



South Alabama Veterans Council

An organization for all people, to serve all veterans.

A coalition of Veterans, Friends and Organizations working together to further the cause of Veterans in the South Alabama area

Lou Lartigue
251-471-4322
Council President

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251-751-6619
Council VP

Fran Barber
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251-391-8176

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SAVC e-mail: support@savc.info

Capt Hal Pierce, Bill Atkinson, Spiritus Ameritus SAVC

NEXT SAVC MEETING - Tuesday- March 15, 2022 – 8:30 a.m. - Saucy Q

1111 Government Blvd–Mobile AL

On the web – <http://www.savc.info> - Facebook – South Alabama Veterans Council

Presidents Corner:

Wow, where has February gone?

"I want to take a minute to thank our SAVC staff for the great job they have done and continue to do, Tom Schwarz and Dale for doing our Treasurer work since 1996 when we started, Fran who came in and picked up for Bill and his work since the late 90s, and Julius Powell who has been with us for years working our automation and events. I cannot not recognize Walter Ballard, Sonny Willisson, and Michael Austin for leading us in prayer over the years. There are so many others that need to be recognized for their untiring support for the SAVC such as CAPT Hal, Pat Downing, Pete Riehm, Jim Jeffries, Bill Callender, and the many others that made us who we are.

We are blessed with great support, but always need your support to bring you a meaningful program. We continue to try to bring our Veterans in South Alabama the news of what is happening to and for Veterans, and the events of the Day. We need your support and help to keep our program and events strong and meaningful. We need everyone to encourage other Veterans to come to our meetings and enjoy our comradery and brotherhood. I also encourage you to let us know what you would like to hear or learn more about. Now I turn it over to our Chaplain for his words of comfort and prayer."

Lou Lartigue, President USA (Ret)
South Alabama Veterans Council



Chaplains Corner:

Good Morning!

It's the details matter to God

Read Philippians 4:6

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Let us tell God every detail of our needs in thankful prayer. Why because God cares for us deeply, and He wants us to talk to Him about all our concerns. We should record in a notebook our practical and emotional and those of our families and friends. Then go back from time to time and check to see what God has done in those areas. It was once said, that there is nothing too great for His power, and nothing too small for His love.

In Jesus' Name Amen
Pastor Lloyd Michael Austin,
Chaplain SAVC



Veterans Recovery Resources

Committed To Veterans Like You 251-405-3677

Stringent training, deployments, frequent moves and, for some, combat, put unique stresses on our Veterans and their families. Our team of health professionals created a unique approach that speaks to a unique set of mental wellness challenges.



Veteran Owned Business List

In partnership with the SAVC and Scuttlebutt Radio Network, we are creating a Veteran Owned Business List. Please register if you are a VOB or an organization helping veterans/military and share with other Veteran business owners. The aim of this effort is to provide support to and increase awareness of Veteran Owned Businesses.

<https://alabamaveteransresourceguide.com/>



Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs

February 16 at 3:15 PM ·

ADVA wishes to send a special thank you to the City of Dothan and Wiregrass community for attending today's Alabama's Challenge Town Hall. Mark your calendars for an upcoming Veteran Resource and Job Fair on March 3 at the Dothan Civic Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

February 17 at 8:30 AM ·

VA has recently updated its presumptive disabilities list to include three new presumptive conditions (asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis).

If you were denied benefits or did not qualify for disability compensation in the past, VA encourages you to file a new or supplemental VA disability claim. For more information and a list on presumed disabilities, download our Presumed Disability Benefits fact sheet here:

<https://benefits.va.gov/.../serviceconnected/presumption.pdf>.



H.R. 6543, the Restore Veterans' Compensation Act,

Would eliminate the recoupment of separation pay, special separation benefits, and voluntary separation incentive payments from members of the Armed Forces who subsequently receive VA disability compensation.

Under current law, veterans are unfairly required to pay back separation pay from the Department of Defense (DOD) if they later become eligible for VA disability benefits. Separation payments are made to eligible active and reserve service members who have completed at least six, but fewer than 20, years of active service immediately before being involuntarily discharged or denied continuation of service for which they volunteered, short of retirement eligibility. The lump-sum separation payment is not based on or due to disabilities incurred in service.

