



Florida Veteran

Vietnam and All Veterans of Florida, Inc.

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April 2016

Volume 15 - Issue 1

Florida's 29th Annual Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion

Sunday, April 17th The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall, The Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom Tribute Panels Walls will be escorted from Eastern State College Cocoa Campus, Clearlake Road at 10 am. Be there an hour earlier for line up. We are going to need help at the Wall Escort selling T -Shirts, flags, and help with the parking lot control. If you would like to help, please contact Doc Russo at 321-652-4185 or e-mail at RaRusso1962@gmail.com or for Escort Info e-mail reunionescort@aol.com.

ESC has always been a big supporter of the Reunion and they said we could use their parking lot forever if we clean it up when we are done, so please help police it up before you pull out. There will be coffee & donuts available that morning for a donation courtesy of the USA River Rats. More than 1500 motorcycles and vehicles took part in the escort last year and several joined in along the way. We should arrive about 11am at Wickham Park. At the back pavilions the VVB will host a covered dish picnic, grilling hamburgers & hot dogs to feed the many volunteers there to help set up the memorial displays. Please bring a covered dish or snack foods to share. Anyone with large drink containers are asked to please bring them filled with iced tea, lemonade, Kool-aid or even water to share with the many hot & thirsty workers. We will have plenty of cups, plates and napkins. There is so much to do, but with everyone pitching in it is easily accomplished. The sign-up book will be at the Wall Set-up, please remember to volunteer some of your time throughout the week.

Opening Ceremony is Monday evening April 18th starting with the Wreath presentations at 6 PM with the guest speakers starting at 7:00pm and will feature the presentation of colors, several speakers who support the Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion, a rifle salute and taps. The memorials will be open to the public 24 hours a day through April 24th. It will be a busy week and we will need lots of help this year to set up the tents, generators and light trees.

The Tentative schedule of events is listed to the right.

"AMERICA ALWAYS FIRST"

2016 Tentative Schedule of Events

Sunday- Apr 17

10:00am Wall Escort from Eastern State College
(formerly BCC) Cocoa

12:00pm Doc Holiday, Covered Dish Picnic and Wall Set-Up

Monday- Apr 18

6:00pm Presentation of wreaths

7:00pm Opening Ceremonies at the Wall

Thursday- Apr 21

3:00pm Doc Holiday

6:30-8:00pm Russ Kellum Band

9:00-11:00pm Absolute Blue Band

Friday- Apr 22

11:00am Doc Holiday

1:30-3:00pm Two Of Diamonds

3:00pm K9 Demonstration Main Stage Area

4:00-5:30pm The Gypsy Rain Band

6:30-8:00pm The Last Chance Band

9:00-11:00pm Time Machine Tribute to the 80's Band

Saturday- Apr 25

11:00am Opening Ceremonies/Massing of the
Colors/LZ Helicopter Landing

12:00pm Doc Holiday

1:00-2:30pm Two of Diamonds

3:00pm Marines Take The Hill Main Stage Area

3:30-5:00pm Greg and Brian

5:30-6:00 Rev John Steer

6:00-7:00pm Suncoast Vietnam Vets "The Last Patrol"

7:00-8:30pm Somkin Country Band

9:30-11:30pm Horsepower Ban "Tribute to Lynyrd
Skynyrd"

Sunday- Apr 26

10:00am Church Services By Rev. John Steer

11:00am Doc Holiday

1:00-3:00pm Buckshot Band

4:00pm Melbourne Municipal Band at the Wall

5:00pm Closing Ceremony at the Wall

Monday- Apr 27

9:00am Cleanup Wickham Park and Wall Take
Down

Brought to you by the Vietnam and
All Veterans of Brevard, Inc.

PLEASE - NO COOLERS, GLASS OR PETS IN REUNION OR
MEMORIAL AREA

Schedule is tentative and subject to change

The Vietnam and all Veterans of Florida State Coalition would like to recognize the following members/organizations for awards that were presented at our Annual Banquet held this past January. Honor Release Return - Organization of the Year, Chris Bischoff - Veteran of the Year, Kiki Carter - Member of the Year. This year we also present several young adults/young children with special awards for their various efforts in support of veterans. This age group ranged from 5 - 14 years old. We would like to congratulate Ruari Voisey, Anthony Mathews-Carter, Madelynn Earrusso, Isabella Earrusso, Destiney Carter and Jake Burton for all they have done and will continue to do to help and honor veterans.

In addition, our 2016 executive board members are: Robert "Doc" Neitzel, President, "Big" Al Diaz 1st Vice President, Ralph Earrusso 2nd Vice President, Roberta Neitzel, Secretary, Jacque Earrusso, Treasurer and Van Carter, Sgt of Arms.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Vietnam and All Veterans State Coalition, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all to the 29th Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion. The membership of the VVB has been hard at work all year to bring this Reunion to fruition once again and I would like to thank each and every one of them for their dedication to helping and honoring ALL veterans.

As I begin my fifth year as the President of the Coalition, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all members once again for giving me the distinct honor of representing them as their President.

This year's theme of the VVB's 29th Reunion is America Always Fists. I personally believe that this rings so true...with all that is going on in the world today, we must defend our freedom, after all isn't this what every veteran and active duty member takes an oath to do: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same" unfortunately at this juncture in time it is sometimes hard to determine exactly who the enemy is and it is becoming more apparent that we must remain ever so vigilant here in this country because one no longer knows where that enemy might strike next.

I have stated this before and it is getting more and more important and urgent. A focal point for many organizations as of late is membership - we, the Vietnam Vets are not getting any younger and we need to find ways to attract our younger vets (Desert Storm, OEF, OIF) into our ranks. We need their involvement not only to assist them in obtaining their benefits and to help them readjust to civilian life, but we will need to pass the torch to them - they will be the ones to carry on for us once we are gone. We all need to reach out to

them and get them involved. The sooner the better. I believe it is our responsibility to them to guide them and to make sure they know from us, their peers, that they are welcomed and supported by fellow veterans.

