

The Patriot Reader

VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

CHAIRMAN BILL DUDLEY

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TREASURER JOHN MOUNTCASTLE

Newsletter Editor Michael Rothfeld

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Message from the Chairman

Fellow Veterans,

This past month we have seen the passing of two of our country's true heroes, Col. Ed Taylor and WW II veteran, Mario Patruno. Both men served their country honorably and heroically in her time of need. The outpouring of the community at each of the services to honor our fallen comrades was testimony to the respect each man had from those who knew them. They will be missed by their fellow veterans and each year's Veterans Day ceremony will be conspicuous by their absence. A more detail tribute to both of our comrades appears in this month's Patriot Reader newsletter.

I would like to put a shout-out to all our Veteran Council members not to forget our meeting the last Thursday of each month at the Elks Lodge, 1420 A1A S at 7 PM. Our attendance has been slipping a bit over the past months and we need to turn that around. Each month we have excellent speakers on the agenda sharing information germane to veterans and veterans causes. Please join us as we continue to

do good things in our community and for our veterans.

Don't forget the Missing in America Project at Jacksonville National Cemetery on Friday, 27 March at 1 PM. Kathy Church and her team have worked tirelessly to locate deceased and forgotten veterans in Florida to give them an honorable and dignified burial at our Jacksonville National Cemetery. Please be there to pay respect to those who served our nation but have been forgotten until now.

Also, the following day the Vietnam Veterans Association will dedicate the Vietnam War Memorial at 10 AM at the Jacksonville National Cemetery. This beautiful War Memorial brings honor to those who served in this controversial time in our country. Those who served did so with honor and dignity even if the political side of this war was confused about the mission. This War Memorial honors those men and women who did not shirk their duty. Please come out on Saturday, 28 March at 10 AM to help us pay tribute to those deserving veterans.



We are only a little over three months away from our next annual Battle of Midway Dinner at the Renaissance Resort Hotel at World Golf Village. We are very fortunate this year to have as our keynote speaker, General John F. Kelly, USMC, Commander Southern Command. The flyer with all the information appears in a later section of this month's Patriot Reader newsletter. We have an exciting program this year as we honor our Midway Veterans and other patriots in an evening gala that promises to be the best ever. Come help us pay tribute to these heroes who served our nation in her time of need and during the darkest days of WW II.

Bill Dudley
Chairman
Veterans Council of St. Johns
County



St. Augustine loses local war hero

Reprinted in its entirety from the St. Augustine Record By [KIMEKO MCCOY](#)
kimeko.mccoy@staugustine.com

One of St. Augustine's most distinguished war veterans died Sunday at 84 years old.

Through his career, Colonel Ed Taylor earned three Silver Star medals, the Legion of Merit medal, three Distinguished Flying Cross medals, the Soldier's Medal (for non-combat valor), four Bronze Star medals with "V" for valor, the Meritorious Service Medal, nine Air Medals with "V" for valor, three Army Commendation Medals with "V" for valor, the Purple Heart for wounds sustained in combat and a variety of other service ribbons and medals.

Considered an "Atomic Veteran," Taylor was exposed directly to a 27-kiloton nuclear blast and was a member of the U.S. Veterans Administration's Atomic Veterans Board for Dosage Reconstruction.

Taylor served as an Army officer for 30 years with the will to always fight for the nation's freedom.

Having served in multiple combat tours in Vietnam and Korea, Taylor carried his fighting spirit to St. Augustine in 1982 with his wife, Jan, to ensure the community's veterans had what they needed.

Bill Dudley, chairman of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, said Taylor was the epitome of what a veteran should represent.

"I look back on all the things he was instrumental in," Dudley said.

Before Dudley, Taylor served as the chairman for the Veterans Council of St. Johns County.

Taylor is also credited with spearheading the council.

He served on an array of veterans organizations and the Colonel Ed Taylor Award, established in 2008 was in his honor.

He even played a key role in the establishment of the Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home in 2010.

"His handprint, if you will, is on a lot of things veterans have in our county today," Dudley said. Taylor also worked with officials and politicians as a representative for the veterans community. "He was not one to stand back when he saw things that veterans needed," Dudley said.

Upon hearing of Taylor's death, U.S. Rep. Ron DeSantis said in an email, "I join the veterans

community of St. Johns County in mourning the passage of Col. George “Ed” Taylor. His service to our country and local veterans will surely be remembered and celebrated.”

In addition to his legacy, Taylor leaves his son, Captain Dwyn Taylor, and daughter-in-law, Kimberly Lynn Taylor. He also leaves two granddaughters Bethany and Olivia Taylor.



Photos contributed and by Michaels Isam & Rothfeld

VA promises interim clinic by September

An interim Veterans Affairs (VA) outpatient clinic by September and long-term replacement clinic in two years are promised by State VA Director Thomas Wisnieski in a letter to more than 5,000 veterans served by the clinic here.

In an effort to smooth relations caused by failure to communicate plans for more than a year, Wisnieski wrote, "First and foremost, there will be no disruption of VA medical care for patients receiving services at the St. Augustine Clinic.

"The current clinic will remain at its current location until the interim clinic is opened. The interim clinic will be located down the street from the current facility on the edge of the Ponce De Leon Mall, at the corner of Old Moultrie Road and Southpark Boulevard.



Wisnieski

"We anticipate moving to the interim clinic in September 2015. The interim clinic will provide the same services that are available at the current clinic. We will stay in the interim clinic until the long-term replacement clinic is completed, tentatively two years from now."

The current location is part of the county health complex on US 1 sold to Lowe's Home Centers, Inc. and scheduled to be turned over to Lowe's at the end of March.

County Veterans Council Chair Bill Dudley noted that VA's extension at the facility will cost \$88,000 a month in contract penalties and utilities.

County officials tried unsuccessfully to get the clinic to move to its new health complex off north US 1. But Wisnieski wrote, "VA cannot accept certain St. Johns County proposals due to strict Federal Acquisition Regulations (and) We must also recognize Lowe's Home Centers, Inc. (Lowe's) who has a long corporate history of supporting veterans. Lowe's and St. Johns County continue to work with VA to ensure that veteran healthcare services remain uninterrupted."

Reprinted in its entirety from the Gardner Report

Mark Miner: Regional VA leadership in St. Johns County is 'abhorrent'

*Posted: March 7, 2015 By [MARK MINER](#) St. Augustine
Reprinted from the Editorial in the St. Augustine Record*

The March 1 article by Clifford Davis, “Jacksonville VA hospital worst among major facilities in country for wait times,” is yet another example of the abhorrent level of service being delivered to our veterans by the organization whose sole reason to exist is to serve them.

Our regional VA leaders, Tom Wisnieski and Nick Ross, are quoted as saying this isn’t their fault and the problem isn’t really that bad. When asked if any changes in Jacksonville administration would be forthcoming, Wisnieski answered “No.” This is the same team that is supposed to be leading VA activities in our region.

St. Johns County’s deal with Lowe’s began nearly four years ago when I was chairman of the Board of County Commissioners. Nick Ross and the VA were first notified then to make plans for moving the existing St. Augustine Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) when the county relocated to the new Health and Human Services building. Now, years later, with the vacation deadline less than 30 days away, they haven’t even begun construction on a temporary location.

Ross says there is an agreement in place to erect a temporary clinic, but the earliest it will be ready to service our veterans is September. In the meantime you and I will pick up the tab for the fines, which the VA calls a “licensing fee,” and all the costs associated with the county having to keep its current location functional. The current location, by the way, has been completely vacated by everyone except the VA.

So how much are these fines? Around \$85,000 a month, over three times the \$26,000 they were paying before. That increases to over \$130,000 a month if they are not ready to move by September. When it is all said and done, this disaster will end up costing the St. Johns County taxpayers an extra couple of million dollars and delay the opening of Community-base, a serious economic driver for the southern part of the county. Now there is talk that Ross and Wisnieski intend to locate the permanent CBOC to a location selected using flawed demographic data, in an attempt to find the geographic center of the veteran’s population in St. Johns County. The incompetence of the regional VA leadership and the arrogance of Nick Ross and Tom Wisnieski truly represent a sad state of affairs. The real victims of this tragedy are first, our veterans; and second, our taxpayers.

