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Together We Served Helps Veterans Reconnect with Comrades



U.S. Marine Corps Col. Jeremy Beaven, right, commanding officer, Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH) and Sgt. Maj. Joseph Caputo, serves cake to service members and civilian personnel during an April Awareness Month proclamation signing event at MCBH, April 1, 2025. Servicemembers often build strong ties with each other that last long after they leave the military.

Veterans sometimes believe there is a disconnect between themselves and civilians. That's why, oftentimes, veterans who are struggling with a myriad of life situations will only open up and talk about it to other veterans.

A Need to Connect

Brian Foster felt there was a need for veterans to connect to fellow veterans, so he launched [Together We Served](#) (TWS) in 2003. Originally designed for former Marines, the organization has opened up in the last two decades to include past service members from all branches, expanding to more than 2.5 million veterans.

TWS provides a way for veterans to get in touch with friends they've served with, some they haven't talked to in decades.

Together We Served offers veterans a chance to record their military service online and provides them with plaques honoring their service. (Photo courtesy of Together We Served)

TWS also established the [Veteran Buddy Link](#), a free service, to help veterans [who feel lonely and isolated](#) to find other veterans to chat with, providing a taste of the camaraderie they enjoyed in the military. The Veteran Buddy Link can also find fellow veterans living nearby to foster get-togethers.

“Those who have served share a unique bond that remains with them throughout their lives,” Foster wrote for [VA News](#).

“Veterans are naturally drawn to and thrive in the company of other veterans because the unique culture of military service and the commitment to service and sacrifice are common to all.”

Forming a Buddy Link

Foster also said that the military’s close living quarters, common goals, and comradeship can form a strict way of life for many veterans who discover being a civilian to be “disorienting.” Many past servicemembers feel alone and misunderstood after they leave the military.

“[Together We Served](#) , and the Veteran Buddy Link program offer a solution to those potentially debilitating feelings by offering veterans a way to securely connect with others who understand the nuances of military service,” Foster said.

The organization’s Buddy Finder program assists veterans who want to find buddies they served with by plugging information into a portal, including the years they served and the specific units they were in. Through the power of the internet, the database will locate other veterans who served in those locations during the same time frame.

“The secret behind this high rate of success is the depth of TWS’s hand-built databases that contain hundreds of U.S. military units, ships, squadrons, and bases going back to World War II,” Foster told We Are The Mighty. “Any veteran can register for free, and the [TogetherWeServed.com](#) search engine can help take care of the rest. With more and more veterans registering, connections and reminiscing grow every day.”

TWS also offers a plaque at no cost honoring a veteran’s military time, and a digital scrapbook where veterans can post photos and information reflecting on their service days. The plaque highlights the veteran’s service record with important information, graphics that reflect the period when they served, and a selection of backgrounds that veterans or their family members can choose to make the plaque look professional.

Most veterans are humble about their experiences and don’t often discuss their military service. However, Foster said his program allows them to partake in large or small ways through the “Service Reflections” feature, which includes a questionnaire that guides veterans through the process of sharing memories from their time in the military.

“A vet’s military service memories captured in their own words and photographs is one of the most valuable legacies a former service member can provide for his or her family,” Foster said.

In recent years, the service has helped veterans reconnect, like Robert Pryor, an Army sergeant who served in the Vietnam War. Pryor was able to find Capt. Dick Gerry, an Air Force pilot, [saved his life](#).

TWS also helps Gold Star Families honor fallen family members and friends, hoping to pay tribute to lost comrades.

With more than 2.5 million veterans and growing, TWS is the [largest online veteran directory](#) and military service archive in the U.S.