

# The Patriot Reader

## VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

**CHAIRMAN BILL DUDLEY**

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**Newsletter Editor Michael Rothfeld**



**Volume 2, Issue 4**

**Newsletter Date: April, 2013**

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### Special Points of Interest

St. Augustine CBOC  
Drone Pilots Medal  
USMC Detachment # 383  
FDVA Veterans Hall of Fame  
Ambush at CALU  
Vietnam YouTube Local Video  
Florida National Guard  
The RIDE HOME

## Message from the Chairman

Fellow Veterans,

This month has been a big disappointment to many of us who learned of the charges that have been brought against Allied Veterans of America. I think we were all very surprised to learn how much money has been raised by this organization over the past years with only 2% allegedly going to help our Veterans. The other side of this is the damage that is done to the reputation of legitimate Veterans organizations that strive every day to help our Veterans in need. I have included in our Patriot Reader newsletter an article I wrote to the St. Augustine Record this week and appeared in Sunday's Opinion Column, so I won't say any more about it in my Chairman's letter except to say how disappointed and angry we have all felt about this betrayal.

For those who attended this year's Chase-Rescorla Dinner I'm sure you felt the same feeling of pride that I felt to pay our respects to two warri-

ors such as Leo Chase and Rick Rescorla. And the emotions brought on by our speaker, my good friend Capt. Giles Norrington, USN (RET) left hardly a dry



eye in the entire room. The evening was one of the best I have spent in a long time and I would encourage all of our Veterans and others to come out next year for this worthwhile event to help raise money for the Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund.

Sunday, Mar. 10 marked another wonderful day as the Coquina Veterans Assoc, FVPPI and the Coquina Crossing Homeowners Assoc. honored all WW II Veterans who live or have lived in Coquina Crossing. It was an outstanding event with Commander Harry Manford as the Master of Ceremony. I was very honored



to be able to read and present to the Coquina Crossing veterans a Proclamation from the St. Johns County Board of Commissioners. The complete coverage with pictures is included in this edition of the Patriot Reader newsletter.

Please put a place marker on your calendar for our Memorial Day Ceremony on the morning of May 27 at our National Cemetery here in St. Augustine and at our Jacksonville National Cemetery in the afternoon. Also, please keep in mind our Battle of Midway Commemorative Dinner on June 1 at the Renaissance Hotel, World Golf Village. I still have tickets to sell but they are going fast and this year we will shut off ticket sales at 1000 attendees.

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

# Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

*Patriotism is our motto*



## Lassen celebrates spring!



Matinees during happy hour on Fridays are a big hit



Spring has sprung and we are enjoying the beautiful weather



We always enjoy visits from the Sally Walton Dancers



Enjoying a St. Patrick's Day party on a beautiful Sunday afternoon



Elk's Prime Rib Dinner- Our veterans enjoyed a free prime rib dinner as guests at the Chase/ Rescorla Scholarship Dinner at the Elk's Lodge 829



The Military Order of the Purple Heart donated \$600 for our veterans' needs. Shown in the photo are from left to right Rick Look, Commander Chapter 808, Diane King, Administrator, Stephen Lunsford, Finance Officer Chapter 808





## **The Chairman's Letter to the St. Augustine Record**

The events of this past week have left many veterans in St. Johns County totally bewildered. That bewilderment has led to anger.

The angst felt by our veterans has been generated by the feeling of deception, by being deceived by an organization that was perceived to be a friend of the veterans of this county.



The shocking news that the Allied Veterans of the World organization apparently raised such large sums of money for personal gain while using veterans' organizations as the purpose behind their "fund-raising" is nothing short of despicable.

It is true there has been some good from this organization. There are many veterans who have a place to sleep at night and food when they are hungry as a result of Allied Veterans donations. But if the sum of money generated by the internet cafes as reported by the Attorney General's office is anywhere near correct and only 2 percent of that is being used to support veteran's needs, this may prove to be one of the most fraudulent acts that could be perpetrated on our veterans.

At a time when veterans' and military family funding is under pressure in the federal budget, the news of the past week comes as a double blow. The Veterans Council and its organizations feel that the money raised by Allied Veterans and the assets that are a part of this organization should be disposed of and the proceeds used for the purposes for which it was raised.

The State of Florida is seeking civil recoveries against Allied Veterans and its associate entities. But under current state law, only 25 percent of the money recovered from civil forfeiture will be put into the state General Revenue fund – and even then there is no assurance it will be used for veterans' matters. We strongly advocate that state and federal authorities seek to find a way to use the monies and assets toward veterans' needs and not for any other purpose.

The Veterans Council assumes no judgment of innocence or guilt of Allied Veterans and the other related entities. We will let the courts decide in this matter. But for too long now, we have had groups of people coming into our county representing themselves as a veterans organization, raising large sums of money and leaving the county with no benefit for our local veterans. All the while many homeless Veterans have slept under bridges at night and have wondered where they would get their next meal.

This has been done too often to an unsuspecting public who may assume that if the word "veteran" is in an organization's name, that they are a legitimate organization and want to help.

We now find ourselves with an immediate need for local legitimate charities, churches, civic organizations and other veterans to pull together and assist in keeping our veteran shelters open. We cannot let these people be turned back out on the street!

## The Jacksonville National Cemetery



Chairman Howard McGillin

My ordinary column in the Patriot Reader is about the happenings at the Jacksonville National Cemetery. So we will start off with the official news. Our next main event at the Cemetery is the Memorial Day Ceremony that will take place on Memorial Day, May 27th at the JNC. The ceremony will begin at 2:00 PM and will last less than an hour. We invite all Veterans to attend the ceremony to pay their respects to those who have gone before. This ends my official column as Chair of the Support Committee.

Now to the unofficial – what are you doing for veterans? More importantly, what do veterans need from you or your group? The disturbing news of this last month about the, so-called, Allied Veterans of the World has left many with those questions unanswered. What did Allied Veterans promise? Helping veterans.....great....what did Veterans need? Have our groups asked themselves whether their mission has validity? What about the Support Committee at Jacksonville National Cemetery – our mission is to make sure that the Cemetery gets the support to supplement the appropriated funds provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. We do it through supporting the activities of the Jacksonville Ladies, by coordinating ceremonies at appropriate occasions at the Cemetery and by partnering with other groups to provide enhancements to the JNC both for veterans and the general public.

The Support Committee does things that the VA cannot do with their appropriated funds resources. The VA will build a cemetery, open a grave and close a grave, erect a tombstone, mow the grass and trim the bushes within the constraints of the budget. If you want flags on the graves at Memorial Day, that responsibility falls on the family or other outside groups. If you want a ceremony – who do you want running it, a VA employee or a Veteran?

How many different groups do that -supplement the work being done by the US Department of Veterans Affairs? I think if we scratch the surface just about every one of our groups does just that – supplement the efforts of the VA. DAV helps disabled veterans with claims filing and transportation, while AMVETS has made it their mission to put a carillon at every cemetery just to name a few. Other

groups conduct advocacy and education campaigns.

Did any of us ever stop and ask what the Allied Veterans actually did? Maybe that is where we all, collectively, went astray. Many of our groups got funds from the Allied Veterans – but none of us ever really asked the really important question – what was the mission of the organization. If the Attorney General, IRS and prosecutors are right, the real mission was simply making money. Some of it was sprinkled out to the various groups, but much of it appears to have gone to less altruistic purposes funding extravagant lifestyles.

So maybe that is the lesson of the last month for all of our groups. What is it that makes my group important? What is our mission? How does my activity really help a veteran or veterans in general? How is the money from our group being spent? It is the same question that you should any group with its hand out asking for money for veterans (or churches, or the poor, or any charity).

In the military, we all learned the value of camouflage. We painted our trucks green and our ships haze-gray to avoid being seen; we wore a variety of camouflage-patterned uniforms for the same reason. We also learned to detect camouflage – look for motion, use radar that “sees” in a different way. Understand that the “bump” on the hillside is really an artillery battery or tank company under camouflage netting. We learned to avoid the deception and look at the real target. We know that deception in battle is a force-multiplier – get the enemy to look at the fake unit while the real one maneuvers to the attack. The Russians used the word “maskirovka – defined by the Free Dictionary.com as “Actions executed to deliberately mislead adversary military decision makers as to friendly military capabilities, intentions, and operations, thereby causing the adversary to take specific actions (or inactions) that will contribute to the accomplishment of the friendly mission.” Which is why it was all the more disturbing that the Allied Veterans appears to have deceived us. It apparently used “Veteran” in its name as camouflage. It conducted its operations in such a way as to deceive our various groups as to its real purpose. We all should use this lesson as an opportunity to scrutinize our own actions to make sure our funds are being used for their intended purposes and not as part of a maskirovka or grand deception. What are you doing for veterans?



## Woman flies to St. Augustine, surprises POW with bracelet she wore for him as a child

By [William Browning](#) Mon, Mar 18, 2013, The Florida Times-Union, used with their permission.

**T**his story ends in the exchange of a bracelet between two weeping adults who before Saturday night had never met.

It begins in 1971, when Peggy Cornacchio was 11, and her parents mailed off for a metal bracelet bearing the name of a U.S. prisoner of war. Many similar bracelets were worn during the intense years of the Vietnam War.

The name on the bracelet Peggy got was “LCDR Giles Norrington,” a Navy pilot who had been shot down over North Vietnam on May 5, 1968.