Tom Wisnieski and Nick Ross have demonstrated leadership failure time and time again. They need to resign or be terminated. Our Northeast Florida congressional delegation and Sens. Marco Rubio and Bill Nelson need to get off the sidelines and get on this. Our veterans want and deserve action.

Miner is a former St. Johns County Commissioner and a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

DeSantis asks for closer look at VA data for new St. Augustine clinic

Posted: March 10, 2015 By [SHELDON GARDNER](mailto:sheldon.gardner@staugustine.com) sheldon.gardner@staugustine.com

This article from the St. Augustine Record is re-printed in its entirety

Congressman Ron DeSantis has asked to review data being used by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to select a site for a new veterans clinic in St. Johns County.

He also plans to get the data for county officials and local veterans to review.

“We’re going to try and track down those figures,” DeSantis said.

DeSantis spoke with VA Secretary Robert McDonald on Tuesday to express concerns about the data and to get the latest information on the St. Augustine Community Based Outpatient Clinic.

Plans regarding the clinic have been a growing source of concern for veterans and St. Johns County officials. Several months will pass before more information is released on the permanent location, DeSantis said.

The clinic’s temporary location is at 1955 U.S. 1 South. Lowe’s purchased the property from St. Johns County and planned to take over the site by March 31. But the VA plans to remain in the clinic until at least September, when VA officials plan to move it to a modular facility near Southpark Boulevard and Old Moultrie Road.

The temporary facility will be less than a mile away from the current clinic.

St. Johns County and the VA recently signed an agreement arranging for the clinic to stay at 1955 U.S. 1 South until September. The VA is responsible DeSantis asks for closer look at VA data for new St. Augustine clinic

Congressman Ron DeSantis has asked to review data being used by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to select a site for a new veterans clinic in St. Johns County. He also plans to get the data for county officials and local veterans to review. “We’re going to try and track down those figures,” DeSantis said.

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The temporary facility will be less than a mile away from the current clinic.

St. Johns County and the VA recently signed an agreement arranging for the clinic to stay at 1955 U.S. 1 South until September. The VA is responsible for lease extension payments of more than \$53,000 for the first six months. After that, the fee increases to \$100,000. The VA will also pay the county for upkeep of the facility.

The agreement was also reached with Lowe’s, according to the VA. Lowe’s is expected to develop it after the VA leaves.

However, Bill Dudley, chairman of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, said he does not believe they will meet the September deadline. Dudley said there is concern among local veterans.

“They’re upset about several things. They’re upset about the uncertainty, if you will, of their future health care,” Dudley said. “They’re upset about the fact that the VA is spending this kind of tax dollars when they could have had a brand new facility to move into rather than moving into modular

units.” Dudley also said he does not believe the VA will be ready to move the clinic in time.

Flawed data?

As plans have been settled for the temporary location, VA officials have been working to find a site for a new permanent facility in St. Johns County.

The site should be chosen by the summer, DeSantis said, referencing his phone conversation with McDonald and another official. Once a site is chosen, construction is expected to take up to two years.

The VA used its own methods for coming up with a swath of the county to search for a new facility location.

County officials said in September that information the VA used in placing those boundaries could be flawed.

Among the concerns were that growth and the actual population of veterans would not be best served by something within those boundaries.

The boundaries in the VA’s original solicitation for offers were State Road 16, State Road 312, U.S. 1 and Holmes Boulevard, according to a previous story. State Road 16 was the northern boundary.

VA officials did not tell the county how they came up with the search area, but county officials thought the veterans population was a major factor.

DeSantis sent a letter this week summing up the concerns and asking the Government Accountability Office in Washington, D.C., to provide oversight.

“The St. Johns County administrators have expressed serious concern over the veteran population demographics being used in this decision. They believe the (VA) statistics are seriously flawed and outdated. To that regard, the county directed their Land Management Department to determine the geographic center of the county’s veteran population. This Geographic Information System study was completed and delivered to the (VA). To date the (VA) has yet to acknowledge to the county its receipt. However, senior (VA) staff have voiced to members of my staff that ‘they have better information than the St. Johns County GIS study.’”

DeSantis requested that the Government Accountability Office look at the demographics used by the VA before a site is selected for a permanent location for the clinic.

The Government Accountability Office has not made a decision about DeSantis’ request, but officials are reviewing it, according to Chuck Young, managing director of public affairs for the accountability office.

The VA will provide any documentation that the office requests, according to Glenda Powell, VA public affairs officer.

“The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) remains committed to providing timely and high quality health care to the entire veteran population of St. Johns County and continues to work to ensure that there is no interruption in service to veterans and their families,” according to an email from Powell.

DeSantis said the demographic information comes from the Veterans Health Administration. And the methods that are applied are different from the county’s methods.

“There were different underlying assumptions being applied,” DeSantis said. DeSantis said his office has been following the issue but has not always been able to get information from the VA. Lack of information has been a major concern among veterans.

“I think it’s been frustrating,” he said. “It’s been frustrating for my office, too.”

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

Patriotism is our Motto



Residents enjoying a lunch out at Krystal's.



St. Patrick's Day Leprechauns



Taking aim during our St. Patty's Day carnival





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



JNC SC Chairman,
Ray Quinn

The Support Committee invites everyone to attend its next scheduled meeting on **Monday, April 6th, 2015** at 7:00pm. The meeting will take place at Community Hospice, 4266 Sunbeam Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32257 in Conference Room A.

On Saturday, 23 May 2015 the Jacksonville National Cemetery will observe Memorial Day. This a departure from the observance traditionally held on the last Monday of May.

The schedule as of this date is to invite the community to post the flags beginning at 0830 hours with the observance beginning at 1000 hours.



Please join us

“The veterans are upset about several things. They’re upset about the uncertainty, if you will, of their future health care. . . . They’re upset about the fact that the VA is spending this kind of tax dollars when they could have had a brand new facility to move into, rather than moving into modular units.”

- Local veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley, speaking about of a continuing lack of transparency by the regional Veterans Administration on facts and studies dealing with the relocation of a veterans’ outpatient clinic here.

“I think it’s been frustrating. . . . It’s been frustrating for my office, too.”

- Rep. Ron DeSantis, speaking to the Record about his newest involvement with the VA’s inaction and refusal to produce documentation on its efforts to relocate its veterans’ outpatient clinic in St. Johns County.

On Tuesday March 10th residents of Coquina Crossing in Elkton as well as all citizens in St. Johns County lost a true American Hero. Below is an article the Florida Times Union ran about Mario Patruno in 2013.

Mario Patruno's D-Day exploits now part of Military Museum of North Florida's permanent exhibit

By **Charlie Patton** Sun, Mar 17, 2013 Florida Times Union and used with their permission

There's a scene in the miniseries "Band of Brothers" in which an American paratrooper is seen riding a white horse during the D-Day invasion of France.

That scene may have been inspired by 92-year-old St. Augustine resident Mario Patruno. During the Normandy invasion, Patruno was a 23-year-old paratrooper in Company F of the 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. "Band of Brothers" follows an affiliated unit in the 506th, Company E.

Like many Americans who parachuted into Normandy in the early morning hours of June 6, 1944, Patruno ended up lost, separated from his company. But he was determined to rejoin Company F. To help him accomplish that goal, he "borrowed" a white horse from the occupying German forces.



Patruno's early morning ride is now the subject of a new permanent exhibit at the Military Museum of North Florida, located just south of Green Cove Springs on Florida 16. The exhibit includes a plastic Patruno, dressed in the uniform of a 101st Airborne paratrooper, seated on a white fiberglass horse.

On a recent visit to the museum, Patruno talked about his memories of D-Day. He jumped into France at 1:40 a.m. on June 6. The first American he encountered was a paratrooper who, like Patruno, was separated from his unit, a company in the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment. Together they set out to find their respective units.

Archive: [Former paratrooper carries memories, scars of war to this day](#)

As they headed toward the beaches, they met a group of about 15 men from the 82nd Airborne Division under the command of a lieutenant. The lieutenant ordered them to join his group. But Patruno, determined to find his own unit, slipped away.

