



AMVETS Post 1776 Cyber Newsletter

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Commanders Corner....



Hope all is well with our membership. Since my last communique I need to report that after a beautiful trip out West our family got back safe and sound. After -14 degrees in Montana, Florida sure feels good, even with some of the cold mornings we have had recently.

Just a brief update on that disabled veteran we have been helping over the Holidays. Edward has agreed for me to address his story. As of February 1st, Edward a former Marine and now disabled has found an apartment. This, after several weeks of a very rough stretch that not just AMVETS but the Marine Corps League Det. #472, American Legion Post #13 and VFW Post 3308 all contributed financially to helping keep Edward off the streets so to speak. All of this is what has prompted mine and Paul's work on a resource guide for the express purpose to help define just which veterans can and should receive financial help from us or any other veteran service organization. You will see in a separate article in this edition that Paul and I have been working of a veteran resource guide.

In other news, our March membership meeting kicks off our campaign for our Golf Tournament at Golden Eagle. We need to make every effort to engage our community to sponsor and otherwise participate in this major fundraising event for our Post. We had almost 100 golfers last year and was able to use our proceeds to donate to some worthy veteran causes throughout the Big Bend. We are especially looking for some items for our Silent Auction. We had some high dollar gifts last year and ask that if anyone might have a pistol or rifle that they could donate, we could put it in our silent auction and then have an authorized gun dealer to process the transfer of the gun to the winner. Contact Tony Minichiello for details. Don't forget to put April 4th on your calendar, good golf, good food and great fellowship, come on out.

AMVETS National was chartered in 1947 and the Tallahassee AMVETS Post 1776 was chartered in July 2009. AMVETS Post 1776 meets on the first Thursday of the month at American Legion Post 13, 229 Lake Ella Drive Tallahassee, Florida 32303. We invite honorably discharged veterans, including Guard and Reserve, from all branches to join us. We are a small Post doing big things for the veterans in the Tallahassee area. For more information please visit us at:

www.amvets1776.org



AMVETS Post 1776

Tallahassee, Florida

Veterans helping Veterans

Ninth Annual Golf Tournament

April 4, 2022

Golden Eagle Golf and Country Club

We Want YOU!

A veteran is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank check made payable to: "The United States of America" for any amount, up to and including my life.



The Barb by John Folsom

The U.S.S. Barb a Gato class submarine, the only submarine known to have invaded the Japanese islands and sink of all things a freight train. Eugene Fluckey was one of the best-known submarine skippers of WWII. Fluckey commanded the last five war missions of the Barb.

Fluckey took command of the Barb in January 1944.

The War Record of the Barb to date included a carrier, a cruiser, and a frigate. From The period of time between May of 1944 to August of 1945, the Barb sank 29 vessels. According to the Japanese, the Barb sank more tonnage than any other submarine during the war. ON June 8th, 1945 the Barb sank a record six enemy ships in one-day.

The Story

On July 8, 1942, the USS Barb (SS-220) was commissioned at Groton, Connecticut. Barb was assigned to the Pacific Fleet by Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Ernest J. King in the spring of 1943 after being shaken up and participating in Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa. Barb was ready for patrol duty in Pacific waters in the fall of 1943 after a refit and extensive training, but the boat's initial tour of service in the Pacific was mainly uneventful.

The submarine made its way to shipping routes west of the Marianas and east of Formosa after undergoing maintenance and training. Barb launched three torpedoes at the Fukusei Maru on March 28, 1944, splitting the cargo in half. Later in the patrol, the boat assisted the USS Steelhead (SS-280) in a successful bombardment of a crowded industrial sector on Rasa Island, Philippines. Barb hit the main Japanese installation of a secondary phosphate plant directly, as well as other targets, causing a flurry of munition and chemical explosions.

Barb was launched on May 21, 1944, with her new commander, Commander Eugene B. "Lucky" Fluckey, after a refurbishment. Barb successfully sent five ships and two sampans to the ocean's floor while patrolling the waterways along the Kuril Island chain. On May 31, the submarine sunk the Japanese cargo ship Koto Maru and then fired three more torpedoes at the Madras Maru, sinking it beneath the seas. Barb launched torpedoes at a single ship on June 2, but the active enemy warship retaliated with guns and depth charges. Barb eventually made her way into the northern Kurils' ice fields. Barb sank two trawlers with gunfire on June 11, then the Japanese tanker Toten Maru and freighter Chihaya Maru four hours later. With her remaining two torpedoes, the boat sunk a passenger cargo ship two days later. During this single battle patrol, Barb was credited with sinking 15,472 tons of enemy ships.

