

AMVETS Post 1776 Cyber Newsletter

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Commander's Message....

My apologies for missing our June meeting, but sometimes life gets in the way of obligations. And if you missed our May Dinner Meeting you missed a great meal at the Chow Time Buffet, great food and of course great comradeship. And of course, we now have our new slate of officers. Not much has changed, you have me for another year along with Paul for Finance Officer, Tom Carney for 1st Vice Commander, Ray House for 2nd Vice Commander, Henry Lowery for Judge Advocate, Cecil Taylor as Provost and Eric Smith for Chaplin. The only major change is that Tony Minichiello gave up his Adjutant role to one of our relatively new members Ray Bogan. Thank you, Tony, for your service for almost three years now and we should welcome Ray Bogan as our new Adjutant.

Since our May meeting, we have had other events, specifically a Memorial Day weekend that was welcomed by a large crowd at the Tallahassee National Cemetery on May 29th a day normally held at our Cemetery on the Sunday prior to the normal Holiday. Raymond Miller and the Support Committee determined years ago that Memorial Day would be held the Sunday before so as not to interfere with other established Memorial Day events held by other veteran service organizations, e.g., VFW Post 3308 conducts a Memorial Day Service at their Cemetery just south of Tallahassee and the American Legion Post #13 conducts a Service in the Veterans section of the Oakland Cemetery in Tallahassee. Thankfully with COVID on the wane, all events were well attended. Of special note about the Service at the National Cemetery, the program was keynoted by veterans Ms. Karen Bauer, 2nd Lt., USA and Pia S. Woodley, LCDR, USN (Ret). Both outstanding presentations along with the rest of the program and the laying of wreaths for the military branches and a KIA wreath.

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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

Afterwards family and friends set the flags on gravesites throughout the Cemetery. And for your information we now have over 2,000 veterans interred at our beautiful National Cemetery. *See photos. Below.*



On a more somber note, our Post 1776 now has several of our members laid to rest at our National Cemetery. Starting with Randy Miller over a year ago, and we have recently laid to rest Kay Ayres wife of Carl Ayres, and in a special memorial Chief John Schmidt was honored at our Cemetery this past month. This reminds me of Major John Haynes comments at our Dedication Ceremony for our Bell Tower last year when he said: “At the Tallahassee National Cemetery, every day is Memorial Day for our veterans” and we must now add for our veterans and their spouses and dependent children.

Thank you all for your continuing service to our Country, our County and our Post.

Semper Fi.....Gordon

Our Vice Commander.....

Ray House, as a 17 year old, enlisted in the Navy on September 1, 1962. While in Boot Camp the nation faced the Cuban Missile Crisis and, later, while I was stationed in Hawaii President Kennedy was assassinated.

I served on active duty for 2 years until 1964. I then spent 2 years in the active Naval Reserve in Tampa, Florida. We had active Naval training once a month. Then 2 years in the inactive Naval Reserve for a total of six years.

During my time on active duty I was designated as a “ABH-AN” (Aviation Boatswain Mate) at Barbers Point Naval Air Station on Oahu, Hawaii. My primary job was doing “Weight & Balance (Load Master) on the cargo planes ; Contractor, Naval and USAF MAT Flights. I received an “Honorable Discharge on August 31, 1968. I’m proud of my U.S. Navy service.

Ray was also one of the founding members of Tallahassee AMVETS Post 1776 and is still an active member.



Report on M.O.A. dinner gathering.... Photos and artical by Fred Ingley



Right:
VVA, Chapter 96
President Joe West enjoys
a conversation with
Steve Murray, FDVA
Communications and
External Affairs Direc-
tor.



Left:
Guest speaker Dr.
Thargard and wife "Rex"
showing the bottle of
"Purple Heart " given
him after he finished
his presentation.

After a two year hiatus due to the COVID shut down of many functions nationwide, the Tallahasee Chapter of the Military are Officers Association of America (M.O.A.A.) sponsored its 20 June Social Dinner Meeting starting a new era with all Veterans and their guests welcome to attend.