If enacted, H.R. 6543 would eliminate this unjust offset of separation pay and VA disability compensation. These two benefits are completely unrelated as separation pay compensates service members for their time served while VA disability compensation is based on wounds, injuries and illnesses directly related to active military service.

In accordance with DAV Resolution No. 004, DAV supports the Restore Veterans' Compensation Act, as it affords justice for veterans. Take action today and ensure that service-disabled veterans retain their separation pay without VA disability offsets. Please urge your Representative to support and co-sponsor H.R. 6543.

<https://dav.quorum.us/campaign/38353/>

On-the-job training and apprenticeships

Learn how GI Bill training programs can help you pay for books, supplies, and housing while you're learning a trade or skill through on-the-job training or apprenticeships. Find out how to get these education benefits.

[On-The-Job Training And Apprenticeships | Veterans Affairs \(va.gov\)](#)

The MILLIE Journal

12 Resources for Military Spouse Education and Employment

8 Feb 2022 MILLIE | By Heather Walsh

According to studies shared by the National Military Family Association, military spouses earn 26.8% less in income than their non-military counterparts which adds to \$12,374 per year in lost wages. Part of these

lost wages occur due to time loss between jobs with each military move, underemployment at each duty station, and challenges in licensing and re-licensing for some positions for each state.

Here are 12 organizations that are there to help military spouses in their career continuation and advancement.

[12 Resources for Military Spouse Education and Employment | Military.com](#)

[Mental Health First Aid Training for Veterans and their Families Free, REGISTER NOW –](#)



Alabama now offers a Cold War Veteran license plate. You can learn more here: <https://bit.ly/3smhqdv>



[American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters](#)

February 23 at 10:03 AM ·

As of today, approximately 6,305 people have completed the ALA member survey. While that's a big number, and we are extremely grateful for the people who took the time out of their schedules, we certainly would love more responses.

We need your help, so let's get ready for some competition! Here are the top five states in the lead for number of members who have completed the survey:

1. Florida
2. New York
3. California
4. Michigan
5. Minnesota

Help your state by taking the survey here:

<https://americanlegionaux.qualtrics.com/.../SV...>



[American Legion District #33](#)

District Meeting Schedule:

March 20 Post 164 Citronelle (Check time) Memorial Service

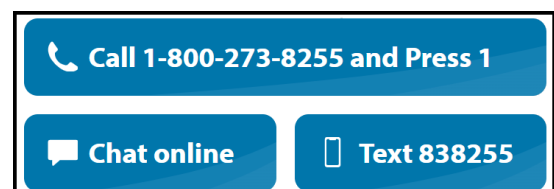
April 17 Post 99 Foley (First nominations for District Officers)

May 15 Post 88 Mobile, AL Meeting begging at 2:30 pm.

MARCH MILITARY DATES TO REMEMBER:

Women's History Month	Month of March
Navy Reserve Birthday	March 3
Hug a GI Day	March 4
Mardi Gras	March 1
Seabee Birthday	March 5
Daylight Saving Time Begins	March 13, 2022
K 9 Veterans Day	March 13
American Legion Birthday	March 15
St. Patrick's Day	March 17
Rosie The Riveter Day	March 21
Medal of Honor Day	March 25
Passover	April 15 to April 23, 2022
National Vietnam War Veterans Day	March 29

Suicide is a National Public Health Concern





New era of education calls for GI Bill changes

By Paul E. Dillard, National Commander of The American Legion

Paul E. Dillard was elected national commander of The American Legion on Sept. 2, 2021

FEB 16, 2022

[New era of education calls for GI Bill changes | The American Legion](#)

The promise of a meaningful, free or low-cost education after military service is among the top reasons young men and women choose the U.S. Armed Forces. In that way, the GI Bill is both an incentive to join and an expression of gratitude to those who voluntarily devote a portion of their lives to defend our nation.