Submarines began to form coordinated attack groups, dubbed "wolfpacks" by the German navy, in order to kill whole enemy convoys. Barb accompanied the USS Queenfish (SS-393) and USS Tunny (SS-282) on their ninth patrol in the Manila/Hong Kong water lanes. On the 31st of August, the group teamed up with another group of submarines to attack a huge convoy that was strongly escorted. The attack was headed by Queenfish, who sank two enemy ships. Barb

launched three torpedoes at other ships, causing a tanker and a freighter to sink. After dealing with a troublesome bird that persisted to perch on her periscope, the submarine continued to track the convoy for the next five hours and delivered three torpedoes into the bowels of the Okuni Maru, shattering the cargo in half. Barb departed the area to avoid ensuing enemy attacks only to be greeted by non-stop aerial attacks. Barb went deep, but two bombs exploded close enough to the submarine that it ripped off her port antenna and broke several gauges and bulbs. After sinking a sampan with gunfire on 4 September, Barb received an urgent request to join in the search for survivors of a Japanese transport that had been carrying Allied prisoners of war, which had been sunk four days earlier. On the way to the rescue mission, Barb and Queenfish encountered a heavy enemy convoy. Barb's commander—"Lucky" Fluckey—ordered the deployment of six torpedoes that sank 11,700-ton tanker *Azusa* and the 20,000-ton escort carrier *Unyo*. Once Barb reached the area in the open ocean to rescue survivors, the crew saved 14 British and Australian prisoners from several small wooden rafts.

The submarine began her tenth war patrol with an attack group in the East China Sea. On 10 November Barb fired a spread of torpedoes at a lone transport sending *Gokoku Maru* to the depths of the ocean. Two days later, Barb fired two torpedoes that sank cargo ship *Naruo Maru*, and two days after that sank two Japanese schooners.

On the Formosa Strait and the Chinese shore, her 11th war patrol began. Barb sank a small Japanese boat with gunfire on January 1, 1945, and a week later, the Shinyo Maru, Sanyo Maru, and Anyo Maru were sunk beneath the seas. The strike force came across a convoy of 30 enemy ships on January 23. Barb launched an eight-hit torpedo barrage, sinking three ships and severely injuring three others. Barb got a Presidential Unit Citation for their bravery throughout the onslaught. Fluckey was awarded the Medal of Honor "for exceptional heroism and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty at the danger of his life..."

Barb was on her 12th war patrol in June 1945, following a substantial overhaul. This offensive war patrol was undertaken north of Hokkaido and east of Karafuto, with the exception of three days of lifeguard duty. Barb arrived in the area and instantly sank two luggers with gunfire at close range. Barb switched her attention to Japan's coasts after the assaults. Barb positioned herself around three miles from the center of Shari in the early morning hours of June 22. Barb made history by becoming the first submarine to successfully use rockets against Japanese shore fortifications. Barb launched attacks on two more beach villages a few weeks later.

Fluckey saw a train traveling close to the Japanese coast on July 19th. Eight crewmembers were discreetly put ashore in the dead of night after three days of observation to establish train timetables. The men placed a 55-pound explosive device in a strategic location, intending for it

Barb is credited with sinking enemy ships of 96,628 tons. For her World War II service, she was awarded four Presidential Unit Citations, a Navy Unit Commendation, and eight battle stars.



Tallahassee AMVETS POST 1776 Calaendar of Events, March, 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Mardi Gras 	2 Ash Wednesday	3 Meeting at Post 13 1830 hours <i>Naval Reserve Birthday</i>	4 Hug a G.I. Day!	5 <i>Seabee's Birthday</i>
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 K-9 Veterans Day Daylight Savings Time Begins	14	15 American Legions Birthday	16	17 St. Patricks Day 	18	19
20 Spring Equinox	21 Rosie the Riviter Day	22	23	24	25 Medal of Honor Day	26
27	28	29 National Vietnan Veterans Day	30	31		



Chaplain's Corner.....



Everlasting God, thank you that your ear is always attentive to our prayers. Hear our prayer for our military veterans today. Give them clear minds and peaceful hearts as you bless them for their service to us. May your divine love spread throughout their soul, saturating their whole being that they may be built up in your likeness. Strengthen them through your limitless mercy and grace. Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor, power, and strength, be unto you our God forever and ever. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen. *Eric Smith.*

Seeking a Protocol.....

The Veteran's Resource Guide

More on Veteran Assistance and Resources

Gentlemen and ladies, welcome back from the Holidays. I would like to take this opportunity to address an event that affected out Post as well as several other veteran service organizations. In mid-December I got a call from VFW Post 3308 Adjutant Eric King regarding a disabled veteran that needed assistance. And as is the case in a lot of these situations this veteran called on the weekend. I told Eric I would do what I could, that these types of calls on a weekend make it difficult to confirm a veteran is eligible to receive benefits from a VSO or particularly benefits from any of the many VA or County social services offices. And to make things worse, during the Holidays it is even more difficult.

