

2017

CELEBRATING
VETERANS DAY



HONORING ALL WHO SERVE



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Remembering our veterans

The men and women who defend the liberties and freedoms of the countries they represent hold a special place in people's hearts and an eternal spot in their countries' histories.

Any opportunity is a good time to commemorate the bravery and selfless deeds of military personnel, but certain prominent holidays in November make this an especially important time to thank veterans for their service.

November 11 is Veterans Day, also known as Armistice Day in other parts of the world. These holidays honor all military veterans who have provided service to their countries, and that each falls on November 11 is no coincidence, as the day commemorates the anniversary of the end of World War I on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918.

Many places around the world pause and remember fallen veterans on November 11, but a good majority of Veterans Day and Remembrance Day commemorative events focus on past and current veterans who are still alive. There are many ways to honor the military at home and abroad in time for the November festivities.

The following are just a handful of ways to show appreciation for military men and women.

- When dining out, ask your server if you can pay the tab for a soldier or veteran you see in the restaurant.
- Attend a military parade with your family and explain the significance of the day to children in attendance.
- Draft letters and send care packages to soldiers currently in service far away from home.
- Ask your company if Veterans Day or Remem-



brance Day can be an observed holiday at your place of business each year to pay homage to servicemen and women.

- Visit a military memorial in a city near you. Your town also may have its own memorial.

- Petition town officials to erect a memorial if your town does not already have one. Such memorials can be a source of inspiration for your community.

- Support a military family in your town who may be missing a loved one stationed elsewhere. Make meals, mow the lawn, help with grocery shopping, or simply provide emotional support.

- Volunteer time at a veterans' hospital. You may be able to read with veterans or engage in other activities.

- Get involved with a military support charity that can provide much-needed funds to struggling families or disabled veterans.

- Have children speak with veterans in your family, including grandparents, uncles and aunts or even their own parents. It can help them gain perspective on the important roles the military plays.

- Ask a veteran to give a commencement speech at a school or to be the guest of honor at a special function.

- Drive disabled veterans to doctors' appointments or to run any errands.

- Support a local VFW organization.

- Create a scrapbook for a veteran in your life.

- Cheer for or thank military personnel each time you see them.

- Visit the veterans' portion of a nearby cemetery and place poppies or other flowers on the graves.

- Always keep the military on your mind and never forget those who have served and didn't return home.

Armistice Day, Remembrance Day and Veterans Day are great ways to honor past and current military for their service and sacrifice.

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In Their Own Words

The Kennebec Journal and Morning Sentinel asked the Veterans of central Maine to share their wartime stories and photos in celebration of Veterans Day. Thank you to all who contributed.

All stories from veterans are published as submitted.

Friendship forever

SUBMITTED BY PEARLEY A. LACHANCE

Winslow

**In
Their
Own
Words**

S/Sgt Scott D. Rousseau was killed in action on June 10, 1944 over the Adriatic Sea.

He was a Ball-Turret Gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress code named "Miss Behavin."

Of the 27 planes on a mission to bomb the railroad yards in Mestre, Italy only one plane did not return.

Scott was born in Winslow, Maine on Jan. 30, 1924 and was a twin. His brother, Frank, served in the U.S. Army and returned home safely. The twins had a sad beginning in life as their mother died from complications on Feb. 10, 1924.

Scott (20 years old) and I (9 years old) became pen pals. Scott sent me post-cards from the locations where he was undergoing training. He also sent me a patch and a silver-colored bracelet with the emblem of the 8th Air Force. In his last message to me, he apologized for not writing sooner. This was the last time I heard from him until I saw the ar-



ticle in the Morning Sentinel announcing that he had been killed in action.

Years later, as an adult, I started asking myself why a 20-year-old GI was so considerate to a 9-year-old boy. His



brother, Frank, had married, but never had children.

So began my journey to make sure Scott D. Rousseau would not be forgotten.

I placed ads in the Morning Sentinel on the anniversary of his death. I also paid for a paver with his name at the Central Maine Memorial Park in Winslow.

From the Internet I found out that through the American Military Cemetery Commission you could order a bouquet of flowers to be placed by his name on the MIA/KIA wall. That wasn't enough; I had to see his name on that wall (Tablets of the Missing).

In June of 2011, my wife, Alice and I went on a tour of Italy and upon arrival I insisted with our guide that we had to visit the Florence American Military Cemetery. It was very emotional seeing his name on that wall along with the graves of 5,000 casualties honored there. We also had the privilege of paying our respects at the graves of S/Sgt Louis Derosby of Winslow and Pfc Claude Dionne of Waterville.

We had a Catholic priest in our group and he suggested that we hold hands and say a prayer for Scott and his comrades in arms. Afterwards a lady Lutheran Minister led us in singing the National Anthem. This moment was the highlight of our trip.

Two different worlds

SUBMITTED BY GEORGE S. WARD

Randolph

**In
Their
Own
Words**

My name is George. I am a Micmac native from New Brunswick, Canada, born onto the oldest continuous living reserve in the Northeast called Red Bank or Metepenagiag (Meh-duh-buh-nog-ee-og). We are known as "The People of the Dawn."

Born into poverty, prejudice, alcoholism and abuse, I was abandoned by my parents and raised by my adoptive/foster grandparents who gave me a strong moral upbringing. I was, however, a sitting duck for the disease of alcoholism, as my parents and sister died from the disease.

After a short stint in the Canadian army, I left the reserve at 17 and joined the American army. Life off the reserve in the white man's world proved to be challenging and quite a learning experience. I spent the next 11 1/2 years in the military facing every danger there was, including 2 1/2 tours of duty in the Vietnam jungle as a combat soldier. The disease of alcoholism finally ended my military career; I was honorably discharged.

I spent the next several years drinking my way through

jobs, relationships and rehabs, until that fateful day when I found myself devastated by alcohol, unable to function as a human being. My plea for help was answered and my final attempt at recovery took place at a veteran's hospital where I began a new life of sobriety.

Six months into my recovery, I met my wife-to-be, Helene, on a street corner in Portland. I was on my way to the soup kitchen and she was on her way to the employment office. Fate had brought us together that day. We were now destined to begin a new relationship where our cultures would be joined. I, a Micmac native from Canada, and my wife, an Eastern European second-generation American-born Jew from New York City. Our cultures are as dissimilar as they are similar in many instances.

With the help and support of my wife and friends, I was successful in going to college, and later working with other Native veterans suffering from the disease of alcoholism and the condition known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder from the throes of combat.

My wife and I are now retired, she from teaching and myself from counseling. This past June, we celebrated 31 years of marriage. And, at the end of this month (November) I will be celebrating 37 years of sobriety. My life has been very rewarding, both personally and professionally.



Contributed photo

Helene and George Ward June 15, 1986. Married in the chapel on the grounds of the Samoset Hotel in Rockport, Maine.

Amphibious landing is rough business

SUBMITTED BY CHARLIE RUNNELS

Burnham



A combat amphibious landing is a unique military operation. The preparation is always the same for the individual U.S. Marine that is landing on the beach. I don't believe it has changed since World War II. Paratroopers

were used then instead of helicopters.