M.O.A.A. is a nationwide association of prior military Warrant and Commissioned Officers whose main function is to advocate for Veterans' issues. Since many of its members are retired senior officers, including many General Officers and Colonels, who during their rise through the ranks had spent one or more assignments in Washington, DC, and had learned of "the ropes" of our Federal Government, and had made many friends with numerous Congressmen and other high placed government officials. Those contacts have made M.O.A.A. probably the most effective Veterans Advocate at the Federal level.

The speaker at the 20 June Social Dinner Meeting was prior Astronaut Dr. Norman Thagard, Col. USMC (Ret.) who's speech related to his journey in becoming an Astronaut, one of the few persons who have been in space. Besides his obtaining degree in engineering, he also a Medical Doctor (M.D.).



Tallahassee AMVETS Post 1776 Calendar for July, 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 	5	6	7 Post Meeting 1830 hours Lake Ella AL Post	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day	28 National Buffalo Soldiers Day	29	30
31						



Tallahassee AMVETS Post 1776 says.....



**Celebrate the 4th....
But do it
Safely!**

Never Forgotten!.....

As the group known as *Never Forgotten* has done for the last seven years, they were at the Southside Cemetery in Tallahassee.



Led by US Army Veteran John Vickers, the likeminded and thankful group were honored to place over 500 flags on military Veteran's gravesites on Sat. 5/28.

In groups of 2 or 3, a Veteran's gravesite would be located, the Veteran's name and a sincere thank you for serving would be recited and an 8"x10" US flag would be placed at the headstone.

"Those who expect to reap the benefits of freedom must first, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it"-TP

Courtesy of Frank Kolbs 111, Veteran, USN, retired, Sgt at Arms Post 49

In One Small North Florida Cemetery!.....

In one small North Florida Cemetery in the Big Bend County of Jefferson, there are three USMC recipients of the NAVY CROSS, the second highest award for Valor awarded by the USMC.

On 18 May 2021, there was a remembrance ceremony at the grave of James E Jackson, KIA, Korea 18 May 1951. Major John Haynes was the keynote speaker at the event. At that time, Major Haynes suggested that each year after, his grave should be visited and decorated with an American Flag on 18 May as a tribute to his heroism and sacrifice. Since Major Haynes was not available as he was out of town during the entire week, I drove over in the early morning of 18 May and the sun was in just the correct location. I did not realize how the photo had come out until I returned to the car and looked at it. I also took a photo at the grave of Boots Thomas with similar results.



1



2



3

Grave Number one:
Maynard Morris McCloud. *Shadow of hand salute is weak.*

Grave Number two:
James E. Jackson.
K.I.A Korea, 18 May, 1951.

Grave Number Three:
Earnest Ivy "Boots" Thomas, K.I.A. Iwo Jima, 23 February, 1945

Courtesy of Mr. David Wilson, Veteran, USAF. 2022 inductee to the Florida wall of Fame.

New Member sworn in, as another contemplates...



Vice Commander Tom Carney welcomes newest member Ernie Reed, USN, Vietnam as he is sworn in during our June meeting. Ernie is also a Minister.

Butch Topicz introduced Ernie to our post.



We had a lovely visitor to our post meeting. Tiffany Hill, USA, veteran stopped by to see what Post 1776 is all about. While Tiffany did not commit to joining during our meeting, she did promise to give it strong consideration.

Tiffany is involved and committed to assisting veterans in need. We would be very fortunate to have her membership.

A veteran, departed, and sorely missed...



Partial Bio from Florida Veteran Hall of Fame page

From an early age, John E. Schmidt Jr. was called to service and spent a lifetime answering the call from his country and community. Men like CMSgt Schmidt (commonly referred to respectfully as "The Chief") are a rarity today. While many Americans appear to maintain a sense of entitlement regarding what the country owes them, Chief Schmidt worked hard from a young age and contributed throughout his very active life contributing through his life of 91 years. He was blessed with an intellect, a servant's heart, determination and commitment to leave this world a better place. It made him a very wise and caring person.

