subject line please write: "Benefits Guide Request."

Federal Benefits Guide (*Federal Benefits for Veterans' Dependents and Survivors*)

http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp



Congratulations and Happy Anniversary

**February 23rd, was the 34th Anniversary of the
Disabled American Veterans Florida Chapter 6.
AJ Sartin, Commander**

www.DAVFL6.org

**Meets the third Tuesday of each month at the St. Augustine South
Clubhouse located at 709 Royal Road.**

*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



Officer's Club, St Augustine

Important Online Veterans Link:

www.pownetwork.org

YOU are NOT Forgotten

<http://www.theridehome.org/>
September 19-21, Americus, GA

The locally produced *Vietnam documentary, Service, Sacrifice and Courage* has received **96,256** 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 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.

**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*

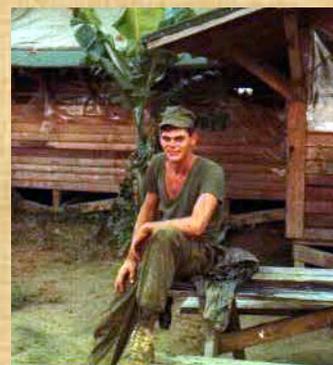
A BAD DAY AT DIEN BAN

By FRED DUPONT

JULY 2011



Fred Dupont on right with
Chairman Bill Dudley



Fred in Vietnam

In August 1968, 9th Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division, III Marine Amphibious Force was tasked with “keeping open and passable the 47.6 mile stretch of Vietnam’s Route 1 from Chu Lai north to the Cau Lau River.” Lt. Colonel Horacio “Hank” Perea, Com-

manding Officer of the 1,000 Marines and Corpsmen of 9th Engineers, was based in Chu Lai. This mission included daily mine sweeps of the entire stretch and construction and maintenance of “41 bridges and 97 culverts”. Captain Reno Rizzo, Commanding Officer of Delta Company, was based at Hill 63 (LZ Baldy) and assigned the northern most “11.2 miles” which included the longest fixed span bridge ever built by the Marine Corps that measured 722 feet across the Ba Ren River. In support of that mission, on August 5, 1968, Capt Rizzo was leading 30 Marines from Delta and Service companies in a convoy of seven vehicles loaded with bridge materials from Da Nang. Just south of the village of Dien Ban they ran into an ambush of an estimated 100 NVA.

If it wasn’t the first bullet, it was close as it tore into Capt Rizzo’s chest, passing through his right lung, and lodging next to his spine. His driver, LCpl E.J. Hayward, sought lower ground by running off the road, spilling the Captain, SSgt Charlie Edwards, and SSgt Nehila into the mud on the west side of the road.



Captain Rizzo’s Jeep after the ambush
(Photo provided by Reno Rizzo)

LCpl John Ruley from Headquarters Company was driving the second vehicle in the convoy,

the “gun truck”. A 6x6 stacked with sand bags and some armor plating with a .50 caliber machine gun mounted on the back, the gun truck was designed to be the lead vehicle, blast through any trouble, and keep the convoy moving. LCpl Ruley covered the 200 yards from the edge of the village to where the jeep left the road with LCpl Pete Triosi blasting away with the 50cal, taking tremendous damage from the small arms fire. LCpl Triosi was hit in the arm but, never quit firing along with PFC Paul Ricard manning “everybody’s M16s”, giving their CO as much covering fire as they could. Faced with turning his truck and everybody in it into “swiss cheese” and trapping the remaining vehicles in the ambush, LCpl Ruley continued to draw fire as he drove through the ambush, as was the original plan for the gun truck.



LCpl John Ruley and his “Baby”
(Photo provided by John Ruley)

Sgt David John Green, Delta Co., 1st Platoon, was the senior U.S. Marine present when LCpl Ruley pulled the gun truck into the Korean Marine Compound near the village of My Hat. By this time the radio was crackling with gun fire and a call for help. Sgt Green called in a Med-evac chopper for LCpl Triosi and with the help of the Korean Marines repaired the truck as best they could. As they began mounting up to go help, 1st Lt Dean Marcellus of 2nd Platoon, busy at the Ba Ren Bridge, radioed Sgt Green to wait until his arrival. Together, elements of the 1st and 2nd Platoons under Lt Marcellus moved north on Ruley’s gun truck to relieve the situation in Dien Ban.