My first amphibious landing was Operation Deckhouse VI. It took place on Feb. 16, 1967 on a peninsula just south of Chu Lai, Vietnam. The objective was to cut off Viet Cong forces in the area. This was to be a vertical envelopment, which meant half the troops landed on the beach and the other half landed behind them by helicopter. The helicopter troops would take road junctions and bridges and act as a blocking force. The beach landing would drive the enemy to them. In our landing, Alpha and Bravo companies were the helo-borne troops while Charlie and Delta companies would come over the beach. I was in Charlie company.

On the afternoon of the 15th, we got our last briefings and were issued our ammo and three meals of C-rations. We packed our gear and readied our equipment. We went to supper, and then most of us showered and shaved because we didn't want to take the time in the morning. We had church services at 1900 (7 p.m.); usually they were non-sectarian. After church, most of us tried to go to sleep as 0230 came early.

Sleeping was not easy. Our racks (beds) were canvas roped into pipe. Everything you owned was in the rack with you, which didn't leave much room. The ship was an LSD (landing ship dock). The racks were four high. Each four-man fire team had a stack of racks. Seniority got you the top rack, so I, as a fire team leader, had the top. There was a good reason for this. If someone had gone on liberty and drank too much or got seasick, he was below you when he threw up.

At 0230, the lights came on. I dressed and headed for the mess deck. The earlier you got there, the better the goodies. There is a tradition going back to WWII that, the morning of a landing, the troops get steak, eggs and an orange. Officially, it is to give you a good meal before the landing in case there is trouble getting re-supply to you. We always thought it was more like a condemned man's last meal. You put the orange in your pocket for later. When we were done, we went back to the squad bay to recheck our troops. After everyone was ready to go, we sat on the deck and waited.

About 0430, the Navy gun line started



Contributed photo

Charlie Runnels, far right back to, with his comrades on a combat amphibious military operation.

to prep the beach. The heavy cruiser and the destroyers started to fire. We started to get a little more excited as we knew our time was close. Not long thereafter, the ship's "bitch box" intercom sounded off with, "Now hear this! Now hear this! General quarters! General quarters! This is no drill! All hands man your battle stations! Set condition One Alpha! All embarked troops proceed to your boat station!" We lined up at the hatches leading to the well deck where we would board our landing craft.

An LSD is not like the old troop ships where you had to go down a net. They opened the rear and flooded the well deck. The Higgins boats and supply boats would then float out, and we would be on a second level on Amtraks (amphibious tractors). Once we were in, they would be driven out into the ocean. When the Amtrak went off the end, a huge surge of water went over the track and came in the two open hatches. These were where the diver and gunner were. The end result is that everyone was soaked, and several inches of water was in the bottom of the Amtrak.

Then, the Amtrak went to its stand-

by position, which is to circle off the bow or stern of the ship until all the landing craft are loaded and ready to go. This took a while, and you couldn't see out. First you were with the sea, then sideways to it, and then against it. If you were at all susceptible to motion sickness, you would get seasick. I was never bothered by it, but more than half the guys were. Only about 2 to 3 feet of the Amtrak stuck out of the water so that waves kept adding water to the inside of the vehicle. In a short time, the water was just below your knees and floating with vomit. By now, most of the romance of the heroic amphibious landing was gone; you just wanted out of the damn thing.

Eventually, the tracks went in one direction, then stopped and idled in place. This meant you were on the line of departure, the place the attack starts — usually about 2,000 yards out from the beach. We could hear not only the naval guns, but also the planes flying over, and huge explosions from the beach where the bombs were landing. It was loud, but just getting started.

The track driver yelled, "Here we go!", and he accelerated from a stop

to full speed as fast as he could. It must look rather spectacular from the outside. However, for us, it meant more water coming in. We knew when he stopped he would open the ramp, and someone might try to shoot us. The ride in didn't take too long, and then the noise increased. The naval guns had moved off, but the planes were right over us. The .50 caliber gunner on the track started to shoot along with all the other tracks. I never heard anything so loud in my life.

Around 0800, we hit the beach. We had news cameramen with us filming. I remember one right in front of me as I came out of the Amtrak. I was full of sand and had salt water in my nose. Back in Bethel, Maine, my father was watching TV a few days later and saw me come out of the landing craft. He called my mother, "Helen! Your kid's on the news!" She came running in just in time to see me blowing my nose on my hand and wiping it on my shirt, something she always said only drunks and derelicts did. This film was actually used in a commercial selling — the Time-Life video series on Vietnam. (Thankfully, they left that part out.)

The trials of an ordinary soldier during WWII

PROVIDED BY DAVID GRANT

Excerpts of letters by Gerald A. Grant
Battery A, 33rd Field Artillery,
1st Infantry Division 1940-1945



The following excerpts are from letters written by Gerald A. Grant while serving as a member of the machine gun section of Battery A, 33rd Field Artillery, 1st Infantry Division 1940 – 1945. They are intended to show the life of an ordinary soldier

during WW II. All quotes are taken verbatim and the spelling and punctuation remains as it was in the original letters. (The editors also have opted to leave the punctuation and spelling in its original form to better capture the moment.)

In December 1998, Dave Grant placed an ad in the Bridgehead Sentinel, a newsletter of the 1st Infantry Division, asking if anyone might remember his dad. Dave Grant received several letters and phone calls. Included are excerpts from letters and telephone conversations to Dave Grant from Ken Anderson, Felix LeFoll, Ersie Hall and Don Hunt. Anderson, LeFoll and Hall served with Gerald Grant (Ged) during WW II. Anderson and LeFoll corresponded with Dave Grant on a regular basis.

Ken Anderson served with Battery A, 33rd Field artillery from 1941 through the battle of North Africa where he was wounded by incoming fire at Hill 609. He rejoined the Battery late during the Sicily invasion and was limited to light duty.

Felix LeFoll served with Battery A from its inception through late 1944. When the 1st Division was relocated back to England after the Sicily Invasion, he was assigned to the machine gun section of Battery A of which Ged Grant was the Sgt. in charge.

Don Hunt was assigned to LST 313, (Landing Ship Tank), which carried elements of Battery A, 33rd Field Arty. During the invasion of Sicily in July of 1943.

Gerald "Ged" Gallant joined the Army in June 1940 and was assigned to the 1st Infantry Division that was then stationed at Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont.

1.

...In April 1942, Ged writes from Camp Blanding, Fla. to his sister Mrs. Bernice Brooks: "Dear Bun, This morning we went into Jacksonville for an Army Day Parade. In the afternoon we went to St. Augustine for a funeral of one of the Sgts. in the Battery. I had to play taps while the firing squad fired 3 volleys. Boy was I nervous."

...In a letter dated Oct 3, 1999, Felix states: "Dear Dave: Yes, your Dad was nervous at the funeral. The Sgts. name was Higgins and he died from a



heart attack."

...May, 1942 Ged writes from Ft. Benning, Ga.: "Dear Bun, We are camped about 27 miles from Columbus and have killed 6 snakes so far."

...June 20, 1942 the Division moves to Indian Town Gap, Pa. which is the staging area for overseas. "Dear Bun: I'm not sure how many more times I'll be able to write, but tell everyone to drop me a line and I will write back to them sometime."

...Aug. 1, 1942 the Division boards the Queen Mary for the trip to England and arrives August 7 for additional training.

...Nov. 8, 1942 the 1st Division invades Oran, North Africa.

...Ged writes Bernice from "Somewhere in North Africa." "Dear Bun, Our first battle was the Ouselltia Valley. While there we got our first taste of the German Air Force. One day they sent over 6 or 7 ME 109s. They dropped one bomb and then we chased them away with AA fire."