VA Vet Centers Need Longer Hours and More Promotion, MOAA Tells Congress

MOAA joined several veterans service organizations in testifying Feb. 3 before a House of Representatives subcommittee in support of expansion and improvements to the VA's Vet Centers, which provide services for military personnel transitioning to civilian life.

More than 216,000 veterans and service members, and their families, took advantage of readjustment counseling and outreach services offered by Vet Centers in 2021. And according to the VA, there was a 90% overall increase in veterans seeking mental health care from fiscal year 2006 to 2019.

US Department of Veterans Affairs, Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care system. Behavior Health Mobile outpatient clinic, local recovery coordinator Ms. Deandra Gullette:

251-219-3900 EXT-3-3636

E-mail: Deandra.Gullette@va.gov



Lou presented a flag to Ed Evans that flew over our nation's capital, made possible by Congressman Jerry Carl

Purple Heart Patriot Project

U.S. Army Command Sergeant Major Edward Evans (Ret.) was selected as Alabama's representative to the 2021 Purple Heart Patriot Project.

He was nominated to take part in the mission by his daughters, Karla Dauzat and Marcia Evans. The Korean War veteran represented the state's Purple Heart veterans at the multi-day tribute honoring those who have been wounded in combat while valiantly serving the United States.

The 20-year veteran enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1948 and earned his Purple Heart during his tour of duty in Korea during the fall of 1950.

Evans made a stop by congressman's Jerry Carl's office in Washington D.C. on his way to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. The Purple Heart recipients received a tour of the newly renovated National Purple Heart Hall of Honor.

The Purple Heart Patriot Project provides an all-expense paid trip to Purple Heart recipients from across the country to visit the museum dedicated as a tribute to their service, the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, and other historic sites connected with the Purple Heart. Each mission is comprised of one Purple Heart recipient representing their fellow Purple Heart heroes from their state. The Purple Heart Patriot Project was inspired by the Honor Flight Network as well as the Gary Sinise Foundation's "Soaring Valor Flight" which fly WWII Veterans to national memorials in Washington and New Orleans.

**In honor of March Women's History Month
We salute two local military women who excel
in their fields**



Janet L. Cobb, MG (USA Ret) & Deborah Walker, CMSgt (USAF Ret)

Janet L. Cobb - Executive Director, USS Alabama Battleship Commission and Battleship Memorial Park, Mobile, Alabama. She enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve in May 1974 and retired from a 42-year military career including leadership roles in Kuwait, the Netherlands and Washington, D.C., Army Reserve Major General Cobb was named the park's executive director in December 2015. Cobb is a past USS ALABAMA Battleship Commissioner. She serves on the boards of the Historic Naval Ships Association, The Lee Foundation and the Equine Therapy Group for Veterans. She is member of the Mobile Bay Area Veterans Day Commission Board of Trustees and serves on the Veterans Initiative Advisory Council of the Community Foundation of South Alabama. MG (Ret.) Cobb holds a real estate license with the State of Alabama. She is a member of VFW Post 5658, American Legion Post 99 and other professional and civic organizations.

Deborah Walker - Veterans Recovery Resources Board Member. Debb is a 30-year, Air Force retired, Chief Master Sergeant who has served as Director of Training the Alabama Disabled American Veterans. As a result, she helps the organization's 19,000 Veterans find a path to a richer, more fulfilling life. Debb is also nationally-recognized for her leadership developing and implementing the Department of Defense (DoD) integrated healthcare delivery system called TRICARE, serving as its training administrator for all armed services. But she has other talents, too. Debb performed in the Air Force's entertainment showcase, "Tops in Blue," before more than 250,000 military personnel and their families worldwide. Debb has earned her MBA and continues to volunteer for Veteran-related organizations.



Military Times:

This undated photo provided by Louisiana National Guard shows Louisiana Army National Guard Warrant Officer Tatiana Julien in front of her National Guard helicopter. (Louisiana National Guard via AP)

[Meet the Louisiana Army National Guard's first Black woman pilot \(militarytimes.com\)](https://www.militarytimes.com/story/news/2022/03/01/meet-louisiana-army-national-guard-first-black-woman-pilot/7711117002/)

PINEVILLE, La. — A woman who was once rescued from the Superdome on a helicopter during Hurricane Katrina has gone on to become the Louisiana Army National Guard's first Black female pilot.