Peggy didn’t know Norrington or anything about his life. That didn’t matter. On most school days for two years Peggy wore his name around her wrist. By wearing it she honored his service and sometimes, sitting in class at Nathaniel Bowditch School in Salem, Mass., the place where she grew up, she thought of Norrington and what happened to him.

Two years after she began wearing it, her parents read in the Boston Globe newspaper that Norrington had been released from captivity. Peggy felt relieved, but still wore the bracelet here and there for the other Americans left in Vietnam.

Then the war drew down, the bracelet was packed away, Peggy went to college, grew up and 40 years passed.

Last Christmas, rummaging through a box of forgotten keepsakes, Peggy came across the bracelet. Holding it for the first time in decades, she wondered.

What happened to Norrington? Where had he gone? Was he still alive?

She searched the Internet and found he was alive, living in Florida and scheduled to speak Saturday night in St. Augustine at the annual awards dinner for the Chase-Rescorla Scholarship. She felt like she needed to give him the bracelet.

“I thought he’s got to be getting up there,” she said. “If I don’t do this now, it’s not going to happen.”

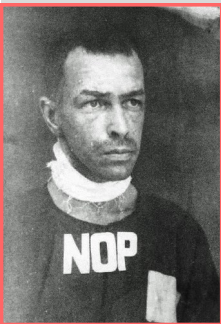
She bought a \$400 plane ticket and took some time off from work. Saturday morning she and a friend flew to Jacksonville from Boston.

She didn’t tell Norrington she was coming.



Photo by Michael Isam

Giles Norrington and Peggy Cornacchio meet for the first time Saturday in St. Augustine. Cornacchio, who lives in Salem, Mass., flew to Jacksonville to give Norrington a POW-MIA bracelet she wore for him 40 years ago when he was a prisoner of war at the Hanoi Hilton.



### 5 YEARS CONFINED

An infamous place of torture and brutal confinement, the Hanoi Hilton was a prisoner of war camp in North Vietnam. Giles Norrington spent 1,775 days there.

He was from Ohio and joined the Marine Corps as an enlisted man out of high school in 1954. In 1965 he switched to the Navy. Three years later the plane he was piloting was shot down and he was captured.

He was tortured at first and then, he said, the hardships of isolation set in.

“The biggest enemy was boredom,” he said. “What I mean by that is, we had no intellectual stimulation.”

Norrington said the conversations he had with his fellow American POWs were “precious.” They would tell each other the stories of their lives.

“When you were listening to those, it was a time away from your problems,” he said.

The prisoners didn’t know what would happen to them. They certainly had no idea people back home were wearing bracelets bearing their names.

On March 14, 1973, he was released.

When he got home he learned about the POW-MIA bracelets, which tens of thousands of Americans had begun wearing to remember the captured servicemen. Talking about what they meant to him recently, he got emotional saying that they represented the military men “who gave all.”

He retired from the Navy in 1988, married and moved all across the country before he and his wife settled in Titusville, where they live today.

Over the years Norrington, 77, received more than 100 of the POW-MIA bracelets bearing his name. Most arrived in the mail.

## NOT FORGOTTEN

When Cornacchio, 52, pulled the bracelet out of the bottom of that box on Christmas, it was broken. She took it to a jeweler in Salem who, after learning why she wanted it fixed, repaired it for free.

Cornacchio, the intact bracelet and her friend from Salem, Beth Ross, flew into the First Coast Saturday morning. They stayed at the home of Athena Tickner, a childhood friend and Air Force veteran who lives in Jacksonville.

Getting ready to go to St. Augustine Saturday night, Cornacchio chose to not wear mascara. She was sure she was going to cry. And she did.

“I can tell you that tears were streaming down my face and hers,” Norrington said when describing their embrace.

He said when the stranger from Massachusetts handed him the bracelet at the dinner, he felt, “Joy and relief and just the kind of pleasure that you can’t explain in words. I can’t get over it.”

Of all the bracelets he has received through the years, he called Cornacchio’s the most important. She gave it to him two days after the 40th anniversary of his release from the Hanoi Hilton.

Cornacchio and her friend are flying back to Salem Tuesday. Cornacchio will be back to work Wednesday and when she goes she will carry a sense of relief.

“For me, it was so important that he knew there was a person out there who didn’t forget about him,” she said of Norrington.

He is back home in Titusville. Through the years, as he and his wife moved across the country, he donated a lot of the bracelets he received to military museums and historical societies. The one Cornacchio gave him is sitting on his kitchen table as he decides where to keep it.

He has no plans to give it away.



Peggy Cornacchio of Massachusetts surprised former POW Giles Norrington with this bracelet in his name that she wore as a child to honor him 40 years ago. Woman flies to St. Augustine, surprises POW with bracelet she wore for him as a child.



## **Iraq War Veteran MSgt John Hayes and family get new home**

By Michael Isam

St. Augustine, Fla, (March 2, 2013) – The MSgt John Hayes family are officially St. Johns County residents.

If you ever wonder what it is like to be in the spotlight, follow John Hayes and his family for a couple of hours. Television crews, reporters, photographers, politicians and more well wishers than one could really count (they kept milling around) descended on the new home for Hayes and his family today for the presentation of the keys to their new home. The “official” count put the well wishers at nearly 200.

Homes for Our Troops, a non-profit organization, builds specially-designed homes for severely injured veterans. The Hayes home has been waiting for its family for a long time. Each child has their own room painted in a color of their choosing.

Hayes has a specially designed track system built in the ceiling to transport him between bedroom and bathroom. “I have my own personal monorail,” said Hayes.

The homes are given to the Veterans as a down payment from a grateful public for the sacrifices made. Most of the vets are from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Most were in close proximity to an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) when it exploded. These weapons of war do exactly as they are designed. Kill. If they can’t kill then severely maim. Such was Hayes’ case, taking both legs.

With most of it behind him now, except physical therapy sessions, “I will be able to spend much more time at home with my wife and children,” said Hayes. “Before the IED, I could literally carry my entire family on my back. Those days are gone, but now I can carry them in a different way. We have a permanent home.”



Photos are available at <http://spotted.staugustine.com/galleries/index.php?id=339598>



## **Students receive acknowledgement and a long trip home for a piece of jewelry highlight scholarship fundraiser.**



By Michael Isam

St. Augustine, Fla, (March 18, 2012) – The space time continuum is alive, well, and functioning at its peak. There was not a dry eye in the house at the end of the 7th Annual Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fundraiser Dinner.

Local students were awarded scholarships as part of the ongoing scholarship fund of the Chase-Rescorla Foundation “Heroes Building Heroes Through Education” campaign.

Lavonshia Evans, a 2012 Chase-Rescorla Scholarship recipient. Evans is currently enrolled at the University of North Florida with a focus on business as her major.



Jayde Robinson, a 2012 Chase-Rescorla Scholarship recipient.

Robinson is currently enrolled at the University of West Florida majoring in International Studies with a 2<sup>nd</sup> Major in Spanish.

Mya Garden, a senior at St. Augustine High School is in pursuit of a career in Psychology and plans to attend St. Johns River State College after graduation.

William Kight, a senior at St. Joseph Academy, intends to seek a degree in Criminal Justice at Pace University. Kight plans to follow in the footsteps of his father, and join the Air Force after college to become a member of the Security Force Team.

The evening was not just about the scholarships. Everyone in the room received sage advice to be passed from generation to generation. A quote from a Marine about to land in the assault on Iwo Jima “It is not about what we have done, it is about what we will do.”

Keynote speaker of the event Giles Norrington’s delivered that sage advice to all present. He went on to talk about not only his experiences as a former POW who spent most of his 1775 days in the infamous “Hanoi Hilton,” but acknowledged this years recipients, “They received these scholarships not for what they have done, but more importantly for what they will do.”

There is a certain look about Norrington. It is not the sorrow or the remorse of his ordeal, but his understanding of what it means to be alive. “During my incarceration, I dreamed of looking at a horizon. I prayed for the day when we all would feel a fresh wind on our faces and feel the indescribable sensation of freedom.”

Yes, that’s the look, that look of seeing the horizon held in the mind’s eye. That look of experiencing fresh wind on the face. That look which says to those who can see “this soul understands the true meaning of freedom.” The adjective has yet to be conceived to capture that. It has to be felt in the depths of the soul.

Norrington spoke of his ordeal, saying “I have had the honor of serving under difficult circumstances. And if I survived, and if I thrived, it was not because of anything I did.” It was because of four things.” “I never lost faith in God as I understood God, I never lost faith in our nation and its’ constitutional underpinnings. I never lost faith in my fellow POW’s,” and the WWII Marine.” .Not more than 30 miles or so from here lives Dick Stratton, my personal hero. Stratton was a prisoner along with me. ”After days upon days of torture, Dick finally agreed to be photographed, but would not speak. Dick began by bowing to the photographers, bowing to the left and right, and in a moment of inspiration, he turned his back to all and bowed again.” “I’m fairly sure it was the first time they had ever been mooned.” “The enemy was not sure what exactly happened, but they knew something happened; Stratton was punished with more and longer sessions of torture. The enemy had no sense of humor,” said Norrington. Every time I see Stratton, I tell him “Thank You.” He helped keep us alive.



Two days after the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his release on March 14, 1973, Norrington was presented with a celebratory cake. “This is my cake,” he joked as he and his bride, Eileen, performed the ceremonial cut. “And because it is MY cake, I’m claiming the corner cut which has a lot of frosting.”



Shortly after the cake cutting, magic arrived and infused the room with wonderment. Chase-Rescorla Foundation Chairman William Jefferson presented Norrington with a plaque containing a letter from Janet Bruno of Spokane, WA telling him of the POW/MIA bracelet she purchased in 1971. The bracelet was inscribed with his name.