...Next he tells of being shelled at Fraid Pass. "It made everyone stick pretty close to their foxhole."

2.

...April 12, 1999. Felix writes: "Dave, I've included an excerpt from a letter that I received from Ersie Hall on March 5, 1993." Ersie writes: "I remember the Ouselltia Valley. This was our first combat action in Tunisia. Shortly thereafter, a Messerschmidt came around, so Sgt. Gerald Grant, who had the machine gun section, fired several rounds."

...Sept. 28, 1999. Ken writes. "Dave: Did your Dad tell you that one of his gunners was firing at a British Spitfire at Ouselltia Valley? The plane flew along the bottom of the valley (we were above him) when the gunner started firing. You could tell by his wings that it was a Spitfire and he was wagging his wings (indicating friendly airplane), but the gunner didn't stop. Your father had to

knock him away from the gun."

...Ged writes Bernice from "Somewhere in North Africa": At Kasserine Pass the Germans broke through one morning. The guns were sent back to the next ridge and we went out to form a skirmish line. The shells were so thick we had to retreat again to the next ridge. I went to the OP, (Observation Post), a short way from one of the guns to help one of our Officers direct fire. We spotted four 88s out on the flats and adjusted on them. We started to get some hits and were ordered to cease fire. By this time we had two more guns in position behind the OP. The next target was an 88 with three ambulances around it. International Law prohibits firing at an ambulance, but not an 88. We let go with everything and got a direct hit. Boy what a mess.

...During the retreat from Kasserine, the machine gun section took its first casualty. Several GIs, including Ged, were in a Jeep trying to get away from the German advance. There was a mounted machine gun in the Jeep and they were returning fire when one of the GIs, a man named Rayannic, was wounded.

3.

...Sept. 4, 1999, Ken writes to Dave Grant: "At Kasserine one night I had the last tour of guard duty. As I started to make my rounds, I neared the machine gun pit, and all of a sudden all hell broke loose. The Germans had broken through our lines at Battery B. We hooked our guns up to the trucks and started up the hill while shells and bullets were flying everywhere. It was raining and the clay road made it impossible for our trucks to go up the hill. So, under fire, we put chains on the back wheels and took to a drainage ditch paralleling the road. We made it to the top and got our gun into position and started firing at the German vehicles coming up the road. I'm telling

you this because your Dad was right there in that mess and I don't know if he ever mentioned it to you."

...Sept 28, 1999 Ken writes. "Dave: I too remember us firing at the German ambulance and the question at the time about firing at an ambulance, but the ambulance was carrying ammunition and the 88s were behind them. Did your dad tell you about our position being hit just after we pulled out?"

...Oct. 1999 Felix writes: "I remember when the OP (Observation Post) was set up at Kasserine. There was an 88 surrounded by ambulances. We got a direct hit and there was nothing left. I drove my truck past the OP and was stopped by a French Detachment. They wanted to borrow my shovels. They made a couple of captured prisoners dig graves then shot the prisoners, put them in the graves, covered them up and gave me back my shovels. They left without marking the graves."

...March 12, 1943. Somewhere in North Africa, Ged writes: "Dear Bun: We have been in battle several times now. We used to say "Why in H--- don't they send us over there so we can do some good?" Now we say, "Why in H--- don't they send us back to the States?"

4.

...April 5, 1943. Somewhere in North Africa from Ged. "Dear Bun: Still at the front and getting our share of action."

...April 12, 1943. Somewhere in Tunisia, from Ged. "Dear Bun: Had our first movies in quite awhile. A double feature. "Babes on Broadway" and "Your Telling Me." We enjoyed them very much."

...Somewhere in North Africa from Ged: "Dear Bun: In El Guettar we met the 10th Panzar Division in one of our toughest battles. We were then sent to Mature to help take Biserte. A tough battle, but we pulled through okay."

...Nov. 20, 1999. Ken writes, "Dave: While we were pinned down in El Guettar by Rommel's 10th and 21st Panzer Divisions, we witnessed German Junker 88 Bombers, ME 109 Messerschmits and the Stukas overhead and also we witnessed three British Spitfires firing at a JU-88. They came in on his tail—one would fire a burst, peel off, and the next one would do the same. We were on the ground cheering. That is, until a Stuka came in on our camp and we had to head for cover."

...May 20, 1943. Somewhere in North Africa from Ged: "Dear Bun: As you know the d--- war here in North Africa is over now. It got pretty tough at times, but now it's over and we feel a heck of a lot better. I saw a picture the other night. "Yankee Doodle Dandy." It was very good."

...On July 10, 1943 Ged landed at Gela Beach in the Invasion of Sicily.

Letters

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

5.

...In April 1999, Dave Grant received a phone call from a Donald Hunt who stated that he believed that he had picked Ged out of the Sea off the Gela Beachhead in the early morning hours of July 10, 1943. It seemed that Battery A had been loaded into DUKWS for the trip to the beach at approx. 3:30 in the morning. They were supposed to only be one or two miles from shore, but as it turned out they were almost 10. The seas were very rough with swells from 10 to 12 feet. As the DUKWS attempted to reach shore one by one, they started to sink. A Higgins boat, (Landing Craft Vehicle & Personal), rescued all of the men out of the water. Of the 5 or 6 original DUKWS, only one made it to the beach. It was felt that one of the reasons that the DUKWS sank, was vomit had plugged the bilge pumps and wouldn't allow them to pump out the water that was coming in due to the rough seas.

At about 9 a.m. they finally made it to shore, but did not have much equipment with them. They managed to get three guns in position and were waiting for the rest of their equipment to be unloaded from LST 313 (Landing Ship Tank). At about 4:00 PM as LST 313 was to start unloading equipment a single German FW 190 came diving down out of nowhere and dropped a bomb directly down the elevator shaft of LST 313. Battery A suffered seven killed, six missing in action, and 16 wounded in action.

...The next day, July 11, 1943, the Germans made a determined attack to force the Americans back into the sea. In places the German tanks got to within 1/2 mile of the beach before they were stopped. Ged often spoke to his family of how close the tanks got that day. "We were bore sighting them they were so close. Then we started to run out of ammo and I drove a DUKW back to the beach to get some more."

... In a letter Ersie wrote in Sept, 1996 he states, "The tanks had gotten to about 150 yards from our unit. Our ammo ran short and myself and a driver grabbed a DUKW, loaded the ammo and headed back to our unit. (Was this driver Ged?)"

6.

...Ged's letters from Sicily to his sister Bernice were few and he mostly wrote that "I'm fine and in the best of health. Tell everyone to write."

...On Sept. 3, 1943 Ged wrote to Bernice from "Somewhere in Sicily." The letter chronicled the battles and events that his division had faced since landing at Gela Beach July 10. "Dear Bun: I received two of your letters and one of Helen's the other day, so I guess I had better answer them. I'm sorry that I have not written sooner, but I have just neglected it. I will do better in the future. Well the Germans are no longer in Sicily. Like Africa a few of them got away and the rest were

either killed or captured.