Warrant Officer Tatiana Julien of New Orleans pilots a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter in B Company, 1-244th Assault Helicopter Battalion, which is based in Hammond.

Why Do We Celebrate Women's History Month? Tuesday, March 1-Thursday, March 31, 2022.

Women's History Month is a dedicated month to reflect on the often-overlooked contributions of women to United States history. From Abigail Adams to Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth to Rosa Parks, the timeline of women's history milestones stretches back to the founding of the United States.

The actual celebration of Women's History Month grew out of a weeklong celebration of women's contributions to culture, history and society organized by the school district of Sonoma, California, in 1978. Presentations were given at dozens of schools, hundreds of students participated in a "Real Woman" essay contest and a parade was held in downtown Santa Rosa. Women's History Month is a celebration of women's contributions to history, culture and society and has been observed annually in the month of March in the United States since 1987. Women's History Month 2022 will take place from Tuesday, March 1-Thursday, March 31, 2022.

[Women's History Month 2022 - HISTORY](https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/womens-history-month-2022)



Robert Lewis Howard

(July 11, 1939 – December 23, 2009) was the most highly decorated officer of Vietnam United States Army Special Forces & Medal of Honor recipient of the Vietnam War. He was wounded 14 times over 54 months of combat, was awarded the Medal of Honor, eight Purple Hearts, a Distinguished Service Cross, a Silver Star, and four Bronze Stars.

He was nominated for the Medal of Honor three times over a 13-month period but received lesser medals for the first two nominations, which were for actions performed in Cambodia where the U.S. was fighting covertly. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on December 30, 1968, his third nomination.

He retired from the US Army after 36 years of service as a full colonel. He was one of the most decorated soldiers in the Vietnam War and was "said to be the most decorated service member in the history of the United States".



<https://savic.info/>

*Check out the SAVC Website
It's full of valuable information*

AFD/BSS May 21, 2022



Scan the QR code and register on Eventbrite for the **Arm Forces Day/Blue Star Salute Memorial 5K Run/Walk & 1 Mile Fun Run For Alabama's Fallen Heroes.**

Saturday May 21, 2022 - 7:30 AM
Battleship Memorial Park
Mobile, AL



"SIX LITTLE stories"

Well worth the 30 seconds to read!

(1)

Once all villagers decided to pray for rain.
On the day of prayer all the people gathered,
but only one boy came with an umbrella.

That's FAITH

(2)

When you throw babies in the air,
they laugh because they know you will catch them.

That's TRUST

(3)

Every night we go to bed
without any assurance of being alive the next morning,
but still we set the alarms to wake up.

That's HOPE

(4)

We plan big things for tomorrow
in spite of zero knowledge of the future

That's CONFIDENCE

(5)

We see the world suffering,
but still we get married and have children.

That's LOVE

(6)

On an old man's shirt was written a sentence
'I am not 80 years old;
I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience.

That's ATTITUDE

Have a happy day & live your life like the 6 stories.

BIRTHDAY PARADE FOR A VETERAN TURNING 100 YRS OLD!!

He is a resident at William F. Green Veterans home
in Bay Minette.

Saturday, March 12th 2022

Staging at 0900hrs at American Legion Post 188 in
Bay Minette.

Parade will start at approx 1000hrs!!

Let's show our thanks and support to this hero!!

Cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles.... Everyone
welcome!!

Decorations are a PLUS!!!

Contact Don Madden 251-401-6544 for more info!

TAPS provides compassionate care to all those grieving the death of a military loved one.

THE MISSION OF TAPS

Since 1994, TAPS has provided comfort and hope 24/7 through a national peer support network and connection to grief resources, all at no cost to surviving families and loved ones.