I find that most organizations have similar goals to that of the coalition - to get information out to our fellow brothers and sisters so they can obtain assistance and to ensure that the Veteran community is not forgotten and that legislation to assist us is proposed and passed. An issue here is that most times, each organization has their own agenda and only pursues the issues that they are concerned with. If we cannot agree amongst ourselves as to the importance or priorities of these issues and direct these to our politicians, then our voices will never be heard by our State and Federal Legislators. If we as organizations cannot unite on issues pertaining to all of us, and cannot determine the best way to fund these issues, then we fail as organizations as our goals outlined in most of our charters and/or by-laws have fallen to the wayside and have been long forgotten.

I would like to invite all to discuss with their general membership joining the State Coalition, to participate in our quarterly meetings held throughout the State of Florida and to take advantage of all the information that is disseminated from our member organizations. The Coalition is a voting member of the Florida Veterans Council and with your organization becoming a member of ours, your voice can be directed and heard where it is important. I believe you will find as I have stated, that the goals of the State Coalition are not so different from yours and we need to unite - We all served together, fought together and we are now all fighting for the rights of veterans - shouldn't this be a united front ?

I also would like to mention as most of you who live in Florida may be aware, Governor Rick Scott has been travelling around the State present the Governor's Veterans Service Award. This is a medallion that Rick Scott personally presents to each veteran that attends as a way to thank you for your service. All Honorably discharged Veterans of all ages are welcome to attend. Wearing of Veteran-related headgear is encouraged and you must provide some form of identification that validates your veteran status (DD-214, VA ID Card, Retirement ID, Military ID, etc...). You are also permitted to bring up to three guests. I had been hesitant to go as I believed it would be a typical political event. There was an event in Deland recently and Roberta suggested (actually insisted) I attend. To my surprise, there were over 300 veterans that attended, no political BS...There was several dignitaries who each said a few words, the Governor arrived, made his opening statement and then one by one, we went up on the stage and he thanks us for our service, shook our hand, placed the medallion around our neck, and took a photo with each one of us. You were not asked to stay for all presentations. These events take place every few months and the location does change so you do not have to travel too far, the Governor's office announces it about a month in advance and they request you fill out a brief online registration/reservation form. I would suggest if given the opportunity you attend the ceremony and receive the Veterans Service Award.

Keep all active duty service members in your thoughts and prayers and please pray that each and every one of them ALWAYS return home to their loved ones safely.

Respectfully yours,
Robert "Doc" Neitzel
President, Vietnam and All Veterans
of Florida State Coalition



The Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard---About Us

A small group of Vietnam veterans in Central Brevard started to meet in 1985 to help each other to deal with lingering issues from the Vietnam War. In 1986 it developed a philosophy and a purpose to attract other Vietnam Vets and formally organized. The primary goal was to assist other veterans. The camaraderie was the glue that developed into a program to help those with PTSD symptoms and the concomitant problems associated with it such as substance abuse and homelessness.

An area of great concern was the POW/MIA unresolved problem and the actions of the government to deal with it honestly. It is still a frustrating matter that we continue to pursue.

Within two years, the VVB organized and hosted its first Vietnam Veterans Reunion. This event eventually became famous throughout the country and today is *the* premier event of its kind. After the Gulf War it became evident that the problems faced by Vietnam Veterans were not much different than those faced by subsequent generations and we began a systematic effort to welcome all veterans into the VVB. We changed our name in 2000 to reflect that commitment at that year's reunion and by 2003 the Vietnam Veterans of Brevard officially became the Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard (we still abbreviate to VVB to, well, to abbreviate).

From the start efforts were made to find a place for distressed veterans to go to regroup and get back on their feet. The story cannot be told in this brief synopsis but suffice it to say, we stumbled our way to it. In fact, we did it ourselves and the hard work and perseverance of those who got it off the ground cannot be understated. We call it the Veterans Transitional Facility and since 1990 it has helped thousands of local vets, which include their families, get back on track. Today the program houses 20 vets and their family members at any given time and sets the pace for a smooth transition back into the mainstream of life. Those that have taken advantage of the opportunity never forget.

Our Reunion depended on various organizations to provide the sacred centerpiece, a mobile Memorial Wall. Getting those commitments coordinated were sometimes nail biting scary. In 2005 we came close to not having one; so we decided to build one. In less than a year, with the committed efforts of several local businesses, Brevard citizens, a laid off vet and other VVB volunteers we had our own Wall on display at our Reunion in 2006. In addition, we make The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall available for other events throughout the country.

Those are the stars of the VVB but in no way are the only services we offer to the veteran community here in Brevard and even beyond. We have a Color Guard and Rifle Team who manage to come together for local events and memorials in spite of the fact that they must coordinate their own work schedules to accomplish those duties. We provide veterans to speak to school students about the experience of war firsthand, beyond what they find in the history books. There is a mobile museum available for community events where citizens can touch the experience; even smell it. Our newsletter has been published since day one and is the source for other events, projects and activities in which we and other veterans groups are involved.

So what about membership? The most common theme heard at reunions for not joining is—I'm not a Vietnam vet. But that isn't a requirement to join. We are an organization dedicated to the support of our local *veteran community*. A veteran who served in peacetime, a veteran's family and any citizen that wishes to lend

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the new VVB president I would like to wish each and everyone a Happy New Year, as well as, a prosperous one. Let us all as veterans come together no matter the organization to help our fellow vets, and to promote fellowship between us all.

I also feel strongly about insuring that the youth of today learns of the many sacrifices of our military has made to make this country great! Too often this is overlooked and/or forgotten.

As we approach the 29th annual reunion I would like to invite everyone to come on out and participate and make this another great year and a great reunion!