North of the Thu Bon River, the gun truck over heated and stopped, they dismounted and advanced on foot. Sgt Green led a column on the east side of the road and Sgt Willie Linner, 2nd Platoon, did the same on the west. They took cover and returned fire as they approached the tree line south of Dien Ban. Major Caleb Wall, Executive Officer of 9th Engineers, arrived by

helicopter from Chu Lai at the Provincial Forces compound in Trung Phu' and established contact with the Australian Army Advisors to the 2/4th ARVN Cavalry Regiment at the scene in Dien Ban. They engaged the enemy for over an hour, until Lt Marcellus was advised to pull back to the compound before a counter attack by helicopter gunships began.

Back at the jeep, before they could get their bearings, an NVA soldier was standing over them with an AK-47 blasting away. SSgt Edwards caught three rounds in his stomach before he got his hands on an M-16 and emptied the whole 20 round magazine into him. SSgt Nehila was wounded in the back and legs.

Desperately wounded with no cover, SSgt Edwards and Capt Rizzo crawled about 100yds back to a well surrounded by a dirt berm. Their 45cals full of mud, SSgt Edwards washed them off, chambered a round and handed Capt. Rizzo's back to him. His back to the well facing the enemy, with Capt. Rizzo facing him, he began stuffing mud in the bullet holes to stop the bleeding. The surgeon told him later it was that action that saved his life.

SSgt Nehila lay wounded and dazed during the entire ambush and could not be found in the confusion. He wandered into the PF compound at Trung Phu' the next day and was taken to Da Nang by Medevac.

When the NVA opened fire, the rest of the convoy stopped about 200 yards from Capt Rizzo's jeep. After LCpl Ruley's gun truck blasted on ahead, LCpl Ray Cummings' tractor/trailer was now the lead vehicle taking the brunt of the NVA punishment. LCpl Bill Lee's tractor/trailer was behind Cummings'. Everyone on those two trucks bailed out and began returning fire. Firing from the back of the third truck, PFC Bob Uderitz was only able to get off one round with his M-60 machine gun before the firing pin broke. From the back of the convoy, Sgt Lee and Cpl Larry Barabaz advanced to Uderitz' position and took the M-60 and two boxes of ammunition off of the truck to repair it at a house at the south end of the village. Not being able to fix the broken firing pin, they moved forward to the well. PFC Uderitz then proceeded back to the ARVNs position north of the village to use their radio and call for help. Not knowing what the call signs and frequencies, he procured an M-1 carbine from them and advanced to the well to assist the wounded.

By this time the automatic fire from the NVA had died down as they started walking mortars in on the Marines. The jeep caught the first round and exploded taking their only radio with it. One round exploded next to the well wounding SSgt Edwards again, this time in the head. A piece of shrapnel stuck into his forehead. He pulled it out and placed it in his flak jacket. It was later returned to him by a nurse in Da Nang.

Exposing themselves to fierce enemy fire, the Marines on the convoy left their cover to aid and protect Capt Rizzo and SSgt Edwards at the well. Capt Rizzo gave the call signs and frequencies to LCpl Lee and told him to find a radio.

The only radio in the convoy having been destroyed in the jeep, LCpl Lee, despite the intense enemy fire, proceeded to use one of the radios on the APCs from the 2/4th ARVN Cavalry Regiment at Hoi An which they had passed to the north of Dien Ban. LCpl Lee was hit in his flak jacket by a round that knocked him face down in a rice paddy. Shaking that off, he again proceeded to carry out his orders. After calling Delta Company Headquarters at Hill 63, LCpl Lee exposed himself to enemy fire for the third time to return to the well. Under the covering fire of two ARVN APCs, directed by Australian Army Advisors WO1 James Francis Harrower and WO2 Terence Francis Malone, LCpl Lee coordinated the retreat from the well. As soon as all the Marines stood to carry the wounded back to the village, LCpl Moore from Delta Company was shot in the shoulder. For the fourth time, LCpl Lee exposed himself to enemy fire this time carrying Capt Rizzo to safety.

At this point the Australian Advisors took control of the situation and called for Medevac Helicopters from Da Nang. Determining that the LZ was “too hot” for the U. S. Army “slicks”, four U. S. Army gunships arrived. After pacifying the NVA, one of the gunships landed to lift out Captain Rizzo, SSgt Edwards and LCpl Moore.