TAPS provides a variety of programs to survivors nationally and worldwide. Our National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp has been held annually in Washington, D.C., over Memorial Day weekend since 1994. TAPS also conducts **regional survivor seminars for adults and youth programs** at locations across the country, as well as **retreats** and **expeditions** around the world. Staff can get you connected to **counseling in your community** and help **navigate benefits and resources**.

If you are grieving the loss of a fallen service member, or if you know someone who can use our support, the **TAPS 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline** is always available toll-free with loving support and resources at 800-959-TAPS (8277).

If you are here because our mission to care for the families of America's fallen heroes speaks to you as well, we welcome you to connect with us about **giving, volunteering, professional engagement** or **careers**.

TAPS is a national nonprofit 501(c)3 Veterans Service Organization and is not part of, or endorsed by, the Department of Defense.

SUICIDE LOSS SUPPORT: WE'VE GOT YOU

TAPS has supported thousands of survivors of military suicide loss by offering them hope, healing, and renewed opportunities for personal growth. If you've lost a military loved one to suicide, you've come to the right place. We've got you. At TAPS, we understand that suicide grief is different. We know you are struggling with a range of powerful emotions and wrestling with very complicated questions. Why did this happen? Where do I go from here?

Fortunately, you are not alone on this journey. We are survivors just like you. We have been down the road you are traveling. Let us help you best honor your loved one's life. TAPS special resources and programming provide compassionate care to all survivors of military suicide loss. Our unique approach will help stabilize you and your family, guide you through "healthy grief," and put you on a path toward healing and growth.

We are you. You are us. Let's heal together.

You are not alone. [https://www.taps.org/...](https://www.taps.org/)

10 things we know to be true...

Grief can feel very isolating, but you don't have to walk this journey alone. We've been down the road you're traveling, and we are here for you.



You will NOT always feel this much pain.

As time passes, the hurt you feel now will change. We know from experience that your emotional pain will subside and soften with time. It won't always feel like it does right now.



Most people who die by suicide do not want to die. They want their pain to end.

Whatever pain brought our loved ones to end their lives, it inhibited them from thinking clearly and from fully comprehending the heartbreak their suicides would cause.



Suicide is the "perfect storm" event.

Suicide is rarely the result of just one person, conversation, or event. It usually involves multiple, complex factors that culminate in a "perfect storm."



You can't prevent what you can't predict.

There was no way you could have known it would happen that very day, at that precise moment. You cannot control the thoughts and actions of others.



Eventually, the questions will cease to be so all encompassing.

"Why?" "What if?" Most of us who have experienced suicide loss wrestle with these and other questions for a long time. This is normal. It helps us to learn enough "to suffice," to process our thoughts so that we can eventually find peace.



What you tell yourself matters.

How you talk to yourself about what happened can shape the experience of your grief journey. Trust what you know about your loved one, and choose to tell yourself the story that best helps you heal.



Suicide is not a reflection of love.

People who die by suicide may have believed they were a burden to the people they loved. They thought that their families would be better off without them. Whereas we know this to be untrue, our loved ones could not see clearly through the fog of their emotional pain.



How you cope with this is up to you.

You didn't choose for this to happen to you, but you do get to decide how to respond to it. You have a say in how you heal.



Love never ends.

When your loved one died, the love you shared didn't just stop. Your relationship continues. Keep the memories alive in all that you do.

[28th Annual National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp | TAPS](#)



United States National Reserve Corps - Information and Recruitment Page

February 13 at 9:50 PM ·

I have a prayer request tonight - Colonel Fred James, fell into his burn pit today and received 3rd degree burns along the back of his body. He is facing surgery and skin grafts. Fred is a liaison and leader in our First Responder unit. He works among the Lao and Hmong veteran groups from the Vietnam era.

Please be in prayer for his healing and finances—and for wife, Paula. **Paula will be off work for weeks – months, an account is in the process of being set up for anyone who wants to make a donation to them, please stand by.**



Mobile Bay Magazine (Dec 2021) published an article about A B Grantham, and the Quilts of Valor Foundation. The mission of the Foundation is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing quilts.

