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NOVEMBER 2026

VETERANS DAY

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED





SHORELINE MEDIA

LUDINGTON DAILY NEWS
OCEANA'S HERALD-JOURNAL
WHITE LAKE BEACON

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A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES**

published by

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A special thanks to our local veterans for their courage, sacrifice and service

On Veterans Day, we pause to reflect on the courage, dedication and loyalty of our nation's military veterans. Throughout history, their hard work and sacrifice have kept us safe and protected our freedom. We owe them a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid, and we salute them for their service. To all the brave men and women who have sacrificed to put their country first, we thank you.

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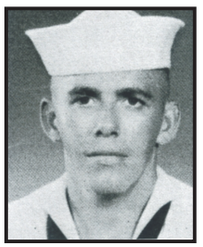
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Joseph Weaver
US Air Force
SRA



Alana Bergstrom
US Army
Sgt. Military Police



Robert D. Brooks
US Navy
1962-1969



Gregory Bussey
US Army
Sergeant, 1980-1984



Jared A. Bussey
US Marines
LCPL



Donald Clemons
US Army
Staff Sergeant



Stephen Cooper
US Army
Spec.



John Cotten
US Army
Lt. Colonel



Arthur J. Collins
US Army, Sgt. 3-6
1966-1969
1974-1999



Ronald Cox
US Navy
LCDR, Chaplain



Justin Duggan
US Marines
PFC



Bud John Holden
US Coast Guard
E-8, Sr. Chief
Operations



Tyler J. Jozwiak
Private 1st Class



Clarence Dust
US Army
PFC
1941-1945



Gregory Feister
US Navy
E-5



Randy France
US Marines
Staff Sgt
1973-1987



Joseph T. Kraus-McCarty
US Navy
Seamans Apprentice



Joseph E. McCarty
US Navy, E5
Electricians Mate,
1977-1988



Joseph McKinney
US Navy
E-4



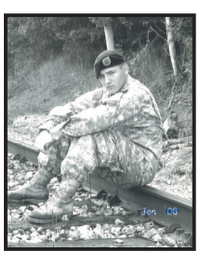
David Mickevich
US Navy, Petty Officer
3rd Class, E-4



James F. Pearson
PFC
1944-1945



Brandon Gokey
US Navy, E-5 Aviation
Structural Mechanic



Jon Jonio
US Army
Private 2nd Class



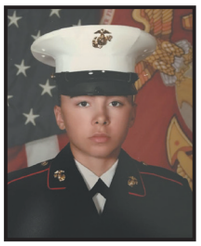
Darin Lambert
US Army
Specialist

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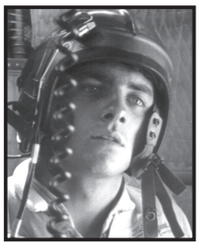
Alexus Del Tour
Corporal
Marine Corps



Dieter Muralt
Sergeant
Army



Michael Del Tour
Sergeant
Marine Corps



Stan Bennette
SSgt. US Marine Corps
Highly Decorated
Helicopter Crew Chief
Vietnam vet



Duane Cooper
FTG-2, Fire Control Tech.
US Navy 1962-66
USS Barry DD933



Lysle P. Hansberger Jr.
Chief Boatswain's Mate
E-7, U.S. Coast Guard
Served 1965-1985



Steven M. Fillmore
First Sergeant/E-8
U.S. Marine Corps
Served Feb. 2, 1982-Feb. 28, 2002



Gail Altschwager
PFC
U.S. Army



Larry R. Wisner
Airman 2nd class
Air Force



Mark Levandowski
E-5 Navy Corpsman
Navy



Noel H. Kibbey
Sergeant, US Army
Korean Veteran



Louis Wolven
Spec 5 Army



John Fletcher
Spec 4 Army



Dawna Wilson
Airman 2nd Class
U.S. Air Force



Robert M. Wilson
Sergeant
U.S. Army, WWII

Frank Phillips Jr.
L/Cpl
U.S. Marine Corps

HONORING ALL VETERANS!

With heartfelt gratitude, we thank you for your service and sacrifice including our own



TERRY
Marine Corps
Infantry/Marine
Security Force
4 Years Service



JB
National Guard Infantry
Air Assault
9 Years Service



RICK
United States
Marine Corps
Combat Specialist
4 Years Service









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★ A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES** ★



Donald A. Linville
US Army
Sergeant



Casey M. Luskin
US Army
1st Lt.



Harlan J. Page
US Army, Cpl.
1943-1945



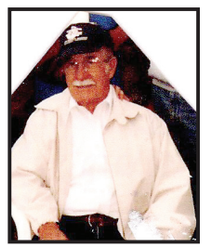
Levi Ivan Reed
US Army
Private First Class
1944-1945



Jerome Roebuck
US Army
1SG



Donald Vorac
Sgt., US Army
WWII and Korea



Wesley Vorac
Cpl., US Army
WWII



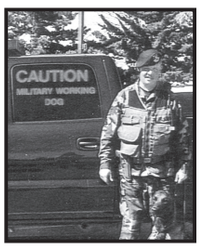
Gordon Nielsen
Sgt. (T), US Army
Korea



William Battice
US Army
PFC



Kenneth Boogaart
US Air Force
Tech Sgt., E6



Matthew Bowling
US Air Force
Tech Sgt.



Bernal A. Burke
US Army, First Lt.
1942-1946



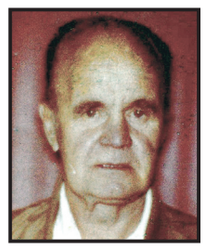
Andrew Champion
US Army
First Lt.



Michael Companion
Spec 5, US Army



Edward Frank Baker
Lance Corporal
US Marine Corp



Charles Risdale Friedley
Pvt. 1st Class, USMC
WWII, Iwo Jima









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Robert J. Jozwiak
US Marines, E-4 Cpl.
1988-1992



Robert J. Jozwiak
US Army
Sgt. E-5, 1994-1997



Trisha A. Kokx
US Air Force
Sr. Airman



Mark D. Morton
US Coast Guard
Damage Controlman 1st Class, 1979-2009



Levi D. Peffer
US Army
Staff Sgt.
2000-2011



Robert C. Jaekel
Marines



Robert W. Nash
PFC First Class
Army



William Nash II
Stationed in Germany
Army



Travis Ruterbusch
US Coast Guard
BM2



Jacob D. Shimel
US Army
Specialist, MP, BN



Kyle D. Shimel
US Army
Staff Sergeant



Bernard Slimmen
US Nat'l Guard
Private



Charles Strejcek
US Army
Staff Sergeant
1942-1945



Orval A. Jensen Sr.
Corporal, US Army
WWII



Orval A. Jensen Jr.
Sergeant, US Air Force



Archie W. Eastway
SFC, US Army, Korean Conflict 1948-1954

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Dr. Matthew, Dr. Joseph and Dr. Michael Ferguson



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Gilbert Lauterwasser
US Navy Seaman 1944-47
WWII, US Army Corporal
E-4, 1949-1959 Korean War



Daryl McLean
US Navy, E-4 Cook
1963-1967 San Diego, Phillipines, Vietnam



Niels C. Nielsen
US Army, T5
Fort Bragg, European Theater, WWII



Raymond Okoren
US Army - Air Force
Tech. Sgt., 1949-1945
Pacific Theater



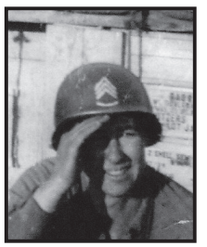
Robert Olmstead
US Army
Infantry Combat
Rifleman
Germany



Leo W. Dean Jr.
E4 Amphibious Army



Alvin R. Benson
S/Sgt. US Air Force
E-5 & E9 USCGR



Russell E. Lemke
Sgt. F.C. Battery A 38th
Field Artillery, Korea



Eric Piper
US Army, Captain
Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Uganda, Ft. Benning & Ft. Riley



Jack Rasmussen
US Army Air Corp, 1st Lt.,
WWII in France 1943-1946
Korea 1951-1952



Brad Sanford
US Marines, Master Sgt.
Camp Lejeune, NC;
Okinawa, Washington, Afghanistan,
Camp Pendleton, CA



Justin Schubert
US Navy, Petty Officer
2008-2012



John T. Royalty
Corporal
US Army



Marjorie M. Herin
US Marines, Lance
Corporal, 1983-1985



Peter R. Hiddema
Army Air Force (AAF)
Sgt., 1942-1945



Peter F. Hiddema
US Army, Specialist E-5
1968-1970



Kenneth Shaw
US Army
Sgt. 1st Class
1994-2006



Terry Lee Usoff
US Army
Sgt. E-5
1967-1969



Jason Wilson
US Army
Sergeant
2006-2012



Wes Althaus
US Air Force
Lieutenant



Richard Barritt
US Army, Corporal
1943-1945



Jerry Linstrom
US Army
Staff Sergeant
1950-1952



Evan Lundberg
US Army
Private



Frank Maleckas
US Air Force
Lt. Colonel
1940-1945



John Broderick
US Army
Capt. Quartermaster
1968-1972



Shaun Butterfield
US Marines
PFC



Mark A. Carroll
US Marines
Sergeant



Matthew Carroll
US Marines
L. Cpl



Nick Crescenzi
US Nat'l Guard



Marla Nelson
US Marines
Staff Sergeant



Richard Perez
US Army
Sergeant First Class



Roger Perez
US Army
Specialist
1992-1999

A SALUTE TO VETERANS OUR HEROES



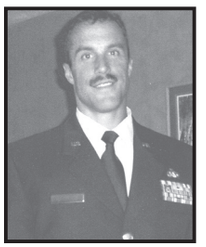
David VanAmeyden
US Air Force, Major
1990-2011



Lloyd Andersen
US Army
Sergeant
1950-1952



Justin C. Clark
US Marines
Lance Corporal



Brian Gregaitis
US Air Force
Master Sergeant



Michael Holmes III
US Navy, BMSN
2009-2013



Jacob Tufts
Technical Sergeant
USAF / Michigan Air National Guard



Theodore James Stone
Sgt. US Army
Vietnam Veteran



Chad Philip Stone
E2 US Navy



James G. Jones
US Marines
Sergeant
1955-1961



Ki Kimball
US Marines
Staff Sgt.



