



AMVETS Post 1776 Cyber Newsletter

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In this Issue

Commander's Message
Pages. 1,2.

Chaplain's Corner
Adjutant's Message
Page 2

They fought Two Wars
Page 3

Military Humor
Page 4

Page 5
Our 2021 "Veterans
helping Veterans"
Golf Tournament

Page 6
Recognizing those
who made it
successful

Landscaping the
Tower's Base
Page 7

The VSO's We help
fund this Year
Page 8



No Ceremony Yet!!!

We are a little late getting our April cyber news out but there just does not seem to be enough time in a day. And I am saying that to a lot of our members that will agree. Why are all of us retirees having to keep a "calendar". We are supposed to be going fishing and gardening and playing with grandchildren! But I do believe veterans have just a little different makeup. We not only care about our fishing, our gardening, and our grandchildren but there is also a need to give back. Give back to our community and give back to our comrades. Give back to those still in need, to those that can not do for themselves. This is why we have those calendars. This is why we feel a need to help our brothers and our sisters. But I digress.

Once again, our small Post has been doing big things. Our last Golf Tournament was in September 2019 and then COVID 19 came along. We could not very easily have a Golf tournament in the middle of a pandemic, so we moved it to this April and even with a shortened year probably had our second most profitable and enjoyable Golf Tournament yet. I think Tony is putting our press release to the Tallahassee Democrat in this issue.

On the other most critical subject of late is when are we going to have our "Dedication Ceremony" for our Patriot Tower at the Tallahassee National Cemetery (TNC). And the answer is, we do not know yet!!! As your Commander I have been in constant contact with the Director Mr. Miller at the TNC and have written several communications to him that I know he has sent on to his superiors. The problem is, the National Cemetery Administration/VA (NCA), during this pandemic only allows 12 visitors for an interment under the covered interment shelter and maximum of 50 attendees outside the shelter. Our dilemma is that we have over 100 donors and I believe we need to invite all 100 plus donors to any ceremony we have for our Tower. I have been told NCA reevaluates attendance numbers on a daily basis, based on CDC estimates of the COVID cases on practically a county-by-county count. Leon County is low, but right now Florida is not. I do want to assure all our members that Paul, Tony and myself have been working diligently on the

Continued on Page two

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

“Program”, a “Formal Invitation” and some nice “Donor Certificates” that we will be distributing once we get the go ahead. You all will be the first on the list to contact.

In the meantime, along with all the above, Henry Lowery and I have been working on some landscaping for the Tower. We have had our design for a short 6 X 6 post with a chain circling the Tower and a 3-foot-wide bed of pea gravel approved by NCA and we plan to include a couple of benches nearby. In the front will be a granite stone with a large bronze plaque in the center of the fence. The Bronze Plaque and the granite stone have been paid for and the Plaque is in. We are waiting for the granite and Culley’s will be installing same as soon as the granite arrives.

Hope this month finds you and your families well. If you need anything from the Post, please give us a call.

Semper Fi.,

Gordon

Chaplain's Corner. Post Chaplain Eric Smith



A prayer to face each new day:

Lord, a new day is here. We've never lived this day before. It's full of unknowns. It's full of possibilities. Fill us with strength when we are tired and fill us with patience with our families, friends, and coworkers. The day full of moments no one but You can see. Thank You for seeing ahead of us on our path and being there to catch us when we fall. We can only live one moment at a time. Help us to live in each moment. Your Holy Spirit dwells in us each moment, giving us comfort, guiding and directing us. Thank You for Your grace and presence. Give us guidance and grace to walk in Your light today. AMEN

From the Adjutant. Post Adjutant Anthony "Tony" Minichiello



“All good things must come to an end”. You’ve heard that phrase before and you’re hearing it again, here. As of our meeting culminating on May 6, 2021 I will pass on the job of Adjutant to another post member yet to be elected. So in order to protect yourself I would suggest that all members attend that meeting—you know what can happen if you’re not present to defend yourself!

My time as Adjutant has been an enjoyable experience. Commander Lightfoot has kept me busy with various projects including sending communications, posting meeting minutes and attending outside meetings.

I have thoroughly enjoyed producing this Newsletter and I will continue as editor, asking for your assistance in sending in stories of personal experiences or stories which you feel will benefit our readers. And, possibly, I will continue as Chairperson of our annual Golf Tournament as my background in sales and promotions seems to be a good fit for the Post. I have a number of friends within the Graphic Arts field that have helped putting the newsletter together making it easier on my nerves. I enjoy being involved with my Veteran organizations, my wife enjoys volunteering at the Tallahassee V.A. Clinic and we recognize that the military time that we served has helped us achieve those goals which we aimed for.