... "As usual we were in on the invasion. On July 10th we hit Gela. It was some different from Oran. The first two days of the invasion the Germans made it plenty hot for us. The first day they sent over plenty of planes. The second day it was tanks and planes. Boy what a day that was. They counter attacked and tried to drive us back into the sea with tanks. It looked like they were going to do it to. We started firing direct and indirect fire at 1000 yds and less. The Navy also dropped some shells in. After quite a hot battle they left with less tanks than they had started with. We started forward again and had no serious trouble until we reached Troina. Like El-Guttar the Germans did not want to get out. So again we were up against a tough one. After a great many counter attacks we drove them out in what the experts say was the toughest battle of the Sicilian campaign. After twenty eight days of fighting day and night we were finally relieved. Shortly afterwards it was all over. Now it is "Where do we go next." Since the start of our fighting, less than a year ago, our Battalion has received a total of six citations, similar to the one we received for the battle of Oran. Well Bun I guess that is enough for now. I am still ok and in the best of health. Write soon. Ged"

7.

...On Nov. 6, 1943 Ged landed back in England and wrote to Bernice on the 21st of Nov. Somewhere in England. "Dear Bun: They have lifted the censorship regulations somewhat now so that we can tell where we are. Back In England."

...From November, 1943 to June, 1944 the 1st Division remained in England training and equipping for the Invasion of France. Ged wrote many letters home describing the night life in England, the weather, people, customs, movies he had seen, etc. On June 5th, 1944 the 1st Division set sail for the Normandy Beachhead. Ged landed on Omaha Beach and very seldom spoke of it.

... In a letter that Dave received from Felix in August, 1999, Felix says "Dave: Your Dad was my Sgt. while I was assigned to his machine gun section. I was with the section from early 1944 to about August, 1944. Your Dad was a good Sgt who cared about his men. He was fair, quite serious, and calm under fire, which is all I cared about. Your dad was sitting beside me in a deuce and a half truck and when we hit the beach, Ged started to get the waterproofing off of the gun, so they would be able to get it in action. We landed on the Easy Red sector of Omaha Beach and it was pretty scary."

...In a letter to Peggy on July 17, 1944 Ged says, "Sorry I haven't written, but we have been rather busy since the sixth of June. Please don't worry when you don't hear from me often, as there are lots of times I am unable to write.

... "An experience that I had one day at our OP, (Observation Post) is something that I hope I'll never have to go through again. I was with the OP right up with the Infantry when the Germans decided to attack. They fired a few rounds of artillery and mortars at us and then

all of a sudden they came at us firing machine guns and machine pistols boy there were plenty of them too. We were well dug in and had a good defensive line, so we opened up with artillery and the Infantry let them have it with rifles, machine guns and mortars. They had us just about surrounded when they decided they weren't going to get through. About five hours after the start of the attack they withdrew, but with considerable less than they had to start with. Boy was I scared. I smoked two packs of cig, during that time. Seemed to have a little trouble keeping my knees from hitting each other too."

8.

...June 16, 1944. Somewhere in France. "Dear Bun: The snipers are tying themselves up in the trees and don't do much firing until our patrols have passed. They have found one or two German women snipers. They didn't live long though."

...Sept 7, 1944. Belgium. "Dear Bun: You will have to forgive me for not writing more often lately, but as you can probably see by the heading we have been pretty busy lately. We seem to have them on the run now and here's hoping we can keep it that way until this is over. I certainly hope it won't last much longer. I'm sick of fighting."

...Sept 16, 1944. Germany. "Dear Bun: We have finally reached the old Fatherland itself. It was pretty tough at times, but we finally got here and now it will be tough on them. I was thinking this morning of the many countries we have been in since Nov. 8, 1942. Algiers, Tunisia, Sicily, England, Normandy, France, Belgium, and now Germany. Wonder how many more we will have to hit before we get the chance to come home."

...Sept 24, 1944. "Dear Bun: I'm enclosing a picture that was given to me by a little kid in one of the towns that we liberated. He gave me some beer and bread and then before we left, gave me the picture."

9.

...Oct 5, 1944. "Dear Bun: At present I am living in a captured pillbox which offers us very good protection. It gives us a good place to sleep in and a good place to get out of the rain. Boy do I mean rain. This place is just one huge mass of mud. The walls of the pillbox are about 6 feet thick of solid concrete. I wrote a letter to Ernest Dakin. I thought he might like a letter from over here as I have been through many places that are familiar to him."

...Nov. 20, 1944. "Dear Bun: The other day we saw one of the much talked about Buzz Bombs. They are not very big, but boy what a noise they make. When the motor stops though it's time to get under ground."

...Dec 15, 1944. Belgium. "Dear Bun: As you can see by the heading we have changed countries again. Sure seems good to get a break. Since D-Day we have only been out of contact with the enemy five days. Five days break out of six and a half months isn't much."

...Feb. 3, 1945. Somewhere in Belgium. "Dear Bun: I just got back from the

doughboys and believe me it was plenty rough. I expect to go out again in a few days. You asked how we keep warm in this weather. We don't. As a matter of fact I've got a cold now from setting in a foxhole all night with no blankets. I was soaked three through and there was about three inches of water in the hole. Boy I d--- near froze. You will have to forgive this terrible writing, but the light is very poor and I am doubled up in a small foxhole."

...March 23, 1945. Germany. "Dear Bun: My buddies and I just finished our new house. We dug down about three feet into the ground and then built up the sides and put on the roof. Makes it fairly safe. I picked up an old radio and now we are listening to a broadcast from the States. Boy it seems nice to be able to hear good music now and then."

10.

...April 30, 1945. Germany. "Dear Bun: You said you needed a new request in order to send pkgs. So I am putting it on the end of this letter. I'll have to write Vera and tell her to let you send things to me whenever you feel like it." "Request that the bearer of this letter be able to send me a pkg containing foodstuffs and misc. 1st Sgt G A Grant 1st Inf Div."

...May 10, 1945 Germany. "Dear Peg: Well at last that much awaited for day has arrived. Boy it certainly seems good not to have to think about going back into battle again. As usual we were right in the fight up to the last minute. It seems to be a habit of ours. I suppose they had quite a celebration in Boston didn't they? We didn't do any real celebrating, but instead held a formation to unfurl our colors and to pin on our battle streamers. It was the first time that our colors had been unfurled since the invasion of France. While this was going on there wasn't a sound and it sought of made a fellow think back over the 444 days that we have been in actual combat and see how lucky we were. It was hard to realize at first that it was over and there was several times during the day that we did things that would make you look around rather sheepishly. For instance we were all out in field playing football when a couple of German planes came over to land. The first thing that came into our minds was to hit the dirt as fast as we could. Practically everyone made a start for the ground and then looked around to see if anyone had seen how they reacted. Say you ought to be around to help us celebrate when we get the chance. We have got about a twenty gallon keg of brandy that we are going to open up soon. Boy I bet there won't be a sober GI in the Battery by the time it is gone. Tell Etta and Hatchie that I will try to write in the near future. By for now. Loads of Love Ged."

11.

...On June 15, 1945 Ged mailed a post card to his sister "Mrs Chester Brooks" from the New York Port Of Embarkation, Brooklyn, New York. "Dear Bun, I have just arrived back in the United States. I can't promise, but I should see you in less than a week. Loads of Love Ged."

Upper class and other ranks

SUBMITTED BY VICTOR LISTER
Waterville



I was entered on the passenger list of Spaceship Earth in 1920. The ensuing 20 years or so were the final gasp of rural America. America became pre-dominantly urban in 1920. Women were given the right to vote in 1920. They,

as we can all witness, put skirts in storage and began to wear the pants in the family.