[Quilts of Valor \(mobilebaymag.com\)](http://mobilebaymag.com)



John 9:3 Foundation

...this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. - John 9:3

Our Vision

To aid and assist families and individuals who are affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder; to serve the men and women who have served our country in the United States Armed Forces; and to answer the call of James 1:27 by supporting orphans and adoptions both foreign and domestic.

<https://www.john93foundation.com/>

About John 9:3 Foundation

Executive Director: John D. Drinkard - (251) 298-7346

jddrinkard@john93foundation.com

In 2013, our oldest son, who was eight at the time, was diagnosed with Autism (Aspergers). While he and my wife were discussing a story of a little girl who could not feel pain, we were able to gain the greatest insight into the mind of a child that we would ever be given. My wife explained that this little girl was continually getting hurt because she did not feel pain and therefore would not stop when she did something like put her hand on a hot stove, etc. The conversation turned to why would God allow someone to go through something like that. My wife asked him, "Well why do you think God allowed you to be autistic." To our astonishment he calmly replied, **"So I can help other people like me."** And that was it. We knew that God was calling our family to do something, but we didn't fully understand what that something was.

While going through the Med Board at Ft. Benning, GA from complications from a Traumatic Brain Injury, I kept contemplating why God would take away my ability to walk and serve and separate me from my family. It was then that these words kept coming back to me, "So I can help other people like me." ***It was then that I knew what our family was being asked to do.***

The John 9:3 Foundation was founded in 2017 with the original purpose of helping families and individuals on the Autism Spectrum with information, support and in-kind donations of sensory items and fuel cards for therapy appointments; as well as serve service members and veterans through partnerships with local and regional nonprofit organizations and veteran service organizations. We are currently seeking approval to start a program that will serve orphans and adoptive families as we pursue our own international adoption from the country of Ukraine. Until then, One Less will serve as a source of information and support for adoptive families.

John Drinkard

US Naval Hospital ship “USNS Comfort” will call Mobile home for several months as it gets an overhaul in Mobile



DOWNTOWN MOBILE, Ala (WALA) -- A big ship will soon sit on the horizon when looking toward the Port of Mobile. The vessel is set to undergo a massive overhaul at Alabama Shipyard.

The ship is the USNS Comfort. It is a hospital ship and come next month it will call Mobile home for several months as it gets an overhaul here.

“It will be quite large, white, and very distinct here on the waterfront,” said Lee Stokes, COO of Alabama Shipyard. “Nothing like it has been in the port here at all.”

The ship might be familiar to some. In early 2020, it was used to help fight the COVID pandemic in New York City. It is set to arrive in Mobile on Fat Tuesday which is March 1st.

“We enjoy these type of projects,” Stokes said. “We’re building a good relationship with MSC and we’re just looking forward to this project in a big way.”

The overhaul is set to take about 150 days and will cover a wide range of things as they work to make fixes and updates to the ship.

“The work we’ll be doing on the vessel is a typical dry-docking project, it will go on our dry dock and will stay

there about 75 days, typical overhaul and repair work that’s done on the vessel,” Stokes said.

The overhaul is expected to be great for the local area because it will employ several hundred people.

“It’s about a \$30 million contract,” Stokes said. “All that money will go into local businesses here, our own workforce, our own people and we’re excited about employing people and this is one of the many projects that we’ll have here this year.”

The ship is set to be finished by the end of July or early August if all goes according to plan.

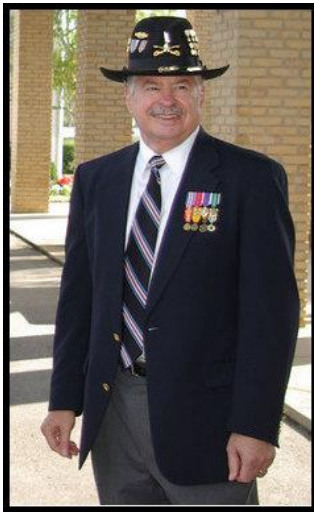


“Tears of Sorrow – Tears of Joy” is a larger-than-life sculpture set in a fountain overlooking Mobile Bay.