I would recommend that joining a veteran service organization can be a rewarding experience for those who have an interest in volunteering, fellowship and just plain enjoying the company of being around men and women who have served. It is a place where you can sit down with a Colonel and say “What’s up” and have a friendly conversation.

They fought two wars.

Units trained, briefly, in Tallahassee.....



Dispatches.....

The U.S. Mint is issuing a **coin to honor the Tuskegee Airmen**. The all-black group of pilots and airmen who fought in North Africa, Sicily and Italy during World War II. The quarter officially released on February 1, carries the inscription "They fought two wars"--recognizing the airmen's fight against Nazis in Europe and racial discrimination at home. The coin is the last of the Mint's "America the Beautiful Quarters" program, launched in 2010 to recognize national parks and other sites in all 50 states, plus territories. The coin commemorates Alabama's Tuskegee Army Airfield National Historic Site.

From WWII issue April, 2021

And in Carrabelle, Florida.....

Iwo Jima- Red Blood, Black Sand, a Documentary

This documentary of the bloodiest Battle in Marine Corps history has interviews with members of the African American soldiers from Camp Gordon Johnston and their USMC Officers conducting operations during the invasion of Iwo Jima.

The documentary was saved on a DVD and donated to the Camp Gordon Johnston Museum by John Hannah a Carrabelle resident and former Marine who took part in the invasion. Mr. Hannah passed away in 2010.

Marine 1st Lt. Grover Groves describes his assignment to the Camp as commander of the DUKW companies that will be assigned to the Marines. African American soldier Garland Mines describes life at the camp and the dangers they will face during the invasion carrying artillery as well as ammunition, supplies and removing wounded marines while braving Japanese artillery barrages. Mr. Mines also describes the rescue of a damaged DUKW loaded with wounded Marines by a black DUKW driver named Joe who won the Silver Star for his efforts.

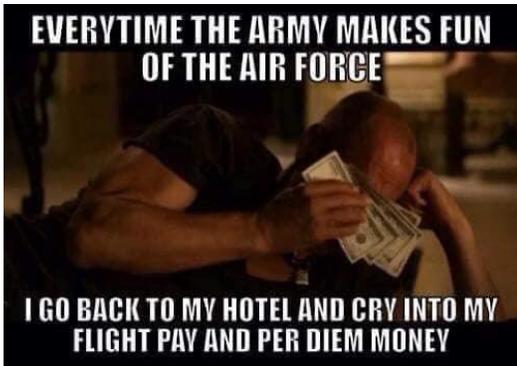
In 36 days of combat on the Island, 25,851 marines were wounded, 6,821 were killed and the African American soldiers from Camp Gordon Johnston participated, suffered and died alongside with them drawing the praise of their officers and grateful Marines.

Note: The 471st, 476th and 473rd truck DUKW companies of the 43rd Amphibious Truck Battalion were on loan to the Marines at Iwo Jima. The current 332nd TC BN, Tampa, Florida traces its lineage and honors back to the 43rd. The 332nd has attended Camp Gordon Johnston Days in past years bringing its LCU 2000 for display on Marine Street.

Information for this article was derived from the Original Camp Newspapers "The Amphibian" March 31st and April 21st 1945 issues as well as the TC-Regt-Association Magazine in the Hall of Fame section 2011. Special thanks also to Colonel Charles Aucoin, USAR (Ret).

I had the honor of meeting one of these soldiers while hosting a group of WWII veterans during the second annual Camp Gordon Johnston Days. The couple was from Brick, NJ. It was an uplifting experience for me because he answered so many questions about their unit's history---- Tony Minichiello.

Military Humor.....



LK 451: ATC this is Lima Kilo 451. Requesting Flight Level 540.

ATC: Lima Kilo 451, request approved for Flight Level 540. If you can get up there, you can have it.

LK 451: Roger, descending.



On one hand it was a 40 million dollar plane, on the other hand the spider was **inside** the cockpit.

Could be any branch except Army



When you lied on the resume but still got the job



Sometimes big things come in Small packages!



Never let an Aircraft Mechanic work on your Kitchen Appliances



Gone Fishing

The rain was pouring and there was a big puddle in front of the pub just outside the Navy base. A ragged old Marine Gunnery Sgt. was standing near the edge with a fishing rod, his line in the puddle.

A curious young Navy fighter pilot came over to him and asked what he was doing. "Fishing," the old guy simply said.

"Poor old fool," the Navy officer thought and he invited the ragged old Marine into the pub for a drink.

As he felt he should start some conversation while they were sipping their whiskey, the smart-ass fighter pilot asked, "And how many have you caught?"

"You're the eighth," the old Marine Gunny answered.

Tallahassee AMVETS Post 1776 Tallahassee hosts another successful Golf Tournament at Golden Eagle Golf and Country Club on April 5th!