I was a waif from about 6 years old and lived with an aunt for some of my grade school years. She and her husband owned a self-sufficient farm. It was idyllic. On that farm, we milked cows by hand, and stored loose hay in a haymow. There was no sliced bread, no fast food, no super highways, no TV and so on.

We traveled to town in a carriage behind our old farm horse, Prince. People, such as I, met their first college graduates when

the draft began on September of 1940. Basic Training centers did not exist until the draft made them necessary.

So, in trice, all of that was swept away.

It happened when I, together with 16,000 others, boarded the Queen Mary for a four-day, unescorted voyage to Great Britain. It was then, when we who had just yesterday milked cows and shoveled shit, came face-to-face with the old country's customs.

We encountered the caste system. We became "other ranks," the lowest of the low. We stood in lines to get mutton, cheese, dark bread and tea.

The upper class—the officers—were served by liveried waiters in a large chandeliered dining hall. They ate fine foods. They were served pies and cakes. They were served wines. Farewell, rural naiveté.

The thing here is troops in World War II were transported by ship. The Atlantic was the responsibility of the British; the Pacific was the responsibility of the Americans. Those who sailed on American ships had an American experience.

Soldier recalls the fear of war

SUBMITTED BY ROBERT E. JOHNSON
Gardiner



When I was a young man, just in my teens, I received a call. It was Uncle Sam. You know who I mean. It was time to serve my country. I had no doubt in my mind that I would do my best as I served my time.

Six months later, I was boarding a plane, headed for Vietnam. As I left the state of Maine, I had no idea what the future would bring. I just knew I was scared, and couldn't do a thing. I knew in a few hours the ride would come to an end. I couldn't stop thinking of home, and "would I ever see it again?"

The morning I arrived in the country of Vietnam, you couldn't hear a sound. Everything was calm. Then, a man said to me, "Wait until tonight when the sun goes down. You'll get your chance to fight." So,

there I stood with my heart beating so, scared half to death and 12 months to go.

They put me on a truck and sent me on my way to an artillery group, and for 12 months I'd stay. Now, come that evening as the sky turned black, I wanted to run, but there's no turning back. I was there for the night and I didn't forget those words, "When the sun goes down, you'll get your chance to fight."

There were mortar rounds, artillery shells, gunners in the sky, M-16s, and hand grenades. I couldn't believe my eyes. I hated everything I saw. I said, "Is this what I have to follow?" And from that night on, each day, I thought, "Would I ever see tomorrow?"

Well, the good Lord was with me, 'cause I survived that night. But I've got a long way to go, and a lot more to fight.

In time, my tour was finally over. But, like a fool, I took a chance and extended. I was a lucky man. I'm one that survived. But others done the same, and they lost their lives.

Stand down time

SUBMITTED BY GEORGE F. SMITH
CHAPLAIN, VFW POST 8835
Winslow



My name is George F. Smith. I served in S. Vietnam with the 7th Air Force, Special Operations Group, Advisory Team 162 with the 82nd Air Borne from March 1969 to March 1970.

This is a little story about "Stand Down" time. Stand Down is when a soldier is given a few days away from being in a combat situation. There were about 12 men in my unit. We would go back to a secure base of operations.

This time off could get a little boring. We often invented games. One of the games that we invented was sort of a lottery. We would put \$1 per guess into a "kitty." Our guess (question) would be "What time do you think the next enemy fire (a.k.a. Charlie) would hit? The person who picked the right time would win the money. The money wouldn't last long, as he would then buy all of us a beer.

We also used Stand Down time to take care of personal grooming, laundry, writing letters home and playing cards. There were no computers, cell phones, social media or direct lines of communication with our families and friends at home.

Welcome Home Brothers and Sisters!



SUBMITTED BY DONALD F. RINES
Waterville



I was a Petty Officer Third Class aboard the U.S. Destroyer, U.S.S. Mervine DD-489 for almost three years. An event that I remember took place in 1943 in Mers El-Kebir, North Africa, where we were waiting to join operation Husky, the Invasion of Scoglitti, Sicily.

The day before we left, we had shore liberty and I was assigned shore patrol duty. I was given a baton and a 45-pistol.

Well, to make a long story short, I fired the 45. As I only weighed 120 pounds, it knocked me on my rear end. I still went on duty, but they took the shells out.

We stayed about five days. Then we went back to the Atlantic for convoy escort duty.



Atomic cleanup

SUBMITTED BY MARK SARGENT, VETERAN U.S. ARMY



I am an Atomic cleanup Veteran. We cleaned up the nuclear waste from the testing of 42 nuclear bomb tests. Our government does not recognize us as Atomic Veterans! A lot of Atomic cleanup Veterans have survived cancer and many have not. We have lost three brothers in three months. For more information, go to: www.legion.org/magazine/231288/toxic-paradise <http://www.atomiccleanupvets.com/>

We are trying to get a bill passed: www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr632 and www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s283



KVCC dedicates space for veterans on Hinckley campus

BY NANCY GALLAGHER
Correspondent

It's been a long time coming, and a lot of dedicated people have worked their magic to bring it from reverie to reality, but the Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC) now has a dedicated Veterans' Lounge in the Alfond Recreation Center on its Hinckley campus.

Furnished with a cushy couch and chair, television, computer, printer, coffee station, Maine flag, framed legislative sentiment and student mementos, this dedicated room can be a "Vet-Cave" for homework or relaxing. A world map pinpoints areas in which some of the student vets have served.

Student Navigator Brian Holtz expressed hope that "the students involved in this initiative currently, as well as alumni, will ... take ownership of the space and use their vision to develop it moving forward."

Holtz named former Director of Financial Aid Ann Connors and current staff member Flora Stack as two of the early administrative supporters of veterans' initiatives.

As part of his coursework, recent KVCC graduate Mike Malone wrote a successful institutional grant proposal to fund a veterans' space on campus and, working with KVCC Foundation liaison Michelle Webb and KVCC Vice President Karen Normandin, moved the initiative forward.

A portion of the grant funds purchased red, white and blue honor cords for graduating 2017 veterans who chose to wear them at commencement.

"Welcome Veterans" signs are appearing throughout the Fairfield and Hinckley campuses as further effort toward building a culture of support, Holtz said. A Nov. 1 flag raising initiated



Contributed photo

The efficiency of an office combines with the comfort of a family room to make the new Veterans' Lounge on the KVCC Hinckley Campus a go-to spot for student veterans.

a new flagpole on the Hinckley campus as another patriotic connection to the veterans there.

A design for a challenge coin — a coin or medallion usually personally presented in special recognition of an accomplishment — is now in the works. Students plan to have the KVCC precision machining program make the coins, Holtz said. The coins will then be offered "to faculty and staff to present to students when they feel it is fitting," he said.

Funding for recent KVCC graduate Alexander "Zander" Walz's AmeriCorps VISTA position — which focuses on veterans' issues such as food security and poverty — came from a renewable AmeriCorps grant effort spearheaded by Lisa Black, director of the federal TRIO program.

This educational opportunity outreach program supports a cohort of 180 qualified students who receive additional, focused support from a team of four staff members.

"The students in TRIO end up being some of our most involved students. They are often our most successful," Holtz said. "Statistically they graduate at a higher rate." Malone and Walz were both TRIO students.