“We aren’t done yet, so don’t pack up,” announced Jefferson. We have in our audience a lady who flew here from Salem, MA to be here tonight.” Jefferson introduced Peggy Cornacchio who found Norrington by searching the internet to find him. “When I saw he was to be the keynote speaker, I knew I had to be here to give it to him.” It was a POW/MIA bracelet with Norrington’s name on it. She found it while cleaning and knew she had to see if he was still alive. ”If he is still alive, I told myself,” said Cornacchio, “I have to give it to him. During the years of wear and moving, the bracelet broke. When she took to a jewelry store to have it cleaned and repaired, the jeweler refused payment. Cornacchio’s parents purchased the bracelet for their daughter in 1971.

A lady at my table had dark tracks running down her cheeks. She leaned over to me and said “It is very difficult to applaud and to wipe the tears from your eyes.” She just let the make-up run.



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## THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY COMMEMORATIVE DINNER



ADM William E. Gortney

### Ticket Information

Ticket costs are:  
Active Duty E-6 and below, \$25;  
E-7 to 03, \$35,  
04 to 05, \$45,  
06 and above,  
civilians, and retirees, \$65.

Tickets available from the following-

#### NAVY LEAGUE MAYPORT

POC Bob Price  
Phone (904)246-9982  
E-mail - bpricex4@comcast.net

#### NAVY LEAGUE ST AUGUSTINE

POC Bill Dudley,  
Phone (904)806-4712  
E-mail - anuday00@aol.com

Make Checks payable to  
NAVY LEAGUE MIDWAY DINNER  
P.O. Box 331944  
Atlantic Beach, FL 32233-1944

Tickets also available thru our WEB SITE  
[www.midwaydinner.org](http://www.midwaydinner.org)

Uniform will be 04 and above -  
dinner dress white jacket;  
03 and below - dinner dress white/dinner  
dress white jacket optional  
and civilian is black tie or business attire.

### Special Hotel Rates for Battle of Midway

Rooms are available from the hotel -  
The Renaissance Resort  
at World Golf Village

Special Room Rate - \$79.00  
(includes 2 breakfast vouchers)  
This special rate good until May 9th only  
Suites also available for \$109.00

**YOU MUST INCLUDE**  
"2013 Battle of Midway"  
to receive this discounted rate

Hotel reservations must be made  
By calling  
Phone 1-888-789-3090  
Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.



### Battle of Midway Commemorative Dinner

#### *Keynote Speaker*

Admiral William E. Gortney, USN  
Commander  
U.S. Fleet Forces Command

Event will be held at  
The Renaissance Resort at  
World Golf Village.  
Cocktails begin at 6 PM  
Dinner at 7 PM.  
Reserved seating.  
Hosted by  
The Mayport Council  
Navy League  
of the United States  
June 1, 2013

*And you are invited!  
Tickets are now on sale*

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# A Short History of the Battle of Midway

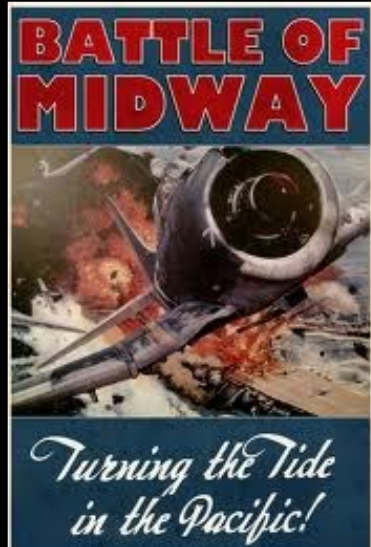
4-7 June 1942

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

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

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

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



## UNF Hosts Military Veteran College Ready Boot Camp

The University of North Florida Military and Veterans Resource Center, in partnership with The Community Foundation of Jacksonville, Florida State College at Jacksonville and Jacksonville University, will host the Military Veteran College Ready Boot Camp from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 13, in Building 9, Frederick H. Schultz Hall, Room 1401, on the UNF campus. Sign in begins at 8:30 a.m.

The boot camp is designed to assist veterans and their families in transitioning from a military life to a college campus, helping them in overcoming various hurdles. The event is free and lunch will be provided.

"The academic setting poses many barriers for veterans, such as financial barriers, school procedures, military transcripts and more," said Rich Carey, UNF MVRC transition coach. "The boot camp provides information to assist veterans to overcome barriers or hurdles and to make their transition from military to college a successful transition."

The boot camp is limited to the first 75 participants. To sign up for the event, go <http://www.unf.edu/military-veterans/> and click the "Boot Camp" link or call the UNF MVRC at (904) 620-5131.

The UNF MVRC provides assistance to military and veteran students in navigating admission, enrollment and financial aid processes. The MVRC is the primary campus advocate for military and veteran students and works with them to ensure their unique needs are met by coordinating with various University services. The Center provides assistance in coordinating with academic advising, tutoring, counseling, disability accommodations, veteran pro-

gramming, benefits information, as well as financial and medical assistance.

UNF, a [nationally ranked](#) university located on an environmentally beautiful campus, offers students who are dedicated to enriching the lives of others the opportunity to build their own futures through a well-rounded education.

**Rich Carey, MVRC Transition Coach,  
Military and Veteran's Resource Center**

**University of North Florida, Building 57, Room 2708 Jacksonville, Florida 32224**

**Phone: 904-620-5132**



# Military Veteran College Ready Boot Camp

## College Ready Boot Camp's Mission

### Date:

**April 13, 2013**

**Saturday**

Assist Veterans and their families transitioning from a military life to a college campus life and help them in overcoming various hurdles.

### Sign In Time:

**8:30 am**

**Registration limited to the first 75 participants**

### Workshop Time:

**9:00am - 3:00 pm**

**Free Event & Lunch**

### Hosted by:

#### Location:

Building 9  
Room 1401

University of North Florida

Jacksonville University

#### Parking:

Lot 2 or Garage 44

Florida State College at Jacksonville

### Sponsored by:

The Community Foundation of Jacksonville



*How are you  
getting ready  
for College?*

**Free Parking for registered guest**



**Sign up today at**  
**www.unf.edu and search for**  
**MVRC and click the**  
**Boot Camp Link**

**Or Call 620-5131  
for more information**



# State Of Florida

## RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, throughout our history, courageous men and women have donned the uniform of our Armed Forces and built a noble tradition of faithful and dedicated service; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense is commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War to thank and honor veterans of that war on behalf of a grateful nation; and

WHEREAS, more than 58,000 service members, including more than 1,900 from Florida, made the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War, and 1,651 remain missing in action; and

WHEREAS, the families and friends of missing service members continue to endure uncertainty concerning the fate of their loved ones who remain unaccounted for; and

WHEREAS, Vietnam Veterans contribute to our state and nation by offering skills, education, leadership, maturity, and dedication learned in military service; and

WHEREAS, the State of Florida is home to more than 449,000 Vietnam-era veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Sunshine State honors its Vietnam Veterans with the Florida Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Tallahassee, Vietnam War Veteran license plate, and high school diplomas for draftees unable to complete their education; and

WHEREAS, we can never fully repay our debt of gratitude to these historic men and women who served, were wounded, or even died in battle, and this presents the opportunity for the people of the Sunshine State to honor and thank our Vietnam Veterans for their service to our country.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Governor and Cabinet of the State of Florida do hereby recognize March 30, 2013 as

### WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor and Cabinet of the State of Florida encourage citizens to participate in local Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day activities honoring the men and women who have stood watch over America.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF the Governor and Cabinet of the State of Florida have hereunto subscribed their names and have caused the Official Seal of the State of Florida to be hereunto affixed in the City of Tallahassee on this 19th day of March 2013.