Jordan T. Kolaski
US Army
Specialist E-4



Bruce S. LaPorte
US Navy, 1965-1967
HN Hospital Man



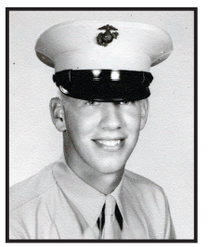
William O. Lindenau
US Army, Sgt. E-5
1967-1970



Cordell Frahm
Lance Corporal
US Marines



William Henry Sadler
Captain, US Army



Thomas A. Keson
Lance Corporal, US Marine Corps, Vietnam

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A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES**

‘One of the lucky ones’: Lyle Taylor’s wartime story lives on

Recent POW recognition honors Ruby Creek veteran whose daughters helped preserve his account of World War II service and captivity

Ginny Beadle wanted her father’s wartime stories preserved so she could pass them on to her son.

At her urging, Lyle Taylor wrote about his service aboard a B-24 Liberator, his escape from the burning aircraft and more than a year as a prisoner of war. Another daughter, Janet Husted, typed his handwritten account.

“By having it down on paper we will always have a record,” Beadle told the Ludington Daily News in 1999. “It’s important that people realize what these soldiers went through and this is a personal account of that.”

More than eight decades after his capture, Beadle attended another recognition of her father’s service. Taylor was honored posthumously Sept. 19 at the POW/MIA Plaques of Honor ceremony at Island Park in Mount Pleasant, she confirmed.

His family thanked Ruby Creek Tavern owner Jerry Welcome for nominating Taylor for the recognition.

The Ruby Creek veteran died in 2003 at age 82. Taylor described his wartime experiences in a memoir. His children also recorded memories of his work, music and family life.

“I feel I was one of the lucky ones that came home,” Taylor told the Daily News in 2002.

Born Jan. 14, 1921, Taylor was a farmhand before entering military service June 13, 1942. He served as an airplane mechanic-gunner with the 737th Bomb Squadron, 454th Bomb Group, according to family-supplied records and his obituary.

As a right waist gunner aboard a B-24, Taylor was flying a mission in March 1944 when his aircraft came under attack. In excerpts from his memoir published by the Daily News in 1999, he described losing an engine to anti-aircraft fire and falling unconscious from lack of oxygen.

When he regained consciousness, the aircraft was flying on automatic pilot. His clothing and parachute were burning.

After struggling to attach his parachute, he crawled to an escape hatch in the floor and went out headfirst.

“We were at 23,500 feet when I left the plane,” he wrote. “It took quite a while to get down to earth.”

His burning parachute caught in tree branches near a village in Yugoslavia, leaving him suspended about 20 feet above the ground. He unbuckled his harness and slid down the trunk.

He tried to get away, but pain in his back stopped him after about 100 feet.

Young people found him and led him to a house where a man spoke English. The residents gave him food and treated his burns. They then concealed him beneath straw in a donkey cart and took him into the mountains to hide him.

German troops learned where he was and took him into custody.

“I often wonder what they did with the people for trying to hide me,” Taylor wrote.

Taylor suffered two broken vertebrae and severe burns. He recalled in the 2002 Daily News interview that his eyes were covered for three weeks while his burned eyelids healed in a German hospital.

After weeks of treatment, he was transferred to Stalag XVII-B, a POW camp near Krems, Austria.

His memoir described wooden barracks with little heat, crowded bunks and meager food. American Red Cross parcels helped sustain the men.

“The one thing that really saved us were the American Red Cross food parcels we received,” he wrote. “Because of these packages I’ll always donate to the Red Cross.”

Softballs, bats and musical instruments reached the camp through relief organizations. Each end of the barracks formed a ball team, and Taylor played mostly left field. Guards came to watch the games.

Musicians formed a small band. Cigarettes served as payment for performances and as currency for trades and card games.

Prisoners also listened to broadcasts on radios assembled from components obtained through trades. They wrote down war news, which was shared among the barracks the following day.

Taylor described an attempted escape through a tunnel whose entrance was beneath his bunk. The men hoped to reach the nearby Russian prisoners’ barracks, join a field work detail and escape.

The tunnel emerged short of the building. A horse stepped into the opening, exposing the effort.

In April 1945, German guards ordered the prisoners out of camp and marched them west across Austria. Taylor recalled walking for two or three weeks before reaching Braunau.

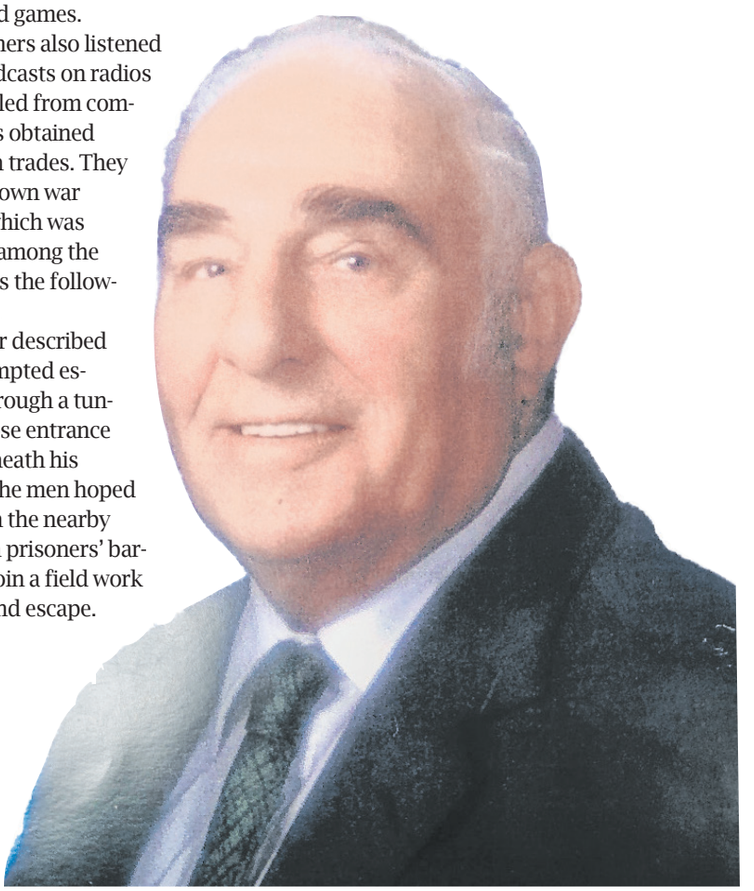
In May, an American jeep arrived, and the guards surrendered the prisoners.

“You never heard such cheering!” he wrote.

“We didn’t need butter on the white bread, it tasted just like cake to us.”

Taylor returned to the United States and was discharged Sept. 25, 1945, at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. He reached the rank of staff sergeant, and his decorations included the Purple Heart and Air Medal.

Taylor was a charter member of Custer VFW Gold Bar Post 5096 and participated in its Memorial Day ceremonies, according to the 1999 Daily News story.



A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES**







"You should honor your fallen comrades, those who have served and those who are still serving," he said.

In 2010, his family arranged to place a copy of "My Memories of the United States Army Air Corps" in the Mason County District Library.

His wife, Ella Mae, said the written account did not fully convey his suffering.

"I think he underestimated the agony he went through," she told the Daily News.

In a tribute dated June 9, 2003, his children recalled a life at home filled with work, family and music.

Taylor worked for the Mason County Road Commission, operating a dragline and plowing snow. His children recalled him helping pregnant women reach the hospital through heavy snow.

He pitched baseball for Riverton and Crystal Valley teams in the early 1950s and later coached his daughters' softball team. He enjoyed horseshoes and bowled in a Monday night league with his brother, Marvin.

When he graduated from high school, he asked his father for a fiddle instead of a class ring. He received the fiddle, and they spent hours playing together, his father accompanying him on piano.

Taylor played fiddle, banjo, piano, mandolin and harmonica by ear. He performed with the Country Playboys Band and the Purchase brothers and participated in local Hee Haw shows supporting the Crystal Valley Care Fund.

He loved his 200 acres in Ruby Creek, where he cut firewood, assessed timber and hunted deer. He also enjoyed hunting trips to Wyoming and Colorado and games of setback with family and friends.

Taylor and Ella Mae lived in Scottville for 28 years before returning to Ruby Creek in 1984. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in September 2002.

He died June 4, 2003.

Ruby Creek Tavern's annual veterans hunt included a posthumous tribute to Taylor in 2016.

"Our dad loved life," they wrote. "He made every day count!"



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Lyle E. Hanson
Cpl., Army. 4th Inf. Div., Band, Trumpet



H. Warren Tibbits
PHM 3/C, Navy, Marine Corps WWII



Michael Companion
Spec 5
Army



Frank L. Bird
Captain
US Army



Richard Mather
82nd Airborne
1983-85



Matthew Mauer
US Navy, Petty Officer
1950-1954



Richard P. Mauer
US Marines
PFC



Robert Mauer
US Navy
Petty Officer



Philip McTaggart
USMC
1991-1995



Gary Ransom
E4 Army



Lance Ransom
E5 Navy



Dale Fritz
Air Force



Ian Fritz
Navy



Bradley Passage
US Marines
Sergeant



Nicholas Passage
US Marines
Sergeant, 2004-2012



Jake Schwass
US Army
Sergeant





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Larena Kramer
CPT
Army Retired



Justin Kramer
SSG
Army Reserve



Adam Sylvester
Major
Army National Guard



Alvin Jamison
Senior Master E-8
Airforce, Tuskegee Airman
WWI, Korea, Vietnam



Jim Sikkenga
Cpl.
Army



Carlin Seward
US Air Force
Korean War



Charles Seward
US Air Force, Served in Vietnam, Korea, Panama & Germany



Don Seward
US Army
1943-1945
World War II



Brandon M. Fisher
Senior Airman (E-4)
US Air Force
Served 2011-2015



David G. Fisher
Staff Sergeant (E-5)
US Air Force
Served 1950-1952



Michael D. Fisher
2nd Class Petty Officer (E-5), US Navy
Served 1978-1982



Saara Sniegowski
Sgt. (E-4) US Air Force
Served from 1983-1989

Scott Sniegowski
Master Sgt. (E-7)
US Air Force
Served from 1981-2001



Matthew Seward
US Air Force,
Served one tour in Iraq & Japan



Alex Shappee
US Air Force
E-1



Harvey W. Silver
US Army
Msg. (Ret.)
1951-1972

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A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES**

USS Saipan, computers, covert ops - Timothy Bunch reflects on time in Navy

BY SHANNA AVERY
SHORELINE MEDIA STAFF WRITER

Timothy Bunch's deep roots go way back in the Baldwin area, where he owns generational land, but his life's journey has taken him far beyond Michigan. From tracking early mainframe computers on naval ships to handling classified intelligence during Desert Storm, Bunch's time in the U.S. Navy shaped his career and work ethic for decades to come. Looking back on where it all began, he reflects on a military legacy that paved the way for his civilian success and his lifelong dedication to family and community.