Thank you,

**Ranger Bob
President**

Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard

I would like to start by saying THANK YOU to Greg Walsh and Ralph Earrusso for their many years of service to, and guidance with getting me ready for my new position as Reunion Chairman. I would like to thank Doc Holliday for stepping up to become my Vice Chairman as well. This year is looking to be another great year (weather permitting). Good music, good displays good vendors and good fun.

Set-up for the Reunion will be Saturday, April 16th. The Traveling Wall Escort will be on Sunday, April 17th. The Wall Escort will leave from Eastern Florida State College (formerly BBC) at 10:00AM and the Reunion will be held from April 21st through April 24th. Clean up will then be held on Monday, April 25th and we can always use your help please!

For more information and updates, please visit us at: <http://www.floridaveteransreunion.com> (Florida Veterans Reunion)

We look forward to seeing you for set-up and beyond!

**Doc Russo
Reunion Chairman**

hands-on support of veterans is part of that community. The Vietnam veterans who started the VVB never intended it to be an exclusive club. They recognized that family members and friends were also affected by the times in which the War took place and as we grew, new generations and their families were welcomed as their own Eras unfolded.

The only requirement for membership in the VVB is a \$20.00 check and a desire to support your veteran community. Many members will assist at the reunion. Others find they're best suited for other activities. So if you like what you've read so far, give our Membership Chairman a call. Information can be found on our website shown below.

For more about us and our work check out the website at www.vietnamandallveteransofbrevard.com

VVB Mailing Address

Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard, Inc.

PO Box 237225

Cocoa, FL 32923-7225

The Wall Report

Well, 2015 was a great year for the Wall! Before our first event in April, we finished a major overhaul of a new powder coating for the entire wall. We then hit the road doing 18 events with the last one being in November at The Villages.

2016 is looking to be another busy year with 15 events scheduled. These include two events in Florida other than our reunion. With the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War, people call and email every day. 2017 is just about full already.

Our Traveling Memorial Wall website has a new look. Check it out at: <http://www.travelingwall.us/>

Here's to a successful new year!

Richard "Doc" Russo
Wall Manager

You can check our schedule at www.travelingwall.us

FLORIDA DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION



**Dedicated Unhesitating Service To Our
Fighting Forces**

"So Others May Live"

On behalf of Florida Dustoff Association I would like to take a moment to say "Welcome Home" and welcome to the 29th Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard Reunion. The Florida Dustoff Association is comprised of Dustoff Medics, Pilots, Corpsmen, Donut Dollies, Med-Evacs and many whom themselves have been "dusted-off" from the Vietnam, Desert Storm, OIF and OEF. Please stop by our campsite in Camp Ground B at this year's coming reunion if you are one of the above to say hello, or are interested in joining our organization. **ALL ARE WELCOMED AT DUSTOFF!!**

This past years elected officers are: Bob "Doc" Neitzel President, Ron "Doc" Custer Vice President, Roberta Neitzel, Secretary and Treasurer and Doc Combs, Chaplin.

Members of Florida Dustoff participate in numerous veterans related events in conjunction with other local organizations...Stand downs, Welcome Home programs, packages to our troops, Wreaths Across America, to name a few. We all strive for the same end result...taking care of our fellow brothers and sisters. I would like to Congratulate to all recipients of awards last year: Member of the Year – Chris "Pegleg" Hamrick Certificate of Appreciation for Service to Dustoff – Jacque Earrusso, Ralph Earrusso, Hjordis Sauerwine, Bill Sauerwine, Michelle Wakefield, Rose Fantaccione, Bobbi Jo Dino, Anthony Mathews-Carter, Larry Dutro. Steve Doan, Nancy Church and John Patton, Chris Hamrick to name a few. Plaques were also presented to the USA River Rats Honor Guard and State Senator Dorothy Hukill

Robert Neitzel – President Florida Dustoff

"WHEN I HAVE YOUR WOUNDED"



USA RIVER RATS

Wow it is 2016 already. Where has the time gone?

We have lost another 3 members in 2015. Robert "Jukebox" Nyland, Dennis "Bionic" Evans and Linda "Sgt Smurf" Walker. They will be missed.

Vista Manor Nursing Home will welcome us again this year with our usual events which are Easter Dinner, Fourth of July Cookout, Fun Day and Thanksgiving. They submitted an article to the local newspaper about our events that we do every year. They also put an article in their newsletter thanking us.

The Medal of Honor Park is planning on moving forward this year. We are a 501(c)3 and are looking for donations and support for building this great tribute to all of our Medal of Honor recipients. If you or your organization is interested in making a donation, please contact George Golden at 321-693-4281 or Don Flammio at 321-652-0000.

As usual we are looking forward to The Wall Escort on April 17th. We will be assisting with the parking at Eastern State College, will have coffee, soda, water and donuts available (for donations) and will be selling key chains. Please stop by and see us.

We will also be having our Annual Rib Dinner in the camp ground (campsites B74-77) on April 20th. There will be a limited amount of tickets so if you are interested, please contact one of our officers listed below.

You can always check out our website (usariverrats.com) for updates and upcoming events.

If you would like more information, or would like to consider membership in our organization, please feel free to contact any officer listed below.