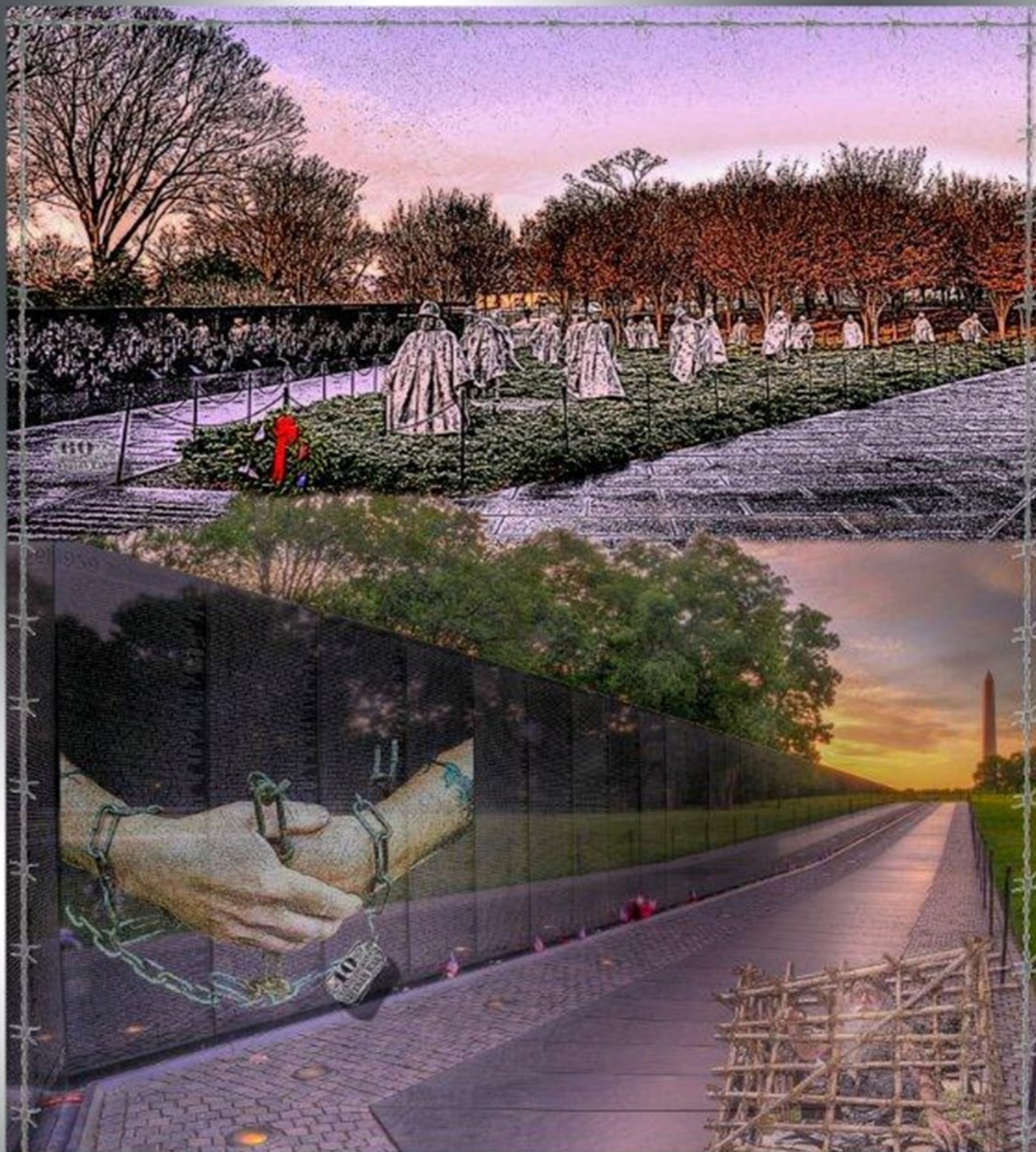
  
RICK SCOTT  
GOVERNOR

  
PAM BONDI  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

  
JEFF ATWATER  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

  
ADAM H. PUTNAM  
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE

**The Veterans Council of St. Johns County would like to  
"Welcome Home" ALL Vietnam Veterans and thank them for  
their service to this great country.  
Bill Dudley, Chairman**



## NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY

September 19-21 Americus/Andersonville, Georgia

Join us as we HONOR and THANK those who

PAID for your FREEDOM with their own

[www.theridehome.com](http://www.theridehome.com)

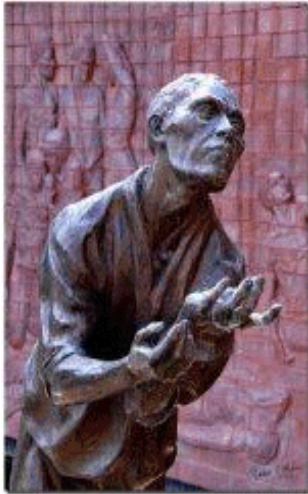


**The Ride Home, Inc.**  
**Honoring ALL Former Prisoners of War**  
**Remembering those still Missing in Action**

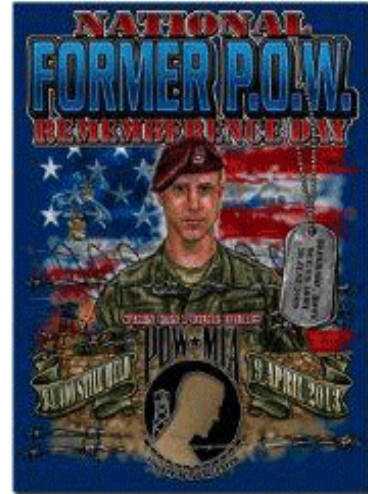
<http://theridehome.com>



# **BRING US HOME!**



**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



*On Sunday March 10th the Coquina Crossing community in Elkton celebrated and honored its World War II Veterans. The celebration was hosted by the Coquina Veterans, Florida Veterans Programs & Projects, Inc. and the Homeowners Association of Coquina Crossing. Coquina Veterans Commander Harry Manford served as host. Below is a list of those who so valiantly served their country in World War II.*

## *Coquina Crossing World II Veterans*



**AVIATION MACHINIST BOB BANSBACH, US Navy, 1944-1946,** NAS Narragansett, Newport, to recover planes.

**USMC, MARY BOYLE,** Mary was in the Special Services at Camp LaJeune, Parris Island and in Wash. D.C., Special Services at that time was recreation.



**LT. THOMAS BOYLE, US ARMY,** Fought in the European Theater

**MASTER SERGEANT HAROLD BRANDT, U.S. ARMY 1942-1946.** Harold served in the 41st Infantry Division, he saw action in the Philippines and Japan (Honchu Island), he visited Hiroshima after the bomb was dropped in 1945. Harold received the Philippines Liberation Ribbon with 1 Star.



**FIREMAN 1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS ROGER BROOKS, U.S. NAVY 1943-1946.** Roger was stationed at the Mayport Naval Air Station and was assigned to the Transportation Dept., repairing cars, Jeeps, trucks and buses

**SERGEANT DON BURKEBILE, U.S. ARMY 1945-1947.** Don did his Boot Camp in California and was stationed at Ft. Benning, GA. He was assigned to the 756<sup>th</sup> Armored Division and was a Tank Commander.

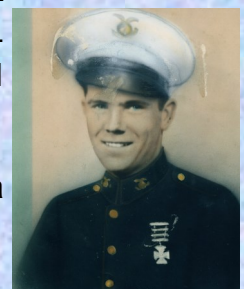
**AL CALABRESE, US ARMY, 1940-1946.** Fought in European Theater.

**STOREKEEPER 2<sup>ND</sup> CLASS MARIE COLLINS, U.S. NAVY WAVES 1944-1945.** Marie was assigned and worked at Treasure Island, Vallejo, and San Francisco, CA. She worked at the ammo depot and issued 20mm & 40mm shells to merchant ships, Coquina's own, "Marie the Riveter".

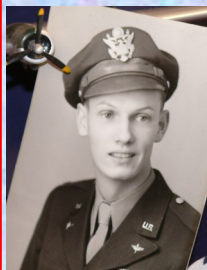


**SERGEANT WALLY CZECHOWICZ, ARMY AIR CORP. 1940-1952.** Wally was stationed at Longford Lodge Air Force Base and also served in Belfast, Ireland. He served in the motorpool and helped build runways.

**SSGT JERALD W. DAVISON, USMC, 1942-1946,** Fought in Bora Bora and other Pacific Islands.







**CAPTAIN BILL FINCH, U.S. ARMY AIR CORP. 1943-1946.** Bill saw action in the European Theatre and in Foggia, Italy. In 1944-1945 Bill bombed Berchtesgaden (Hitler's Retreat). He received numerous Battle Ribbons for his service.

**AMBROSE FLIGHT, US ARMY, 1942-1950,** Fought in African and Pacific Theaters.



**1<sup>ST</sup> SEAMAN TED GACEK, U.S. NAVY 1945-1947.** Ted was assigned to a mine sweeper in the Pacific, No. Korea and Japan. He was based in Guam.



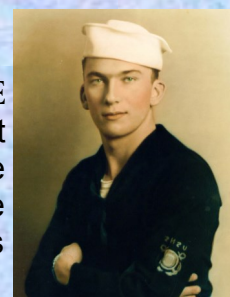
**ROBERT EARL GEIGER, ARMY AIR CORP., 1942-1945.** Bob was the husband of Catherine Geiger and the father of Ralph. He served under General Chenault and was in "The Flying Tigers". Bob flew missions in China, Burma and India and flew "The Hump" many times.

**SERGEANT RALPH GOETZ, U.S. ARMY 1945-1947.** Ralph was stationed in the Philippines with a Combat Engineering Unit and was scheduled to invade Japan when the war ended. He was assigned 11 months as part of the Japanese Occupation Forces.



**1<sup>ST</sup> LIEUTENANT JERRY GREEN, ARMY AIR CORP. 1942-1946.** Jerry was a Navigator on the B24 Liberator. He flew 39 missions out of New Guinea. He bombed islands and airstrips in the Philippines and Borneo.

**MASTER SERGEANT WALLY GREIS, MERCHANT MARINE 1944-1947, U.S. AIR FORCE 1948-1952.** Wally was on a Merchant Marine supply vessel for Admiral Halsey's Pacific Fleet. He was in the Pacific War Theatre at the Battle of Okinawa and was stationed at the Kadena Air Base. While in the Air Force, Wally was in combat missions during the Korean Conflict.



**ELECTRONICS TECHNICIANS MATE 1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS JACK HAGAN, U.S. NAVY 1943-1946.** Jack served in "SOCO" a Sino-American Co-operative organization, a "Special Group". He worked with the Chinese in China and received the "Special Award" in China.



**YEOMAN 1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS BOB HOLLOWELL, U.S. COAST GUARD 1942-1945.** Bob worked at recruiting and Induction and was a Radio Technician.



**SERGEANT JOE JONES, U.S. ARMY 1942-1945.** Joe was stationed in England, North Africa, Italy, Germany, France, Luxembourg and Belgium. Joe was at the Battle of Casino in Italy where he was pinned down for 3 months. Joe received praise from General Mark Clark and shook Winston Churchill's hand.