In a small village, he stopped a Frenchman who was riding a bicycle to ask for directions. But the Frenchman didn't answer him. Patruno walked away. Then several trucks with Germans in them arrived on the scene. Patruno saw the Frenchman pointing in his direction but the trucks kept going.

Later, Patruno said, he saw the same Frenchman bicycling down the road and shot him. He said he also encountered a German soldier who came at him with a bayonet. Patruno shot him as well.

"I was allergic to bayonets," he quipped.

As he continued in the direction of Vierville-sur-Mer, where he hoped to rendezvous with his

unit, he saw a field with five horses in it. There was a stable nearby. There were guards outside two of the entrances to the stable, but a third entrance had been left unguarded. Patruno went into the stable and found a bridle.

"The first horse I saw was this guy," he said, gesturing to the fiberglass model of a horse. "He was gentle and friendly."

Because he was carrying equipment, including a bag of grenades, Patruno wasn't sure how he would get onto the horse. He solved that problem by leading the horse to a watering trough, climbing on the trough and hoisting himself onto the horse's back.

As he headed down the road on horseback, he saw two Germans on a motorcycle.

"One of them waved," Patruno said. "I waved back."

Several miles down the road, he heard the sound of a firefight and rode toward it. He had found Company F.

Seeing Patruno, known to the company as Gus, on horseback, a fellow G.I. called to him, "Hey Gus, there's a war going on."

Reunited with his unit, he joined his sergeant, named Swank, in an assault on a farmhouse held by Germans.

"I was itching to throw a grenade," Patruno said. "So I threw one in the window."

When he and the sergeant entered, the farmhouse appeared to be deserted. The sergeant started to go upstairs but, instead of joining him, Patruno went to the basement. He heard a shot behind him and turned. The sergeant had shot a German who had been hiding under the stairs.

"That's why he was a sergeant and I was a private," Patruno said. "He went by the book. Always cover your partner." John Fails had worn in Baghdad.

Charlie Patton: (904) 359-4413

Two days later, Patruno was hit by shrapnel and suffered burns, leading to his first Purple Heart. He got a second Purple Heart after he was shot in the face in September 1944, during Operation Market Garden, a failed effort to secure a bridgehead across the Rhine River into Germany. That was the last action for Patruno, who now lives with his wife, Ruth, in a St. Augustine retirement home.

On the day Patruno visited the museum, several people came to meet him.

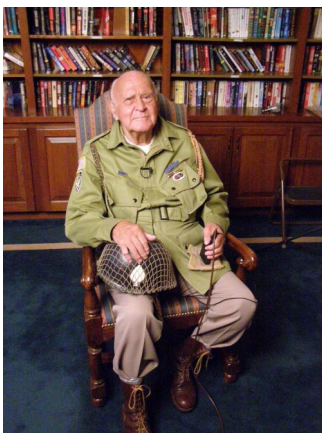
One was C.C. Sprinkle, 91, who was the co-pilot of a B-26 Marauder during World War II and took part in Operation Dragoon, the invasion of South France in August 1944.

Another was Charles Fails, who served with Army Special Forces in the 1970s and 1980s and made 325 parachute jumps.

Fails' son, John, who works at the University of North Florida, served with the 325th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne in Iraq in 2003.

At his son's request, Charles Fails gave Patruno the combat infantry badge

He was with the "F" (Fox) Company of the 506 Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) and the 2nd Battalion of the 101st Airborne. A recent book tells the story of the "Fighting Fox Company," The Battling Flank of the "Band of Brothers". Mario was among 23,000 allied paratroopers who jumped into Normandy on D-Day in 1944, behind enemy lines, to secure the bridges and causeways. The 7,000-ship invasion began at dawn. He was among 40,000 allied paratroopers who jumped into Holland, in September of 1944. (The "Market-Garden" Operation) "The Liberation of Holland". Mario was wounded in Nijmegen and Normandy. He received the following medals: Parachute Wings with two stars, two Purple Hearts, Combat Infantry Badge, WWII Victory Ribbon, Presidential Unit Citation with Oak Leaf Cluster, Campaign Ribbon with 3 Bronze Stars and 2 Spearheads, French Croix de Guerre and Netherlands Orange Lanyard-Bronze Star Medal. Mario loved his country, the military, and the American Flag and was proud of his service and uniform. He participated in "Massing of the Colors" on Memorial Day, proudly carrying the 101st banner with his friend, Jim Robinson. Among the highlights of his life, he was greeted by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands during their 65th Anniversary of Liberation in 2009, and when he and his wife were guests of the Royal Dutch Army in 2014 for the 70th Anniversary of Liberation. Let's not forget the solidier on the white horse on Veteran's Day at Francis Field in 2011! That was Mario. It was one of the best days of his life.



Photos by Michael Rothfeld

Ticket Information

Ticket costs are:
Active Duty E-6 and below, \$25;
E-7 to O3, \$40,
O4 to O5, \$50,
O6 and above,
civilians, and retirees, \$65.
Ticket sales cut off on June 7th

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.mayportnlius.org

Uniform will be O4 and above -
dinner dress white jacket;
O3 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 World Golf
Village Resort
Special Room Rate - \$120
(includes 2 breakfast vouchers)
This special rate good until May 30th only
Suites also available for \$170.00

YOU MUST INCLUDE
"2015 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

General John F. Kelly, USMC
Commander, U.S. Southern Command

Event will be held at
The Renaissance World Golf
Village Resort .
Cocktails begin at 6 PM
Dinner at 7 PM.
Reserved seating.
Hosted by
The Mayport Council
Navy League
of the United States
June 13, 2015

And you are invited!
Tickets are now on sale

The Battle of Midway was a crucial and decisive naval battle in the Pacific Theatre of World War II. Between 4 and 7 June 1942, only six months after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, and one month after the Battle of the Coral Sea, the United States Navy under Admirals Chester Nimitz, Frank Jack Fletcher, and Raymond A. Spruance decisively defeated an attacking fleet of the Imperial Japanese Navy under Admirals Isoroku Yamamoto, Chuichi Nagumo, and Nobutake Kondo on Midway Atoll, inflicting devastating and irreparable damage on the Japanese fleet. Military historian John Keegan called it "the most stunning and decisive blow in the history of naval warfare." It was Japan's first naval defeat since the Battle of Shimonoseki Straits in 1863.



St. John's County Veterans Service Office Relocates to New Offices

Pictured from left to right are Assistant CVSO Rick Rees, Office Specialist Lashonda Burns, Assistant CVSO Tammy Shirley, and County VSO Joseph (Mac) D. McDermott during a tour of the new Health and Human Services building put up by St Johns County. Approximately 3 years ago the county sold the property that was previously the home of the SJC VSO to Lowes and began to build a new building to hold all of the facilities previously occupying the old facility.



The move to the new building began on February 24th, 2015 and continued for several days after until everything was moved to the new offices. While still very much a work in progress by each of us in our new spaces and individual offices the change has been far less painful than previously envisioned. The new location is only about 5 miles north of the previous building which has us now located closer to the remaining county services departments.

The location has made it easy for our customers to find out new home. We look forward to serving our customers out of this bright new state of the art facility and we have already had several comments from our customers about how nice our new spaces are. Our new offices are located at 200 San Sebastian View, Suite 1400, St Augustine, FL 32084. Our contact numbers are: Phone-(904) 209-6160 and Fax-(904) 209-6167. Our email addresses and phone numbers have not changed. Only the actual mailing address is different.

In commemoration of our recent move our office was recently presented with a plaque from leaders of the St Johns County Veterans Council congratulating us on a successful relocation and thanking us for our ongoing outstanding services to the veterans of St Johns County. See you all at the May 2015 Conference.



An Update on Veterans Council produced Vietnam Documentary

Thanks to Tom Waskovich the Vietnam documentary will be shown in Ohio at the County Veterans Hall for Vietnam Remembrance events. Tom was also contacted by a nurse who served in Vietnam and saw the documentary.