A woman stands on a marble disk cradling a folded flag with the field of stars toward the heavens. Her head is bowed in honor of a fallen soldier who has made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. On an adjoining marble disk are a soldier and a young boy. The soldier is on one knee to accept a “welcome home” greeting from the boy. Water flows across the marble disks, sheeting into an illuminating pool collecting the tears.

Concept Designer: Sissy Birindelli Sculptor: Stephen Spears

The road to the memorial began in 2004 with the Citizens for Local Troop Support’s wish to commemorate Fairhope veterans and their families, especially Spc. Christopher Taylor, 25, of Daphne who died in Iraq while on tour with the Fairhope-based Alabama National Guard 1165th Military Police Co.



Joseph Ray Birindelli, Jr.

January 27, 2022

Joe was co-chair of the effort to build the Fairhope Veterans Memorial. The memorial was truly a labor of love for Joe. He worked for nine years to bring it to completion in 2013.

HOUSE PASSES CHAIRMAN TAKANO'S EVEST ACT -JANUARY 20, 2022

Eligible veterans would be automatically enrolled in the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) health care system under a bill passed by the House on Thursday.

The House voted 265-163 to approve the Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition, or EVEST, Act. The vote fell largely along party lines, though 44 Republicans joined Democrats to support the bill.

Right now, veterans must proactively apply for health care benefits at the VA. The bill approved Thursday would require the department to instead automatically enroll veterans who meet existing eligibility criteria for VA health care. The VA would also have to provide a way for veterans to opt out of coverage.

The bill, which does not change who is eligible for VA health benefits, would apply retroactively to veterans discharged 90 days before it becomes law. The bill must still be voted on by the Senate before being sent to the president to be signed into law.

5 Korea and Vietnam Veterans Are Now Eligible for Medal of Honor

Five soldiers from the Korean and Vietnam wars could be awarded the Medal of Honor under the annual defense policy bill signed into law Monday.

The National Defense Authorization Act, or NDAA, would also allow four soldiers who served in the Battle

of Mogadishu in Somalia to have their awards upgraded.

By law, a Medal of Honor or other distinguished service award has to be given within five years of the act that is deemed deserving of the honor.

But that time limit can be waived through separate legislation, which is what this year's NDAA did for those nine soldiers.

While the NDAA makes the nine soldiers eligible, the Medals of Honor must still be approved by the president and the upgrades by the Army before they can be awarded.

Those who are now eligible for the Medal of Honor include Korean War veterans Charles R. Johnson, who died in combat in 1953 and was awarded the Silver Star 57 years later for putting "himself between his comrades and the enemy, thereby creating the conditions for their successful rescue;" Wataru Nakamura, who received a posthumous Distinguished Service Cross in 1952 for carrying out a "one-man assault" on bunkers recently captured by the enemy; and Bruno R. Orig, who was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in 1951 for treating wounded comrades under enemy fire and then manning a machine gun with "such effective fire on the enemy that a withdrawing friendly platoon was able to move back without a single casualty."

Also now eligible for the Medal of Honor are Vietnam War veterans Dennis M. Fujii, who earned the Distinguished Service Cross in 1971 after he was wounded and left behind during an attack in Laos and "repeatedly exposed himself to hostile fire as he left the security of his entrenchment to better observe enemy troop positions and to direct air strikes against them;" and Edward N. Kaneshiro, who was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in 1967 for a battle a year earlier where he saved his platoon by single handedly fighting off and clearing the enemy from trenches and bunkers.

Four soldiers who received the Silver Star for their service during what's known as the [Black Hawk](#) Down incident in Somalia in 1993 are also now eligible for their award to be upgraded to the Distinguished Service Cross: Earl R. Fillmore Jr., Robert. L. Mabry, John G. Macejunas and William F. Thetford.

If their awards are upgraded, it would be the second time in recent months that service members connected with the Black Hawk Down incident were given higher honors.

In July, the Army announced it was upgrading medals for 60 special operators who participated in the battle. Two were upgraded to the Distinguished Flying Cross and 58 were upgraded to Silver Stars.