He shared how it all began, after he just turned 20 in 1986.

"I had tried two semesters of college at Lansing Community College and did not feel like that was a successful direction for me. I felt more like a trades school education or military experience would be more satisfying for me. I looked into the Marines and the Navy. The Navy had a career in computers that I felt would be a smart career path, especially in 1986 with how computers were on such a rise," he said. "I was hoping to go at least 20 years, but in 1994 I was retired with a service-connected disability."

Bunch shared about his time in the Navy.

"After Bootcamp and my training school (called A-school), which were in San Diego, I was stationed on the USS Saipan in Norfolk for a little over three years. After that I received my Top-Secret clearance and transferred to Intelligence (still in Norfolk), just in time for Desert Storm, starting in 1990, where I spent my last four years. In 1990, we were on a six-month deployment to the Mediterranean (Med Cruise). That got interrupted by an attempted overthrow of the government in Liberia. Since that fell in our area of responsibility, we were rerouted to the Ivory coast (west coast of Africa),



to provide humanitarian services as part of Operation "Sharp Edge." We ended up evacuating civilians to a safe location well north of there," he said.

"On the ship, I started with data entry, then worked my way up to running system operations and then Work Center Supervisor, this was all on a Honeywell mainframe computer system. We processed all the data for the ship...printing checks, order parts and much more. When I transferred to Intel, I became one of a few techs that built and maintained desktop systems for multiple classified platforms. I also traveled to other areas like Keflavik, Iceland to set up a remote system there," he said.

Bunch said while working in Intelligence from 1990 through 1994, he had mostly state-side responsibilities for many different systems during Desert shield and Desert Storm.

"Some systems did bomb damage assessment (video imaging), and other systems weren't related to the war, but did things like counter-narcotics related operations in the Caribbean area, as well as 'monitoring' other adversaries around parts of the world," he said.

There are some memories that stand out, such as Christmas Day in boot camp.

"We got an hour or so to sit around and polish our boots, write letters home, smoke cigarettes," he said. He also remembers the first day walking on the ship and getting lost into a restricted area. Then there was the "old days of watching CNN with analysts to see where our bombs were hitting (Desert Storm era) in real time."

Bunch said his time in the Navy prepared him for the future.

"I feel like it has given me (or greatly increased) my good work ethic and attention to detail. I also feel that the education that I got with computers was invaluable. All of this is what sent me on my successful two career paths in civilian life," he said. "I used my computer skills that I learned in the navy and landed a job with the Virginia Department of Social Services performing network support. From there, I moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan to work for a firm that sold, installed and maintained small to medium sized business networking systems where I was the Service Manager. In 2001, I found myself burnt out with computers and was able to gradually move myself into Home Inspections by taking several classes and working for another Inspector until I was able to open my own Inspection business."

Bunch still keeps in touch with his friends he served with.

"Most of my friends (Shipmates) are on Facebook. I created a group about 15 years ago on Facebook to reconnect with a few of my buddies, and that has now grown to almost 900 shipmates that had served on the USS Saipan."

Bunch shared how his Lake County roots served as an influence throughout his life.

"As a Duffing (Great Grandson of George F. Duffing), it's where I come from even though I wasn't born there. Ever since I was too young to remember, I spent quite a bit of time every year in Baldwin at the family property. My grandparents, Norman and Georgene Anderson, my Great aunts and uncles, Gladys & Albert (Skip) Bradford along with Ronald & Dorothy Duffing, and Marie Dionne, were all huge impacts on me and my upbringing. Having that kind of support system with a loving family, as a growing young man, was priceless. We have been able to



maintain that beautiful piece of property in Lake county since 1920 when George Duffing purchased it. I am the fourth generation steward of this land along with my brother and cousins. My children have had the same exposure to it that I was able to experience growing up. They are already carrying that torch as stewards to protect this priceless piece of nature."

In his spare time, Bunch is very active in the firearms community in southwest Michigan.

"I have had quite a bit of education from implementing safety programs, range design, and helping our community to understand safety and responsibility around firearms. I use them for recreation, competition, hunting and self-defense. I'm also a member of the Lake County Sportsman's Club, a great organization. I also enjoy classic cars, I own a 1970 Corvette and still have a clean driving record. But most importantly, I enjoy spending time with my wife and family, I'm very proud watching my children growing into responsible adults and building their own families now. I have 3 children, Curtis, Amanda and Steven," he said.

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Tony Hren | U.S. Marine Corps
Phillip Jollands | U.S. Army
Dean Prause | U.S. Marine Corps
Andrew Smith | U.S. Army
Mike Wilson | U.S. Navy
Doug Macon | U.S. Navy
Anthony Little | U.S. Army
Craig VanWormer | U.S. Air Force
Maurice Rachow | U.S. Army

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Joseph Robert Farber
PFC, Army



Kim A. Loncar
MSgt. USAF
1985-2007 Retired



James B.Schaner
Staff Sergeant
US Air Force and
Air Force Reserve



John L. OstenSacken
USAF
1954-1958



Jack Varso
E5, 2nd Class Quartermaster, Navy Nuclear Submarine



Burton J. Tanis
Private First Class
US Army, 1943-1945



Robert J. Tanis
Sergeant, US Army
1967-1969 Vietnam



David Gaudette
US Marines
LPCL



Lisa Kroesing
Specialist 4, Army
1975-1978



Donald Farber
PFC, Army
World War II



Burl Farber
PFC, Army
World War II



Earl C. Hanks
Corporal, Eighth Army
Air Force - England



Samantha C. Helms
A1C US Air Force
2008-2013



Frank Bird
PFC, Army



Merlin E. Bacon
Sergeant 1st Class Korean War, Army
1948-1952



Patrick Lange
US Army, Sgt. E-5
1984-1995
Gulf War









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David A. Boughan
E4 - Staff Sergeant
US Air Force 1991-96



Lauren Nicole Nguyen
Corpsman
Navy



John Henry Converse
Sgt E7 Army, 1943-1968
WWII and Korea



David Lilleberg
E-5 Sgt., Army



Hiram W. Price
Cpl., US Army WWI
Co. I, 126 Infantry



Dakota Lichner
Staff Sergeant
National Guard



Raymond Ewing Jr.
Corporal, US Army



N. Charles Nielsen
US Army, Corporal
1943-1946

Lanny Hartman
MR1, Navy

Fred S. Olds Jr.
Pvt., USMC

Dan Vanderboegh
E4, Army

James Roy Steiger
E5, Army

Gary L. Dewey
E4, Army



Rudy Vorac Jr.
Merchant Marine
WWII

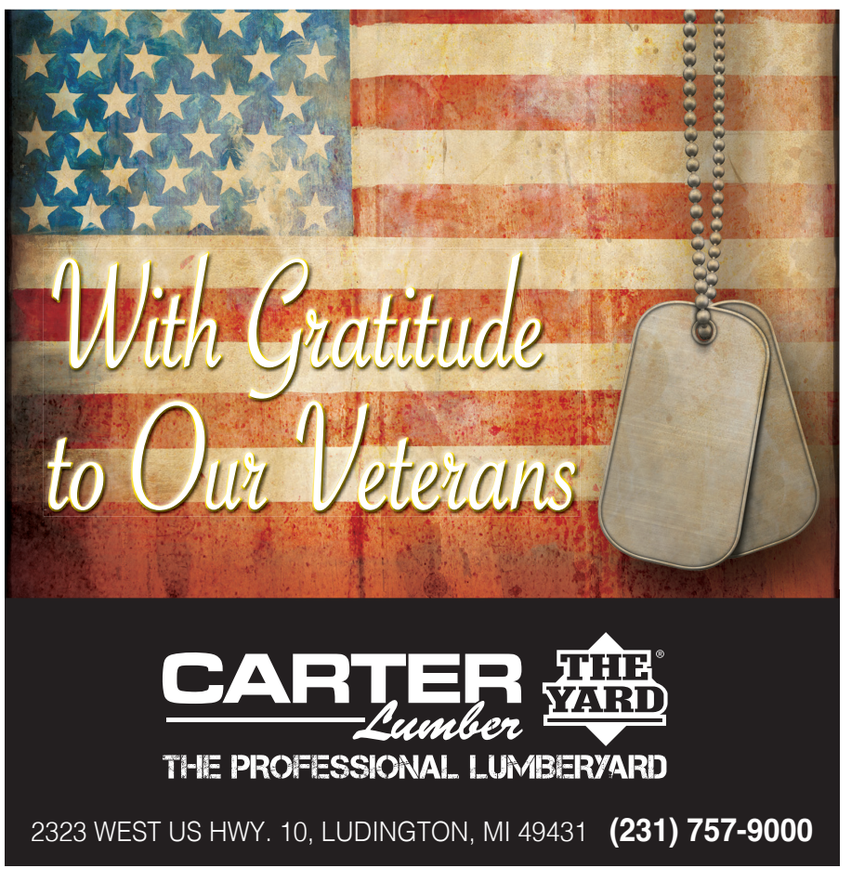


Rudy Vorac Sr.
Pvt., US Army
WWI



Robert J. Schwass
US Army
SPC





★ A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES** ★





From Hesperia to Baghdad, and back again

BY CRISTINA JUSKA

National Guard Veteran Les Meyette has taken a winding path, but it has led him to exactly where he wants to be.