On the south end, as the counter attack began, the gun truck having been repaired again at the PF compound in Trung Phu’, Lt Marcellus and his men mounted up and moved south to the KMC compound at My Hat. Sgt Linner manning the 50cal as they passed the Korean Marines from My Hat moving north.

Battalion records show that 5 Marines were wounded in this battle: Capt Reno Rizzo, SSgt Charlie Edwards, SSgt Nehila, LCpl Moore, and LCpl Pete Triosi. These were the five that required Medevac, however, two more were wounded. Sgt Mike Cummins was hit in the leg by a ricocheting bullet as he dismounted one of the low bed trucks and was treated by the Corpsmen at 7th Engineers that night. Also, PFC Larry Organ was knocked unconscious when a round hit his helmet as he left the truck in which he was riding.

At the end of the battle, while the trucks were being turned around to return to Da Nang, Sgt Cummins went into the house where the sniper must have been that had hit Bill Lee in his flak jacket. He found the sniper on the second floor blown to hell, apparently by the 50cal on the ARVN APC. He took his rifle and still has it on his boat in Ft. Lauderdale. He plans on cleaning it and presenting it to Bill Lee at the next Reunion.



LCpl Bill Lee pointing out the hole in his flak jacket
(Photo provided by Bill Lee)

I would like to thank the following comrades who helped piece this story together.

Lt Col Caleb Wall who provided information about the efforts from the south and worked with me in submitting an award for LCpl Lee to Headquarters Marine Corps.

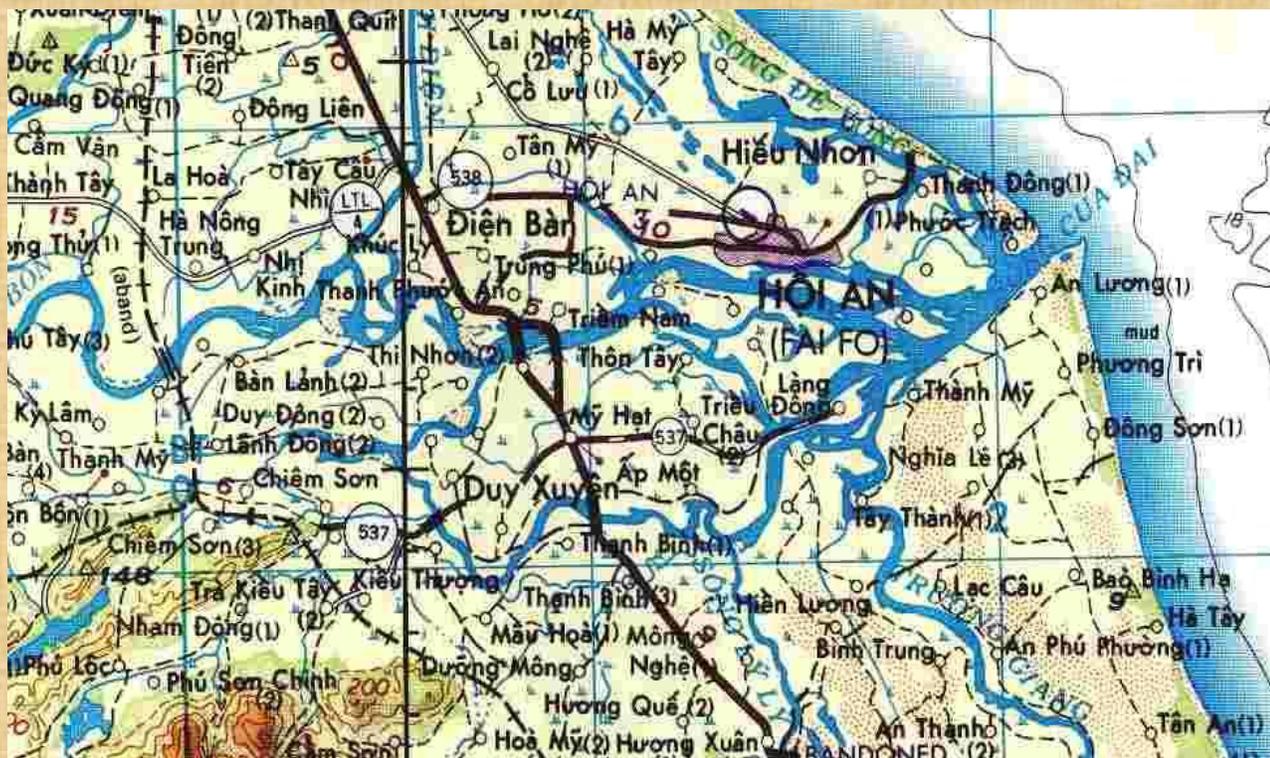
Capt Reno Rizzo who also assisted in the award for LCpl Lee and still has the bullet they removed from his spine.

