



AMVETS Post 1776 Cyber Newsletter

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News Spots....

Page two, History of Veterans Day plus 13 historic and present day facts about our military.

Page three, Book Review of "Fiftenn Minutes Ago". The author and Marine veteran Craig Tscheddar visited with Post 107 and other posts sharing their Viet Nam experiences.

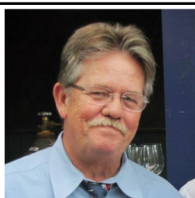
Page three "Fire Away" Dale Mabry mishap lands in the Capitol.

Chaplins Corner:

An AMVET prayer by Chaplin John Fokson AMVETS Commander Emeritus.

Page Five.
Spotlight on a Veteran.

Page six.
Five years ago.



From the Commander.....

Welcome once again to our Cyber Newsletter. Our last bit of news was in January and it seems like the world has been turned upside down since then. This Coronavirus (COVID-19) is wreaking havoc on all of us, our friends and comrades and our families. Please be sure to visit our web page at

www.amvets1776.org where I have placed a couple of linkages for all of us to get up to date information on what is happening with this virus. One site is our National AMVETS site and the other is a State of Florida website that might give you more local information. In fact, I just looked and the site on our National website is on their homepage which you can still access with the link on our site. Of course, those living in Leon County can go to our County site and look for the Counties Health Department advisories. It really is important for all of us to stay informed, follow directives and stay safe.

On a different subject, I have added to this newsletter an article on the benefits of our National Cemeteries, particularly focused on the cost savings and the value of doing some pre-planning. In this months American Legion there is an excellent article on "pre-need determination" that gives you quite a bit of information on how to apply for pre-qualification and eligibility determination for access to National Cemeteries. It gives the form number and references the website for online processing of the VA Form 40-10007 that you need to fill out. If you need any help, I have the form and can help you fill it out or, if you wish, you can go directly to the Tallahassee National Cemetery and their staff will sit down with you and help you fill out the form.

On the Patriot Tower project. In our last newsletter I took a bold step and told you I thought we might be able to plan for a spring installation of our Bell Tower/Carillon. As of this writing I stand corrected. The coronavirus pandemic has changed all that.

To catch you up to date, the package/complete application was submitted to Raymond Miller, Director of the Tallahassee National Cemetery on February 27, 2020. Raymond reviewed the package and we found we need another form to go along with the package which delayed him sending it on up to VA a couple of weeks. And there it sits. We have found out that the VA office is closed for now and we have not heard if our package is moving or not. The bottom line is that we need NCA/VA's green light to move forward. Our Post and National AMVETS have made a \$30,000.00 deposit to Campbellsville Industries and they are anxious to construction, deliver and help us install the tower. We have paid our local Engineer and we have a concrete

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AMVETS National was chartered in 1947 and the Tallahassee AMVETS Post 1776 was chartered in July 2009. AMVETS Post 1776 meets on the first Thursday of the month at the Allegro Senior Living Center at 4501 Shannon Lakes West, Tallahassee, Florida 32309. We invite honorably discharged veterans, including Guard and Reserve, from all branches to join us. We are a small Post doing big things for the veterans in the Tallahassee area. *For more information please visit us at:*

www.amvets1776.org.

construction company waiting for us to give them the green light to begin construction of the base for the tower.

And, further, the good news is that we have put in the bank a \$7,500.00 from the City and \$7,500.00 from Leon County. That plus other donations that Randy Miller has solicited has finally put us in a position to pay for this tower. Thank you, Randy. And, that doesn't include what our National office still plans to cost share with us. At this time the only thing holding us up is this GREEN LIGHT so to speak from NCA/VA. As soon as we get it, we will be in business and construction will begin. If anything breaks anytime soon, I will be sure to let you know.

And finally, I have forwarded through Tony a few communiques from our State Department regarding the status of our elections that we are supposed to hold in May and if you have read them, everything is on hold. Therefore, without penalty from our State Department or the National office all our officers will maintain their positions until we can meet and conduct our elections.

Once again, if you are reading this newsletter on our website or have received it online and are not a member of AMVETS Post 1776 please give us a call or go to our website at www.amvets1776.org and join. If you are already a member, thank you for your continuing support as we grow in membership and thank you for your service.

Stay safe,

Semper Fi,

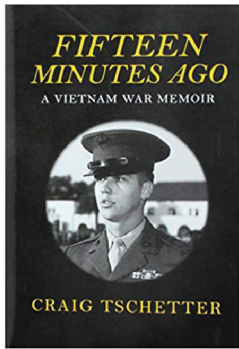
Gordon



On Saturday, May 16th, we'll celebrate Armed Forces Day, 66 years and one day after the first one was celebrated in 1950. In honor of and to celebrate U.S. service members today, here are a few things you may not know about the American military.