Meyette grew up in Hesperia, and his family is originally from Mears. When he moved back to Oceana County about 12 years ago, "It was like coming home," Meyette said.

He and his wife Cherish own and operate Grand Alpaca Company and Fiber Mill in Montague. They have three adult children, 32 alpacas and one horse. The alpaca business was inspired by his aunt, who was looking for ways to stay busy after retiring from her career at the VA.

"I was going to add on to our house and have her move in with me when she retired, and she wanted some animals or something to do afterwards," Meyette said. His aunt still lives with him and tends to the animals daily.

They started slowly with 16 animals on five acres; then they purchased 81 more alpacas from another farmer — also a military veteran — who needed to retire due to illness. Meyette raised the animals on that farmer's land for two years before finding and buying their own farm, where they remain today.

Meyette had been working full-time at Gerber, and left the security of that job to go all-in on the Grand Alpaca Company in 2014.

"It's been a blessing ever since, and it's great," he said.

Since then he has learned how to shear the animals via an apprenticeship. At one point they had 156 alpacas, but Meyette said over time they have downsized the herd to focus on another revenue stream – yarn.

Around 2021, he identified a need in

A SALUTE TO VETERANS OUR HEROES

the industry for fiber processors and purchased a mill for processing fiber into yarn. Today, Meyette and Cherish process fiber from their own herd, selling it to Montague yarn shop Knit & Spin — another veteran-owned business — as well as processing fiber for other alpaca farms around the country.

MILITARY CAREER

With a father and two uncles who had all served in the armed forces, one might assume that Meyette jumped right into the military after high school. However, he says that in the early '90s, college was heavily promoted to all students.

Plus, Meyette's father did not want him to join the service. So he went away to college for a year.

"I came home after deciding accounting wasn't something I wanted to do for the rest of my life," Meyette said. "Counting other people's money."

After studying heavy equipment operation at Ferris State University and other schools, Meyette decided to enlist and join friends he knew in the National Guard in Montague (1434). He served the full six years and, soon after he got out, that unit was deployed.

His story of service does not end there. Four years later, he re-enlisted and was placed with a National Guard combat engineering unit out of Grayling (1434).

"When I would go to the Armory every once in a while when I wasn't enlisted, I'm like, 'Man, I missed this!'" Meyette said. "You get to the smells of the diesel, and you get to hang around the guys and the girls, the other soldiers."

So he signed up for 20 more years, and was eventually deployed with his Grayling unit to Baghdad, Iraq, from June 2009 to June 2010.

"I went from a combat engineer horizontal to a combat engineer vertical. They needed some heavy equipment operators when they deployed," Meyette said.

Vertical engineering is the construction of new buildings. In his year in Iraq, Meyette's unit built two command centers for the Iraqi army and miscellaneous other projects, like barracks. The U.S. was preparing to withdraw its forces at this time and to hand over the bases they had created and occupied.

"It's all gone now," Meyette said. After the U.S. forces left the Iraqis destroyed the structures the U.S. military had constructed.

After returning home from Iraq, Meyette was medically discharged from the service in July of 2012.

LIFE AFTER SERVICE

In retrospect, Meyette feels that the work his unit did in Iraq amounted to a "waste of time," but he does not regret it in the least. He said that he believes wholeheartedly that young Americans should engage in some type of "selfless service," whether that is in the armed forces or in another capacity, such as volunteerism.

Of his three kids, his eldest son chose to enter the military.

"My son served six years in the Air Force. He's still in the reserves," Meyette said. He encouraged the decision, because he knows firsthand the benefits and life lessons the service provides.



"It does change who you are and gives you more responsibility, gives you more accountability, personal accountability," Meyette said. "If you do the military right, it is a solid foundation to start the rest of your life."

He added, "All I ever wanted my kids to do was find out what they were called for and follow God to lead them to it."

Meyette has shoulder damage as a result of his time in the military, and is grateful to Oceana County Veterans Affairs and Veterans Service Officer Jodi Slinkard for helping him navigate the VA healthcare system, as well as the friends and family he sends her way.

"That's where Jodi comes in," he said. "She's amazing at what she does. And she's a fighter. She's been a fighter since I knew her in high school. She has always stood up for what she believed, and she's very adamant about taking care of veterans."

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Thomas Carr
US Army
E-4



Atanas (Pete) Sanoff
US Army, PFC
WWII 1942-1946



Bruce Genia
SP-4
US Army



Timothy E. Kokx
Senior Airman
U.S. Air Force



Patrick H. Dake Jr.
Hull Technician
3rd Class, US Navy



William Bluhm
FT1 (Fire Control)
1st Class
U.S. Navy



Emil E. Utermohlen
Army WWII Co. A 30th Inf., Italy, France, England



Raymond & Richard Karstens
US Navy, 1957-1961



Roger Kraus
US Marines, Corporal
Vietnam
1966-1967



Stanley Norberg
US Army, 1942-1945
World War II



Edward "Suds" Czarny
Army
Tech 4



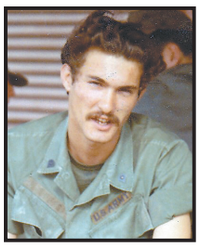
Bob Taylor Jr.
Private First Class 1
U.S. Army



William E. Olson
Staff Sergeant
Army 4 years and Army National Guard 4 years



Robert H. Wagner
Sergeant
U.S. Marine Corp



Steven A. Salter
SPC 4 Army
Vietnam 1971-72



Michael Claus
US Army
Corporal
1967-1968



Egan Simmons
US Navy, E4-ETN3
USS Eisenhower



Carl Simmons
US Navy, E4-FCA3
USS Normandy



Kenneth H. Wegner Jr.
US Army
Spec 4



Stanley F. Sanford
US Marine Corps
WWII



Scott Case
US Marine Corps
Corporal



Kim Tate
Corporal, US Marines
1970-1976
Vietnam



Everett Herin
US Army
World War II
Germany



Harold Hunt
US Army
World War II



Aaron Loughridge
Sgt. 1st Class
US Army, S. Korea



Frank A. Delia Jr.
US Marines
Private First Class



Richard A. Weinart
US Air Force, E-4
Senior Airman, NY



Caitlin Mauer
US Air Force
Staff Sergeant
Okinawa, Japan

Cory Mauer
US Air Force
Staff Sergeant
Okinawa, Japan



Nancy Gay (Williams) Frye
US Air Force Veteran
American Legion Past Commander and Vice Commander



Hughie Douglas Frye
US Air Force
SMSgt retired



Ronald J. Townsend
US Navy, E-5 Petty Officer 2nd Class
1960-1964

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Vance Sanders
Sergeant
Army

Christopher Sanders
Sergeant
Army

Andrew Sanders
Petty Officer First Class, Navy

Larry Sanders
Sergeant
Army

William Sanders
Chief
Navy

Phillip J. DeVries II
US Army
LTC

Ralph W. Egeler
Corporal
1952-1953



David Frank
US Army
E4

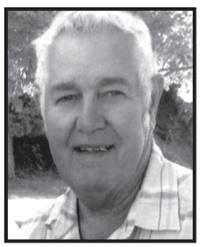
Wayne Abbatoy
SPC5
Army

Roger Francisco
Army

James Francisco
PFC
Army

John Charles Krim
Airman Basic
Air Force

Alfred H. Ardolf
Y3 USN SV
Navy, World War II



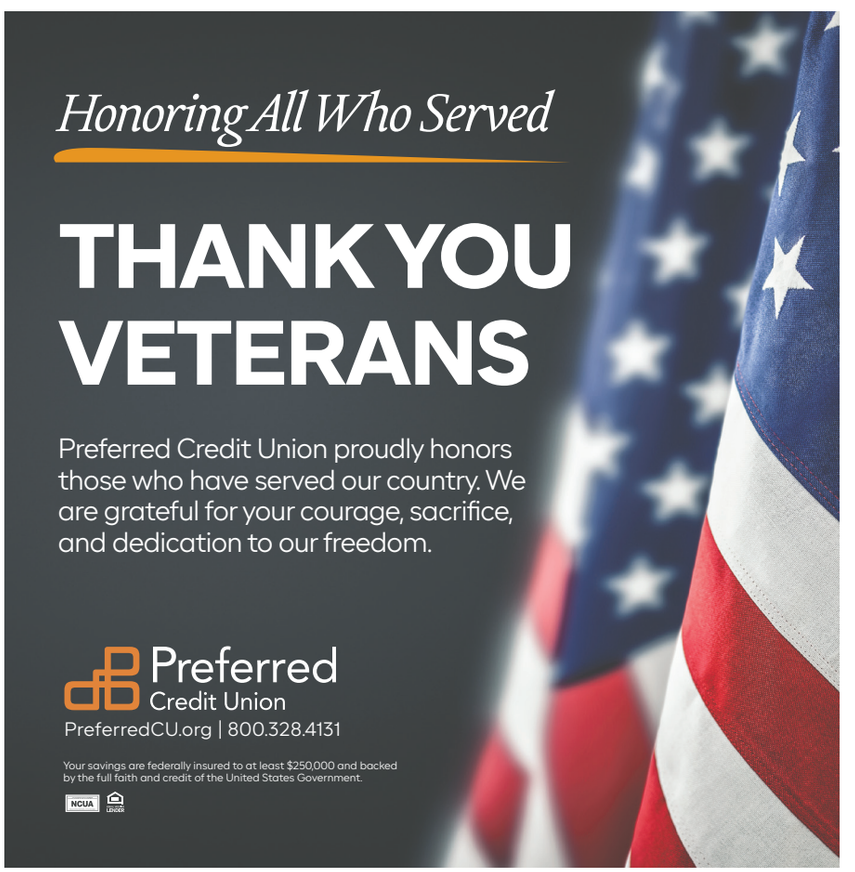
Lloyd Hansen
US Army
PFC
1957-1965

Daniel Kissell
US Army
Sgt. First Class



Donald Lange
US Army, Cpl. Spec-5
1950-1955
Korean War





★ A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES** ★



'THEY WORE THE UNIFORM'

Veteran talks about solemn significance of funeral Ritual Teams

BY DAVID L. BARBER

They stand solemn in honor of the venerable veterans they are paying their last respects to.