SSgt Charlie Edwards who also assisted in the award for LCpl Lee and wanted all of the Marines at the “Well” to know they deserve a medal.

Dr. Gary Ward, who relieved Capt Rizzo, and provided the information about SSgt Nehila.

Major Rick Ryan and all members of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam for Persevering to provide the information about the Royal Australian Armoured Corps officers who saved our bacon that day.

Cpl “Machine Gun” Mike Maxfield, who was on the south end with 2nd Platoon and always kept good notes.



This article is dedicated to Staff Sergeant Charles E. Edwards who passed away on the Marine Corps Birthday, November 10, 2010, to WO1 James Francis Harrower who passed away November 16, 2006, and to WO2 Terence Francis Malone who passed away in 1986.

Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund



The Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund (CRSF) proudly announces that scholarship applications are now available for the 7th 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. 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 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 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.

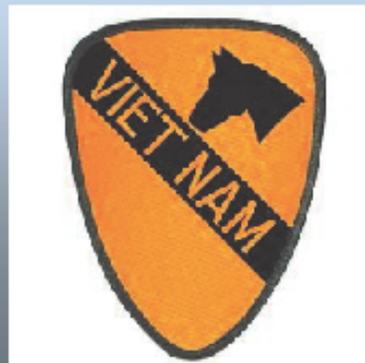
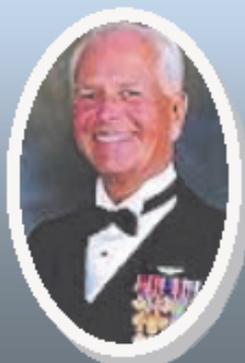
For ticket reservations contact Cheryl Jefferson at 904 642-2929 or cheryljefferson14@comcast.net

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

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

MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART

CHAPTER 808

P. O. Box 2526 • Bunnell, FL 32110

CHARTERED BY CONGRESS FOR COMBAT WOUNDED VETERANS



The Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) was formed in 1932 and chartered by congress in 1958. The MOPH is composed of men and women who received the Purple Heart Medal for wounds suffered in combat, which makes it the only veterans' service organization composed strictly of combat veterans. The MOPH membership is the fraternal arm of the order and is organized into regions, departments and chapters. The MOPH supports all veterans and their families with a myriad of nation-wide programs by chapters and national service officers. Chapter 808 of the MOPH, located in Palm Coast, Florida, was chartered in September 2008.

The mission of the MOPH is to foster an environment of camaraderie among combat wounded veterans, promote patriotism, support necessary legislative initiatives and most importantly, provide services for all veterans and their families. The National programs sponsored and administered by the MOPH include, but are not necessarily limited to: The National Service Program, ROTC and JROTC Program, Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services Program, Americanism, Purple Heart Trail and First Responders Program.

Funds for welfare, rehabilitation, and/or service work carried-on by the MOPH are derived from several sources including contributions and donations. Your contributions and donations work in two ways. First, they help veterans who participate in these endeavors. Also, they enable the organization to do many things on behalf of hospitalized and needy veterans and families. Please help us to accomplish the mission of the MOPH. Your tax deductible donations are sincerely appreciated. Your check, made payable to Military Order of the Purple Heart, Chapter 808, can be mailed to:

Flagler County Chapter 808

MOPH

P.O. Box 2526

Bunnell, Florida 32110

Thank you very much for you support.

Respectfully,

Rick Look

Commander



Badge of Military Merit

On August 7, 1782, General George Washington had established his army's encampment at Newburg-on-the-Hudson. After six years of fighting, the war has essentially come to an end. However, Washington, not trusting the British, kept his army on the alert. To maintain the fighting spirit of the army, Washington introduced a decoration, The Badge of Military Merit, which became known as The Purple Heart. In cases of "unusual gallantry" or "extraordinary fidelity and essential service," soldiers would receive a purple heart-shaped cloth, to be worn over the left breast.