I spoke with the veteran, and he assured me he had a copy of his DD-214 and other documentation that showed his disability. The veteran told me he was at Lake Ella looking for help and didn't know where to go so he called the VFW. The difficulty is these types of situations, is that when a veteran calls a VSO, it is usually for gas money, but in this case, he was on the streets with no shelter and no food.

Then it gets complicated. Most VSOs don't have a policy or a set of protocols to handle shelter except to refer to VA social workers or the County Service Officer. In this case the veteran had two cats that he called his service animals and in previous assistance he found out homeless shelters won't recognize "cats" as service animals, and in fact they are not, they are "comfort animals". The quickest and most efficient resolution was for me as the Commander of AMVETS Post 1776 to call Paul, our finance officer and see if we could effectively cover his shelter and some food expense. We did so by calling a local motel close to Lake Ella that allows short term stays. Paul had to go to the hotel and prepay the stay. And that is part of the problem, a call such as we got, usually requires someone to leave home at odd hours and find and assist the veteran in need. Without clear cut rules on how to assist a veteran it is left to impromptu decisions and an available member to provide a service as Paul did. At our January meeting we asked for and received a vote to approve of the monies we expended for this veteran and a big thank you to Paul for his extraordinary effort to help a fellow veteran.

Over the course of the next couple of weeks this veteran continued having problems and after talking to his VA case worker and found out he was in the system but a difficult case, I called in a few chits, calling my VFW Commander Rick Stanford that covered his shelter for another week and then I called Val at the American Legion and he covered another week. Unfortunately, this veterans' issues are many and as of this date I understand his VA caseworker is working with him more closely now and there is some progress.

As a consequence of this activity, our AMVETS Post is working on a new policy/protocol to handle veteran assistance. Part of the problem is that most VSOs don't have such an open-door policy and they don't have an unlimited source of funds to share with all the veterans' in need in the Big Bend area. Our monies can and should be used to help veterans in need but more on a temporary basis, in part ensuring we can help more veterans. As we continue to research this issue, we are discovering the multitude of services other community services organizations, including the VA and the County offer not just our veterans but other folks in need in this county, this is a continuing effort by our AMVETS Post as discussed at our January meeting and I am sure it will be a continuing effort by VFW, American Legion and other VSOs throughout the Big Bend.

RUN FOR THE FALLEN...

BY FRANK KOLB III



On Feb 11 the 2nd annual Florida “Run for the Fallen” came through Jefferson County. Escorted by several Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association members, the run started in Tallahassee at 0630 and made it to Monticello by 1130. Around a dozen runners, alternating on and off, stopped at several Hero Markers in the county spaced one mile apart. At each marker the runners would stop, read the names of the fallen designated by that marker, and present flags to any Gold Star family members that would be present. Several members of Post 49 volunteered to man 3 of the markers in the county so, in the absence of family members, the fallen would receive their due reverence. The Post also supplied the runners and staff with sandwiches, pickles, and drinks. The runners, stopping for well-deserved R and R in the evenings, continued on with their 3 day honor tribute to Jacksonville where the effort culminated in a remembrance ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park. The run has doubled in participation in its second year and the staff is expecting a continued increase in the years to come. The staff was very happy with the involvement and help from Post 49. The run will happen on the 2nd Friday of February every year and the Post expects to man more Hero Markers next year.



The 77th Annivervy of the 1st Flag Raising on Mount Suribchi, Iwo Jima, Japan. “Boots” Thomas Veterans Memorial Park 930 West Washington Street, Monticello, Florida



Post 1776 Judge Advocate Henry Lowery USMC (Ret) Stands before the Memorial Wall illustrating The Flag Raising.



This Memorial Bronze Plaque was placed at the Thomas family burial plot. The Plaque is placed at the head of “Boots” Thomas grave and discribes the events leading up to the 40 man patrol in which brought about the raising of that first Flag.



WWII Veteran Dr. Jim Sledge opens the event With a prayer.



From left to right:

WWII Veteran Charles Reichert points to a brick honoring his Grandfather. Somerset Jefferson USA JROTC raise the American Flag. Standing left of the Marine Corps League, Henry Lowery watches and directs raising of the Marine Corp Flag. Maj. John Haynes reads the prayer originally read to the survivors of Iwo Jima prior to re-embarquing their ships, returning to an Island for rest and more training. **Extreme right** is CMR Troy Avera, USN (Ret), opening the ceremony. **On immdeiate left, WWII veterans:** John Haynes, George Pittman, Charles Reichert and Dr. Jim Sledge.