The Veterans' Lounge is located in the Alfond Recreation Center on the Kennebec Valley Community College's Hinckley Campus, 23 Stanley Road, Hinckley, Maine 04944. Lounge hours are the same as those for the Alfond Recreation Center: currently 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday through Sunday. For more information, email Brian Holtz at bholtz@kvcc.me.edu or telephone him at 453-3539 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

VETERANS DAY



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“Jeep” Wilcox honors his brother on Veterans Day

The missing one

BY GAYLON “JEEP” WILCOX
Rangeley

**In
Their
Own
Words**

In honor of Veterans' Day, Rangeley native son Harland N. Wilcox, son of Forester Clyde Wilcox and Olive Dunham Wilcox, is remembered by his brother Gaylon “Jeep” Wilcox.

In 1950, while engaged in combat at the Chosin

Reservoir in North Korea, Harland was reported missing in action and later assumed dead, but still unaccounted for. There is still hope his remains will be found and returned home. Gaylon has honored his brother with this story-poem:

Born and raised the seventh child in a family of 12 on a hardscrabble farm, money was scarce, but happiness was plentiful. Love and concern between siblings in a large family seemed to add strength to the family values. One member's hurt was everyone's hurt. Devotion and concern were shared equally, but 12 births spanning 24 years didn't necessarily mean everyone shared the same interests at the same time in their lives. The interests of a 16-year-old differed from a 6-year-old. The closeness in age seemed to strengthen the ties that bind.

One of my brothers — Harland — being only two years older than I, while growing up, we became inseparable. Whether doing our chores or hunting and fishing, our ways became one. It was often said we were so close it reminded people of the well-known picture of a boy from Father Flanagan's Boys Town carrying another on his back with the caption “He ain't heavy Father . . . he's m' brother.”

Teenage years pass swiftly, and while I was 15, my brother turned 17 and proudly enlisted in the U.S. Army to serve his country, which I also did when I turned 17. The two years I had to wait to follow him was long and lonely and also became the saddest.

In November of 1950, my brother was one of 2,500 U.S. Army soldiers engaged in combat with enemy troops on the east side of the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. Those U.S. Army troops, thinking the battle would be short and they would be home for Christmas, were taken by surprise when, on Nov. 27, 20,000 Chinese troops that had unknowingly massed, surrounded them with relentless onslaught, including hand-to-hand combat. Those U.S. Army troops were outnumbered 8-1. The battle lasted four days and five nights and certainly speaks of the bravery and determination of our troops. By the time



the order came on Dec 1 to withdraw to Hagaru-ri at the southern tip of the Reservoir, the U.S. troops were reeling with heavy casualties—many killed, wounded or taken prisoner.

I vividly recall December 12, 1950, 13 days before Christmas, as the messenger from Western Union delivered the telegram from the Department of the Army: “With regret, missing in action.” Three years later in 1953, my brother was reported

“assumed dead but unaccounted for.” The Department of the Army has family blood on file for DNA testing, in case any remains are found. But with passing of nearly 70 years, hope is fading that the military's most sacred vow—“Until they are home”—will be fulfilled, bringing closure for both the Department of the Army and myself.

In the center of my hometown of Rangeley, there is a granite war memo-

THE MISSING ONE

By Gaylon “Jeep” Wilcox

“Missing in action,”
the telegram said.
“With regret, we can't say
if he is alive or dead.”

Though half a century has passed,
the roll-call is the same:
“Unaccounted for” is answered
when they call his name.

But did he die fighting
for his country that day?
Or was he taken prisoner
and carried far away?

Does he lie in a dungeon
walled by cold stone,
believing he is forgotten
by those at home?

Is he a victim of brain-wash,
now a disorientated man,
living a strange life
in a foreign land?

Does the search go on
across the battle ground,
seeking his remains that
have never been found?

Yes, my heart still carries
an ache of sorrow and woe,
but the unbearable pain
is the “never to know.”

I see no medals
pinned to his chest.
I see no remains
laid to final rest.

No yellow ribbons
wrapped around a tree.
Nowhere a symbol
of hope I can see.

So, aimlessly I wander
each Memorial Day,
with no graveside to visit
or to kneel at and pray.

The only hope I carry
to ease the burden I bear:
being unaccounted for could mean
he still serves somewhere.

But until the time comes
his remains are found,
a memorial to those who served
is my hallowed ground.

rial inscribed with names of those from the Rangeley region who answered our country's call and served in the Armed Forces, including the names of my father and his five sons. It's a very impressive list of names from a community so small, and gives me a deep feeling of being hometown proud. It also provides me with some consolation. Each Memorial and Veterans Day as I visit the gravesites of family and friends who have passed on—there being no site for my missing brother—I view the war memorial as a substitute, clinging to hope that his remains will be found and returned to his homeland, no longer to be the missing one.

DAV helps veterans and their families access benefits

BY WANDA CURTIS
Correspondent

One of the nonprofit organizations assisting veterans in Maine and across the U.S. is the DAV (Disabled American Veterans).

According to its website, www.dav.org, the organization was founded “on a single impulse of an unselfish desire to render service to the disabled veterans and their dependents, to make every effort possible to rehabilitate them, to alleviate the sufferings of those who would never be able to take their place in the normal walks of life again and to provide for their families.”

Maine DAV Officer Ron Brodeur said many veterans consider their comrades who never returned home to be heroes. He said that many carry a huge sense of guilt because they survived and their comrades did not. He said he believes that contributes to the high rate of suicide among veterans.

Brodeur said that the DAV’s mission is to do everything it can to ensure that the needs of veterans and their families are met once they return home. That might include helping them to access government benefits to which they’re entitled, or providing them with a ride to file a claim. Brodeur said that people of all ages and from all walks of life volunteer to serve as drivers.

He said they’re always looking for qualified volunteers. There’s currently a shortage in Arrostook and Washington counties.

The national DAV reports on its website that volunteers provide more than 670,000 rides annually for veterans attending medical appointments and that they assist veterans with more than 292,000 benefit claims annually. In 2016, the DAV helped attain more than \$4 billion in new and retroactive benefits to care for veterans, their families, and survivors.

Brodeur said that many veterans aren’t aware of the benefits for which they may be eligible and don’t know how to access them. DAV mobile service offices (offices on wheels) travel to smaller towns and rural communities



Contributed photo

DAV mobile service offices (offices on wheels) travel to smaller towns and rural communities to educate, counsel and assist veterans and their families in accessing benefits and services for which they are eligible.

to educate, counsel and assist veterans and their families in accessing benefits and services for which they are eligible.

“The vans spend one week in areas where people have trouble getting into Togus,” said Brodeur. “Veterans come to the satellite and can start a claim right there in the van.”

Two veteran service officers and two support staff personnel from the DAV also work at Togus to assist veterans in applying for benefits. Brodeur said that veterans don’t need to be DAV members to request assistance from the service officers. “Any veteran can get an appointment,” he said.

In addition to assisting veterans with benefits and transportation needs, Brodeur said that the Maine DAV also supports special projects at Togus. He said they recently provided funds for a hoop house for a special gardening project at there. He said all of the fresh vegetables from the garden were used

by the hospital to feed patients there.

“They (Togus) are our partners in serving veterans,” Brodeur said.

Another special project the DAV contributed to was a project in which bicycles were donated to veterans who needed them to travel to job interviews. Brodeur said the DAV collects money at places such as Walmart, which is used to help fund projects and provide for the needs of veterans.

“We evaluate the need and see if it’s something that we can support,” Brodeur said.