Washington was devoted to his regular troops. They had fought with him for six years under extreme conditions; usually, without proper food or clothing. History tells us that his men were often reduced to boiling and eating their moccasins for lack of food and froze for lack of clothes and blankets, while the privileged colonists in New York, Philadelphia and other cities lived fat and happy having sold their commodities to the British at exorbitant costs. Since the Badge of Military Merit was to be conferred on non-commissioned officers and ordinary soldiers, this decoration supplied evidence how much he honored his troops and how much he desired full social, political and economic equality for everyone.

On May 3, 1783, the Badge of Military Merit was awarded to sergeants Elijah Churchill, William Brown and Daniel Bissell, all from Connecticut. However, after the revolution the decoration fell to disuse until WWI. During WWI, those in the military who were wounded in action wore a "Wound Chevron" on their sleeve. After WWI, a bill was proposed to revive the decoration. On October 10, 1922, the Army Chief of Staff, Charles Summerville, directed a draft bill to congress to revive the Badge of Military Merit; however, political squabbling stalled the effort. In 1931, the new Chief of Staff, Douglas MacArthur, revived the effort. Elizabeth Will with the Army Quartermaster Corps redesigned the decoration. In 1932, President Herbert Hoover ordered the medal revived as the Purple Heart Medal out of respect to the memory and accomplishments of George Washington.

The exact number of Purple Hearts that have been awarded can only be estimated. The estimated numbers of Purple Heart awards by conflict are:

WWI . . . 320,518

WWII . . . 1,076,245 . . . includes Merchant Marines on supply ships

Korea . . . 118, 650

Vietnam . . . 351,794

Persian Gulf . . . 607

Afghanistan as of 6/5/2010 . . . 7,027

Iraq as of 6/5/2010 . . . 35,321

In early WWII, the Purple Heart Medal was awarded to those wounded in combat and for meritorious performance of duty. Later, the Legion of Merit was established to honor meritorious performance.

In 1984, Executive order 12464 declared the Purple Heart Medal be awarded for wounds received in terrorist attacks or while serving as a peace keeping force subsequent to 1973.

In 1996, the Purple Heart Medal was awarded to civilians killed in the Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia.

Chartered by Congress in 1958, the MOPH is composed of Military men and women who received the Purple Heart Medal for wounds suffered in combat. Although, MOPH membership is restricted to combat wounded, we support all veterans and their families with a myriad of nationwide programs.

The MOPH mission is to foster an environment of goodwill and camaraderie among combat wounded veterans, promote patriotism, support necessary legislation and more importantly, provide service to all veterans and their families.

The MOPH has 43,000 members, 499 chapters, and operates world wide.

MOPH Programs include: ROTC/JROTC, Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services, Scholarships, Americanism, Purple Heart Trail and First Responders.

ROTC/JROTC: Foster patriotism and citizenship among our youth. Recognize outstanding leadership in cadets and midshipmen.

Americanism: Work with schools and other organizations to help promote U.S. History and our quest for freedom.

Purple Heart Trail: To promote the designation of certain highways and roads as part of the Purple Heart Trail system throughout the U.S., to remember the sacrifices paid for our freedom.

First Responders: To honor members of law enforcement and firefighters who were killed or wounded in the line of duty.

Palm Coast, Florida

On August 9, 2010, the members of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Chapter 808, Flagler County, Florida had the honor of placing a Purple Heart monument at Hero's Park in Palm Coast. Through the efforts of Mayor Jon Netts and General Holsey Moorman (Ret.), the land was donated by the City of Palm Coast, for which we are very grateful. The cost of the monument was achieved through generous member contributions; with a special thank you to Mr. Jeffrey Puritus and his wife Christine. Father Ted Stavru was present on this day to bless the ground and joined us again for the dedication.

The formal dedication took place on September 28, 2010. Approximately 200 people gathered for this ceremony with representation from local and state officials, military organizations and of course, family and friends with a reception following the closing of the dedication.

As Commander Look stated in his speech, "This monument is about honoring the warrior, past, present and future, and not the policies of war".



Veteran to Veteran

When a Veteran leaves the 'job' and retires to a better life, many are jealous, some are pleased, and others, who may have already retired, wonder if he knows what he is leaving behind, because we already know.

1. We know, for example, that after a lifetime of camaraderie that few experience, it will remain as a longing for those past times.
2. We know in the Military life there is a fellowship which lasts long after the uniforms are hung up in the back of the closet.
3. We know even if he throws them away, they will be on him with every step and breath that remains in his life. We also know how the very bearing of the man speaks of what he was and in his heart still is.