And then, given their orders, they take aim for their purpose and presence – for being silent sentinels at life's final roll call for a brother in arms:

"Ready, aim, fire."

Having already taken aim – they've pointed the muzzles of their M-1 Garand rifles skyward, toward the heavens, themselves – they pause, if only for a second.

"Aim, fire!" comes the second command.

They pause, again.

"Aim, fire!"

And with that, the members of the United Veterans Council (UVC) of Manistee County Ritual Team have once again delivered a gun salute at the funeral of a fellow veteran.

The team, all wearing dress white shirts and black slacks, are members of either the VFW of Manistee, the American Legion, the DAV (Disabled American Veterans), or the Catholic War Vets, and their various auxiliaries, or a combination there-of.

Not only will the team offer such ritual salutes – not to be confused with a 21-gun salutes generally offered for heads of state – the UVC team will always deliver a volley of three shots, no matter how many members of their team are standing tall in line at any one time, the latter which may vary from funeral to funeral.

Such emotional, soul-tugging presentations have long been recognized as one of the most anticipated – and appreciated – moments of any funeral for a veteran.

After the rifle volley and the playing of Taps, the captain of the team will then present a carefully folded American flag to a surviving member of the deceased veteran's family – usually the surviving widow or husband.

Similar presentations by other service organization teams all across the West Michigan shoreline – all across the state and country, for that matter – are carried out day after day, month after month,



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year after year, for their local veterans, too.

And so it goes, funeral after funeral – one soldier giving one final salute to another soldier.

"It's something personal for the families, and it's something we take seriously," said Stan Preidis of Manistee, who retired from the U.S Air Force in 2001 after serving for 26 1/2 years. "There are times when we can do two or three in a week, maybe more.

"When I first started we had a team for each the VFW and the American Legion, now we have a combined team from VFW, Legion, Catholic War Vets and DAV. For the last dozen years or so I have been the team captain, receiving calls for funerals, flag details at schools and parades."

Preidis estimated he and the UVC Ritual Team he serves on has "probably done close to 500 funerals and events," over the years and since the beginning of the new century.

But teams like the UVC one in Manistee do more for their community and fellow veterans than to perform rifle/ritual salutes at funerals. They also march out front in local parades, presenting the colors – carrying the American flag, and other service flags.

They also deliver such red, white and blue presentations at local festivals, community events, school events and more.

Many will help to place small flags on the graves of those who served on Memorial Day; will help to clean-up and renovate their local veterans parks; and more.

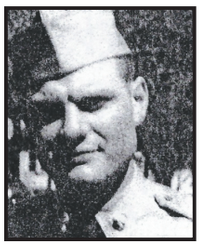
But then there are the funerals for their friends, and for those they've never known, that they offer one, final rifle salute – "Ready, Aim, Fire!"

Some times – many times, he said – Preidis and his team might not have known the veterans they provide the ritual rifle salute for – that doesn't matter.

"They wore the uniform," he said, " that is what matters."



A SALUTE TO VETERANS OUR HEROES



Wesley E. Carlson
PFC Army 5th
1952-1954



Fredrick F. Brunner
M1 U.S. Navy, WWII



James Brouder
Spec 4, Us Army



Orval W. Smith
PFC, US Army WWII
Co. B, 87th Infantry



Valentine Blank
US Air Force
Airman 1st Class



Orval Jensen Jr.
Sergent
US Air Force



Orval Jensen Sr.
Corporal
US Army, WWII



Jim Seward
US Army
1944-1946
World War II



James Sniegowski
Senior Master Sgt.
(E-8) US Air Force
Served from 1978-2003



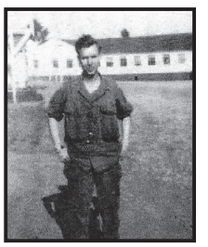
Tammera Sniegowski
Technical Sgt. (E-6)
US Air Force
Served from 1983-2003



Alexander M. Oomen
Lance Corporal
Marines



Al F. Krusniak
T-5 Corporal
US Army 1945-1947



Raymond P. Guiher
Private, U.S. Army



Walter A. Johnson
Pvt., US Army
Served 1945-1946



Leona B. Ashley
US Army, Spc.



John F. Strall
US Marines
Staff Sgt.
1943-1953



Wesley E. Carlson
PFC HQ 20th E.A.B.
Army 5th, 1952-1954



Debra (Debbie) J. Genia
L/CPL (E-3)
US Marine Corps



G. Wayne Davis
GySgt (E-7)
USMC Retired



Gerald E. Thorne
Specialist 5, US Army
1966-1968 Air Support Liaison, 25th Infantry, Cu Chi, Vietnam



Darrell E. Hansen
SFC, US Army Retired



Augusta J. Morse
Hospital Corpsman
1st Class, Surface
Warfare, Veteran,
Navy Reserves



Randall S. O'Brien
US Air Force, Airman
1st Class, 1979-1983



Raymond C. O'Brien
US Air Force, Airman
1st Class, 1954-1958



Ernest V. Hansen
TSGT, US Army
WWII POW



John Fekken
Private
US Army



Pete Kelly
Colonel (Ret.)
Air Force & Air
National Guard



Lorrie VanDyke
Staff Sergeant
US Air Force



Kevin VanDyke
Staff Sergeant
US Air Force



Leo Petrosky
US Navy
Petty Officer 2nd Class
1940-1949



Irving Prescott
US Army Air Corp
Staff Sergeant
1942-1946



Steven C. Price
US Air Force
Staff Sergeant

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John Urick
Sergeant, US Army
187th Infantry,
101st Airborne
1967-1969 Vietnam



Franklin Adkins
E-5, US Air Force



Josh Morrison
Sergeant, US Army
Two tours Iraq



Kevin Fitzgerald
Corporal / E-4
US Marine Corps



Gabriel Malburg
Sergeant, US Army
Reserve - Truck Driver and SAW operator
1 term in Iraq War



Charles T. Giles
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
1948-1968



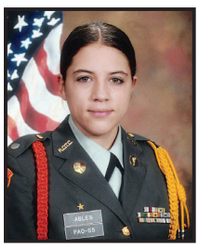
Stanley P. Giles
US Marines
E-4
1982-1986



James Howe
US Air Force
Staff Sergeant
1950-1953



Bruce E. Wright
Private First Class
US Army
1961-1963



Christel Ables
Sergeant
US Army



Steven Tennant
SPC
US Army



Jeff Spaniola
Musician Seaman
US Navy Currently stationed at Fleet Forces in Norfolk VA



Willard Dornbos
Master Sgt, WWII US Army, 1942-1945 Europe Company 738 Amphibious Track Battalion



Richard I. L. Lathouwers
US Air Force
Sgt., 1964-1968



James Luevano
US Army
SFC



Louis Lundberg
US Marines
Corporal
1944-1946



Mark W. Trim
US Army
Global War on Terrorism



Jean M. Nielsen
US Army



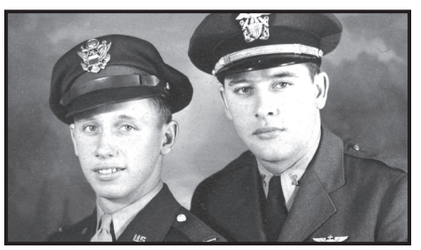
John J. Wallace
US Army, Operation Urgent Fury, Grenada



Daniel A. Trim
US Army
Desert Storm



Danielle Trim
US Army
Iraq



Roy Grams
US Army Air Corp
Flight Officer WWII

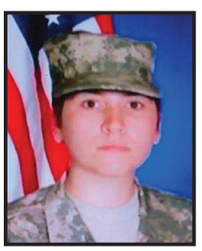
Rodney Grams
US Navy
Lt. Commander Naval Aviator, WWII



Kenneth L. Johnson Jr.
US Army, Spec. 4



Joshua A. Trim
US Marine Corp
Afghanistan



Dianne M. Trim
US Army



Tamara Ellzey
US Army
Kuwait



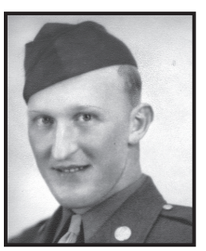
Timothy G. Murphy
US Army
Iraq



Carly A. Gehris
US Navy, Defense Intelligence Agency, Washington DC



Ronald L. Lamb
US Navy, Petty Officer, 2nd Class
1966-1969



Pete Lucas
US Army
Technician 5th Grade
1943-1945



Kevin Luskin
US Marines
Corporal

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Lenny Gajeski
E3 - M5SR
US Navy



Larry Pierce
EAS-2, US Navy
Vietnam



David Landis
Spec - E4
Army



Leonard Tomaszewski
PFC US Army 2nd wave
D-day Omaha Beach



Franklin Pierce
US Merchant Marines



Patrick Appledorn
US Navy
1980-2003



Phillip Appledorn
US Marines
Sergeant, 2002-2016



William A. Appledorn
US Navy
SN, 1973-1976



Rudolf Vorac
US Army WWI France
2nd Division



Carl M. Nielsen
Danish Army, WWI



Gordon V. Nielsen
US Army, Korea



Don G. Wallace
US Army
WWII & Korea



Lou Anne Wallace
US Air Force
Korea



Theodore L. Bell
US Army
Airborne Ranger



Blake A. Bentz
US Navy
E-2



Michael D. Chambers
US Marines
Corp E-4, 1967-1970



Bob Gancarz
SK3, US Navy
1956-1957



Robert J. Tanis
Sgt. E-5 - Infantry
US Army, 1967-1969
Central Highlands, Vietnam



