



AMVETS Tallahassee Post 1776 Cyber Newsletter

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Commander's Corner

First let me wish all a Happy Thanksgiving and the rest of our Holiday Season. Our newsletter in September told us that October and November would be active months for all us veterans. On October 29th our Post hosted its first group of young school children enjoying our very first Military Heritage Trail Program tour. Please see the article in this edition. And we followed up

with another Tour on November 13th. Both of these groups of kids came from a Homeschool Program in Jefferson County. We received rave reviews from the kids and their parents that attended the tours. We have also gotten nice articles from the Monticello newspaper and the Tallahassee Democrat.

Further, what I believe to be an important component of these tours is the input from our very own members that are taking on the role of "docents" at the monuments that we take the kids to. So far, Ernie Reed, Johnnie Roberts, Butch Topicz, John Folsom and Tony Minichiello and I are attending these tours. I have a larger docent list and will be calling on the rest of the volunteers as we start to develop and schedule more of our tours. I have to say the interaction between our members and these kids is inspiring. And on a special note, we are adding Mike Terhune's "911" monument/memorial to our program. Mike was present for our second visit to his memorial and gave a brief presentation. **(Continued on Page 2)**

AMVETS National was chartered in 1947 and the Tallahassee AMVETS Post 1776 was chartered in July 2009. AMVETS Post 1776 meets the first Thursday of the month at American Legion Post 13, 229 Lake Ella Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32303. We invite honorably discharge veterans, including Guards and Reserve, from all branches to Join us. We are a small post doing big things

www.amvets1776.org

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(Commander's Corner Continued from page 1)

Mike gave the background to his memorial and if you haven't seen it you need to stop by. It is situated in front of the Red Cross building on Easterwood Drive a block down from the National Guard Armory.

Our Marine Corps Ball was held November 8th, a co-sponsored event between the Marine Corps League Arthur Meyer Det. 472 and the FAMU Naval ROTC. The Cadets put on quite a show. Then on November 11th we had one of the best Veterans Day Parade in the Country. On November 13th while we were waiting for the school kids to show up at the Tallahassee National Cemetery, a truck drove up carrying our VFW District II monument ready to be installed at the Cemeteries Memorial Walkway. Another must see monument at the Tallahassee National Cemetery. At this time the memorial walkway has a Purple Heart, a Marine Corps, an Air Force, a DAR and now a VFW monument. Two of our members are working on two other monuments. David Wilson and Tom Carney (representing AFA Chapter) is in final stages of donating a POW monument and Butch Topciz and Ernie Reed and their Fleet Reserve Post is in developmental stages of a Navy memorial.

Oh, and your Commander got to fly in a WWII Bi-Plane sponsored by Liz Crawford and her Sports Clips Hair Cut business. Henry Lowery and Tony Minichiello both had the privilege to make these flights. What an experience that was. And lastly, please read another article in this edition about our 1st Turkey Shoot what we hope to be our fall fundraiser.

As always, thank you all for all you do for veterans and your continuing service to our Country, our County and our Post.

Semper Fi,

Gordon

Chaplains Corner

Eric Smith, Chaplain AMVETS Post 1776

Holiday Prayer

Heavenly Father, we give you all our hopes and dreams for the holidays. Please grant the ones that glorify you most and which grow our best into Your likeness. May we allow You to be in control. And when things don't turn out exactly as we thought they might, may we let it go.

Thank You Lord,

Amen.



AMVETS

(American Veterans)

Is the nation's most inclusive congressionally-chartered Veterans Service Organization (VSO), representing the interests of 20 million veterans. AMVETS is open to and fighting for all who honorably served in the U.S military, including the Reserve and Guard. With more than 250,000 members nationwide, we are veterans serving veterans.



AMVETS 1st Turkey Shoot

(Article by Gordon Lightfoot)



AMVETS and TRPC Team

In discussions with Paul over finances and a need for a second fundraiser perhaps for the Fall, we came up with an idea for a Turkey Shoot. Neither of us were aware of any Turkey Shoots around town and by partnering with the Tallahassee Rifle and Pistol Club (they have a shooting range in Woodville and Paul and several of our other members are members of the Rifle Club) we thought we would test the waters and put one on.

Paul put together the program and found out rather quickly the logistics of assignment of workers and putting together a

Turkey Shoot was a bit more complicated than we first thought. Paul did an outstanding job of research; including determining what kind of targets we would use, coordinating with the Rifle Club on the range rules for safe handling of 12-gauge shotguns and literally organizing just how we would set up groups to compete using a single #8 shotgun round.

We pulled together a team and worked out some details in our regular meetings then Paul took us down to the Range to do a walk through, a second trip down to set up the targets.

Although we didn't pull in the numbers of shooters, the shoot was a success. We had six groups of ten shooters meaning each group got a Turkey with second place getting a canned ham. We had our teams putting up targets, taking them down and taking the targets to our trustworthy Chaplain Eric Smith and his helper Rick Beyer to judge the closest pellet to the center of the X on the target Eric determined the first and second place winners. First Place got a nice 20 lb Butterball Turkey; second place got a canned ham. With only six groups and with ten Turkey's we were lucky we had some nice Turkeys and hams for door prizes. And I must mention we raffled off a Ruger 30-06 rifle selling almost 200 tickets.