On Monday, April 5, 2021 AMVETS Post 1776 sponsored their Annual Golf Tournament at Golden Eagle Golf and Country Club with the theme, “Veterans Helping Veterans.” Eighteen teams showed up to play for 1st and 2nd place trophies. There were over 20 sponsors advertising on the golf fairways with raffles and a luncheon provided for all teams. It was a beautiful day for golfing and a good time was had by all.

Monies raised by our tournament will be used to support our Post’s contributions to a number of veteran programs in the Tallahassee area. To mention a couple, the Big Bend Honor Flights; American Legion Baseball; Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. and other Veteran service organizations throughout the Big Bend Area.

Presenting the trophies were (R) Post Commander Gordon Lightfoot and (L) Tony Minichiello, Post Adjutant and Chair of the Golf Tournament. The winning teams are shown below:

**1st Place
winner was**

“RT Electric”
with players
left to right:
Chuck Bruce,
Rob Thompson,
and Reid
Brett, missing
in the photo is
Bo Bryan



**The 2nd Place
winners were**

“Purdom
Team”

with players left
to right: Judd
Bell, Shawn
Beaty, Justin
Platt, and Lex
Hughes.



We want to send a special *thank you* to Ray Wright with the Disabled Veterans of American chapter here in Tallahassee and Nell Hewitt with the American Legion’s Post #13, Auxiliary, Ray House of our AMVETS Post also here in Tallahassee along with all the other volunteers who came to help with the registration tables and oversee the golf course where we put all the Sponsor plaques.

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 the American Legion Hall on Lake Ella. We invite honorably discharged veterans from all branches of military service, including reservists to join us. We are a small Post doing big things for Veterans in the Tallahassee area.



Volunteers and Sponsors were so important for this tournament



Cecil Taylor, Lois Duley
and Ray Wright



Our Sponsors.....

Inovia Consulting Group, LLC

Mr. John Oescher

Black Dog Cafe

Sports Clips

Prime Meridian Bank

Al's Community Service

Mr. Steve Winn

The Gem Collection

American Commerce Bank

Honeysuckle Unique Gifts, Monticello,
FLorida

Publix Super Markets

Mission BBQ

Village Inn

Carpenters Construction

Rock Bottom Seafood, Monticello, Florida

Sovran Building Systems, LLC

Power On, LLC

Bevis Funeral Home

Truck N' Car Concepts

Southern Capital, LLC

L&B Enterprizes, Vero Beach, Florida

BJ's Restaurant

Pappas Restaurant

Carrabbas Italian Restaurant

Ford Motors, Tallahassee

Mr. Sal Martocci

Paul's Pest Control

Southside Mower and Magneto Repair

Mr. Anthony Minichiello

Saul - Bridges Post 13, American Legion

Mr. Craig Tschetter

Talquin Electric Co-operative

Centennial Bank



Gordon Lightfoot at the
Raffle table



P.J. Coleman
Steve Godbehere, Jackie
Johnson, Cecil Taylor and
Lois Du;ey



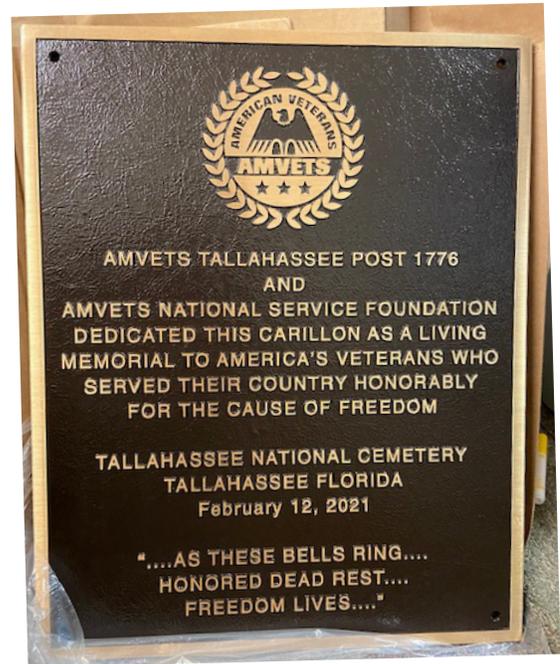
Debra Mann Jones sets up the
"Silent Auction" Table

*Not shown here are
Post 13 American
legion Auxilliary
volunteers
Nel Hewitt and
Paulette Howell*

Landscaping the Tower's Base

Commander Lightfoot and Judge Advocate Henry Lowery have been beautifying the base around the Tower. On their own time they have placed Posts around the tower with chains to set up a perimeter that protects the base of the Tower. Gordon made the posts by fashioning them inside his workshop.