For those of you who have not seen it yet, here is a link to it:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_5gJVXK0gI&list=UU5TLKyliWlGxdbKz2vRsXGg

The Vietnam documentary has also been put on YouTube by several people and the total number of views to date is, 183,520.



The Veterans Council of St. Johns County is proud to announce that its latest documentary production, “Unleashing the Underdogs: The K9s for Warriors Story” will be shown on WJCT TV, the PBS station in Jacksonville, broadcasting on channel 7, on Thursday, April 9th, at 8:30 pm.



It is the story of several Iraq/Afghanistan veterans, suffering from PTSD, and how they are assisted by rescued service dogs at K9s for Warriors in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Please go to their website and make a tax deductible donation:

www.K9sForWarriors.org

Here are the [K9s For Warriors](http://www.K9sForWarriors.org) graduates . March 20th 2015 Way To Go Ladies and Team K-9 !!



Shari Duval, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL

“Age has its benefits. We have more time, years of experience and realize the need to give of ourselves to others.”

My son was an independent contractor for the U.S. Department of the Army. As a veteran police dog handler, he volunteered to serve our country with his expertise.



He served two tours in Iraq, and returned home with severe PTSD. When he returned, he was completely changed – there was no life left in him. In a desperate attempt to help him and other veterans, I started a nonprofit providing highly-trained service dogs to mitigate the horrible symptoms of PTSD.

I am now president and founder of K9s For Warriors, a Florida-based nonprofit that gives service dogs to disabled veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disability, traumatic brain injury and military sexual trauma as a result of the wars since 9/11. There is no charge for our service. We believe we are the largest and most successful program for the treatment of the effects of “after battle” disabilities.

As a nation, we are losing 22 veterans a day to suicide. The K9s For Warriors program is working and we are saving lives. We have now served 154 warriors and seen a 95% success rate. Actually, 100% when you consider that not one of our graduates have tried or committed suicide. We have also started a national campaign called Stop 22, to bring awareness to veteran suicide.

K9s For Warriors, in four short years, is now a large and successful three-week, live-in program for the treatment of PTSD, TBI, and MST. We are privately funded through generous donations and we accept no government assistance. Additionally, we use 95% rescue dogs in our program, saving their lives as well.

After a lifetime of volunteering, working, and now as a mother, and a grandmother, I have many skills and gifts to give back to others. At 65, I started my organization with no financial assistance, but with a vision, passion and determination. Today we are an \$8-million organization. We were recently gifted a new \$5-million facility to increase our capacity of five veterans a month to 16.

Age has its benefits. We have more time, years of experience and realize the need to give of ourselves to others. That is the best gift you can give.

The DAV Chapter 6 had a very successful run at the Celtic Heritage and Music Festival.

Thanks to Those who volunteered their time and energies.



Photo by John Reardon

Celtic Heritage volunteers l-r (back row: Earl Stroud, Shawn Prentiss, Amanda Stroud, Jim Campau-VVA) (front row: Judy Davis, Tammy Shirley, Bob Dinkins-VVA, Audrey Allen, John McGinty-VVA, Michael Isam) Not pictured: Bob Place and Kevin Murphy and Joe McDermott.



Photos by Michael Isam

Last month's Patriot Reader included an article from St. Augustine-Palm Coast Navy League member **Jana Teehan**. The article was about her father, WW II Navy Veteran, Lt. (jg) George Mitchell Addison, Jr. I forwarded that article and the one from the previous Patriot Reader about Navy "K9 veteran Bill" to John MacKay, from the USS LSM/LSMR Association.



John MacKay

From John MacKay:

Thank you very much for forwarding those two articles to me. I don't know how much Jana has told you about me, so allow me to give a bit of an introduction: I know Jana from the USS LSM/LSMR Association. Both of our fathers served on what were called 'Interim' LSMRs during WW2. There were only 12 of the Interim LSMRs and because they arrived in the Pacific too late, they were only used in the invasion of Okinawa and associated islands. Following Okinawa, they were sent back to Pearl Harbor for conversion into ammo carriers for the invasion of Japan, but thankfully, the war ended with the dropping of the atomic bombs.

It is unusual to meet LSMR vets or their descendants because there were so few of the ships, so Jana instantly became a good friend when we met at a reunion years ago. I'd built a model of the my dad's ship a while back, which I often take to reunions, and at one point, Jana asked me if I'd make her dad's ship the subject of a future model. This was an intriguing challenge because rather than select a subject for a ship model at random, I like to choose a ship that has some connection to me or our family. A bit of time has passed since Jana made her request, but I am finally beginning the research necessary to faithfully replicate the LSMR-198 in miniature.

In the past, I've posted a couple of threads detailing construction of my recent ship models on ModelWarships.com. The information I collect on Jana's dad and the ship will be incorporated into the introduction of the thread for the LSMR-198 project.

I've attached some photos of models I've built in the past:



This is a model of my dad's ship, the LSMR-192.



A model of LSM-59. LSMs delivered tanks, vehicles, and troops onto invasion beach heads. LSMRs were built using a standard LSM hull.



This photo is of an 'Ultimate' LSMR, LSMR-409. While the Interim LSMRs were being converted to carry ammo, the Ultimate LSMRs were on their way to the Pacific in preparation for the invasion of Japan. They were a vast improvement over the Interim LSMRs.



A photo of the LSMR-409 as she appeared during the Viet Nam War. She and a handful of her sister ships were reactivated and 'modernized' for use in Viet Nam, and were given names. The 409 was named the USS Clarion River.



The fellow on the left served with my dad on the LSMR-192. It was a real treat to meet this gentleman. The photo with my dad's crewmate with me and my model was taken at the 2009 reunion of the USS LSM/LSMR Association.



a model of the LCI(L)-30. I am finishing up this model, which represents another ship my dad was on, right after the war ended.

Former Adjutant General Bullard honored



This article reprinted with the permission of the St. Augustine Record and its author, Jake Martin jake.martin@staugustine.com

Maj. Gen. (ret.) Kennedy C. Bullard lives alone in an unassuming red brick house under old trees with an American flag out front.

The 97-year-old resident of St. Augustine is a World War II veteran and former adjutant general of Florida. Friends call him “K.C.”

On his coffee table is the complete set of HBO’s miniseries “Band of Brothers.” His son, Dr. Timothy Bullard of Orlando, had brought it for him to watch. Inevitably, they’ll need one of Kennedy Bullard’s grandsons to actually “get the thing working.”

Kennedy Bullard said he doesn’t spend much time thinking about the past, but it’s not so easy after 97 years of living.

Bullard was born in Palatka, raised in Tampa, and spent his early teenage years during the Great Depression. He watched his father go from working as a civil engineer to becoming a farmer.

“We didn’t have anything, but the family was close,” he said.

Bullard’s first job was with McKesson & Robbins in the liquor department, putting state and federal stamps on bottles.

“Pretty important job,” he joked. “The only amazing thing was, while I was there, Jack Dempsey the prize fighter came in promoting his Jack Dempsey whiskey.”

Bullard got to shake his hand, a highlight of his young life.

He joined the military because all his friends were doing it. In November 1940, he reported to Camp Blanding, which at the time was little more than a “tent area.” There is now an armory at Blanding named after him.

It was never his intent to make the military his career, but his superiors had other plans for him. Bullard was recommended for a series of promotions and commissioned to second lieutenant in 1941.

“I was a carefree guy and didn’t have any goals set,” he said. “Whatever happened to me, it happened to me because of the military.”

Dedicated

Bullard was presented with the Governor’s Medal of Merit by Gov. Rick Scott on March 10, during National Guard Day in Tallahassee.

Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Emmett Titshaw, who is retiring at the end of March, provided the recommendation.

“(Bullard’s) selfless, lifetime dedication to our state and nation are in keeping with the finest traditions of military service, deserving of this most prestigious recognition,” he wrote. Bullard is only the sixth person to be awarded the medal, or “gadget,” as he calls it.

“It just came out of the blue,” he said. “Gen. Titshaw told me they were working on it for a while and they wanted me to come to Tallahassee in my uniform.”