These are the burdens of the job. You will still look at people suspiciously, still see what others do not see or choose to ignore and always will look at the rest of the Military world with a respect for what they do; only grown in a lifetime of knowing.

Never think for one moment you are escaping from that life. You are only escaping the 'job' and merely being allowed to leave 'active' duty. So what I wish for you is that whenever you ease into retirement, in your heart you never forget for one moment that you are still a member of the greatest fraternity the world has ever known.

NOW... Civilian Friends vs. Veteran Friends Comparisons:

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Get upset if you're too busy to talk to them for a week.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Are glad to see you after years, and will happily carry on the same conversation you were having the last time you met.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Have never seen you cry.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Have cried with you.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Keep your stuff so long they forget it's yours.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Borrow your stuff for a few days then give it back.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Know a few things about you.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Could write a book with direct quotes from you.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will leave you behind if that's what the crowd is doing.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Will stand by you no matter what the crowd does.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Are for a while. VETERAN FRIENDS: Are for life.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Have shared a few experiences...

VETERAN FRIENDS: Have shared a lifetime of experiences no citizen could ever dream of...

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will take your drink away when they think you've had enough.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Will look at you stumbling all over the place and say, 'You better drink the rest of that before you spill it!' Then carry you home safely and put you to bed...

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will ignore this.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Will forward this.

A veteran - whether active duty, retired, served one hitch, or reserve is someone who, at one point in their life, wrote a blank check made payable to 'The Government of the United States of America ' for an amount of 'up to and including my life'.

From one Veteran to another, it's an honor to be in your company. Thank you for your service to our country and defending the freedoms we enjoy.



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

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

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

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

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

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

*****VETERANS CAREER FAIR*****

***Allied Veterans Center
&
The Florida State College of Jacksonville
present
1st Annual Career Fair***

Presentation to Include:

**Individual Assessment & Aptitude Testing
Apprenticeship/Trade/Educational Programs
Financing Assistance (GI Bill, VRAP, VHA Allowance)
FSCJ Job Placement upon Completion of Programs**

SAVE THE DATE: Tuesday, March 5, 2013, 5pm-9pm

You must fill in the attached form to attend and return to us by email to:

lisapappas@alliedvetscenter.org,
fax: (904) 723-5952

For more information please call Lisa Pappas at: 904-723-5950

Allied Veterans Center, 40 Acme Street, Jacksonville, FL 32211

1st Annual Career Fair

***40 Acme Street
Office: (904) 723-5950***

***Jacksonville, FL 32211
Fax: (904) 723-5952***

ORGANIZATIONS

Name of Organization: _____

Approximate Number of Attendees: _____ Contact Phone #: _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Email: _____

INDIVIDUALS

Individual Name: _____

Address: _____ City & Zip: _____

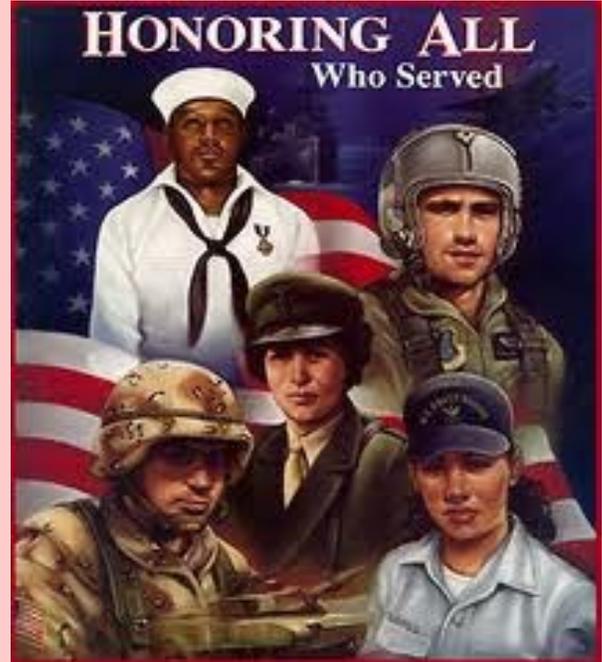
Email Address: _____

Contact Phone #: _____ Branch of Service: _____



"Veterans Helping Veterans"

www.AlliedVetsCenter.org



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

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.