The inside beyond the chains will be filled with pea gravel. There will be a simple bronze plaque set into a rock at the front of the base acknowledging the hard work of AMVETS Tallahassee Post 1776 and AMVETS National Service Foundation in dedicating the Carillon.



Above: Judge Advocate Henry Lowery, Post 1776, digs the post holes for the Bell Tower.

Right: Commander Lightfoot stands next to the posts after they have been set in concrete.

There will be a chain connected to these posts that will encircle the base of the Tower. The area inside showing the dirt will be covered with "Pea Gravel" matching what the Cemetery uses now and the opening at front will contain a "Polished Granite" stone with a bronze plaque (see above plaque) attached and inscribed dedicating the Patriot Tower to the Tallahassee National Cemetery.



These are the Veteran Organizations which we will help fund this year:



Tallahassee Honor Flight

The mission of Honor Flight is to transport America's veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit the memorials dedicated to honoring those who have served and sacrificed for our country.

The Honor Flight Network

The Honor Flight Network is a national network comprised of independent Hubs working together in furtherance of the Honor Flight mission. In furtherance of this common goal, we have the opportunity to show our nation's veterans the appreciation and honor they deserve. Participation in an Honor Flight trip gives veterans the opportunity to share this momentous occasion with other comrades, to remember friends and comrades lost, and share their stories and experiences with other veterans. All honored veterans travel at no cost to the veteran.



Sauls-Bridges Post 13 American Legion at Lake Ella in Tallahassee sponsors a youth baseball team each year. A little history and benefits of Legion baseball is below:

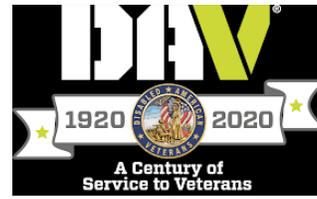
Of all the notable former players, Legion Baseball had perhaps the greatest impact on former Cleveland Indians great Bob Feller.

A self-described shy farm kid from rural Iowa, Feller cut his teeth playing for Variety Post 313. He says the experience taught him as much about life as it did baseball. Legion Baseball gave him an outlet to be discovered as a pitcher, but also gave him a chance to form lifelong friendships, learn to deal with letdown in athletic competition, and become better prepared for the mental and emotional strain of fighting in a war. The first Legion alumnus elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame, Feller wrote a column for The American Legion Magazine in June 1963, expressing his love and appreciation for the league after it honored him with a plaque in 1962.

"Truthfully, I feel I should have given a plaque to The American Legion rather than receiving one from it," Feller wrote. He penned the column free of charge and admitted that he never endorsed anything he didn't believe in during his career, even for large sums of money.

Yet baseball isn't the only area where former players have excelled. Legion Baseball graduates have gone on to prominence in other career fields. Former Vice President Dick Cheney played for Post 2 in Casper, Wyo. Famed journalist and author Tom Brokaw played Legion ball in South Dakota, and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack was on a team in Pennsylvania.

In short, Legion Baseball graduates are **proud** contributors throughout our society and often are the most successful people in their respective career fields.



Disabled American Veterans A Legacy of Service, Hope for the Future

DAV is a nonprofit charity that provides a lifetime of support for veterans of all generations and their families, helping more than 1 million veterans in positive, life-changing ways each year. Annually, the organization provides more than 240,000 rides to veterans attending medical appointments and assists veterans with well over 160,000 benefit claims. In 2020, DAV helped veterans receive more than \$23 billion in earned benefits. DAV's services are offered at no cost to all generations of veterans, their families and survivors.

DAV is also a leader in connecting veterans with meaningful employment, hosting job fairs and providing resources to ensure they have the opportunity to participate in the American Dream their sacrifices have made possible.

With nearly 1,300 chapters and more than 1 million members across the country, DAV empowers our nation's heroes and their families by helping to provide the resources they need and ensuring our nation keeps the promises made to them.



Chapter 96 Vietnam Veterans of America Lake Ella, Tallahassee

This chapter is a very active with a strong agenda emphasizing the welfare of all veterans in the Big Bend Area. From lobbying for a Veterans Day Parade, not confined to side streets but rather down the main street in the middle of Tallahassee, to constructing a stainless steel seven-foot plus tall replica of the Vietnam Bracelet and lobbying the State Legislature for permission to place it, at no cost, alongside the Florida Vietnam War Memorial in downtown Tallahassee across from the state Capitol, to mentoring incarcerated veterans towards rehabilitation,

Under the direction of President Joe West, this Chapter has developed a reputation for standing for veterans rights and always keeping an "open door" for those in need; be it sending generators to families who lost power when hurricanes Irma in 2017 and Michael in 2018 came through or locating and identifying grave sites of long forgotten veterans.

The welfare of veterans and their families during times of need have been at the forefront of this organization.