It was a tight fit, but he did so. He said he was flattered to be recognized by younger generations in the service.

“Of course I retired in ’81 and so a lot of these people were in elementary school,” he added.

Bullard fought in North Africa and Italy with the 1st Armored Division during World War II. Among other distinctions, he received the Bronze Star with “V” device and a Purple Heart.

His service in the Florida National Guard spanned from 1939 to 1981. On Aug. 13, 1975, he became adjutant general, serving in that position until Dec. 31, 1981.



Duty calls

Bullard met his wife, Carmen, on a blind date in 1939 and never looked back. They were married the Sunday after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Bullard had been training draftees at Fort Bragg. But when he saw the Pathé News reels coming from the front lines in Europe and North Africa, he needed something more.

He wrote a letter to his superior saying he would better serve the Army in combat. “It wasn’t because I thought I was any kind of brave guy — it was just on an urge,” he said. He didn’t tell his wife about the letter until after he returned.

“The military made me grow up,” Bullard said. “I tried never to take any kind of action without thinking of people first.”

The first combat he saw was at Kasserine Pass, Tunisia, the first large-scale meeting of American and German forces in World War II. Bullard said those early days of U.S. involvement were tough.

“Their equipment was far superior to what we had,” he said.

Eventually, the tide would turn.

His unit went into Naples, Italy, where he was made executive officer of a firing battery. Approaching the Monte Cassino front, his battalion commander sent him out with a howitzer loaded with propaganda shells.

At the canisters’ peak, the back ends would blow out and leaflets would fall from the sky.

“I have no idea what the leaflets said, but I presume it went something like: ‘It’s time for you to surrender now,’” he said.

Life’s a beach

Bullard and his men were put on waterproofing duty. The rain and snow of Monte Cassino was just a precursor to what would come next.

The unit landed at Anzio Beachhead, Italy, four days after the first troops and stayed there for four and a half months.

They were shelled day and night with anti-personnel bombs they called “two-pounders.” Soldiers dug caves into the ground just big enough for two people and their sleeping bags.

“If you had claustrophobia, you were in trouble,” he said. “It was tough, but we were young, I

guess. We didn't know any different."

Bullard earned his Purple Heart at Anzio while helping put a fire out. He was shot in the hand.

"Nothing life-threatening," he said. "I never considered myself more than just a person. I was just trying to do my job."

The Germans gradually moved north. Bullard's unit was north of Rome when it was announced on the radio that Americans would be crossing the English Channel.

In the area of Pisa, under strict orders not to fire anywhere near its Leaning Tower, Bullard was promoted to captain.

Altogether, he served overseas for about 30 months.

Generally at peace

Bullard doesn't quite fit any stereotype of career military officer. He tried living a quiet life after the war.

But, by 1946, he was talked into a series of reorganization efforts for the National Guard. He spent much of his time off from his accounting duties helping with training and domestic operations.

Calculators didn't give him much trouble either.

In 1968, he was appointed Hillsborough County Tax Collector. The governor often referred to him as the "Tax Collector General."

He resigned in 1975 to become Florida's adjutant general, culminating his military career. Among the memorable moments during his tenure was leading the Florida National Guard through the 1980 Miami race riots.

"The biggest thing for me is: Think about your friendships with each other," he said. Bullard said he was able to lead in combat and at home because he cared about the people his decisions would affect.

"Life is so fragile," he said. "In just a split second, all a person's hopes and dreams can vanish."

He looks like he might be at home anywhere. The walls of his office are covered with war decorations and photographs taken with fellow accountants and tax collectors at annual luncheons.

His retirement has been one of golf swings, family and taking in the views of time passing.

When he first arrived in St. Augustine, U.S. 1 was a two-lane road. About three years ago, he decided to quit driving and sold his car.

Carmen, his wife of 71 years, passed away about two years ago. Bullard had never dated anyone else.

He said it was the hardest thing he's gone through yet, despite a wealth of war stories. Aside from his vision, Bullard reports his "stats are good." His neighbors give him rides to doctors' appointments.

He said he never expected to be the oldest person in the room, but that he's been blessed. Bullard will celebrate his 98th birthday on Dec. 9.

"If I'm here," he said, smiling.

Thank you for your service, ma'am!

In honor of Women's History Month, check out these two recruiting posters, one from the Gulf War in 1990s and the other from the early 1940s during World War II.



The US Army officially welcomed women into the service in 1941 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the bill into law creating the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC).



More than 35,000 women applied for less than 1,000 anticipated officer positions during the opening of WAAC enlistment.

The first WAAC officer candidate training class of 440 women started a six-week course at Fort Des Moines, Iowa on July 20, 1941.



Kathy Beaudoin Church MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT - FLORIDA (MIAP - FLORIDA)



Note to all MIAP-FL volunteers (and all others). Please take the time to go to our website and review our pages. New information is being updated or posted on a regular basis. If you go to our Chaplain's page you will now see a new section titled "In Memory of MIAP Volunteers". It is sad that we have lost 5 of our volunteers.

Other sections are also being updated and it is all of us as volunteers responsibility to keep up with the updated info.

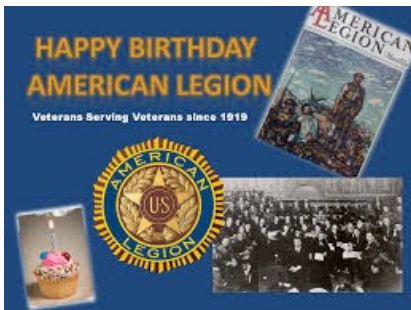
If you have any questions you can always contact me as well. www.miap.us

The City of Jacksonville and Department of Veterans Affairs - Florida Veterans Foundation is putting on a three day Stand Down for it's Homeless Veterans. The event will be held at the Jacksonville Fair Grounds on Aug 13 - 15, 2015. We are expecting over 600 homeless veterans to be present. We need St. Johns County veterans support. Our goal is to end veteran homelessness in 2015. Please consider giving us your support through voluntary services or monetary contribution. Either one would be very appreciated.

For more information please contact Daniel Hughes at jamiedhughes@msn.com or 386-446-3830.

From Kathy Beaudoin Church

**SUNDAY MARCH 15, 2015 - AMERICAN LEGION'S
96TH BIRTHDAY**



March 15, the birthday of The American Legion, is the day in 1919 when the first Legion caucus, held by members of the American Expeditionary Force, convened in Paris.

Each year, Legion posts across the country hold events – public, private or both – to commemorate this anniversary. A guided speech has been drafted by the Legion's Media & Communications Division staff as a way for Legionnaires to emphasize what the organization represents, to both themselves and the community at large. The speech is not necessarily meant to be recited verbatim; members are encouraged to amend it to taste and audience. The birthday speech can be downloaded here, www.legiontown.org.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICAN LEGION!!!!

Woodland Acres Neighborhood
FREE GROCERIES EVENT

**Wednesday, April 1, 2015
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.**



**Drop by for Fresh &
Nutritious Foods**
provided by



The Five STAR Veterans Center
Here to help our Veterans and our Neighbors



**40 Acme Street
Jacksonville, FL 32211**

Preference will be given to:
Veterans, Active Duty Military,
and our Woodland Acres Neighbors.
Neighbors **MUST** bring a Door Hanger

INSTRUCTIONS

**Veterans & Active Duty Personnel
Must bring ID & Proof of Veteran Status**

**Woodland Acres Neighbors
Must bring this Door Hanger or Proof of Address**

Enter thru Main Door of Center

**Bring insulated containers
& items to carry food**

**Limited Handicap Assistance Available
if Requested in Advance**

(More information at: www.5starveteranscenter.org)

The FL Army National Guard needs volunteers to assist with our Unit's Family Readiness Group (FRG). The Family Readiness Group works directly with each Company Commander to assist him with getting information out to his families, planning family days and activities and deployment cycle support in the event of deployments. There could also be fundraising and community outreach opportunities.



We also have State level volunteer positions that need to be filled. I am available via email and phone anytime.