Legislation addressing the needs of veterans and their families is high on the DAV priority list. Brodeur said there are DAV representatives in Washington, D.C. who stay on top of the legislation and advocate for the needs of veterans.

One piece of legislation in which the DAV was involved was related to the government providing compensation for caregivers of veterans injured in active combat.

For more information on services available to veterans and their families through the DAV, see www.dav.org/learn-more/about-dav/.

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Profiles from visitors to the Travis Mills Foundation Belgrade retreat

These wounded veterans responded to questions regarding their stay this past summer at the Travis Mills Foundation in Belgrade at the Maine Chance Lodge & Retreat (the first summer for the newly-opened retreat).

1. What were you hoping to get out of the Mills retreat experience and what did you get out of it?
2. What kind of challenges do you encounter as a recalibrated veteran?

Name: John Hayes

Age: 35

Town/ city of residence: St. Augustine, FL

Military service background: 14 years of active service in the USMC. Served as a Aviation Ordnanceman for three years and 11 years as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician. Deployed to Afghanistan where I was injured on Dec 28, 2010 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, deployed twice to Iraq in 2004 and 2007 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

1. After attending other Veteran retreats and knowing how new TMF was, I had no other expectations than to enjoy Maine for a week with my family. Once we arrived, we were amazed! Every effort was made to make sure our entire family was thought of and we all had the best week possible. From having days filled with fully accessible activities for my entire family, to giving my wife and I an enjoyable night with other adults while the children were busy with incredible babysitters. The food was amazing and seemed to never end and the staff seemed as if they had found their dream job and loved watching us have fun and relax.

2. With losing my left leg completely and having my right amputated so high above the knee, even the act of sitting is incredibly painful. With now four children who appreciate and respect my injury, they still need/want me to be dad and do dad things. That week at TMF, I was able to kayak with them and hadn't done that since days before my final deployment. That memory is priceless and I could have gone home after that. Always being in a wheelchair means I am unable to go certain places. TMF made sure that the entire campus was outfitted properly and safe. That meant my family could enjoy their week rather than having to worry about me. As a family of six, we go on vacations every few months it seems, but none have compared to the week we spent at TMF. Even months later, we are still bringing up the time we had. I am forever grateful that TMF allowed us to attend that week.



Name: Kevin Jaye

Age: 30

Town/ city of residence: Hagerstown, MD

Military service background: I joined the military in October of 2010 and was sent to Ft. Benning, GA for my infantry training. After training, I was sent to Ft. Stewart, GA where I was assigned to Bravo Company 2-7 Infantry. In roughly February of 2012 the squad I was in was transferred to 1-64 AR 2nd Brigade to deploy with them. On June 24th 2012, I was on a foot patrol in Afghanistan in the Panjwai district. I later stepped on an IED resulting in the loss of my right leg below the knee, left leg was limb salvaged with an ankle fusion, lost my right pinkie, left wrist being fused, and right eardrum perforated. I spent two and a half years at Walter Reed Medical Center recovering from my injuries. In January of 2015 I was medically retired from the military.

Medical Center recovering from my injuries. In January of 2015 I was medically retired from the military.

1. We were hoping to get out of the Mills retreat a nice relaxing vacation of sorts for my family. We have a 1 year old and it was our first ever family trip. It was amazing! Being able to see my daughter have so much fun, and take in everything that we did at the retreat was worth everything to my wife and I. It was also amazing for my wife and I, as not only did we get to watch our daughter grow, but there was also services there that would watch our daughter while my wife and I participated in the events going on.

2. Honestly, I don't really have many challenges anymore. I'm a single, below knee amputee with a limb salvage on the left leg. I mean, trying to keep up with my daughter is exhausting, but I wouldn't trade it for the world. I had a great physical therapist who gave me all the tools I needed to have very few challenges in life and all of that has worked.



Name: Jarrid Collins and Layla Collins

Age: 41

Town/city of residence: Fayetteville, NC

Military Service Background: Active duty 18Z (21 yrs service). My wife Layla retired with 20 yrs of service. Both with multiple deployments.

1. Primarily, I expected to reunite with old friends, meet new ones and share experiences to improve in day-to-day life. Secondly, I thought this would be an opportunity to experience new potential hobbies, teach my children to live in harmony with all types of people, and see a beautiful part of our nation.

2. As a recalibrated active duty Green Beret, I've encountered many unique situations. From the physical aspect of "lashing my prosthetic on" for Military Free Fall (Skydiving) operations and caring a bag of SLRP (Small Leg Repair Parts) everywhere I go. To the unexpected social situations of children grabbing my leg, or leaders telling me to retire because I've given enough. I believe that the most important thing I've learned though is that we have a unique platform to speak for not only wounded warriors, but the military population at large. I believe it is imperative that we, as a group dissuade, the popular narrative of broken VETS and show that we have overcome a lot, dug in, rebuilt and continue to thrive. By sharing his message, we can shed the negativity popularized in media and honestly help Jose in our community that need help- while crossing the military-civilian chasm that we currently have.



Name: Josh Wetzel
Age: 31
Town/city of residence: Auburn, AL
Military service background:
 4 years of Service, 1-23 Infantry Battalion, Injured May 31, 2012 in Mushan, Afghanistan

1. We were hoping to reconnect with all of our friends from Walter Reed and see how everyone's families have grown! We felt like we got to catch up with everyone while also learning about the newest/latest things that are helping amputees. It was cool to see how everyone was able to do the activities, as well as seeing what everyone was using in their daily lives to make life more adaptable.

2. Getting exercise!! It's almost pointless to join a gym because there is hardly anything I can do with legs off. Plus, I would have to bring my wheelchair if I wanted to swim or shower at the gym.



Name: Adam Keys
Age: 33
Town/city of residence: Annapolis, MD
Military service background: Army, combat engineer, Airborne

1. I was hoping to reconnect with friends and meet more people and try new things as always. I got all of that. It was great to experience new things and see how I can manage to do it. Travis and his team have created a great thing up there in Maine and I look forward to coming back.

2. First off, I love the words "recalibrated Veteran" and I may use that in the future! But to answer the question, I face many perceived challenges every day, and even when people watch me do almost everything, they either want to watch, help or look away. All of that I understand, but usually I just get it done myself one way or another, and if anyone is still watching they will say things like: "That's impressive" or "You're a beast." (those are the positive comments; I try and block out or forget the negative comments that happen from time to time). I, or we, (other recalibrated Veterans) sometimes have to do things a different way, but I/we still find a way, which may be a perceived "challenge" but I welcome it, and hopefully it helps or inspires someone else to keep moving forward.



Name: Marc A. Owens
Age: 50
Town/city of residence: Leland, NC
Military service background: SFC (ret) Army 25 years

1. What I got from the TMR, was a sense of relaxation, camaraderie, serenity and a loving caring environment. There was never a worry about how to navigate the grounds, and the activities were very well thought out to element the stress.

2. I think the most challenging thing "I" encountered as a veteran, is mobility. This world is not set up for veterans/others with missing limbs, such as vacation spots where you are not the subject of stares. I Believe, we just want a sense of NORMALCY.



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Veterans' groups struggle to fill their ranks in central Maine

Posts could close if younger vets don't start joining groups such as the American Legion and VFW

BY KEITH EDWARDS
Staff Writer

Leaders of local veterans' groups say their members are aging and younger soldiers coming out of the military aren't joining their ranks to take their place or help shoulder the burden of helping people, including other veterans, in their communities.