President	Al "Big Al" Diaz	321-863-0575
1 st Vice	Richard "Woodchuck" Gilliland	321-636-5538
2 nd Vice	Bill "Chapy" Chapman	321-403-4518
Treasurer	Al "Gunner" Dudley	321-258-3098
Secretary	Michelle "Screamer" Wakefield	321-323-4382
Chaplain	Janis "Bubbette" Worrell	321-698-0659
Quarter Master	Susan "Stitch" Chapman	321-403-9301
Historian	Rosemary "Rosebud" Diaz	321-403-5875
Sr Sgt @ Arms	Skip "Grease Monkey"	321-431-3352
Sgt @ Arms	Greg "Clueless" Boyle	321-327-4575
Asst Sgt @ Arms	Jerry "Wolverine" Celona	321-431-3352
Asst Sgt @ Arms	Kathy "RC Chopper" Fenocchi	321-243-0306
Asst Sgt @ Arms	Robert "Tailhook" Franklin	321-458-2843
Asst Sgt @ Arms	Linda "Radar" Patricks	321-427-5756
Asst Sgt @ Arms	Bobbie Jo "BAD" Dino	321-302-4781

Asst Sgt @ Arms	Greg "Clueless" Boyle	321-327-4575
Asst Sgt @ Arms	Gordon "Flash" Benson	717-571-3199
Asst Sgt @ Arms	Linda "Clueless 2" Boreske	321-271-6922
SR Advisor	Steve "Scarecrow" Worrell	321-698-0009
Advisor	Al "Gunner" Dudley	321-258-3098
Advisor	Robert "Dustoff" Neitzel	386-527-5445
Advisor	Wayne "Wayneo" Smith	321-698-5689

USA RIVER RATS
Michelle Wakefield
Secretary

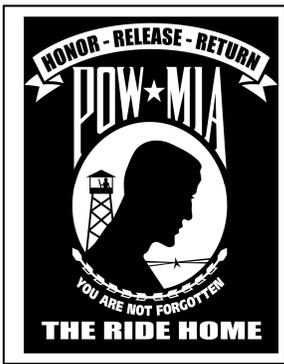


The Vietnam Brotherhood is an in-country, fraternal association of Vietnam Veterans. The Vietnam Brotherhood's organizational purpose is first social. However, the stated desire of the membership and officers are to help one another support our respective communities through charitable drives and donations as well as support Veterans' rights issues and all other legal activities common to Veterans organizations. Our goals include:

- To help each other in our separate Company's
- To help other Vietnam Veterans
- To help other Veterans
- To help our community
- To educate the public about the true Vietnam Veteran
- To teach the young, so it does not happen again
- To be **Proud** to be in a free nation, under **God**.

We invite all In-Country Veterans who still remember the brotherhood we once had to re-light the fire. The Vietnam Brotherhood was born to serve you, not for you to become a servant.

Our website address is www.vietnambrotherhood.us please check us out.



HONOR-RELEASE -RETURN, Inc.

3818 Litchfield Loop Lake Wales, Florida 33859

www.honorreleasereturn.com

The Mission

Working for the repatriation of live American Prisoners of War in any form of captivity world-wide. To devote all available manpower and resources of the organization to build political support through education and attain mission favorable outcomes. To craft and pass effective legislation, gain government action and success in repatriating Prisoners of War and those still Missing in Action. To act as a catalyst for the POW/MIA community through communication, organization and coordination of efforts to foster common success of all and nurture a universal will to account for all the missing.

The Name

Why the name Honor Release Return? We have come together to take action and restore **honor** to our government by stopping the dishonor and hold them accountable. Our government has abandoned young patriots in captivity and we have come together to gain the **release** of their person alive or their remains and to **return** them to their country, their home and their family. This is our mission and this is our strategy. Truth and honor are our sabers. We will wield them unrelentingly and expertly, no matter how long the fight, until they all come home.

The Reason

Unaccounted for American Military Personal

WWI WWII Korea Cold War Vietnam War on Terror

3,344 73,677 7,926 126 1,654 6

Our Demands

1. U.S.G. formally request the return of all live Americans who are unaccounted for, in captivity or being detained in any foreign country
2. U.S.G. under take all measures necessary to repatriate all Americans who are unaccounted for, in captivity or being detained in any foreign country.
3. U.S.G. under take all measures necessary to obtain all information held and/or known by foreign governments, groups and individuals concerning all Americans who are now or who have been unaccounted for at any time.
4. All information, in any form regardless of when or how obtained, pertaining to Americans unaccounted for prior to 1991 be declassified and made available for public inspection.
5. Funding of all actions to account for Americans who are unaccounted for be fully funded by the U.S.G.
6. All remains recovered in association with unaccounted for Americans, past, present and future, be identified and/or confirmed using the latest scientific means and that all remains be tested and analyzed for age at death using minimal remains to allow for a 2nd, independent DNA analysis if family members so desire.

It is time for Americans to **STAND** for those who **CANNOT STAND** for themselves.

CONTACT US Together we can make happen!

BOB "Bulldog" Ousley bousle19@comcast.com

Jim "Moe" Moyer moehog@verizon.net



SEMPER FIDELIS AMERICA, INC

Semper Fidelis America Inc. was started by Founder and President James R. Martina (Papa Smurf) who did six tours in Vietnam and was one of the few U.S. Marines attached to help at Hamburger Hill. His vision was to help other veterans in need. Today Semper Fidelis America holds numerous yearly functions to help raise money for our military brothers and their families. Our group reaches out to many other organizations. Semper Fidelis America Inc. is a not for profit organization.

Our mission is to support the VA Convalescent home located in Baldwin Park at 5201 Raymond Street Orlando, Florida. We hold numerous yearly functions in order to raise money to help these veterans. Our organization is not for profit, so all the proceeds from our functions go to veterans in need and their families. We also work together with other organizations such as Vietnam Veterans of Central Florida caretakers of National Vietnam War Museum also located in Orlando. Youth organizations, such as Orlando Devil Dog Young Marines, which always help with our yearly dinners for disabled veterans.