For over 46 years, Chief Schmidt dedicated his life to making an impact on the students, veterans and families of Florida. Through his tireless efforts working with his fellow Air Force Airmen, local government and school board officials, businesses and civic leaders, his mark has been made. Shortly after retiring from active duty and establishing residency in Florida in 1981, he began a second career as a high school instructor.

However, there were no Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) programs in Tallahassee, so Chief Schmidt took his can-do attitude and began a crusade with Colonel Hower Weber to establish the very first one

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in Tallahassee at Godby H.S. With his expertise, determination, and belief that this type of training can have a very positive impact on students, he set out to help establish others in Leon County.

Now, the County enjoys programs sponsored and supported by the Army (Rickards H.S.), Navy (Lincoln H.S.), Marine Corps (Leon H.S.) and Air Force (Godby H.S.), thanks in large part to what Chief Schmidt and a few others accomplished. For nearly four decades, these JROTC programs have developed young men and women of character and integrity, with a much greater sense of teamwork, commitment and hard work both in and out of uniform.

Chief Schmidt passed recently and will be missed by young men and women through the Big Bend. And he will be especially missed by all the veterans in all the veteran service organizations that knew him. Rest in peace Chief Schmidt.



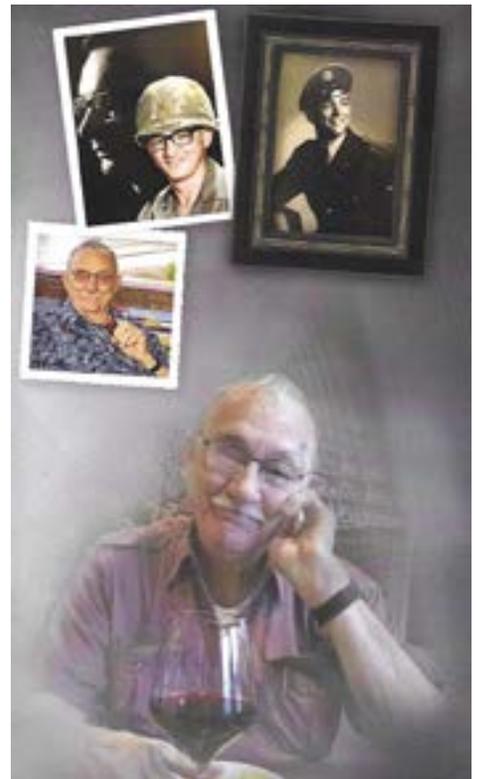
Three rows of backed-up automobiles at the Tallahassee National Cemetery for Chief Schmidt's funeral.



USAF Honor Guard at rest awaiting time to send the volleys Heavenward.



The Priest awaits arrival of the transporter.



*Your work on earth is done.
Heaven joyfully awaits.*





Resource Guide for Veterans in Need

In our February issue of Cyber News I wrote an article about some veteran assistance our Post along with several other veteran service organizations was involved in. As a consequence, to that article and the work we did helping a veteran in need we understood there was a need in the Big Bend for a Resource Guide that would collect as many resources as we might be able to find in the Big Bend area that specifically targeted helping veterans in need. We want to thank John Folsom for him sharing the American Legions resources, the VFW Post 3308's resources and especially Paul Rogerson our Finance Officer for stepping up to the plate and helped put together this Resource Guide for Veterans in Need, that has since been published and just last month taken to our monthly Commanders Meeting for distribution. It needs to be said, and one of the members at the Commanders said it probably better than I can say it, the project was a "labor of love". That reference is simply put, fairly accurate, because it took quite a bit of time and effort to collect, coordinate and collaborate with a number of people to put our product in a useable format. Paul and I discussed this because we wanted a workbook edition so that folks could use some of the forms in the guide but then we wanted a smaller version, sort of a pocket edition that could be used as a quick reference guide. Well, we ended up with both.

And it has been well received. We produced over 150 copies and distributed most of those already and now we have been asked for more copies, MOAA wants another 50 copies, and we are printing those and more at this time. Due to the cost of this production, for future copies we will probably start charging a nominal fee to cover our costs. Although, we do have the capability to send to those that may want an electronic copy. Thanks to everyone for their support.

Commander Lightfoot