Ms. Lynn Brannon, Florida Army National Guard
JFHQ Family Readiness Support Assistant, MPSC Contractor
[\(904\) 827-8574](tel:(904)827-8574) (office), [\(904\) 599-2917](tel:(904)599-2917) (cell), lynn.b.brannon.ctr@mail.mil



The officers and members of the chapter are proud to launch our new website. (<http://www.vva1084.org>).

I invite you to visit the new site and enjoy the information and links. Please remember that this site is under construction and will contain much more information and sponsor links in the future.

Bob Dinkins - President, Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 1084, St. Johns County, FL

904-540-1898

God Bless You and America

bobdinkins@bellsouth.net

president@vva1084.org

SOBERING STATISTICS FOR THE VIETNAM WAR

Here are some updated statistics concerning Vietnam era service. I am surprised at the survivors update at the beginning of the stats. In case you haven't been paying attention these past few decades after you returned from Vietnam, the clock has been ticking. The following are some statistics that are at once depressing yet in a larger sense should give you a HUGE SENSE OF PRIDE.

"Of the 2,709,918 Americans who served in Vietnam, Less than 850,000 are estimated to be alive today, with the youngest American Vietnam veteran's age approximated to be 54 years old."

So, if you're alive and reading this, how Does it feel to be among the last 1/3rd of all the U.S. Vets who served in Viet Nam?!?!? ...don't know about you guys, but kind of gives me the chills, Considering this is the kind of information I'm used to reading about WWII and Korean War vets...

So the last 14 years we are dying too fast, only the few will survive by 2015...if any.. If true, 390 VN vets die a day. so in 2190 days...from today, lucky to be a Vietnam veteran alive..... in only 6 years..

These statistics were taken from a variety of sources to include: The VFW Magazine, the Public Information Office, and the HQ CP Forward Observer - 1st Recon April 12, 1997.

STATISTICS FOR INDIVIDUALS IN UNIFORM AND IN COUNTRY VIE TNAM VETERANS:

* 9,087,000 military personnel served on active duty during the Vietnam Era (August 5, 1964 - May 7, 1975).

* 8,744,000 GIs were on active duty during the war (Aug 5, 1964-March 28,1973).

* 2,709,918 Americans served in Vietnam, this number represents 9.7% of their generation.

* 3,403,100 (Including 514,300 offshore) personnel served in the broader Southeast Asia Theater (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, flight crews based in Thailand, and sailors in adjacent South China Sea waters).

* 2,594,000 personnel served within the borders of South Vietnam (Jan. 1,1965 - March 28, 1973). Another 50,000 men served in Vietnam between 1960 and 1964.

* Of the 2.6 million, between 1-1.6 million (40-60%) either fought in combat, provided close support or were at least fairly regularly exposed to enemy attack.

* 7,484 women (6,250 or 83.5% were nurses) served in Vietnam.

* Peak troop strength in Vietnam: 543,482 (April 30, 1968).

CASUALTIES:

The first man to die in Vietnam was James Davis, in 1958. He was with the 509th Radio Research Station. Davis Station in Saigon was named for him.

Hostile deaths: 47,378

Non-hostile deaths: 10,800

Total: 58,202 (Includes men formerly classified as MIA and Mayaguez casualties). Men who have subsequently died of wounds acco unt for the changing total.

8 nurses died -- 1 was KIA. 61% of the men killed were 21 or younger.

11,465 of those killed were younger than 20 years old. Of those killed, 17,539 were married.

Average age of men killed: 23.1 years

Total Deaths: 23.11 years

Enlisted: 50,274 22.37 years

Officers: 6,598 28.43 years

Warrants: 1,276 24.73 years

E1: 525 20.34 years

11B MOS: 18,465 22.55 years

Five men killed in Vietnam were only 16 years old. The oldest man killed was 62 years old.

Highest state death rate: West Virginia - 84.1% (national average 58.9% for every 100,000 males in 1970).

Wounded: 303,704 -- 153,329 hospitalized + 150,375 injured requiring no hospital care.

Severely disabled: 75,000, -- 23,214: 100% disabled; 5,283 lost limbs; 1,081 sustained multiple amputations.

Amputation or crippling wounds to the lower extremities were 300% higher than in WWII and 70% higher than Korea.

Multiple amputations occurred at the rate of 18.4% compared to 5.7% in WWII.

Missing in Action: 2,338 POWs: 766 (114 died in captivity)

As of January 15, 2004, there are 1,875 Americans still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

DRAFTEES VS. VOLUNTEERS:

25% (648,500) of total forces in country were draftees. (66% of U.S. armed forces members were drafted during WWII).

Draftees accounted for 30.4% (17,725) of combat deaths in Vietnam.

Reservists killed: 5,977 National Guard: 6,140 served: 101 died. Total draftees (1965 - 73): 1,728,344.

Actually served in Vietnam: 38% Marine Corps Draft: 42,633. Last man drafted: June 30, 1973.

RACE AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND:

88.4% of the men who actually served in Vietnam were Caucasian; 10.6% (275,000) were black; 1% belonged to other races.

86.3% of the men who died in Vietnam were Caucasian (includes Hispanics);

12.5% (7,241) were black; 1.2% belonged to other races.

170,000 Hispanics served in Vietnam; 3,070 (5.2% of total) died there.

70% of enlisted men killed were of North-west European descent.

86.8% of the men who were killed as a result of hostile action were Caucasian; 12.1% (5,711) were black; 1.1% belonged to other races.

14.6% (1,530) of non-combat deaths were among blacks.

34% of blacks who enlisted volunteered for the combat arms.

Overall, blacks suffered 12.5% of the deaths in Vietnam at a time when the percentage of blacks of military age was 13.5% of the total population.

Religion of Dead: Protestant -- 64.4%; Catholic -- 28.9%; other/none -- 6.7% SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS:

Vietnam veterans have a lower unemployment rate than the same non-vet age groups.

Vietnam veterans' personal income exceeds that of our non-veteran age group by more than 18 percent.

76% of the men sent to Vietnam were from lower middle/working class backgrounds.

Three-fourths had family incomes above the poverty level; 50% were from middle income backgrounds.

Some 23% of Vietnam vets had fathers with professional, managerial or technical occupations.

79% of the men who served in Vietnam had a high school education or better when they entered the military service. 63% of Korean War vets and only 45% of WWII vets had completed high school upon separation.

Deaths by region per 100,000 of population: South -- 31%, West --29.9%; Midwest -- 28.4%; Northeast -- 23.5%.

DRUG USAGE & CRIME:

There is no difference in drug usage between Vietnam Veterans and non-Vietnam Veterans of the same age group. (Source: Veterans Administration Study)

Vietnam Veterans are less likely to be in prison - only one-half of one percent of Vietnam Veterans have been jailed for crimes.

85% of Vietnam Veterans made successful transitions to civilian life.

WINNING & LOSING:

82% of veterans who saw heavy combat strongly believe the war was lost because of lack of political will.

Nearly 75% of the public agrees it was a failure of political will, not of arms.

HONORABLE SERVICE:

97% of Vietnam-era veterans were honorably discharged.

91% of actual Vietnam War veterans and 90% of those who saw heavy combat are proud to have served their country.

74% say they would serve again, even knowing the outcome.

87% of the public now holds Vietnam veterans in high esteem.

INTERESTING CENSUS STATISTICS & THOSE TO CLAIM TO HAVE "Been There":

1,713,823 of those who served in Vietnam were still alive as of August, 1995 (census figures).

During that same Census count, the number of Americans falsely claiming to have served in-country was: 9,492,958.

As of the current Census taken during August, 2000, the surviving U.S. Vietnam Veteran population estimate is: 1,002,511. This is hard to believe, losing nearly 711,000 between '95 and '00. That's 390 per day.

During this Census count, the number of Americans falsely claiming to have served in-country is: 13,853,027. By this census, FOUR OUT OF FIVE WHO CLAIM TO BE Vietnam vets are not.

The Department of Defense Vietnam War Service Index officially provided by The War Library originally reported with errors that 2,709,918 U.S. military personnel as having served in-country. Corrections and confirmations to this erred index resulted in the addition of 358 U.S. military personnel confirmed to have served in Vietnam but not originally listed by the Department of Defense. (All names are currently on file and accessible 24/7/365).