**SENIOR CHIEF ENGINEMAN WILLIAM KELLY, U.S. NAVY 1942-1962.** Bill was in the Mediterranean for 2 years and was part of the Sicilian Invasion in a LST # 385. Bill also was part of the Salerno and Anzio Invasion. In the spring of 1944 Bill went to England and became part of the Normandy invasion on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1944 and fought in Cahen, France with British Troops.

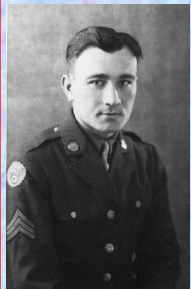


**LT. COMMANDER, ROBERT KISTLER, US NAVY, 1943-1963.** Bob was a gunnery officer who saw action in Europe and Asian Theater.



**NEWMAN (WHITEY) LANDIS, US NAVY, 1942-1947,** served on the USS McKee and fought in 12 battles in the Pacific

**SGT ROBERT LENTILHON, U.S. ARMY 1942-1945.** Bob served in the 78<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. Bob crossed the last standing bridge over the Rhine River into Germany, "The Bridge at Ramegan" on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1945, his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday. Bob received the Bronze Star for his heroics.



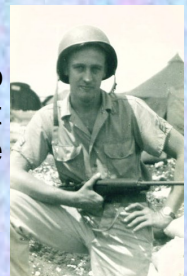
**STAFF SERGEANT CLAY LEWIS, ARMY AIR CORP., 1942-1945.** Clay served in England, France and Africa in the 544<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron. Clay was a mechanic's crew chief on a B-17. Clay received a Bronze Star.

**LIEUTENANT (JG) ROBERT LIPPITZ, U.S. NAVY 1940-1945.** Bob traveled from Hawaii across the Pacific in three weeks and landed in Okinawa just in time for the battle.



**CORPSMAN, 1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS PAUL LITCHFIELD, U.S. NAVY 1945-1947.** Paul was stationed at Moffatt Air Force Base in San Jose, CA. Paul treated and cared for the wounded WW II returning soldiers.

**CORPORAL ROBERT ONG, ARMY AIR CORP., 1942-1946.** Bob was stationed at Tinian (North Field) in the Mariana Islands. In August 1945 and was a ground crewman on the B-29. Bob saw the loading of the A bomb on the "Enola Gay" and is pictured here with the "Enola Gay" 1 day after the dropping of the bomb.



**PFC MARIO PATRUNO, U.S. ARMY 1942-1945.** Mario was in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Squadron and was a D Day Paratrooper. Mario jumped into St. Mary Iglise, France and fought his way back toward the beach. He was there for 30 days. Mario was wounded in Holland in 1944 and went home in 1945.

**SERGEANT PETE PINTO, U.S. ARMY 1942-1945.** Pete took part in the invasion of North Africa and was part of the force that defeated Rommel's troops in Tunisia. After Tunisia Pete spent 2 years fighting in Italy.



**STAFF SERGEANT AL ROCKAFELLOW, ARMY AIR CORP. 1942-1945.** Al served in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. He was a B-25 flight engineer and flew 62 combat missions. He received the "Air Medal" with 6 Oak Clusters" from when he was shot down in the Mediterranean and saved the radio gunner's life



**CLINT SCHOCH**, Clint was a Naval Aviator and Instructor on the AT (SNJ) airplane and was stationed at NAS Atlanta.



**CORPORAL JOE SHOMO, U.S. ARMY 1943-1946.** Joe served in the 66<sup>th</sup> Signal Repair Co. He was in Europe in the spring of 1945 and on VE Day he was in Hyangeville, France. He received several Marksman Medals on the rifle, sub-machine gun and 37mm anti-tank gun.

**ED SPENCER, US NAVY**

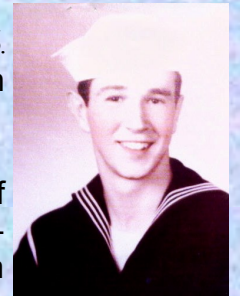


**SIGNALMAN WALTER TIMMERMAN, U.S. NAVY 1944-1946.** Walt served on a picket boat and was in Okinawa 6 months after the battle. He was based in Shanghai, China from Dec. 1945-June 1946. He received the American Theatre, Pacific Theatre and WW II Victory Medals.



**LIEUTENANT (JG) ROLLIN WILKINS, U.S. NAVY 1942-1946.** Rollin served aboard Carrier USS Steamer Bay on the So. Pacific. He was in the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Rollin received the "Distinguished Flying Cross and several Air Medals.

**2<sup>ND</sup> CLASS PETTY OFFICER RICHARD WILSON, U.S. NAVY 1942-1946.** Dick was an Aviation Radioman and gunner on a B-24. He flew 46 missions in the South Atlantic and the Ascension Islands off the coast of Africa.



**LIEUTENANT (JG) WILLIAM ZACHARY, U.S. NAVY**, was husband of Donna Zachary. Bill was stationed on the Battleship USS California that was attacked on December 7, 1941 at Pearl Harbor. Bill also served in the Korean War.

**TECH SERGEANT WALTER ZIMMERMAN, ARMY AIR CORP.** was husband of Rosemary. Walter was a POW in Stalag 17B, he received the Bronze Battle Star. He was a tail-gunner on a B-17 and is buried in Andersonville Cemetery.



From left, Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley presents St Johns County Commission Proclamation to Coquina Veterans Commander Harry Manford, WW II documentary Producer/Director Michael Rothfeld, our dessert cake honoring our WW II veterans and on the right D Day Paratrooper Mario Patruno

**St. Augustine, Florida****1955 U.S. 1 South, Suite 200 St. Augustine, FL 32086****Phone: 904-829-0814****Toll Free: 866-401-8387****Fax: 904-829-6174****(Station #573GE)****Hours**

Monday - Friday

7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (with laboratory access hours from 7:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.)

**Services**

The **St. Augustine Community Based Outpatient Clinic** located in St. Johns County, provides a broad range of general and specialized medical, psychiatric, nursing, women's health, social work, and ancillary services for the primary care patient in a community-based clinic. A full-time podiatrist also provides wound care services. The interdisciplinary staff is dedicated to remaining a patient-centered, integrated health care organization for Veterans. Using a primary care delivery model, patients are assigned to specific caregivers for health care planning and follow-up. The St. Augustine CBOC provides an interdisciplinary team model directed toward health promotion, disease prevention, management of acute and chronic medical conditions, referral to specialty care and coordination of patient health care needs across the continuum. The clinic has applied the PACT concept of care:

Partnerships - between Veterans and health care teams

Access to care - enhanced through a variety of methods

Coordinated care - among all team members

Team-based care - with Veterans at the center of their PACT

This clinic serves acute and chronically ill eligible Veterans aged 18 to greater than 100 years. Veterans requiring hospitalization are assessed, stabilized and transferred to either local facilities or to the Gainesville or Lake City VA Medical Centers according to the urgency of their needs. Procedures or specialty care not provided by this clinic are referred to other facilities within the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System. Veterans in the St. Augustine CBOC have access to specialty care clinics and education sessions via Telehealth.

During off-hours, Veterans are referred by the Patient Information Handbook and telephone recording to the nearest emergency room or VA Medical Center according to the urgency of the health care problem.

**Driving Directions**

The St. Augustine Community Based Outpatient Clinic is located in the St. Johns County Health and Human Services Complex, just south of State road 312 on US 1 South.

**Parking**

Free on premises





*19TH ANNUAL FIRST MILITIA CHAPTER  
AUSA GOLF TOURNAMENT  
APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup> 2013*



**Time:** 7:30 AM Registration 8:30 AM Shotgun Start

**Location:** The Golf Club at South Hampton (CR-210)

**Format:** 4 Person Captain's Choice

**Field:** First 36 Teams

**50/50  
RAFFLE**

**SPECIAL  
RAFFLES**

**Entry Fee:** \$70.00 (Includes Green Fees, Cart, Luncheon & Prizes)

**Prizes For:** 1<sup>st</sup> , 2<sup>nd</sup> , 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Place

Hole Prizes Include: Longest Drive, Closest to Pin and Longest Putt  
Chipping & Putting Contests (During the Tournament)

**DOOR  
PRIZES**

**Golf Shoes Must Be Soft Spikes Only**

The Luncheon & Awards Ceremony will be held on-site after the Tournament

TEAM CAPTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

PLAYER #2: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

PLAYER #3: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

PLAYER #4: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL ENTRY FORMS & FEES TO:**

**MRS. REBECCA GIBSON, C/O AUSA GOLF TOURNAMENT,**

**P.O BOX 3883, ST. AUGUSTINE, FL 32085-3883.**

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO FIRST MILITIA CHAPTER - AUSA**

AUSA is an exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the US Internal Revenue Code.



*Washington: The military's new medal for cyber warriors should get a demotion, according to veterans groups and lawmakers who say it shouldn't outrank such revered honors as the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart.*



*The Distinguished Warfare Medal announced by the Defense Department two weeks ago, is a sign of the changing nature of war, in which attacks conducted remotely have played an increasingly important role in gathering intelligence and killing enemy fighters and terrorists. It will recognize extraordinary achievement related to a military operation occurring after September 11, 2011.*

*But the Veterans of Foreign Wars and other groups say that ranking it ahead of the Bronze Star and Purple Heart is an injustice to those who served on the front lines.*

*Members of Congress are also getting involved. Five veterans now serving in the House introduced a bill that would prohibit the Defense Department from rating the medal equal to or higher than the Purple Heart.*

## **New medal for drone pilots outranks Bronze Star**

By [Andrew Tilghman](#) - Staff writer, Posted : Wednesday Feb 13, 2013 16:37:27 EST

The Pentagon is creating a new high-level military medal that will recognize drone pilots and, in a controversial twist, giving it added clout by placing it above some traditional combat valor medals in the military's "order of precedence."