With Mission Bar B Que providing a menu for lunch the Range, its membership and even the shooters doing their regular weekly shooting had a great lunch. And we know we couldn't have pulled this off without the help of the Tallahassee Rifle and Pistol Club. They furnished the venue, helped set up targets and even provided the 12-gauge rounds and loaner 12-gauge shotguns. Everyone had a good time and hopefully we will do it again next year. Here are a couple of photos of the day. Enjoy.

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TRPC Set up the Range For the AMVETS Turkey Shoot



It's Prize Turkey Time!



Time Out for some BBQ!

**We have a
couple of
shooters
hoping for
the big
Prize!**



**AMVETS Commander awards the "Prize
Turkey" and "Ham"**



**Rifle Raffle Winner Ken Swords Vietnam
Purple Heart Recipient**

AMVETS conducts two Military Heritage Trail Tours

AMVETS Tallahassee Post 1776 has now conducted two tours for our Military Heritage Trail program. One on October 29th and a second tour on November 13th. Both of these tours hosted school age children from a Home School Program in Jefferson County. Tony Minichiello one of the originators of this program solicited these groups through his American Legion Post 49 where he also serves. We have received two newspaper articles one in the ECB Publishing newspaper in Monticello and the other in the Tallahassee Democrat. Below is the article submitted to the Tallahassee Democrat from our Post Commander published Veterans Day.

On October 29, 2024, AMVETS Tallahassee Post 1776 hosted a small group of students from the Jefferson County Homeschool Association, Inc., to tour veteran memorials in the Tallahassee area. Tammy Brookins their President brought some of her students to Tallahassee to participate in our AMVETS Post 1776 inaugural tour designed to share some military history through the eyes of AMVETS veterans speaking from each of several veteran memorials throughout Tallahassee.

The tour started at the Tallahassee National Cemetery, but the next stop was outside the program book. We took a detour to the 911 Memorial that sits in front of the American Red Cross building on Easterwood drive. That Memorial encompasses a complete history of the 911 bombings and includes an actual steel beam from one of the Towers hit by the attack. Michael Terhune developed this Memorial over ten years and is a Memorial we should all visit. We plan to include this Memorial in our Program booklet for future tours.



**911 Memorial Located
at Red Cross Building
on Eastwood Drive**

AMVETS conducts two Military Heritage Trail Tours (Continued from page 5)

Gordon Lightfoot, Commander of the AMVETS Post addressed the students at the Tallahassee National Cemetery in front of the Bell Tower that AMVETS Post 1776 donated to the National Cemetery in 2021. Gordon a Marine veteran of Vietnam gave a brief history of the National Cemetery and the current monuments that have been placed throughout the Cemetery honoring veterans that have been laid to rest at these hallowed grounds. Gordon then introduced each AMVETS member that would present themselves as docents in front of each of the following memorials: Butch Topicz a Navy and Vietnam Era and Cuban Missile Crisis veteran would present at the Korean War Memorial; Earnest Reed another Navy Vietnam veteran would present at the Wall of Remembrance at the Old Bloxham School where Post Vietnam casualties are honored; then Henry Lowery a Marine and Vietnam veteran would present at the Vietnam Memorial; after which Tony Minichiello an Air Force Vietnam era veteran would present at the WWII Memorial in front of the R. A. Gray Building. The tour concluded at a unique Borne Memorial located behind the American Legion Post 13 hall on Lake Ella. Navy Vietnam veteran John Folsom gave a brief presentation explaining this Borne of one of many Borne's given to each State in our Union for our role in Frances's fight for Freedom in WWII.



Wall of Remembrance Old Bloxham School



Korean War Memorial

Korean War Memorial



***AMVETS conducts two Military Heritage Trail Tours
(Continued from page 6)***

Vietnam Memorial



World War II Memorial

**Bome Memorial
American Legion
Post 13 on Lake
Ella**



93.3 FM - The Greg Tish Show

Mattie Roe Behind the Glass

By: John Folsom

A few years back I was invited to appear on the Greg Tish Show. I mentioned this to a friend and his question was, "How do you rate appearing on the top-rated show in Tallahassee?" Well here it is a couple of years later and today, November 04, I was asked once again to give me the honor to speak on some upcoming Veteran events.

The American Legion is preparing for the annual Veterans Day Breakfast co-hosted by Leon County.

The AMVETS are looking forward to having a Turkey Shoot on November 16.

They also have had their inaugural Military Heritage Trail tour. This is a guided tour of the military monuments and memorials around town. The tour is designed for Middle and High School students.

On the show we also talked about flag retirements and the laying of wreaths in several of the cemeteries. But we left out the date, I believe it is December 14, 2024.

I would like to extend my thanks to Bill Eichhoefer and Doug Ingram for allowing me to share their time on the program.