John Organ
Corporal
US Army



C. Gordon Osborn
P.F.C., US Army
1943-1946 WWII
Europe

Thomas H. Osborn
Corporal, US Army
1943-1946, WWII
Europe



Clayton D. Sommerfeldt
US Army, E-5
1972-1974



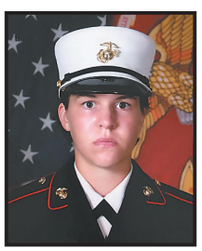
Claud J. Taylor
US Army
Tech Sgt.
1942-1945



Justin Wyer
US Air Force
E-4



Megan Marsteller
Corporal
US Marine Corps



Molly Guthrie
Sergeant
US Marine Corps



John T. Royalty
Sergeant
US Army



Clayton Kroll
Sea Bees
US Coast Guard
1942-1944



Rick Singleton
MK2 / E-5
US Coast Guard



Larry Bogus
US Marine Corps
SSgt



Joseph Buchholz
US Army
E-2



Joshua Buchholz
US Army
Sergeant

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Emotional support
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Help in finding employment

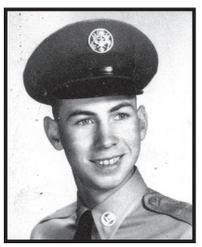
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Richard D. Paul
US Army
Private



Kenneth L. Johnson Sr.
US Air Force
A/IC

Glenn F. Ketchman
US Navy
1st Class Boatswain Mate



Aaron Baade
MM1/SS
US Navy



Delbert Baade
Master Sergeant
US Air Force



Rodney W. Baade
Tech Sergeant
US Air Force



Donald Dykman
Corporal
US Army



Nick Baade
Chief
US Navy



Robert H. Schrink
US Air Force
Lt. Colonel, 1982-2005



Gregory McDonald
US Nat'l Guard
Specialist E-4



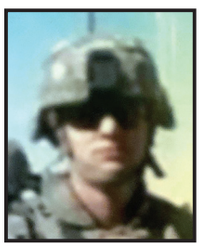
Jeffrey McDonald
US Coast Guard
Petty Officer 2nd Class



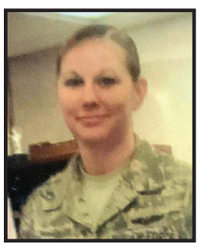
Jay Salyards
E4, US Air Force
1983 - 1987



Jay Salyards
E4, Naval Reserve
1990 - 1996



Michael Sandoval
Sergeant
National Guard



Alaina Ramos
Master Sergeant
US Air Force

Merwin E. Bacon
Sgt. 1st Class
US Army



Junior Cable
Staff Sgt.
Army



Harvy Cable
Tech Sgt.
Army



Ethel Cable
Lieutenant
Army

Evart Cable
Buck Sgt
Army



Ezra Cable
Master Sgt.
US Army Air Corp



Wilbur Nelson
US Navy
Fireman 1st Class
1945-1945



Joseph E. Papes
US Army
PFC
1942-1945



Jeffrey Peters
US Marines
Lanc Corp. E-3
1985-1989 & 1990



Wendy J. Beal
US Air Force
Colonel (Ret.)
Active duty service of 25 years



Thomas Eilers
Aviation Ord. 2nd Class US Navy - Squadron 191
Vietnam



James A. Wicklund
Airman 1st Class
US Air Force
1951-1955



William F. Wicklund
E6 (EN1) US Navy
Served 1997-2006 & 2009-2013

David M. Bean
Navy



Frederick D. Stohr
US Navy Air, Seaman
1st Aviation Mechanic

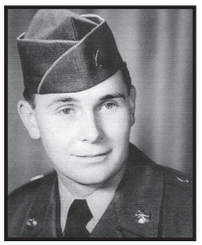


Roy L. Vanhanselaere
US Army, Cpl.
1952-1954



Albin J. Wincheski
US Army
Staff Sergeant

★ A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES**



Kenneth F. Saunders
Corporal, US Army
Korean Veteran



Larry Rathburn
US Army, Specialist 4
Vietnam 1969-1971



Joseph A. Vanden Heuvel
US Army, Corporal,
Medical Corps 1942-1945.
North Africa and Italy



Keith Hoffman
US Army, Sgt. E-5
Vietnam 1966



Robert Lee Kunsky
US Army, Sgt. E-5
1965-1967



DeOren Wolever
US Army, 1950-1953
Private 1st Class



Lance Zaverl
US Army
Spec. E-4



Tom Hansen
US Army
Sergeant



Tyson Beetz
Private First Class
Marines



Thomas Amstutz
Sargeant E-5, 1970-1971
Army 11th Armored
Cavalry, Black Horse
Vietnam, Cambodia



George Barna
Tech. Sargeant
US Marines 1939-1946
Pacific Theater



Larry Brower
SP5 - CO.A/229th AHB
1st Cav. Airmobile
Cook & Gunner - Vietnam



Kevin Keller
US Air Force,
Sr. Airman, Moody Air
Force Base, GA



Donald L. Gale
US Navy



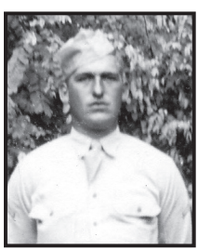
Lawrence Wise
Corporal
US Army



Thomas P. Gaffney
Ensign A-1
US Navy



Richard I. L. Lathouwers
US Air National Guard
Staff Sgt., 1970-1971



William M. Appledorn
US Army, Private
1944-1945, WWII



Bernard Bennett
US Army
Cpl. 42nd Div.



Earl Russell Hartley
US Army, WWII 1943
New Guinea



Russell Earl Hartley
Tec 4, Army, WWII
1943



William L. Hartley Sr.
Military Police WWII
1943-1945 New
Guinea



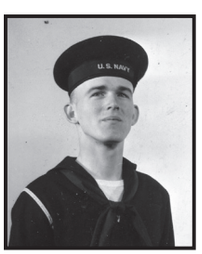
John Michael Thibert
E5 Army Engineers
Vietnam, 1966-1969



Donald Earl Harrison
EM3, Cook
US Navy



Steven G. Miller
US Navy
Petty Officer 2nd Class



Jack Ereon
US Navy
S1/C USS LSM 200



Sidney Haight
Union Army
1864



Joseph D. Thibert
US Air Force
Thialand, 1966



Fred Campbell
Sergeant, US Army
WWII, 1943-1946



John A. Doty
Petty Officer 3rd Class
US Navy, 1943-1946
Electrician Mate



Henery Charles Rodger Moore
Private First Class
U.S. Army



David Coon
Corporal
U.S. Army

★A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES**★



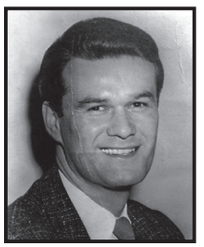
Albert J. Conroy
US Army, PFC
World War II



James L. Howard
Corporal
US Marines



Richard Romaine Corsi
US Army, Staff Sergeant
US Air Force, Corporal



James Carlton Corsi
US Navy
WWII



Daniel Louis Flynn
Fireman Apprentice
US Navy



Dennis Francis Flynn
Fireman
US Navy



Bob Gancarz
US Navy
SK 3, USS Sierra



Christopher P. Osborne
US Navy
Lieutenant



LeRoy P. Horter
E5, US Army and National Guard



Frank Peter Horter Jr.
E5, US Army
National Guard



William S. Albaitis
Pvt. 1st Class, Marines
Guatemala Canal



Harvey J. Anes
Pvt. 1st Class
Marines
Korean War



Gordon M. Tushek
Captain, U.S. Air Force
1969-1979



Thomas P. Carroll
Sgt. (E-4)
U.S. Air Force
825th Security Police Squadron, 1967-1971



Russell A. Odean
Sgt.. Army , Vietnam
May 1966-May1968
Oct. 1966-Oct.1967



Rachel Sanford
US Army
Specialist
National Guard



Walter Crescenzi
US Navy
1975-1987



Mark Hamilton
US Marines
Corp.



Michael Harmon
US Marines
Lt. Col.



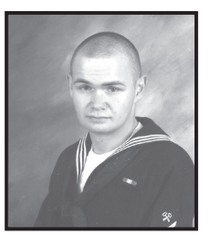
John T. Healy
US Army
E-4, 1973-1976



Gaylon A. Heyse
US Army, Lt.
1941-1945



Ezra Swan
US Army
Spec.



Nathan Ulman
US Navy
SKSN



Brad Walker
US Army
Sgt. First Class

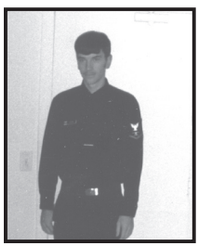
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Robert T. Gilchrist
US Marine Corps
Corporal



John L. Peters
US Navy
FTB 1., Nuclear Subs.
1981-1983



John J. Quinn
US Army Air Corps
2nd Lt. 8th Air Force
WWII



Laverne (Pete) Smith
US Navy, Korea



Joe Faltinek
US Army, Vietnam



Fredrick F. Brunner
M1, US Navy
WWII



Jeffrey D. Smith
Coast Guard



Ronnie D. Smith
Coast Guard



Roger Dereske
US Navy
DC-2
1961-1969



Donald Albrecht Sr.
US Air Force
Staff Sergeant
1950-1953, Korea



Ronald V. Beemer
US Navy
1981-1989



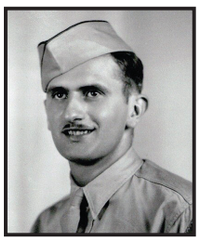
Russell N. Brady
Pvt. ARMD RTC
US Army



Kristian Tutten
HM3, US Navy
1994-1999



Meredith Clifford Field
Private, US Army
1917 - WWI



LeRoy Don Peterson
1st Sgt., US Army
1941-45 WWII Europe



Paul Warmuskerken
Major, US Army



Eric Gilchrist
US Air Force
Sr. Airman
2000-2004



Jeffrey Gilchrist
US Marines
Corporal
1976-1982



Dylan Lambert
US Army
Specialist



Andrew Lange
US Army
Sergeant HHT - 126
Calvary



Samuel Miner
US Army
Staff Sergeant



Joseph Motyka
US Army Air Force
First Lt., 1942-1945



Robert J. Quinn
US Army
Sergeant
1950-1952



Tyler Schulz
US Navy
Airman Recruit



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Tobin Warnock
US Army
Sergeant, Retired