The Distinguished Warfare Medal will be awarded to pilots of unmanned aircraft, offensive cyber war experts or others who are directly involved in combat operations but who are not physically in theater and facing the physical risks that warfare historically entails.

The new medal will rank just below the Distinguished Flying Cross. It will have precedence over — and be worn on a uniform above — the Bronze Star with Valor device, a medal awarded to troops for specific heroic acts performed under fire in combat.

The new medal is a brass pendant, nearly two inches tall, with a laurel wreath that circles a globe. An eagle is in the center. The ribbon has blue, red and white stripes.

"This award recognizes the reality of the kind of technological warfare we are engaged in the 21st century," Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told reporters in Washington on Wednesday.

The new medal will be awarded for specific acts, such as the successful targeting of a particular individual at a critical time.

"Our military reserves its highest decorations obviously for those who display gallantry and valor in actions when their lives are on the line and we will continue to do so," Panetta said.

"But we should also have the ability to honor the extraordinary actions that make a true difference in combat operations," Panetta said. "The contribution they make does contribute to the success of combat operations, particularly when they remove the enemy from the field of battle, even if those actions are physically removed from the fight."

The service secretaries will make the final determination for awarding the Distinguished Warfare Medal.

The order of precedence came as a surprise to Doug Sterner, a military medals expert and the curator of the Military Times Hall of Valor, the largest database of military medal recipients.

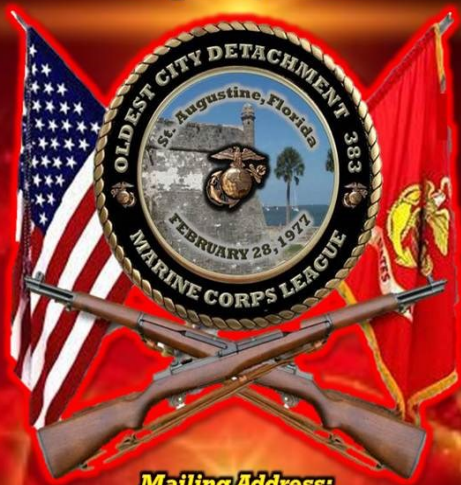
"It's got me puzzled," Sterner said in an interview Wednesday. "I understand the need to recognize the guys at the console who are doing some pretty important things. But to see it ranking above the Bronze Star [with] V?"

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*Washington: March 13 New Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has ordered the military to stop production of a controversial new medal pending a 30 day study of whether the award for drone pilots and cyber warriors should outrank medals given for battlefield bravery.*

*The Distinguished Warfare Medal, approved by former secretary Leon Panetta during his final days in office last month, was criticized by members of Congress and veterans groups because it was ranked above the Bronze Star and Purple Heart in the military's order of precedence.*

**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)**

**On Saturday March 9th the Oldest City Detachment # 383 Marine Corps League, its members, auxiliary and family stepped off in that long anticipated honor of being a part of this city's 3rd annual St. Patrick's Day Parade.**



## **Marine Corps League St. Augustine, St. Patrick's Day Parade**

"... the pipes, the pipes are calling" are some lyrics to a well know Irish tune and the Oldest City Detachment #383, Marine Corps League, St. Augustine answered the call. It was on a picture perfect morning of March 9th that continued perfect weather wise for the entire day when the bagpipes started to wail and the drums sent a Celtic rhythm into your heart. The Oldest City Detachment #383's Color Guard, its members, Auxiliary and family members stepped off as a part of the third annual St. Augustine, St. Patrick's Day Parade. Detachment #383's Color Guard, aka "Woody's Warriors" had the distinct honor of being the Honor Guard to lead off this year's parade.

*Also in the line of march were the honorable Mayor Joseph Boles, Grand Marshall Corporal Tyler Southern and the remainder of the Oldest City Detachment #383 with its float and antique vehicles. A short photo show of the Oldest City Detachment #383's participation is available for viewing on its website: <http://www.mclfl383.org> under the photo folder.*



COL Mike Prendergast, ret  
Executive Director FDVA



## FLORIDA VETERANS' HALL OF FAME OPENS NOMINATION PERIOD FOR INAUGURAL CLASS

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council is now accepting nominations for the first class of inductees into the newly established Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.

The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame recognizes and honors those military veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the state of Florida through civic, business, public service or other pursuits. It is not a traditional military hall of fame, as it focuses on post-military contributions to the State of Florida.

"This recognition honors veterans for the work they have done for their state, and we encourage the public to nominate a veteran they consider worthy of selection to the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame," said retired Air Force Col. Bruce Host, a former Leon County Commissioner who serves as council chairman. "The council has worked really hard to ensure all Florida veterans who are nominated will be given equal consideration during the selection process."

The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council, a seven-member advisory panel, is responsible for submitting to the Governor and Cabinet a list of recommended nominees. In selecting its nominees for submission to the Governor and Cabinet, the council will give preference to veterans who were either born in Florida or adopted Florida as their home state.

The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame will find a permanent home on the Plaza Level of Florida's Capitol Building in Tallahassee.

Nominating guidelines and submission forms are located on the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame website at <http://www.floridaveteranshalloffame.org/index.asp>. Nominations for the inaugural class must be received no later than June 1, 2013.

*Mail nominations to:*

*Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs*

*Attn: Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame*

*The Capitol, Suite 2105*

*400 South Monroe Street*

*Tallahassee, FL 32399*

*E-mail nominations to: [FVHOF@fdva.state.fl.us](mailto:FVHOF@fdva.state.fl.us)*

*For more information, visit <http://www.floridaveteranshalloffame.org/index.asp>*



R. Steven Murray  
Lieutenant Colonel, USAF (Ret)  
Communications Director  
FL Department of Veterans' Affairs  
The Capitol, Suite 2105  
400 South Monroe  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001  
Office (850) 487-1533, Ext. 7714



*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)



Coquina Crossing Color Guard

**Important Online Veterans Link:  
Homepage for Veterans and Resource  
Guides for Veterans**

[http://www.amervets.com/  
warlib6/warlib6.htm](http://www.amervets.com/warlib6/warlib6.htm)

**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 120,769 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.*

# AMBUSH AT CALU

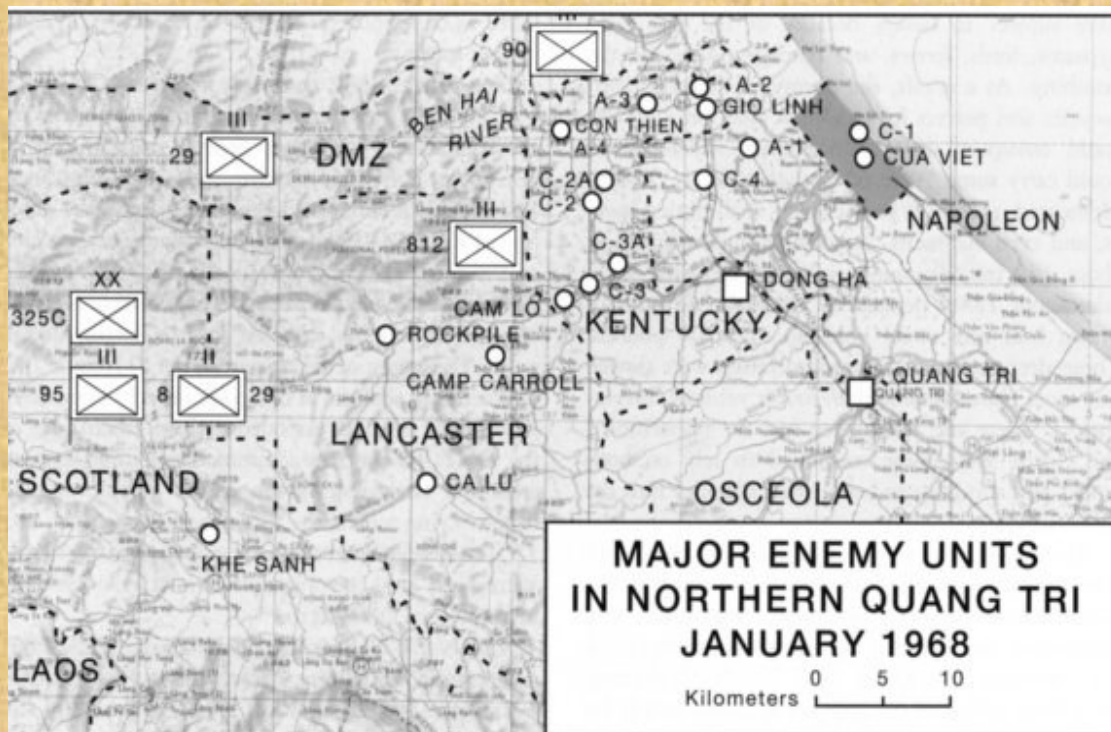
By Fred DuPont

April 20, 2011

In November of 1967, Delta Company, 9<sup>th</sup> Engineers, 1<sup>st</sup> MARDIV, III MAF, stationed in Chu Lai and led by Capt J.T. O'Kelly, Jr., was sent to build a fire support base at Ca Lu in northern Quang Tri Province, an integral part of the McNamara Line or Dye-marker system below the DMZ. I was dispatched from Chu Lai in December to relieve a fellow Marine so that he could go home on emergency leave because of a death in his family.