Isolated atrocities committed by American Soldiers produced torrents of outrage from anti-war critics and the news media while Communist atrocities were so common that they received hardly any media mention at all. The United States sought to minimize and prevent attacks on civilians while North Vietnam made attacks on civilians a centerpiece of its strategy. Americans who deliberately killed civilians received prison sentences while Communists who did so received commendations.

From 1957 to 1973, the National Liberation Front assassinated 36,725 Vietnamese and abducted another 58,499. The death squads focused on leaders at the village level and on anyone who improved the lives of the peasants such as medical personnel, social workers, and school teachers. - Nixon Presidential Papers

Great news!!

USS Indianapolis CA-35 Second Watch Organization has begun a new program to honor the men Lost At Sea in the Sinking of the USS Indianapolis and their families!



It came to our attention that many Lost At Sea families never received a flag on behalf of their loved one.

Therefore, Second Watch is purchasing American Flags which will each then be flown over the USS Indianapolis Memorial in Indianapolis then sent to the Lost At Sea family.

Because we do not have an accurate database of all Lost At Sea families, we ask that you help us spread the word.

If you are a Lost At Sea family that would like a flag flown over the Memorial in your loved ones memory, please contact Maria Eck Bullard (daughter of USS Indianapolis Survivor Harold Eck) via email at BullardMBullard@aol.com (one per family please!)

The cost of the flags to our organization is \$13.10 each. If you would like to make a donation to sponsor a flag for a family, please feel free to contact me also! Genejanjay@aol.com

****A special thank to Brigadier General Goodwin, Executive Director of the Indiana War Memorial for his assistance in having these flags flown and to Michael Hussey of Fed Ex in Indianapolis for helping us ship them to the families****

From CUCM (SCW/NAC) Gene R. Toffolo, USNR(ret)

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County Website

<http://www.veteranscouncilofstjohns.org>

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County is very fortunate to have AJ Sartin, Commander of VFW Post 12142 in Vilano Beach as our webmaster. Thank you AJ for the outstanding design of the website and for always keeping it updated.



If you haven't visited the website recently I encourage you to do so now. Here is a partial list of what you will find on the site.

Event Flyers: we list here Veterans Organization flyers for fund raisers, golf tournaments, etc.

Wreaths Across America: an update of progress toward goal of having one wreath on every burial site at St. Augustine National

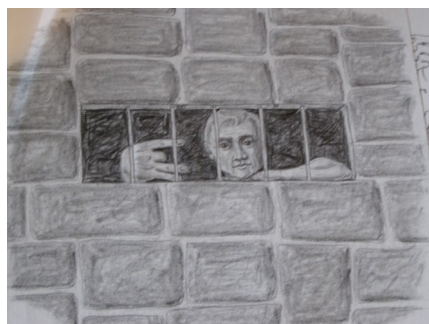
Jacksonville National Cemetery: an update on MIAP, and events, ceremonies, and dedications

How to get Veterans License Tags

Update on meetings, events at new VFW Post 12142, Vilano Beach

All editions of the Patriot Reader going back 4 years are available here

The Veterans Council produced documentaries, as seen on PBS, are available for viewing here, they all feature the stories of local veterans: World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War and Stolen Freedom, the story of 4 local ex American Prisoners of War. Soon to be available online, "Unleashing the Underdogs: The K9s for Warriors Story", filmed in Ponte Vedra Beach.



Are you a disabled Veteran?

Did you become disabled AFTER you purchased your home?

There is funding available to help you!

Unemployed or underemployed?

Owe more on your home than it's worth?

Behind on your mortgage?

First time home buyer?

We might be able to help!

We NEVER charge homeowners for any of our services!



St. Johns Housing Partnership is a Non-Profit, HUD approved Housing Counseling Agency.
We administer government programs throughout most of Florida.



A Non-Profit Organization

(904) 819-1266

**93 Orange St
St. Augustine, FL 32084**



Do you or someone you know suffer with *Psoriasis?*

We need your help, we are conducting a clinical trial with an investigational topical medication for those with moderate to severe **Plaque Psoriasis.**

If you are at least 18 years of age,
please call

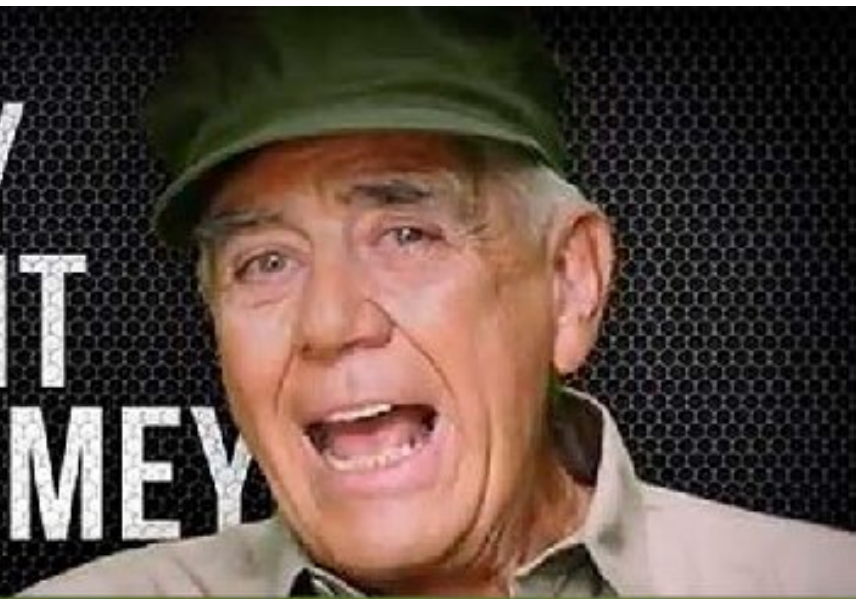
**Solutions Through
Advanced Research
(904) 619-8157**



14546 Old St. Augustine Rd. Suite 107, Jacksonville, FL 32258
www.jaxadvresearch.com

#1001820718 (1/8 PG HORIZON(5in x 7in)) 10/06/2014 00:59 EST

GUNNERY SERGEANT R. LEE ERMEY



R. LEE ERMEY CELEBRITY GOLF CLASSIC

NOW HEAR THIS!!!

Join co-host SgtMaj Gene Overstreet (12th SgtMajor of the Marine Corps) and me for an exciting 18 holes of golf at the beautiful Golf Club of South Hampton. Proceeds benefit Warrior City in helping Jacksonville's wounded and homeless veterans.

R. Lee Ermey is best known for his role as Gunnery Sergeant Hartman in Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* and the T.V. series *Mail Call*.

DATE: **APRIL 16, 2015**

LOCATION: GOLF CLUB AT SOUTH HAMPTON
315 SOUTH HAMPTON CLUB WAY ST. AUGUSTINE FL

TIME: 11:00 AM - LUNCH & REGISTRATION

TEE TIME: 1:00 PM - SHOTGUN START

COST: \$90 PER PLAYER (\$80 ACTIVE DUTY)

\$360 PER TEAM (\$320 ACTIVE DUTY)

INCLUDES GREEN FEES, CART, LUNCH & DINNER

SPONSORSHIP & QUESTIONS: EMAIL JERRY AT
INFO@RLEECLASSIC.COM OR CALL 904- 323-2198



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Run For The Heroes 5k/Fun Run

OAKLEAF VILLAGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

410 Oakleaf Village Parkway, Orange Park, FL 32065

MAY 2, 2015

Race Start: 0800

Entry \$35.00

**All Proceeds help send children of fallen military to
summer camps all over the U.S.**

ONLINE REGISTRATION AT:

www.runfortheheroes.org

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On December 1 the Vilano Beach VFW Post 12142 became official and all of our officers were sworn in! I'm excited to serve as our Post Judge Advocate. Pictured in the center, is FL Commander of the VFW, on the right is the District 6 Commander and on the left



is AJ Sartin, our new Post 12142 Commander. Present were the Commanders and Officers of the surrounding VFW Posts in District 6, the District 6 leadership, Ladies Auxiliary leaders and members from the District, all of the members and officers of Post 12142.