JOHN MURPHY
PRESIDENT

Support Florida's Veterans and Our Mission by Supporting the Walk of Honor

The Florida Veterans Foundation's main mission is to provide emergency assistance to Florida veterans and their families who are having financial difficulties which cannot be resolved by the veteran or other veteran service organizations. Most of these situations will develop into a catastrophic situation such as homelessness, if the situation is not solved promptly. Many cases that the Foundation handles involves Service Connected Disabled Veterans. Read more about our emergency assistance program go to <http://www.floridaveteransfoundation.org>. After receiving a bona-fide application for assistance from a veteran,

the Foundation responds to the emergency within 24 to 48 hours with a solution as warranted by the facts of the situation. Last year, the Foundation expended well over \$200,000.00 helping Florida's veterans and their families, and assisted over 700 Florida Veterans by providing financial support to those who fit Foundation guidelines, or by providing information on veteran resources such as; available benefits for disability claims, benefits to widows, education resources, housing, etc. Because of the vast amount of services we provide, the Foundation needs your help. You can help support our efforts to Serve, Support and Advocate for our Florida Veterans by donating, volunteering or by purchasing a brick to honor a loved one. Please help us make a difference in our Florida heroes' lives.

The Florida Veterans Walk of Honor will accommodate 25,000 engraved bricks. There are presently 1.5 million veterans residing in the State of Florida. Your engraved brick will be placed on a first come, first serve basis. Therefore, the first 25,000 engraved bricks will be the ones placed in the Florida Veterans Walk of Honor at our State Capitol. *On November 12, 2014*, Governor Scott placed the first memorialized engraved brick into the Florida Veterans Walk of Honor. The Veterans Walk of Honor measures 12 feet wide by 500 feet long, and connects both the old and new Capitol buildings, the House and Senate Buildings and the Florida Veterans Memorial. The heart of the Veterans Walk of Honor will consist of engraved bricks which are being offered to veterans, families and friends of veterans. The proceeds from the sale of the engraved bricks will go to the Florida Veterans Foundation, the Direct Support organization to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs to help further the Foundation's mission to Serve, Support and Advocate for our Florida Veterans. To order your brick to go <http://www.floridaveteransfoundation.org>.

The Florida Veterans Foundation is composed of all volunteers, with the exception of one (1) Executive Assistant to the volunteer Chairman. The majority of the Foundation Directors are retired military disabled veterans who volunteer their time to provide aid and assistance to our Florida Veterans who are less fortunate than themselves. Most of our Directors work more than 48 hours per week on the Foundation's mission.

We urge you to help the Foundation get the word out to all of our brave Veterans and military personnel who have, and still are, putting their lives on the line each and every day to protect our citizens. These brave men and women signed a blank check, up to and including their lives. Many Florida veterans that we assist have debilitating injuries, have PTSD or other service related injuries, with some who are having difficulties re-integrating back into society. It is the Foundation's mission to ensure that none of our Florida Veterans are left behind or forgotten. We need your help.

If our office can answer any questions on the Walk of Honor program, please call (850) 488-4181 or email ridleyr@fdva.state.fl.us

Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) Modifications

The Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) was to be modified on February 8th, 2016 to implement the VA Service-Connected Disability. The EDRS will allow the funeral director to notify the certifying physician that the decedent may have a service-connected disability.

The VA brochure has been modified and is intended to educate the deceased veteran's families and the physicians with identifying

possible service related disabilities when filling out cause of death on death records. All EDRS users will receive an e-mail explaining the enhancement to e-vitals and how to notify the certifying physician.

Basically, if the check box on the decedent tab, for "Was Decedent Ever in U.S. Armed Forces?" is checked, then EDRS will open another check box asking "Did a service-connected disability contribute to the veteran's death?". If the service-connected disability checkbox is checked too, doctors are notified two different ways:

1) If the certifier is an online doctor, EDRS will send an email message with verbiage related to the cause of death and a service-connected disability possibly being a contributing factor should be indicated in the cause of death portion; or

2) if the certifier is offline/fax attestation, then the funeral director will fax a generic letter to the doctor with the same verbiage in the email to the online doctor. This generic letter may be printed from EDRS directly or they can photocopy extras to keep on hand. This letter is manually faxed to the offline doctor by the funeral director and is not sent automatically by EDRS. EDRS users include funeral directors, medical examiners and online physicians.

For this program to be as effective as possible, it is imperative that the veteran and their families provide all physicians providing care a copy of the VA Disability Rating Letter so they are familiar with their disability. If the veteran dies, the family should remind the physician and the funeral director that the veteran had service-connected disabilities. Hopefully, this change will assist veteran's families in obtaining benefits and compensation due to them.

Women's Memorial Foundation seeks veterans to register

The Women in Military Service for America Memorial here allows women to record their role in the nation's heritage.

Dedicated in 1997, the memorial is the only national memorial honoring women who have served in our nation's defense in all eras and in all services. It is located next to Arlington National Cemetery. According to the memorial's website, 2.5 million women have served in defense of the nation since the beginning more than 230 years ago; however, only 250,000 of these women are registered with the memorial.

Registration is not automatic. Service women, past or present, must register themselves. People can also register women they know of who served. Memorial officials ask women to share their stories and encourage other service women to do the same.

Registration is free; however, people may make a donation. Visit www.womensmemorial.org and click on "Membership" to register. To register by mail, contact the memorial staff at 703-533-1155 or 800-222-2294 to request a registration form, or write: Women in Military Service for American Memorial Foundation, Dept. 560, Washington, DC, 20042-560.

Groundbreaking for the memorial took place June 22, 1995. Total cost of building the memorial was \$22 million. In building the memorial, support came from federal grants; proceeds from the sales of commemorative silver dollars; and corporate, organization and individual donations.

Women Veterans Organizations, Resources and Websites

Our women veterans are an integral part of our Military Service. From the time of the American Revolution thru today, women have served our Country. Their roles and missions have changed over the years. Today Women are doing jobs in the Military that are critical for our National Defense and many are doing those jobs on the front lines.

There are a number of organizations that exist specifically for Women Veterans. Some are specific to unique women veterans, others are broader in their membership. You can find a list of many of these organizations by GOING TO <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-jMscbxDg2KVkZQUWQ1OF9FTVE/view?pref=2&pli=1>

Two other valuable resources:

-Veterans Administration has a wealth of information for Women Veterans. Go TO <http://www.va.gov/womenvet/> for the VA Main page for Women Vets.