The following is a compilation of material from: "US Marines in Vietnam: 1968 The Defining Year" (published by Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1997); information from virtualwall.org, Delta Company records, photographs found at 9thengineers.com; and personal recollections.

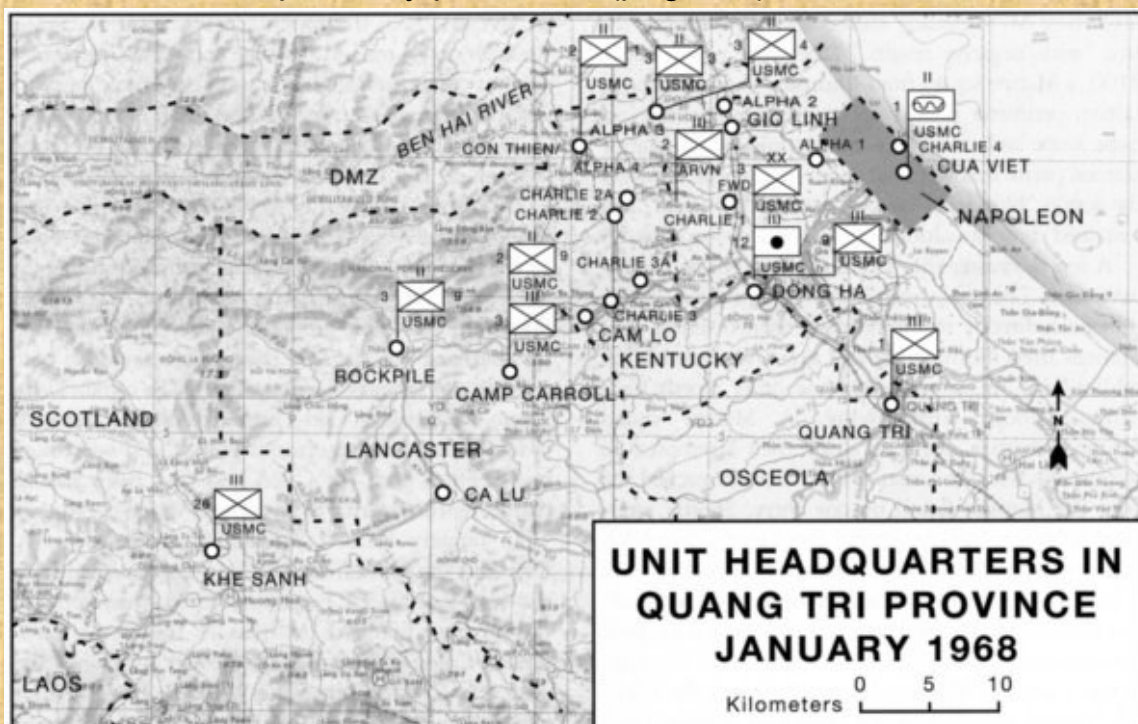
At the end of the year, American commanders and intelligence officers attempted to assess the enemy intentions. Although the North Vietnamese Army had suffered heavy casualties in the DMZ sector, some 10,000 dead according to Marine sources, and had obviously been hurt, it was still a formidable adversary. General Westmoreland recognized the obvious advantages that the situation provided the enemy. He later remarked that the proximity of I Corps to North Vietnam was "always frightening to me." Indeed, he declared that "it was more frightening to me than it was to ... [Lieutenant General Robert E.] Cushman," the III MAF commanding general. (page 35)





Marine commanders and staffs, nevertheless, shared some of Westmoreland's concerns. At the beginning of the year, the headquarters of the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific in Hawaii prepared a 92-page "Estimate of the Enemy Situation, DMZ Area, Vietnam, 1 January 1968." In this detailed study, the FMFPAC intelligence staff outlined both the perceived NVA strengths and weaknesses, the options available to the NVA commanders, and their most likely courses of action.

According to the FMFPAC staff, the North Vietnamese Army was "one of the best in Southeast Asia . . . ." The NVA adapted well to the DMZ situation where they knew the exact location of the American positions and were generally more familiar with the terrain than the Marines. Although limited for the most part to movement by foot, the North Vietnamese soldier also gained a singular leverage from this apparent liability. As the Marine report noted, "This is certainly a slow mode, but due to this circumstance he [the NVA soldier] is restricted only from those areas which are virtually impassable to foot movement." Acknowledging the relative high morale and dedication of the North Vietnamese Army, the FMFPAC staff writers observed that one of the enemy's major attributes was that he viewed "the present conflict as one which has existed for two generations, and he has no great expectations that it will end soon, thus all of his actions are tempered by patience." (page 36)



### ***Operation Lancaster and Heavy Fighting in Mid-January***

The Lancaster area of operations contained the key Marine bases of Camp Carroll, an important artillery position, the Rockpile, and Ca Lu. The Rockpile, a 700-foot sheer cliff outcropping, dominated the nearby terrain. Perched on its top, Marine observers had a clear view of the most likely approaches into the Cam Lo River Valley and of Route 9, the two most strategic east-west arteries in the DMZ sector. About 12,000 meters below the Rockpile and part of the Dyemarker system was Ca Lu, in



effect the southern terminal of Route 9 since the North Vietnamese had effectively cut the road between Ca Lu and Khe Sanh, about 20,000 meters to the west. An obvious way station for any relief effort of Khe Sanh, Ca Lu, at the junction of the Quang Tri River and Route 9, also provided the Marines an outpost to warn of enemy infiltration into the Lancaster area from the west, southwest, and from the Ba Long Valley to the southeast. Similar to much of the terrain in the DMZ area, the Lancaster area of operations consisted of rolling hills rising into jungle-covered mountains of 700-800 feet with tree canopies reaching up to heights of 20 to 60 feet. Fifteen-foot elephant grass and dense brush vegetation restricted movement even in the relatively low regions. (pages 52-54)

The Marines worried most about their relatively exposed position at Ca Lu. There, the isolated garrison numbered about 625 Army, Navy, and Marine personnel including the Marine infantry company. Navy Seabees and Marine engineers had nearly completed the permanent facilities required for the Dyemarker project. While not directly attacking the Marine outpost, the North Vietnamese had mined Route 9 occasionally in December and ambushed one Marine convoy on a return trip from Ca Lu to the Rockpile. Despite a relative lull during the first two weeks of January, Marine intelligence indicated that North Vietnamese forces were on the move.

A division "Stingray" reconnaissance team operating in the general area of the Ca Lu base soon confirmed the presence of enemy troops in the general area.\* On 12 January, about 1415 in the afternoon, Reconnaissance Team 2C3, using the codename "Blue Plate" and operating in the mountains about 4,000 meters southwest of Ca Lu below the Quang Tri River, radioed back that it was being followed by five NVA "wearing black pjs and carrying automatic weapons." The "Blue Plate" Marines fired upon the enemy but missed. For a time all was quiet and the Marines continued upon their way. About two hours later, the Marines came back on the air to report that they were surrounded by about 30 North Vietnamese troops armed with AK-47s. Marine gunships appeared overhead and provided covering fire while another helicopter extracted the Marine team. The reconnaissance Marines sustained only one casualty, one wounded man.

The incident on the 12th was only a harbinger of what was to come. On the following day, the North Vietnamese sprang an ambush on an engineer convoy bringing Dye-marker supplies and equipment to Ca Lu. Under an overcast sky and a slight drizzle, about 1120 on the morning of the 13th, the 20-vehicle convoy departed the Rockpile area. Marine artillery had already fired 15-minute preparation fires at suspected ambush sites. With two tanks in the lead, the convoy consisted of 10 six by six trucks interspersed with two more tanks in the center of the column, four "low boy" tractor trailers, and two of the Army "dusters" bringing up the rear. The vehicles carried about 200 men including engineers, drivers, the M42 crews, support personnel, and Company I, 3d Battalion, 9th Marines.



About 1150, approximately 3,000 meters above the Ca Lu, enemy gunners took the convoy under fire with rocket-propelled grenades, small-arms fire, and mortars. At the same time, the NVA ambushers detonated a command mine which set two trucks on fire, one a "low boy" and the other carrying 81mm mortar ammunition. The truck with the mortars exploded which forced the rear section of the convoy to come to a complete halt. The infantry from Company I hastily dismounted from their trucks to engage the enemy, only for many of the troops to trigger several "surprise firing devices" and mines skillfully hidden along both sides of the road.

Lieutenant Colonel Cook recalled several years later that before the convoy had started out he and his sergeant major had moved to an outpost on a hill top just west of Route 9. From there, he remained in radio contact with both his command post and the convoy and could observe the vehicles as they moved south toward Ca Lu. When he saw the convoy stopped after the initial burst of fire, he directed "the lead element to continue on to Ca Lu and return with reinforcements." He then joined the stalled troops. According to Cook, from the site of the ambush, he "called and directed artillery fire through his COC [Combat Operations Center] on enemy escape and reinforcing routes both east and west of Route 9."

In the meantime, Company L, 3d Battalion, 9th Marines boarded at Ca Lu the lead trucks to relieve the embattled column. At the ambush site, about 1215, an aerial observer using the call sign "American Beauty" arrived overhead to assist in calling in supporting fires. The leaden skies precluded the use of Marine fixed-wing jets, but two helicopter gunships strafed the enemy firing positions. Marine artillery fired over 700 rounds including 54 155mm howitzer shells in support of the convoy after the initial contact.