"Honoring the Dead by Helping the Living"



I have just finished refurbishing a Go-Go Elite power chair, like NEW, to go to a War Veteran.

***For more information,
contact A. J. Sartin (904) 669-1946***

**Offered by the Vilano Beach VFW Post 12142
VilanoBeachVFW@att.net**

Vilano Beach VFW Post 12142 collects Walkers, Wheel Chairs, and Power Wheel Chairs for distribution to other Veterans in need.

VETERANS HELPING VETERANS

Go-Go Elite Traveller 3-Wheel

by Pride , Model No. SC40E

Lightweight, agile, the Elite Traveller.

18AH battery option for extended drive range

Comes with blue, and red shroud covers

Front frame-mounted seat post offers maximum stability

Key Specs

Top Speed: 4.25 mph

Drive Range: 10.00 miles (this may vary, depending on charge and life of battery)

Heaviest Piece: 28 lbs.

Rider Weight capacity: 300 lbs.

Weight: 96 lbs.



As part the Vilano Beach VFW Veteran Outreach Program, we have presented another Disabled Veteran with a motorized Wheelchair.

We ask families of Veterans who can no longer use the equipment or have passed on, to donate their Standard Wheelchairs, Motorized Wheelchairs, and Walkers to the Post, and we re-distribute them to Veterans in need.

We presented a Go-Go Traveler motorized Wheelchair to George Kline, at the Pavilion, at the Bay-View Assisted Living Facility in St. Augustine. George proudly served in Korea.

This is the 2nd motorized wheelchair we have presented to a Veteran. We always leave with a smile on our faces and a warm feeling in our hearts. The first one was presented to a Veteran in his 80's, at the Clyde Lassen V.A. Nursing Home in St. Augustine.



Pictured is Post Commander A. J. Sartin, George Kline, and Post Adjutant Jim Crutchfield.

The Vilano Beach VFW Post 12142, of St. Johns County, has a EZ-Access Modular Ramp System available for a Veteran that needs one that requires a turn, and two ramps to get from the porch to the sidewalk. This ramp cannot be parted out...must be used as manufactured.



For more information,

contact A. J. Sartin (904) 669-1946

For several years, D.A.V. Fl Chapter 6 has furnished the passenger vans for the delivery of Veterans between the St. Augustine Clinic and the Gainesville, V.A. Hospital, and back, Monday – Friday. The Van departs the Clinic every weekday at 0600. Phone (904) 209-3710 to schedule a ride. Drivers furnished by the COA are:

Monday – Lonnie Woodard;
 Tuesday – Jack LaLonde
 Wednesday – Floyd Bubba;
 Thursday – Bob Garlander
 Friday – Robert “Butch” Harrison



Dear Veterans,

University of Florida will be hosting a Veterans Entrepreneurship Program, a training opportunity for disabled veterans who are interested in starting and running their own business. The program is scheduled for May 2015 and it covers all costs for the veterans.

The brochure is below and an introduction letter from our program director for you to learn more about our program. If you have any questions you can email me at annmarie-zhu@ufl.edu or contact our program coordinator (Dr. Morris) at 352-273-0330.

Best,

Annmarie Zhu

Graduate Assistant

Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation University of Florida

COST

The VEP is free to veterans who are selected for the program. Instruction, materials, travel expenses, lodging, and meals for the Phase II Boot Camp will be provided at no cost to each delegate. The costs of the VEP are underwritten by sponsors and private donors, with operations and program development provided by the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the University of Florida.

ELIGIBILITY

VEP serves veterans who meet the following three requirements:

- Have separated from active duty service (or are currently in the administrative process of separating) with an honorable discharge
- Are identified as disabled by the Veteran's Administration or Department of Defense based on a "service-connected" disability (or) Are "service distinguished" based on exemplary military conduct
- Demonstrate an intense interest in entrepreneurship and small business ownership/management

HOW TO APPLY

The VEP has a selective application process that reflects the unique opportunity and valuable resources being offered to eligible veterans as part of this entrepreneurial education initiative. Successful candidates will demonstrate a strong interest in entrepreneurship and venture creation, the motivation to own and operate a business, and a high likelihood of active participation and completion of the entire VEP program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

The Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation
(352) 273-0330
vep@warrington.ufl.edu

APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:
warrington.ufl.edu/VEP

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

The University of Florida (UF) is a major, public, comprehensive, land-grant, research university. The state's oldest and most comprehensive university, UF is among the nation's most academically diverse public universities. UF has a long history of established programs in international education, research, and service. It is one of only 17 public, land-grant universities that belong to the Association of American Universities.

WARRINGTON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

The Warrington College of Business Administration is one of the world's top-rated business programs, recognized for excellence by U.S. News & World Report, The Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, The Economist, and Fortune. As part of a Research I Institution Warrington is dedicated to a substantial research agenda, in addition to its teaching mission, from the undergraduate to the doctoral level. Warrington educates future business leaders using teaching methods that provide opportunities for development of leadership; interpersonal and total management skills; promoting mastery of business functional areas; and fostering the habits and attitudes that constitute a solid research and work ethic.

CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION

The Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI) was created to teach, coach and inspire students to be entrepreneurial in their lives. The Center provides the tools and experiences necessary to creatively pursue new opportunities and innovations in the start-up, social, and corporate venture arenas. Through courses, degree programs and co-curricular programming, CEI currently serves more than 2,000 students per year.

A young man who does not have what it takes to perform military service is not likely to have what it takes to make a living. — John F. Kennedy



VETERANS ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM

EMPOWERING DISABLED VETERANS

MAY 9-16, 2015
THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

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Wine & War Stories

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS OF AMERICA (IAVA) VET-TOGETHER

New Owners of The Wine Bar and a recently separated Vet back from Afghanistan team up for a great social networking and community building event at The Wine Bar.

Located on 1st Street, Jacksonville Beach!

This is open to Veterans, Active Duty, and Military Supporters.

We are hosting once a month so come on out meet new friends, bark at old ones and don't be afraid to stick around a little while longer! It is A Wine Bar.

Check out our Facebook Page and Web Site—Events for the next one!

Tweet, Text and Share IAVA VetTogethers for Vets in Jax



For More Information, Please Call or Email

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STONEWORK FRANCHISING is proud to host another IAVA VetTogether in Florida. The IAVA (Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America) have dedicated quite a bit to helping vets get back on their feet, find employment, seek education and function within our communities upon separation. This is a chance to speak the lingo and get along with people who understand you.

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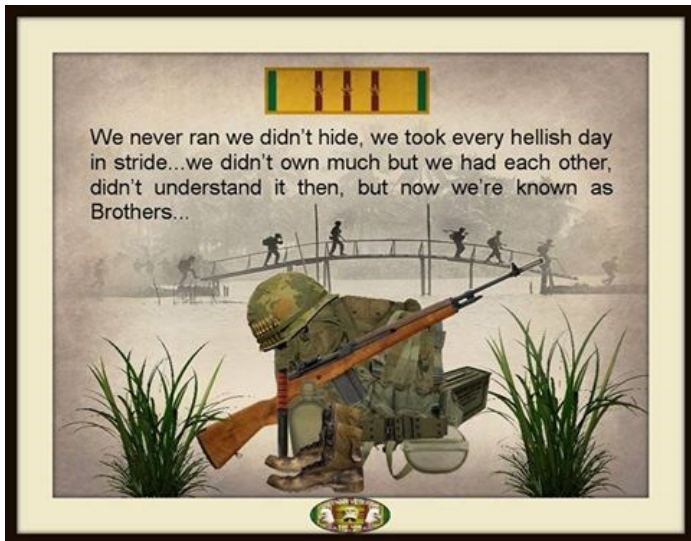
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*Veterans Council of St. Johns County,
"Helping All Veterans"*

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



**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

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

(physical location)

*The VSO Office is located in the new St. Johns County
Health and Human Services Building.*

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

*Service is by appointment.
Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161
Joseph McDermott, CVSO
Rick Rees, Assistant VSO
Tammy Shirley, Assistant VSO*

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