- A new Women Veterans website is now available. This new website is <https://womenvetsusa.org>

Also, for those of you who may be interested, a Women Veterans license plate is supposed to be available for purchase between now and June. All the proceeds from the plates go to Women Veteran's Outreach. If you would like to see a sample of the tag go to this link <http://www.flhsmv.gov/html/tagbrochure.pdf> and then scroll to the bottom of page 13.

In addition, The Florida Department of Veterans Affairs will be having a conference June 15-16 2016 at the Mark Lance National Guard Amory at 190 San Marco Avenue in St Augustine Fl. It is open to all women who have served or are currently serving in the military. There will be guest speakers, informational and outreach booths for benefits and assistance, you can learn about local and state resources. Etc, For additional information, go to http://floridavets.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Women-Veterans-Conference-Flyer_2016.pdf#page=1&zoom=auto,-265,746.

BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO FLORIDA VETERANS

Most of these benefits have already been in this newsletter before at one point or another, but we felt they are certainly worth mentioning once again:

Basic Property Tax Exemptions

Eligible resident veterans with a VA certified service-connected disability of 10 percent or greater shall be entitled to a \$5,000 property tax exemption. The veteran must establish this exemption with the county tax official in the county in which he or she resides by providing documentation of this disability.

The unremarried surviving spouse of such a disabled ex-service

member, who on the date of the disabled ex-service member's death had been married to the ex-service member for at least five years, is also entitled to this exemption. (FS 196.24)

Additional Property Tax Exemptions

Any real estate owned and used as a homestead by a veteran who was honorably discharged and has been certified as having a service-connected, permanent and total disability, is exempt from taxation if the veteran is a permanent resident of Florida and has legal title to the property on January 1 of the tax year for which exemption is being claimed. (FS 196.081(1))

Any real estate owned and used as a homestead by the surviving spouse of an Armed Forces member who died from service-connected causes while on active duty is exempt from taxation if the member was a permanent resident of Florida on January 1 of the year in which the member died. (FS 196.081(4)(a))

If, upon the death of the veteran, the spouse holds the legal or beneficial title to the homestead and permanently resides there, the exemption from taxation carries over to the benefit of the veteran's spouse until such time as he or she remarries, sells, or otherwise disposes of the property. If the spouse sells the property, an exemption not to exceed the amount granted from the most recent ad valorem tax roll may be transferred to the new residence as long as it is used as the primary residence and the spouse does not remarry. (FS 196.081(3))

Any partially disabled veteran who is age 65 or older, any portion of whose disability was combat-related, and who was honorably discharged, may be eligible for a discount from the amount of ad valorem tax on the homestead commensurate with the percentage of the veteran's permanent service-connected disability. Eligible veterans should apply for this benefit at the county property appraiser's office. (FS 196.082)

Any real estate used and owned as a homestead by any quadriplegic is exempt from taxation. Veterans who are paraplegic, hemiplegic, or permanently and totally disabled who must use a wheelchair for mobility, or are legally blind, may be exempt from real estate taxation. Check with your local property appraiser to determine if gross annual household income qualifies. The veteran must be a resident of Florida. (FS 196.101)

Service members entitled to homestead exemption in this state, and who are unable to file in person by reason of such service, may file through next of kin or a duly authorized representative. (FS 196.071)

VETERAN BENEFITS: MOTOR VEHICLE, LICENSING AND FEE EXEMPTIONS

"V" for Veteran Designation on Driver License

Florida's veterans can add a veteran designation to their driver license or identification card. To add the "V" to a license or ID card, veterans can visit any Florida driver license office, to include those operated by county tax collectors. Requirements:

1) present a discharge document which shows an honorable discharge from active duty; 2) pay a one-time \$1 fee, in addition

to the replacement or renewal fee. If it is too soon to renew your license, you can pay a one-time \$2 fee plus other applicable service fees; 3) visit www.GatherGoGet.com to ensure you have all other documents. Veterans who need to obtain a copy of their DD-214 may request it online at www.archives.gov/veterans

Note: The word "Veteran" will replace the "V" on future editions of the driver license and identification card.

100% Disabled Veteran State ID Card

A disabled veteran ID card may be issued by the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs to any veteran who is a permanent resident of the state and is determined by the VA or Department of Defense to have a 100% service-connected, permanent and total disability rating. (FS 295.17) The card may be used as proof of eligibility for any state benefit except exemption of homestead property taxes. For more information, call (727) 319-7440.

Driver License & State ID Fee Exemptions

Any honorably discharged veteran who has a valid FDVA disabled veteran ID card or who has been determined to have a 100% total and permanent service-connected disability and is qualified to obtain a driver license is generally exempt from all fees. However, a fee may be applied to drivers seeking to reinstate a license. (FS 322.21(7))

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles or a county tax collector may issue or renew a state identification card to a person who presents evidence that he or she is homeless without payment of the fees required.

A \$6.25 fee may apply in offices operated by county tax collectors. Homeless veterans may prove their status with a letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that establishes eligibility in the HUD-VASH program.