Stanley Hlady
US Navy, A03
Served on Aircraft
Carrier USS Oriskany



Shirley R. Fassett
3rd Class Petty Officer
US Navy, World War II



Richard A. Fassett
Sergeant, US Marine
Corps, Vietnam 1971-74



Richard Lynn Myers
3 Stripe Sergeant
Air Force, 1968-1972



Craig Allen Myers
3 Stripe Sergeant
Air Force, 1990-1994



Chad A. Welsh
Chief Warrant Officer 2
Air Force, Army - 12 yrs.
1994-1998, 2000-2008



Emil Lathouwers
US Army, Private 1st
Class, 1918-1919



Roger J. Hiddema
ABH-5
US Navy



Tracy Blamer
US Navy
E-4 (AW)



Lyle A. Taylor
US Air Force, Staff Sgt.
1942-1945, Austria,
Africa and Italy



Marvin E. Taylor
PFC
Fifth Army, Korean
War



Ron Gorzynski
U.S. Coast Guard
1959-1963



Deanna Gorzynski Lutz
U.S. Air Force
1987-1991



Glenn R. Cooper
S/Sgt.
U.S. Air Force



Fred Malliett
US Marines
Sergeant, 1948-1952
Korea



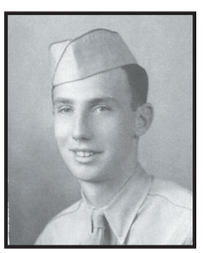
Dennis Tabor
Staff Sergeant, DI
U.S. Army



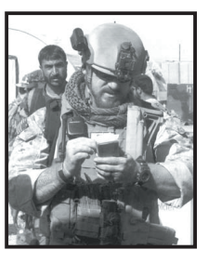
Nathan Palmer
US Navy
E3 Seaman



Robert J. Kelley
US Marine Corps
Corporal



Philip Dyer
US Army Air Corp
Staff Sgt.
1942-1946



Pete Evans
US Army Rangers
Captain



Howard Fugere
US Army
Specialist
1945-1947



David J. Gancarz
US Army, Spec. E-4
2001-2006



Joshua Bryant
US Army, PFC
Medic

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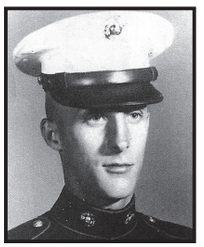
Eva M. Galvin
US Navy E3
COMSERVRON 6
Naples, Italy
Vietnam War



Samantha Darling
US Navy, AWF3
Aviation Warfare



Scott Daugherty
US Army
First Class E/7



Nick Fekken
US Marines
Corporal



John Fekken
US Marines
Corporal



Robert Fekken
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant



Carl Edward Wiegard Jr.
US Army
Spc. 4th Class



Eric L. Roskam
US Marines
Lance Corporal



Seth Forbear Linville
Marine Boot Camp
San Digeo, CA
Graduated 10/28/22



Gabriel Walker
US Army, Sergeant
2004-2008



Kenneth Wheaton
US Army, PFC
1953-1955



Edward Frank Baker
US Marines, 1968-70
Lance Corporal



Alfred H. Ardolf
US Navy, Y1
World War II
1944 - 1946



Travis Geil
US Marine Corps
Corporal
2008-2013



Soraida Rozell
E-7/Chief Petty Officer
US Navy



William Rozell
E-8/Senior Chief
Gas Turbine System
Technician, US Navy



Larry P. Osborne
US Army, Spec E4
Vietnam, 1965-1967



Pauline (Liebetreu) Lunde
Sgt., Army, Spokane WA
San Antonio TX
1942-1945



Raymond (Bud) Lunde
PFC US Army, 64 Coastal Artillery, Pearl Harbor
1941-1945



David Ross
US Marines
Sergeant



Willard (Curly) Hinzman
US Army, Private
World War II



Clifford E. Albrecht
US Navy, Machinist
Mate 3rd Class, 1970-74
Vietnam



Gary Seiy
US Navy
E-3 Store Keeper



Randy Seiy
US Air Force
E-3 SRA
Military Police



Donald W. Galvin
US Army PFC
Third Infantry Division
Anzio, Italy WWII



James O. Carlson
Gunnery Sergeant
US Marine Corps
Vietnam Veteran



Robert Mathew Kemmer Sr.
Ae2/SSG
US Navy, US Army



Felix (Phil) Petrongelli
US Navy Radarman
3rd Class, 1943-1946



Shelby Benson
US Air Force
Staff Sergeant



Terri Berling
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
1986-2006

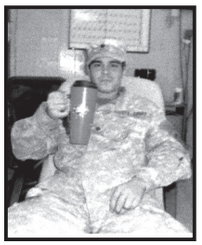


James M. Bloom
US Army, Sgt. E-5
1960-1963



Joshua T. Davis
US Air Force
AIC Special Forces

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Justin Groff
US Nat'l Guard



Brittany C. Padilla
US Coast Guard
SN-E3



Joel Seward
US Army
1941-1946
World War II



Joseph Martz
US Army National Guard
Specialist
2010-2016



Bill Seward
US Coast Guard
World War II



Larry Gustafson
US Army
Vietnam War

Jerry Gustafson
US Army
Vietnam War



Roy Bruce Gates
Spec 4, US Army
Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service 12 Aug 1963 - 6 Aug 1964



Christopher P. Bogus
US Marine Corp
Corporal



Billie Wilson
US Army, E2



Sarah Bean
US Army E4



Jeff Sanborn
US Marines E5



Ralph Kruska
US Army, Spec 4
Military Police,
Vietnam



Bill Travis
US Navy, E6



Dan Bross
US Navy, E5



Arthur R. Jeffries
US Army, SP 4



James R. Rozhon
US Air Force, E04
honorably discharged
1969



Alexandra D. Weisenburger
2nd Lt, US Air Force
Wright Patterson AFB



William G. Kruger
US Army Pvt. 1st Class
WWII



Donald J. McCarthy
Yeoman, US Navy



John Sonefeld
US Navy 1964-1967
3rd Class Petty Officer
Sonarman



Raymond Buchholz
US Navy, Aviation
Munitions Mate 2nd
Class



Ron Rottler
Senior Airman,
US Air Force



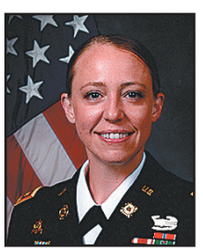
Bryson Waller
US Air Force
Senior Airman



Howard E. Nickelson Jr.
US Army, Vietnam
1967 and 1969



Ronald H. Scott
US Army
PFC E3



Trista Budzynski
US Army
Major



Wayne Kinstner
US Army, E4



Arland E. Purchase
Tech Sgt.
US Air Force
Retired 20 yrs.



Kenneth Dewayne Leonard
US Air Force
Tsgt
Technical Sergeant



Brenda (Dutton) Miller
US Army
Sp 4



Dennis Wilson
US Navy
E3

A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES**



Nick Wiggins
US Army
Spec. 4



Aric Lee Bentz
US Air Force
Airman First Class



Ron Gotwalt
US Air Force
A1C



Richard D. Hamilton
US Army
Cpl. Technician 5th grade



Gary Dancz
US Army Signal Corp
SP 3



David Hackert
US Army
PV 2



Joseph W. Balcom
US Marines
Sergeant



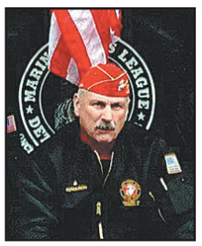
Timothy P. Engemann II
US Navy Reserve
MN Senior Chief Mineman



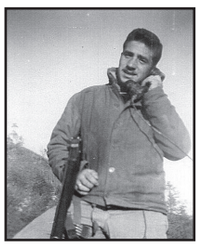
Sarah R. Engemann
Ensign, US Navy



Timothy P. Engemann
US Navy
GMT 2



Jay E. Ferguson
US Marine Corps
LCPL



Joseph J. Orlando
US Sergeant
US Marine Corps
Korea



Robert Colston
US Air Force
Master Sgt.



Terry Gleason
US Army
Sgt.
Vietnam



Gary J. Pletcher
E5, US Army
Vietnam



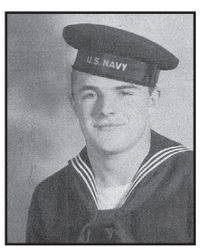
Carl Pletcher
Seaman 1st Class
US Navy
WWII



Richard E. Wallis
E5, US Navy



Jimmy D. Walker
AE2, US Navy



Donald E. Gleason
Seaman 2nd Class
US Navy, WWII



Daniel R. Astrowski
Sergeant E-5
US Army



James Gajeski
US Army National Guard
Spec 2



William G. Copley
Cpl., USMC
Korea



William M. Copley
SP4, US Army



James C. Copley Jr.
Cpl., USMC
Korea



Harry W. Copley
Specialist E-5
US Army
Korea & Vietnam



James Copley
US Army, WW I
341st St. Motor Truck Co.