- 1.** Thirty American presidents served in the U.S. Army, 24 during time of war. Of the 30, two became five-star generals – George Washington and Dwight Eisenhower. Teddy Roosevelt was awarded the Medal of Honor. -- *military.com*
- 2.** 1,760 PlayStation 3s were used to build a supercomputer for the Department of Defense.
- 3.** There are 1.8 million people on active duty, according to the Department of Defense. -- **DOD**
- 4.** The Department of Defense owns 29,819,492 acres of land worldwide. -- **DOD**
- 5.** The United States has 737 military installations overseas. -- **DOD**
- 6.** According to Military.com, the Navy's bell-bottom trousers are believed to have been introduced in 1817 to permit men to roll them above the knee when washing down the decks. In addition, the trousers can be used as a life preserver if you knot the legs.
- 7.** The Marine Corps motto is "Semper Fidelis," Latin for "Always Faithful."
- 8.** The last time the United States "declared war" was in 1942. -- *Wikipedia*
- 9.** The U.S. Department of Defense is the world's largest employer. -- *DOD*
- 10.** The Department of Defense uses 4.6 billion US gallons of fuel annually. -- *DOD*
- 11.** Stores on U.S. military bases outside of America will not accept pennies as currency. It's too expensive to ship them there and back. -- *Los Angeles Times*
- 12.** The U.S. military uses a nearly silent type of Velcro that reduces the ripping noise by over 95 percent. -- *Reddit*
- 13.** A service member in a designated combat zone or hazardous duty area generally does not have to pay federal income tax on the military pay and reimbursements during his or her service there. -- *Internal Revenue Service*
- 14.** In 1949, a U.S. Army private first class – known to the payroll department as an E-3 -- took home a monthly check of \$99.55 in "basic pay." That \$99.55 came after he had been in the service for two years and had no dependents.

Book Review....



I met the author, Craig Tscheddar by happenstance, one Sunday afternoon. There is a house at the top of the street in Oak Hill Farms where our Homeowners Association meets. The owner is also our legal advisor. Whenever I drove by her house I would notice the American Flag flying on its pole next to the house.

Thinking she may be a veteran, I stopped in one day to tell her about our post. She told me the flag was for her father, a Marine, and that he and her mother would be visiting in the Fall. One day I noticed a man sitting on the front porch, and I went up and introduced myself. That is when I met this Marine who had a most inspiring story to tell.

Craig, first of all, is every bit a gentleman. So much so I wonder if maybe he had been in the Air Force, instead of the Marines! But after reading his story I began to understand and admire his gentle manners.

I took him to our Post meeting in January and Post Member Harry Mulhearn took him to meet with the Marine Corps League here in the Tallahassee area. Craig was impressed with the League.

I'm certain many of our Viet Nam veterans also harbor an understanding and since of bonding with his story.

Below is a review I copied from the web page "Good Reads"

"Craig Tschetter served as a US Marine in Vietnam from November 1967 until July 1969. His unit—India Company of the Third Battalion, Fifth Regiment of the First Marine Division—served close to the border with North Vietnam and fought in absolutely harrowing circumstances. Craig's book is a riveting account of what India Company's war was like, and of the personal price that even survivors paid for close combat. It is honestly written, is based on solid sources, and is very clear about what the war was like for the twenty percent of total American total troop numbers in Vietnam who were engaged in combat. It is compelling. My wife and I took turns reading it aloud while driving across South Dakota, and forgot to stop for lunch."



Some interesting additional history regarding Dale Mabry Field during WWII

Submitted by Post 107 member, Fred Ingley

Lucius Bivins, a deceased friend of mine was an air traffic controller even as far back as during WW2. One time during a meeting of an aviation fraternity he related how after gunnery training the cadets would park their airplanes for the mechanics to go over, take care of any "squawks", preparing the airplane for the next day's flight. On one occasion a cadet parked his plane facing east without deactivating his machine guns.

When the mechanic got into the plane to move it he hit the trigger firing several rounds which ended up hitting the Old Capital Building. A year or so ago I was at a meeting when general conversation came up with yours truly telling about this. One of the guys there verified it; he is a retired TPD Officer and related that years ago the janitor or some maintenance man at the Old Capital Building showed him where those rounds had hid. Think he said it was in the dome. Since then they have been covered/repaired.

We invite all who may have interesting stories to submit their articles. Please, keep it pertaining to subjects pertaining to military history or personal experience.



I needed some filler for the bottom of this page so I found these two images.

Two really divergent perspectives.

Kinda' says it all....

Tony Minihciello, Editor and Adjutant.



Chaplin's Corner:

John Folsom is AMVETS Post 1776 Commander Emeritus and Chaplin for the American Legion. We asked John to pray for our Post. John, we thank you for your service:

Almighty Father unto whom all glory goes, each of us, so separated, are banded together as a single body with the dedicated purpose of helping our veterans. We are meeting the challenges of a worldwide pandemic. We remain strong in the faith and the commitment to see our mission through. The blessings you have giving each us have worked for the benefit of all. We each pray for all our brothers and sisters.