Disabled Veteran Motor Vehicle License Plate

An honorably discharged veteran who has been a resident of Florida continuously for the past five years or who has established a domicile in Florida, as provided by FS 222.17, may apply for one free disabled veteran "DV" license plate for an owned or leased vehicle. The veteran must provide proof of a service-connected 100-percent disability rating or that the vehicle was acquired through VA financial assistance. Note: Free license plates with a wheelchair emblem are available for those veterans permanently confined to a wheelchair and who otherwise qualify for a DV plate. Service charges may apply. (FS 320.084) For eligibility requirements and more information, call (850) 617-2000 or visit <http://www3.flhsmv.gov/dmv/Proc/rs/RS-17.pdf>

Handicapped Toll Permit

Licensed drivers who operate a vehicle specially equipped for the handicapped, and are certified by a licensed physician or the VA as having permanent upper limb impairments/disabilities substantially affecting their ability to deposit coins in toll baskets, shall pass free through all toll gates. A window sticker from the Florida Department of Transportation must be obtained and displayed. (FS 338.155(3))

Disabled Veterans' Exemption from Fees

Total and permanently disabled Florida veterans are exempt from county and municipality building license or permit fees when making certain improvements to their residence in order to make the dwelling habitable or safe. Restrictions apply. (FS 295.16)

Florida State Park Discount Passes

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection provides a 25-percent discount on annual passes to Florida's State Parks for all active duty and honorably discharged veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserve units of the U.S. Armed Forces or National Guard. The pass is available for purchase at any Florida State Park staffed ranger station. Veterans with service-related disabilities, surviving spouses and parents of members of the U.S. military who have fallen in combat, and law enforcement officers and firefighters who have died in the line of duty, will receive a free lifetime family annual entrance pass. The free annual pass can only be obtained at a staffed ranger station. For specific details, call (850) 245-2157 or visit www.FloridaStateParks.org.

Hunting and Fishing

The Military Gold Sportsman's License is available for a reduced fee of \$20 to any resident who is an active or retired member of the U. S. Armed Forces, U. S. Armed Forces Reserve, National Guard, U. S. Coast Guard, or Coast Guard Reserve upon submission of a current military ID card. For more information, visit <http://myfwc.com/license/recreational/military-gold/>. The license is only available at tax collector's offices.

State hunting and fishing licenses and permits shall be issued without fees for five years to any veteran who is a Florida resident, certified or determined to be 100% totally and permanently disabled by the VA or the U.S. Armed Forces, or who has been issued a valid disabled veteran ID card by FDVA. For more information, visit <http://myfwc.com> (FS 379.353).

The Division of Forestry has designated areas of state forests as Operation Outdoor Freedom Special Hunt Areas. Active duty members and veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces with combat-related injuries have access to specialized hunting areas that are adapted to assist their needs. For more information, visit www.OperationOutdoorFreedom.org (FS 589.19).

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission makes it easier for Florida veterans to enter the commercial fishing industry. Applicants should visit www.MyFWC.com/License and click on Commercial Saltwater Products or call (850) 487-3122.

Mica Bill Transfers Lake Baldwin Nursing Home to Florida VA

Washington, DC – Congressman John L. Mica's (FL-07) bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives today to transfer the vacant 120 bed nursing center at the Lake Baldwin VA medical complex from the federal government to the State of Florida. The transfer from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) will expedite the process of re-opening those nursing care beds for Central Florida's veterans.

“This transfer is vital to speed up the reopening of the Lake Baldwin VA Community Living Center and to make these beds available for our aging veteran population. The FDVA can accomplish this faster with less cost and operate the facility more efficiently than the VA,” Rep. Mica said. “Currently, the FDVA operates seven nursing homes and has agreed to acquire and operate the nursing facility left vacant after a new nursing care unit was opened two years ago at the Lake Nona Veterans medical complex. I have received concurrence from the U.S. Senate, and I hope to have the measure passed through that body to speed up the reopening of these needed nursing beds.”

In 2014, Congressman Mica received direct assurance from VA Secretary Bob MacDonald that the Lake Baldwin VA Clinic would remain operational after the opening of the new Orlando VA Center at Lake Nona. The Lake Baldwin Nursing Center, opened in 1999 as part of the VA complex, has been serving the past year as a staging area for the new VA Center since nursing patients were moved to Lake Nona last year.

Mica’s Bill, HR 4056, to Authorize VA to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States in the property known as “The Community Living Center” at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida, is supported by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the State of Florida Department of Veterans Affairs and national veterans organizations.

DPAA Reaches Full Operation Capability Status

By Lt. Col. Eric Bjorklund
Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency
Feb. 1, 2016 --

In the year since being established as a Defense Agency on Jan. 1, 2015, the **Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA)** has accomplished a critical milestone, reaching “full operational capability” or “FOC” on Jan. 8, 2016. This declaration signifies the completion of the reorganization of the Department of Defense’s legacy past conflict accounting organizations into a single, unified defense agency.

During the reorganization efforts of 2015, the DoD never ceased its efforts to account for missing personnel from past conflicts and provide information to the families of our missing, but the full establishment of DPAA as a defense agency now enables the mission to be done more effectively and efficiently.

“I’m very excited about achieving FOC status as it postures the [Defense] Department’s accounting community in a better position to fulfill our noble and important mission,” DPAA Director, retired Army Lt. Gen. Michael Linnington, said. “Now is the time to sharpen our focus, increase our efforts, and maximize all aspects of our accounting efforts to better provide answers to the families of our missing.”

Over the last year, DPAA has steadily attained many milestones that have led to FOC.

The Secretary of Defense approved the name and establishment of the agency on Jan. 29, 2015, and the next day the interim director, now Vice Adm. Michael Franken, held a small ceremony declaring that DPAA had achieved “initial operational capability,” or “IOC.”

Since then, the agency consolidated many administrative functions and developed a new organizational structure. DPAA is now anchored around two regional, multi-disciplinary teams that enable collaboration among researchers, planners, operators, scientists, and a host of other professionals. One region is focused on Asia and the Pacific while the other is Europe-focused.

“This new regional, multi-disciplinary approach will ensure improvement in operations, as team members are not only focused on their specific region, but are also working together in the same location,” said Army Col. Chris Forbes, director of the Europe-Mediterranean regional directorate. “We are now able to work face-to-face, making it easy to interact and conference as needed.”

Another key decision for the new POW/MIA accounting agency was the Deputy Secretary of Defense’s April 2015 decision to clarify the DoD’s policy on disinterring American Unknowns from cemeteries around the world. This decision addressed multiple family concerns about the difficulty of gaining approval to disinter their loved one’s remains, for the purpose of individual identification. The immediate result of this decision was the disinterment of the Unknowns associated with the sinking of the USS Oklahoma at Pearl Harbor, on Dec. 7, 1941.