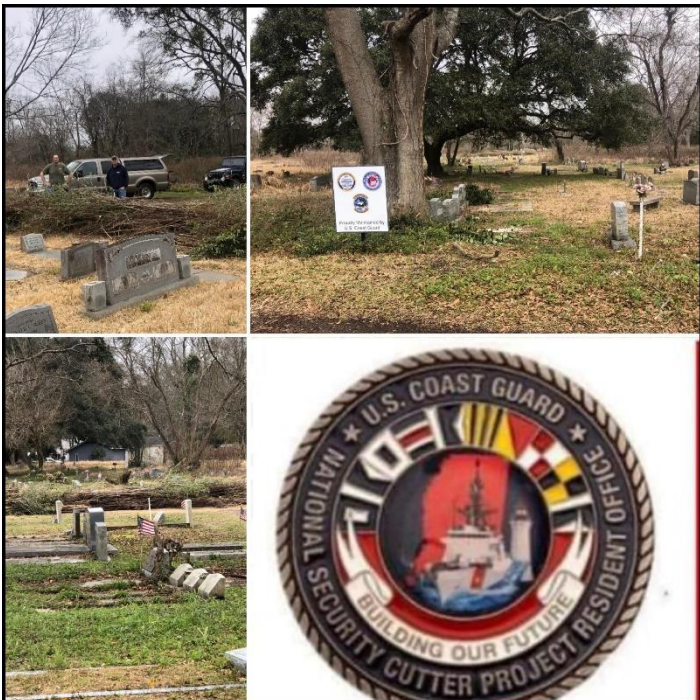
VMRT - Honoring community leaders during Black History Month. Col Roosevelt Lewis, JR, Tuskegee Airman, Kelly Finley, Judge Finley, the VMRT crew, and Montfort Point Marines, Austal, and others who volunteered.



February 5

"We had an incredible time this morning at Oaklawn Cemetery. Working with the VMRT to pay homage on Black History Month and caring for our ancestors and our veteran sisters and brothers."

K. Fitzgerald Finley PC, Attorney at Law



Thank you USCG PRO - Historic Oaklawn section 6 - looking good!!! Friday Feb 18, 2022 Andy Clark's crew

William F. Green Veterans Home

Car Show

March 12, 2022 (Rain date April 2, 2022)
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM Registration 9 - 12
 300 Faulkner Dr Bay Minette, AL

FREE to Public

Awards: 50+ trophies:
 Best of Show-90 & newer, Best of Show-89 & older,
 WFG Director's Choice,
 Best engine, Best Paint, Best Interior
 Best: Mustang, Challenger, Corvette, GM, Ford, Mopar, Import,
 Antique (49 & older), Truck 4x2 & 4x4, Low Rider, Unrestored,
 Rat Rods, 4 Door, Longest Distance, Special Interest.
 Plus 1st & 2nd place trophies by decade back to 1929,
 & Top 10.




Entry Fee: Pre-registration \$20, day of show \$25
 Pre-registration entry must be received by March 5, 2022

Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Email: _____ Car Club: _____
 Make: _____ Model: _____ Year: _____ Color: _____
 Signature: _____ Date: _____

By signing above, you agree to abide by the rules set forth by the sponsors and the William F Green Veterans Home Staff, to include Covid 19 requirements that may still be in place on this date.

Make check payable to: Gear Jammers Car Club
 Mail to: Gear Jammers Car Club, Attn: Dave Hitchcock, 26411 Wesley Pate Rd, Elberta, AL, 36530
 For more information contact Dave Hitchcock at 251-747-4223 (leave a message if no answer)

Places To Go

Alabama Military Hall of Honor

Marion, AL


The Alabama Military Hall of Honor was established in 1975 and stands today to honor Alabama's Military heroes. Here they are provided a permanent tribute with displays of portrait plaques of inductees and military artifacts. The museum is housed in a building that was built circa 1832 as a law office and then served as the Marion City Hall for forty years. It was moved from the courthouse square to the Marion Military Institute campus to serve as the museum building during the late 1960s.

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