With the arrival of Company L and the continuing artillery bombardment, the Marines disengaged under occasional enemy sniper fire and completed the trip to Ca Lu, arriving there about 1510. The convoy made the return trip to the Rockpile area late that afternoon without incident. The costs, however, had been high. American dead and wounded totaled 19 killed and over 70 wounded. Most of the casualties were sustained by Company I in the first moments of the ambush. The Marines accounted for 10 enemy dead and captured one prisoner. Marine intelligence officers estimated that a North Vietnamese company participated in the attack. (page 55)

Along with Lima Company, three Marines from Delta Company, 9<sup>th</sup> Engineers rushed to the ambush site on an EIMCO bulldozer: Cpl Mike Pehrson, from Sacramento, California; LCpl Tim Eads from Miami, Ohio and LCpl John Dixon from Detroit, Michigan. Their objective was to clear the burning trucks off of the road so that the remaining trucks could get through. Both Cpl Pehrson and LCpl Eads were awarded Bronze Stars for their heroism. LCpl Dixon told me that, even though the enemy fire



was heavy, LCpl Eads repeatedly stopped so that dead or wounded Marines could be moved out of the way. Cpl Pehrson coordinated with the convoy commander to extract the wounded and clear the road. One of the dead was LCpl Bob Molossi from San Francisco, Ca and one of the wounded was 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Rishard Matteson, both members of 9<sup>th</sup> Engineers.

Delta Company finished the firebase at Ca Lu on January 19, 1968, the main body of the Company departed for Dong Ha by air at that time. A contingent of 16 Engineers, lead by 1st Lt J. P. Brady, Jr. remained. Calling ourselves the "Ca Lu 16", we cleaned up the company area, buried all the remaining fuel, and dug slit trenches to hide the four bulldozers below ground. A group of us, headed by Cpl Norman Ryan, left by truck shortly thereafter with the light equipment. TET was in full swing by then and every truck capable of hauling heavy equipment in Quang Tri Providence was out of commission. The few engineers that remained stood-by to help in any way possible.

The ground shook day and night from the B-52s' "rolling thunder". The artillery from Camp Carroll sounded like freight trains passing overhead. We were lucky the NVA never turned their attention to us the way they did the Marines at Khe Sanh. After a couple of weeks, the Commander of the 3/9 at Ca Lu ordered us to leave. The CH-46 was so loaded that LCpl Paul Kozak and I had to ride on the rear tailgate. We were stranded in Dong Ha until the end of February. We re-joined Delta Company in March 1968 at Hill 63, 20 miles below Da Nang.

The memory of LCpl Bob Molossi has been with me and my fellow Marines of 9<sup>th</sup> Engineers for over forty years. He was the first Marine I served with to die in combat and his memory will always be with me.

Semper Fi, Bob.





The following pictures were taken with the camera brought to the scene by LCpl Dixon



LCpl John Dixon



LCpl Tim Eads



**Cpl Mike Pehrson**  
**(Photo by Cpl Mike Cummings at Ca Lu)**

## **DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF**

**Pfc Charles S. Sickler, Ewan, NJ, C Co, 3rd Shore Party Bn**  
**LCpl Robert J. Molossi, Daly City, CA, D Co, 9th Eng Bn**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Michael T. George, Erie, PA, H&S Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**LCpl Arthur Bustamante, San Fernando, CA, H&S Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**HN Dennis K. Rice, Phoenix, AZ, H&S Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**1stLt Alfred B. Russ, Peterborough, NH, I Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Cpl Robert A. Jackson, Providence, RI, I Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Cpl Lewis J. Parker, Gates, NC, I Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**LCpl Edward Sanchez, Jr., Los Angeles, CA, I Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Pfc Rudolph J. Bielek, North Braddock, PA, I Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Pfc Ernest Howard, Memphis, TN, I Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Pfc Bruce A. Morrison, Proctor, VT, I Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Pfc William O. Saunders, Jr., Tulare, CA, I Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**LCpl Jackie R. Mc Elwee, Sidney, IL, L Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Pfc Mark A. Lamprecht, Douglas, AZ, L Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Pfc Harold L. Schreckengost, Rural Valley, PA, L Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Pfc Gerald A. Hiukka, Albany, OR, M Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**Pfc Eugene Law, Linden, NJ, M Co, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines**  
**LCpl David G. Stewart, Memphis, TN, Trans Co, 9th Motor Trans Bn**

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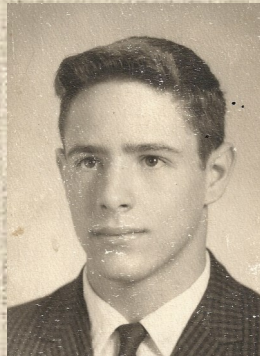
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# The Florida National Guard

Maj. Gen. Emmett R. Titshaw Jr., Adjutant General of Florida

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March 19, 2013

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Public Affairs Office Phone: (904) 823-0166

### Florida Guardsmen and Iraq: ten years later

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. (March 19, 2013) — Soldiers from the Florida National Guard's 53<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team mobilized December 27, 2002, and went to Iraq. The Soldiers were part of a force comprised of the active duty 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group and select Florida Army National Guard Soldiers, secretly maneuvering into Iraq before Coalition Forces launched Operation Iraqi Freedom March 21, 2003.

On March 19, 2003, Soldiers from Combat Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 124<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment cut through two built-up earthen berms between Jordan and Iraq using simple tools instead of large pieces of equipment to remain undetected. These Soldiers' actions helped enable Special Forces teams to secure Basra and the surrounding petroleum fields, paving the way for the main invasion force to move into Iraq.

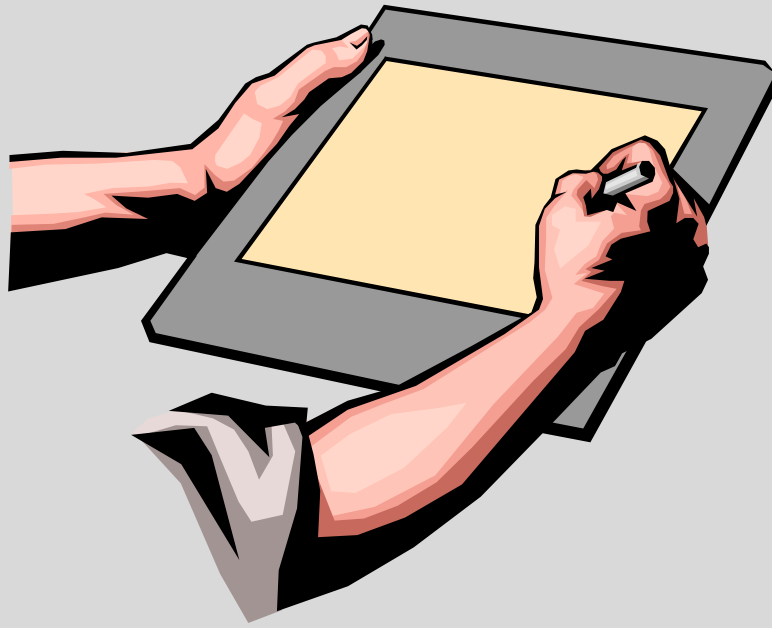
Spc. Jeffrey Wershow, a 22-year-old Florida Army National Guardsman from Gainesville, Fla., can be seen in a video from that night through the green haze of the night-vision lens, planting the American and Florida flags beside a breach in the defensive wall in Northern Iraq.

The unit continued on to serve in Baghdad and Wershow became the 26<sup>th</sup> U.S. Soldier killed in Iraq four months later. In all, 18 Florida Guardsmen died in the past 10 years while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation New Dawn.

These proud and dedicated Florida Guardsmen went into the fight before the fighting officially started and have continued the fight, with nearly 100 overseas deployments of our Florida National Guard units over the past ten years.

Just as Florida Guardsmen were there when the war in Iraq began, Florida Guardsmen were also some of the last Soldiers to leave the country when the last combat troops withdrew from Iraq. In the early morning of Dec. 18, 2011, Soldiers from the Florida National Guard's 1st Battalion, 111th Aviation Regiment provided security from the air for the ground convoys as the last Soldiers and vehicles exited Iraq.

Prepared by the Florida National Guard Public Affairs Office, Phone: (904) 823-0166



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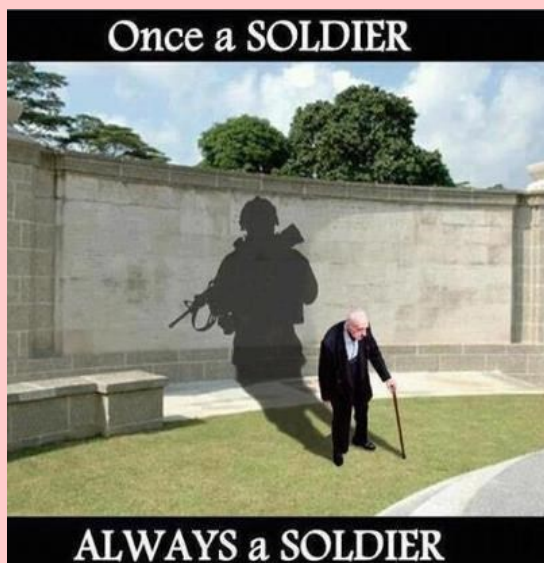
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We want to tell everyone about where you served, who you served with, any interesting or exciting battles you were in, etc. We also want to know what you are doing now, what veterans groups you belong to, how to join, when they meet and what they do.

*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.*