Establishing unity of purpose under a single agency director for the accounting community was one of the drivers for the Secretary of Defense and Congress’s decision to reorganize. With the appointment of Linnington as the first DPAA Director (in June 2015) and subsequent arrival of his two deputies, Army Brig. Gen. Mark Spindler and Mrs. Fern Sumpter Winbush, this critical objective was met. “I’m proud of all the hard work our team members have put into this reorganization,” Linnington said. “Their dedication and passion for their work made the past year undeniably successful.”

While the reorganization tasks are complete and the agency is operating at full strength, there is still much work to do. The merging of different organizational cultures from the various legacy organizations will take some time to cultivate.

“Each of the three separate organizations naturally had their individual ways of approaching the accounting task,” said Army Lt. Col. Eric Bjorklund, consolidation team leader. “But there was never any dispute about the importance in accomplishing this mission. Now as one team, we can focus on the same priorities and perform the mission better than ever.”

Some of the key recommendations for the new agency to implement will take more years to be fully integrated. For example, the case management system that will improve efficiency to workflows and communicate case information to the families of the missing has begun development, but is expected to take several months to become fully functional.

Another key initiative that is now under development, and is expected to grow significantly in the coming years is the agency’s strategic partnerships with external organizations (public and private) to augment and assist current capacities in all areas of our accounting mission. The Strategic Partnership office was established last summer and is implementing several partnership programs for 2016.

“Our goal is to have many additional professional organizations helping us with the recovery process,” Dr. Tom Holland, director of Strategic Partnerships, said. “We greatly appreciate their expertise, resources and enthusiasm for bringing home the remains of our missing war heroes.”

As DPAA starts 2016 as fully operational, there is great optimism that the agency is better positioned to fulfill its mission to provide

the fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel to their families and the nation.

AGENT ORANGE PRESUMPTIVES

Most of us are familiar with this information, however, due to its importance, I believe it needs to be disseminated once again:

Particularly Vietnam veterans, but also other veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War are presumptively service-connected for several illnesses known to be caused by AO exposure.

Veterans who served in Vietnam which includes in land waterways and in the Korean demilitarized zone during the Vietnam era are presumed to have been exposed to Agent Orange.

What presumption means in practical terms is that veterans who served in Vietnam during the war and to have a "presumed" illness don't have to prove an association between their illnesses and their military service. This was designed to speed up the process of getting veterans with particular illnesses that are listed below to be found service-connected for these conditions. It is known that over 100,000 veterans were exposed to herbicides while serving in Vietnam and other areas.

List of Diseases for Agent Orange Presumption

Illnesses or diseases recognized under the VA's presumption rule as being caused by exposure to herbicides during the Vietnam War include: Ischemic heart disease, B cell leukemia, Parkinson's, AL Amyloidosis, Acute and Subacute Transient Peripheral Neuropathy, Chloracne or other Acneform Disease consistent with Chloracne, Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia, (now being expanded), Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2), Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, Porphyria Cutanea Tarda, Prostate Cancer, Respiratory Cancers (cancers of the lung, bronchus, larynx, or trachea) and Soft Tissue Sarcoma (other than Osteosarcoma, Chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or Mesothelioma). If you are a veteran who served in Vietnam or near the Korean Demilitarized Zone during Vietnam and suffer from anyone of these illnesses you need to file a claim for disability with the VA **and if you were denied in the past you need to reopen your claim.**

For those of you who log on to the DMPO Website for POW/MIA information:

The new link <http://www.dpaa.mil/Home.aspx> will take you to the NEW Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Agency's website.

The DPMO site is still available for viewing but it will no longer be updated.

Please share this information with your members, veteran friends and fellow advocates.

Are you involved with an organization or know of an organization that sends care packages to our troops? If so, please contact Al Diaz @ Bigalchico@yahoo.com. We would like to have this information available to share with individuals or organizations that may like to make a donation, or submit a name of a soldier to receive a care package.

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE COALITION?

There are many benefits to join the Vietnam and All Veterans State Coalition. A voice of many is heard above a voice of one. The coalition meets quarterly at various locations in the State of Florida and we discuss and disseminate information pertaining to veterans and their benefits. To obtain information regarding joining the coalition either as an Organization, or an individual, please visit our website at VVOF.ORG coalition either as an Organization, or an individual, please visit our website at VVOF.ORG

If you, or your organization is already a member of the coalition, and there has been a change in officers, please immediately advise the coalition of these changes, including mailing addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers so we may keep you up-to-date with all pertinent information

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**All inquiries, questions or comments may be directed to the President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer. All articles printed in our newsletters are strictly the opinion of the submitter and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Vietnam and All Veterans of Florida State Coalition or its member organizations.
Updated September 17, 2006**

THE VIETNAM TRAVELING MEMORIAL WALL



About Our Wall

Our Wall is a 3/5 scale of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington DC, it stands six feet tall at the apex and covers almost 300 feet from end to end. The Memorial Wall is sponsored by The Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard (VVB). Work to build our Wall was started in April of 2005. The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall was completed and first shown to the public April 24, 2006.

This Traveling Memorial stands as a reminder of the great sacrifices made during the Vietnam War. It was made for the purpose of helping heal and rekindle friendships. The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall also allows people the opportunity to visit loved ones in their home town, who otherwise may not be able to make the trip to Washington.

The names on The Wall were painstakingly researched from five different data bases and cross-referenced with the Department of Informational and Organizational Reports (DIOR) in Washington, DC, and is one of the most correct and up-to-date traveling wall in the country.

Feel free to take a look at our website www.travelingwall.us, read about what we have to offer. Please contact us with any questions you might have in regards to The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall coming to your town.

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NEWS PLEASE EXPEDITE