As for Greg and Mattie, to just saying thank-you makes me feel like I'm coming up short. Their level of professionalism with such a relaxed atmosphere, you get the point, they are the best, thank-you guys.



**Greg Tish Show Studio
with Visiting John Folsom
Representing our Veterans
Interest.**

Defense Department to Restore Honorable Discharges:

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced that a review of military records this past year has resulted in more than 800 service members who were administratively separated under the since repealed "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy now having honorable discharges. Veterans who leave the military without honorable discharges usually suffer some loss of eligibility for VA benefits, including educational and health care. Any veteran discharged due to sexual orientation is eligible to apply for a review to potentially have the status upgraded.

Dot The I's and Cross the T's The New Sign-In for the Federal Government by: John Folsom

I went to sign in to my Veterans account and was notified that the Federal Government was transitioning to a universal account that would include my federal retirement and Social Security. I made the decision at this time to make that transition. How frustrating could it possibly be? Following the typing-input directions was straight forward. But then, I repeat BUT THEN, you are requested to take a picture of your State ID. Actually, you turn your camera on and they snap the picture. To complete this maneuver, you need to place the ID on a dark surface and ensure that there is not a glare on the picture. The first day I tried this I found out the light above me was causing glare, then it was the open window. When holding the phone-camera above the ID to take the picture it kept prompting me to move closer and then telling me I was too close. BUT I HADN'T EVEN MOVED THE CAMERA. End of session, it told me I was limited to six more tries.

Two days later, not to be defeated, I turned off the lights, sat down away from the windows, put a dark flat surface in my lap, and finally managed to get the pictured made and get signed in.

So, if you think that you are not that adept with a computer they do offer another option. Go to a participating post office and let them help you. I had already told my grandkids, if I fail again, one of them will be getting the call.

AMVETS Members Attend Major John L. Haynes Highway Dedication.

On 21 November at 6:00 PM, the Jefferson County Commissioners dedicated a road sign in honor of Major John L Haynes. In Jefferson County, State Road 59 from Highway 90 to Highway 27 is now named in honor of the famed veteran who fought in WW2, Korea, and Vietnam. Members of AMVETS Post 1776 who attended were: Henry Lowery, Charles Lecroy, Buddy Perryman, and David Wilson.

AMVETS Member Henry Lowery and His Wife Mona With the Memorial Highway Sign.



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AMVETS Members Attend Major John L. Haynes Highway Dedication.
(Continued From Page 10)



AMVETS member Buddy Perryman greets fellow AMVET member Charles LeCroy and his wife Juanita.

Veterans and friends of Major John L Haynes attended the Highway Dedication Ceremony



How Long can Someone Serve in the Military?

Fred Ingley Provided this Article

How long can someone serve in the military? I've mentioned U.S.M.C. Colonel Howard Lovingood in the past. He enlisted in the Marines in 1952 in his mid-20's. He was already older than most of the men who enlisted with him. He fought in Korea, having served under Chesty Puller. He fought in Vietnam.

After attaining the rank of Gunnery Sergeant, he was given I&I orders to Washington D.C. For most Marines, that would be considered a prestigious assignment. As legend goes, the good Gunnery Sergeant was there for three weeks when he said, "This is stupid. My unit needs me."

He then went UA - Unauthorized Absence - and took MAC flights back to Vietnam. (At that time, no one was going to question a GySgt. claiming to have lost his orders going to Vietnam.) He transitioned to another unit in Vietnam when his rotated back to the U.S. Months went by before the I&I staff in D.C. discovered where he was. By that time, he was a Master Sergeant.

With nearly 20 years in service and a legitimate war hero, the Marine Corps command sentenced him to the worst punishment they could imagine. They promoted him to Second Lieutenant. He was now in his mid-40's with butter on his collars. He returned to Vietnam as an officer.

He fought to keep Staff Sergeant Carlos Hathcock in the Marines after he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis then made sure White Feather made Gunnery Sergeant.

He continued to serve through the 80's and then the 90's.

When I was on an exercise with him in early 1997, he had the watch pound on his hatch at 0430 and yell at the top of his lungs, "Wake up, Sir! There's a war to be fought!" (And woe be to the Lance Corporal who failed to follow those simple instructions.)

He gave up collecting his social security so that he could remain on active duty. (At the time - and might still be the case today - one could not collect social security and active duty pay at the same time.)

In 1997, after 45 years of service, Colonel Howard Lovingood retired. He served longer than twice the time of most lifers.

How long can someone serve in the military, "it depends." If you are an absolute bad ass, then at least 45 years!



**U.S.M.C. Colonel
Howard Lovingood**

**Retired After 45
Years of Service!**



AMVETS Tallahassee

Post 1776

DECEMBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Rosa Park Day First Day of Advent	2	3	4 American Legion Commander's Coalition	5 AMVETS Post 1776 Monthly Meeting at Glory Days Restaurant	6	7
8 Immaculate Conception	9	10	11	12 Days of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Mex)	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
			Merry Christmas			
29	30	31				
		New Year Eve				