Dear Lord, the AMVETS seek to do thy bidding. Proverbs 3:27: *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.*

As a group we seek to help others mentally, physically and financially. You have commanded us to love one another as you have loved us. Mathew 25:35: *For I was hungry and you gave me meat. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you took me in.*

Dear Lord I ask for your continued inspiration for all of us and for you to allow the AMVETS to continue in thy bidding. This I ask for in the name of my personal savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen

Spot-light on a Veteran!

Each issue of our Newsletter will feature an outstanding Veteran from a different branch of service.

Sgt. “Manila John” Basilone, USMC



On Oct. 25, 1942, the U.S.'s six-month struggle to keep a small advantage at Guadalcanal's Henderson Field hardened into a contest between two exceptional armies. The Marines at Lunga Ridge had driven off waves of Japanese assaults for two days in torrential rain and seemingly bottomless mud.

At midnight, hundreds of screaming troops from Japan's famed Sendai Regiment threw themselves over the barbed wire surrounding the field, forming human bridges for their comrades to cross. The exhausted, malaria-ridden U.S. Marines must have been overwhelmed by this night firefight.

An experienced machine gunner, Gunnery Sgt. "Manila John" Basilone knew his men and his guns were about to be severely tested. Basilone, who had earned his nickname during an Army stint in the Philippines, realized it would be up to him to keep them fighting and firing. "Basilone was everywhere at once, clearing jams, calming nervous gunners, replacing parts, and repositioning guns ... he became the glue that bound Co. C together," wrote Eric Hammel in his article "October on Guadalcanal" ("Leatherneck," October 1992).

At dawn, the barefooted, red-eyed Basilone finally rested his head on the edge of a pit. The line had held. The battlefield was strewn with casualties. At least 38 Japanese dead were credited to Basilone, but more important, his men credited Basilone with inspiring them and giving them the will to fight.

"Only part of this medal belongs to me," Basilone said of the Medal of Honor he received. "Pieces of it belong to the boys who are still on Guadalcanal." He believed this so strongly that he turned down the opportunity to have President Franklin D. Roosevelt bestow the medal, opting instead to have the ceremony in the field with his unit. With his self-effacing manner and movie-star good looks, Basilone soon became the U.S. government's War Bonds celebrity, featured in parades, newsreels, and other media. The Marine Corps offered him a commission and a D.C. desk job, but he declined both. "I ain't no officer, and I ain't no museum piece," Basilone said. "I belong back with my outfit."

Basilone left the limelight for Camp Pendleton, Calif., where he met and married fellow Marine Sgt. Lena Riggi in 1944. By early 1945, he was voluntarily back in the South Pacific. Within hours of landing on Iwo Jima, where he forcibly got his men up and off the beach, Basilone was killed by an enemy mortar round at age 27. For his heroism there, he was awarded the Navy Cross. He is the only Marine to have won both that award and the Medal of Honor during World War II.

\$17,000.00

About five (5) years ago my wife and I thought it was time to look for our final resting place. We have been in Tallahassee for 40 years, raised our kids here and figure Tallahassee is home. It was about this time Ben Bradwell, our current County Service Officer, called me and said I might want to meet the new Tallahassee National Cemetery Director. I told Ben I had just heard about a new National Veterans cemetery planned for Tallahassee and I would like to meet him (Raymond Miller) and learn more about just what a national veterans cemetery was all about.

It didn't take long for my wife and I to conclude we wanted to plan for our resting place here at the Tallahassee National Cemetery. This decision was made after meeting Raymond and visiting the site of our new national cemetery, it was still under construction and their offices were in trailers at the site.

That was five years ago. Now the facility is complete and we have buried over 1700 comrades and some with spouses. And if you look at this picture you will see and I now know the Tallahassee National Cemetery is one of the most well-kept and best-looking national cemeteries in the country. I know because I now visit and have visited national cemeteries, from Washington D.C. to Phoenix to Minnesota to even the Punch Bowl in Hawaii.



(Tallahassee National Cemetery Memorial Day 2019)

I digress. What in the world is the heading on this article "\$17,000.00"? That for all us veterans to know is the approximate cost of two cemetery plots, including a vault and a headstone for you and your wife in a private cemetery. And that is only the beginning. You will spend thousands more on a casket, opening and closing the plot, and a myriad of other expenses associated with burying folks today.

In stark contrast burial at our Tallahassee National Cemetery give you honors upon request, a plot with vaults for you and your wife and any dependent children, a headstone, flag and a presidential certificate. Thus, saving you approximately \$17,000.00, the value of your interment at not just our national cemetery but any national cemetery. Although you will still have the cost of your casket or cremation urn and associated costs for preparation. All funeral homes in the Big Bend area are aware of the application process to become eligible, and if you want, there is now a VA form that you can complete called the "Application for Pre-need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery". You can pick one up at the cemetery, fill it out and send in or ask me and I will get one for you and help you fill it out. It takes one for each of you, your wife and a dependent child if necessary.

Not only is our national cemetery unique in its design with rolling hills and large live oaks but committing to a final resting place will give you and your whole family peace of mind that you will be well cared for and remembered in perpetuity.

As usual if you have any questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Semper Fi, Gordon