Thomas J. Sayles
US Army
PFC



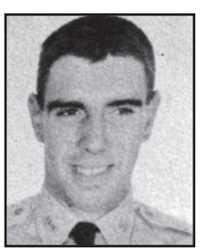
Rex B. Funnell
608 Field Artillery Battalion, Sergeant
71st Infantry Division
US Army 1943-1946



Kim Halladay
Captain
US Army Medical Service Corps



Lowell Bailey
Corporal
US Army
Korea



James Cunningham
Airman 1st Class - Senior Airman
US Air Force
1955-1959



Gary Kent Swanson
Pvt. E-2
Army National Guard of Michigan

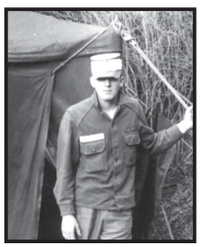
A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES**



Richard C. Callis
US Army - Airborne, E2
1970 to 1973
Fort Knox, Georgia, TX



Devon Eves
US Army, Specialist
Combat Medic,
2002-2006, Germany,
Kuwait, Iraq



Richard A. Dodson
Pvt. 1st Class, US Army
1957-1960, Fort Lewis, WA
and Vicenza, Italy



Austin M. Egeler
Lance Corporal
US Marines
Okinawa, Japan



John Franklin
Staff Sergeant
US Air Force
Middle East



Ben Kaat
US Marine Corps
Sergeant
Nov. 2000 - Nov. 2004



James Ackerberg
US Army, SP4
Germany



Robert A. Beckman
Sergeant
US Army



Hugh G. Gannon Sr.
US Air Force, A/3C3
1954 - 1958
Gettysburg, S.D.



Howard Haight
US Army, PFC
1958-1960
Korea



Hiram Herrick
US Air Force, Lt. Col.
Vietnam



Augusta Alayon
US Navy, HM2 Surface
Warfare

Fredrick Alayon
US Navy, GM1
Surface Warfare



James D. Herin
US Navy, FC1
1990-2010



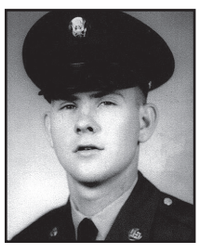
Nora J. (Herin) Seng
US Navy, Petty Officer
1st Class, 1979-1988



Frank Peter Horter Sr.
Merchant Marines
6 years



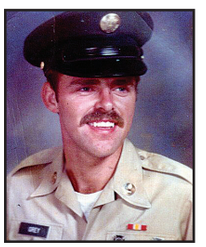
Donald E. Grey
US Army
WW II



Daniel L. Grey
US Army, E4
Vietnam



Chuck Keller
US Army
E-5



Dennis L. Grey
US Army
Germany



Curtis Lamb
US Army
Staff Sergeant



Walter A. Carrier III
Chief Master Sergeant
US Air Force
23 July 80 - 31 July 06



Myrton Hackert
Sergeant, US Marines
1952 - 1955
Korean War



James McDowell
US Army



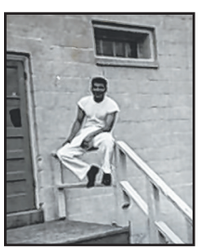
Donald Jr. Grey
US Army
Korea



David R. Grey
US Army
Vietnam



Diane (Grey) Bradley
US Army
Germany



Joseph Negele
Corporal
US Army



Dalton Haldeman
PFC
US Army



Leona Ashley
Specialist, US Army,
1997



Johanna Booms
Specialist, US Army,
1997

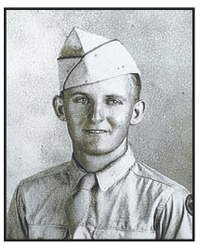


Tristan Andre Sutton
PFC Army Reserve -
M.P., Desert Storm

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William F. Spenhauer
Private First Class
US Marine Corps



William Forrester
US Army
1943-1946
WWII



Mary Frances Phillippi
US Army
Nurse



Don Miller
US Army



Leona Ashley
Specialist
US Army

Johanna Booms
Specialist
US Army



Arthur T. Supran
Sergeant
Army WWII



Thomas F. Wincheski
Sargent E 5
US Army



Jon Trojan
E-4 Specialist
US Army



Kerina Mariana
Staff Sergeant
US Army



Kim Halladay
Captain
US Army



Ron Baynton
E-5 2nd Class Petty Officer, US Navy
1982-1988



Glenn F. Kretchman
1st Class Boatswain Mate, US Navy



Eight ways to honor veterans

Veterans Day is celebrated on November 11, marking an opportunity to express one's gratitude and support for the scores of veterans who have served honorably

1 Attend events. Organize or participate in local Veterans Day celebrations, such as parades and ceremonial events.

2 Get involved with veterans' affairs. Support veterans by volunteering with organizations that assist them.

3 Petition for veteran speakers. Reach out to schools, scout troops or other groups and arrange opportunities for veterans to share their stories and contributions.

4 Support the families of veterans. Reach out to veterans' families, who also must make sacrifices and concessions. Anything from shopping, babysitting, doing chores, or making a meal can help the families of veterans.

5 Make a donation. If finances allow, make contributions to reputable charities that provide services for veterans like those that offer mental health counseling or job placement services.

6 Hire veterans to work. If you are a business owner or hiring manager, consider hiring veterans for open positions at your company.

7 Offer personal acknowledgements. Take the time to speak to veterans and thank them for their service. If possible, when dining out, ask the server if you can pay for the meal of a veteran who also is dining that day.

8 Don't forget the fallen veterans. Although Memorial Day is designed to honor those who lost their lives through military service, people still can honor the fallen veterans on Veterans Day by sharing stories or placing flags at veteran cemeteries.

★ A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES** ★







Destined for the military — and each other

Nancy and Hugh Frye, Air Force veterans

BY CRISTINA JUSKA

Nancy and Hugh Frye have lived in a cottage overlooking Big Blue Lake for nearly 50 years, but their journey together began far from Michigan, at Hamilton Air Force Base in California in the late 1950s. Hugh served in the security police from 1955 to 1979, and Nancy was a court reporter from 1958 to 1962. They married in 1960 in a military wedding at the base after a, well, interesting courtship.

But let's back up and start this story from the beginning. One of these Air Force veterans felt destined to serve from a young age, and it may not be who you think it is.

THE EARLY YEARS

"My story is that in ninth grade a teacher by the name of Mrs. Califf had us write a paper about what we wanted to do when we graduated from high school," Nancy said. "And I wrote, I am going into the Air Force. And that was my goal from ninth grade on."

She added, "I had a guy that would like to have married me, but no, I said, 'I'm going to the Air Force.'"

Nancy's father and uncle both served in the military. When she was a little girl, she suffered from polio for six years and almost died from the disease. A nurse called her mother one day, asking her to come to the hospital in Grand Rapids right away because Nancy was dying. Nancy's uncle also came to visit that day, dressed in his military uniform.

"He walked into the room and she looked at him and thought it was her dad," Hugh said. "And she turned around, came back alive again."

When she enlisted in the Air Force years later, Nancy did not mention that she had survived polio, and they did not ask. If this had been disclosed, it would have prevented her from serving.

"There were so many people that were crippled with polio, and you couldn't see the results of mine on the outside," Nancy said. "I did have a few problems, but not bad enough that I couldn't pass the test to get into the military."

She became the first woman in the Air Force to be named Airman of the Month. The trophy displays a man because, well, she was the first woman to be selected.

On the other hand, Hugh says he fumbled his way into the Air Force.

"I was an Indiana hillbilly working in a factory and my goal was just to work in the factory and have a little country wife and a bunch of kids at home," Hugh said. "This guy I didn't even know very well asked me, 'Let's join the Air Force.' And I said, okay."

When it was time to have their blood drawn, Hugh's friend passed out and was sent home. Hugh was sent to San Francisco.

"I went there all by myself, and thought, what am I doing here? I didn't know anybody," Hugh said. "But it was the best thing that ever happened in my life, because I ended up with her."

HOW THEY MET

Nancy and Hugh first met at a restaurant outside the base. Nancy was out with her friends when she realized she had lost the security card she needed to access the flight line.

"I saw a group of the military policemen over at another table, so I went over and said, 'How do I get a new pass?' And Hug hie was there," Nancy said.

When she and her friends were leaving the restaurant later that evening, Hugh and his buddies pulled up in a 1954 Plymouth convertible and asked if the women wanted to hop in and go to San Francisco.

"All of us said yes, except one. She was engaged," Nancy said. "We had such a good time!"

But after that night in San Francisco, they did not see each other again for quite a while. Hugh says his shyness stood in the way, but after seeing her at the swimming pool one day, he told

A SALUTE TO VETERANS **OUR HEROES**





himself, "If you don't ask that girl for a date, you will never, ever get to meet her again." He was due to leave soon for home.

He took her for a drive in his convertible, up into the mountains, and the song "What a Difference a Day Makes" came on the radio. He pulled over, and they danced on the side of the road.

"That kind of sealed the deal," Hugh said.

They dated for about six months, until it was time for Hugh to leave the service.

"I went back to Indiana, never to see her again," Hugh said. "And I left my heart in San Francisco."

They kept in touch by writing letters, and it would not be long before Hugh decided to reenlist. About three months later, he drove to San Francisco and got his old job back. When Hugh arrived on base, Nancy was in the gym doing taekwondo training.

He had two of his military police buddies "arrest" her and bring her outside, where he was waiting.

"It was a setup!" Hugh said, beaming.

MARRIED LIFE

They married in 1960 and served together in Cuba before Nancy gave birth to their first child in 1962.

"At that time, you couldn't have a child and be in the military," Nancy said.

But she and their children would travel with Hugh around the United States and the world for the next 15 years, spending time in Europe, Turkey and the Netherlands. Nancy moved into their Holton home with the children in 1977 while Hugh completed his last tours in Korea and Japan.

After Hugh's retirement from the Air Force, he worked as a prison guard and became Nancy's "PR person" as she got involved in the civic life of the community. She first volunteered to serve on the Muskegon County Board of Review and later ran for the county Board of Commissioners.

"She ran three times," Hugh said.

"And lost three times," Nancy added.

But she persevered and was able to fill a commissioner's seat that became vacant. In the next election, she ran again and won, serving on the county board for 11 years. During that time, she helped pass a millage supporting services for veterans.

She served five terms as commander of American Legion Post 69 in Whitehall, two terms as commander of Michigan's 9th District and one year as state vice commander. She also found time to start a public speaking business and serve as president of the Muskegon-area Girl Scouts.

Nancy is running for reelection to the Muskegon Community College Board of Trustees, a position she has held for 18 years.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Hugh and Nancy share a deep pride as Air Force veterans and as the parents of a son who served in the Army.

"Four percent of all living Americans served in the military, so 96% can live in peace," Hugh said.

"You look back and you say, 'I did my part,'" Nancy added.



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