If local outposts of organizations, including the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, AMVETS and Marine Corps League, don't bring in new blood, as their current members die off, posts could close and the services they offer to the community and to veterans could no longer be offered, according to several local leaders.

"We need to have some new blood, new ideas. We need somebody to step in and start taking over the activities us old guys are doing," said Ralph Sargent, 81, of Augusta, a retired Marine who served in the siege of Khe Sanh and is senior vice commandant of Marine Corps League Kennebec Valley Detachment 599 and junior vice commandant of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9 in Gardiner. "Get out of your recliner, get up, and support the community that supported you while you were on active duty, and step up to the plate."

Group members said some younger veterans who saw action in places such as Iraq or Afghanistan have told them they don't join veterans' groups after their military service because they don't think they would relate well to the older former soldiers there, and that they don't have much in common.

Eric Hunt, 66, of Fairfield, who served in the Navy, is a past commander of Winslow Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8835 and an associate member of Marine Corps League Kennebec Valley Detachment 599, suggested otherwise. He said a post full of older veterans is perhaps about the most likely place a young person dealing with the horrors of war can find someone who understands what they've been through, because many there have been through it themselves.

"The younger people need to know there are people in these organizations that have experienced what they've experienced, and they're not alone," Hunt said. "There are others in these organizations who are in the same boat they are, and they're more than willing to do what they can to help these younger members."

Hunt said group members also go to VA Maine Healthcare Systems-Togus, where they help returning veterans with any problems they might have.



Photo by Elise Klysa

American veterans' group leaders meet outside the offices of the Kennebec Journal to discuss the decline in veterans' groups membership. They are, from left, James Laffin, U.S. Army retired, AMVETS National Executive Committee representative, commander of the AMVETS Post 2001 in Augusta, and a past commander of department of Maine AMVETS; Ralph Sargent, U.S. Marine Corps retired, senior vice commandant of Marine Corps League Kennebec Valley Detachment 599 and junior vice commandant of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9 in Gardiner; Bill Schultz, U.S. Navy retired and commandant of Marine Corps League Kennebec Valley Detachment 599; Roger Paradis, U.S. Navy retired and adjutant, historian and Americanism coordinator for American Legion Smith-Wiley Post 4 in Gardiner; Roger McLane, U.S. Navy retired, Commander VFW Post 9 in Gardiner and member of American Legion Post 181 in Litchfield; and Eric Hunt, U.S. Navy Retired, past commander of Winslow VFW Post 8835 and an associate member of Marine Corps League Kennebec Valley Detachment 599.

Services that veterans' groups provide in the community include scholarships; fundraising drives for other causes; flag, color and honor guards for events including funeral ceremonies at no charge for deceased veterans; motorcycle escorts; making sure flags are placed on veterans' graves and flag poles; putting on parades and remembrance ceremonies; community meals; educational programs on patriotism; and sponsorship of youth groups including scouting programs and sports teams.

Beyond camaraderie, local posts and groups provide services to veterans such as advocacy to preserve their benefits in Washington, D.C. and, Sargent said, access to people who are willing to help fellow veterans solve just about any problem they may have.

If new veterans don't join and fill the

shoes of members who die or are no longer able to be active, the services the groups provide may no longer be provided, and some posts may close or be forced to consolidate with other posts.

Hunt said his VFW post in the late 1970s had nearly 600 members, but now it is down to about 400 members. But, he said, it's the same 20 to 23 members who regularly go to post meetings and it's that same core group that seem to be involved in nearly all the other post activities.

Members of other groups said the same thing: A small core group of their members are the ones involved in nearly every group activity and meeting, while other members are rarely seen at group events.

Bill Schultz, 76, retired Navy and commandant of Marine Corps League Kennebec Valley Detachment 599, said if the

core members of these veterans' groups stop coming and doing all the things they do, their local posts would likely close.

James Laffin, 70, of Readfield, retired Army, an AMVETS National Executive Committee representative, commander of AMVETS Post 2001 in Augusta and a past commander of the department of Maine AMVETS, said that organization has lost a couple of posts in recent years and has seen its state membership of about 1,500 decrease by 200 to 300 members.

Statewide, the number of legion members in Maine, according to a membership report on the state legion's website, decreased by nearly 1,951 members from 2016 to 2017, and in that same time period, only 315 new members joined in the state.

Augusta American Legion Post 2 lost 11 members and gained seven from 2016 to 2017, according to the state membership report. Gardiner's legion Post 4 lost 19 members with six new members joining in the last year. And Waterville's legion Post 5 lost 60 members with 14 new members joining in their place.

Nationally, the American Legion had about 2.4 million members in 2010. Currently it has about 2.2 million members in some 13,000 posts throughout the country and overseas, according to John Raughter, a national legion spokesman.

Roger Paradis, 70, of Pittston, retired from the Navy and adjutant, historian and Americanism coordinator for American Legion Smith-Wiley Post 4 in Gardiner, said members of the Kennebec Valley Honor Guard, at their own cost, attend nearly 100 burials of veterans a year, and the group is increasingly finding it hard to keep up with the demand.

Schultz said one thing might help: As soldiers are leaving the military, they could be presented information about the various veterans' groups and what they provide.

"A lot of people don't know anything about us," he said.

Group members said if fewer veterans join such organizations, it lessens the strength of their voice as a group when they need to lobby to protect veterans benefits in Washington, D.C.

Roger McLane, 69, of Litchfield, retired from the Navy, commander of VFW Post 9 in Gardiner and a member of American Legion Post 181 in Litchfield, said it is important that people, including legislators and children, learn that freedom isn't free and that it came from sacrifices made by those who served their country.

"We're all here because we care about our brothers and sisters," McLane said.



Photo by Elise Klysa
Ralph Sargent, left, U.S. Marine Corps retired and senior vice commandant of Marine Corps League Kennebec Valley Detachment 599 and junior vice commandant of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9 in Gardiner, discusses the decline in membership in Veterans of Foreign War organizations locally. He's joined by Roger Paradis, middle, a Navy veteran from the Gardiner American Legion Post 4, and Bill Schultz, U.S. Navy retired and Commander of Marine Corps League Kennebec Valley Detachment 599.



Photo by Elise Klysa
James Laflin, an AMVETS National Executive Committee representative, commander of AMVETS Post 2001 in Augusta and a past commander of the department of Maine AMVETS, discusses reasons why fewer younger veterans are not engaged in local veteran organizations. He says without younger veterans involved, there will be fewer voices fighting for veteran issues such as health care.

CENTRAL MAINE VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK

Roderick Road
Winslow, Maine

VETERANS DAY
November 11, 2017

Central Maine Veterans Memorial Park wants to thank all the people who have helped at the park this year.

Thank you to The Central Maine Jeep Owners who helped weed and place crushed stone, Patriot Riders of America, Maine Chapter 3 for helping with the solar lighting and helping with the weeds, Mrs. Bernadette Massey for continued use of her hose and water, Caroline Morgan for weeding when she could, Darcy Little, a student from Maine Academy of Natural Sciences, who offered her help weeding, M.J. Stafford, Connie Mitchell, Pat Poulin, Winslow High School Jobs for Maine Grads Class, Winslow Girl Scout Troops #1901 and 1995, Hampden Boy Scout Troop #41 for planting, weeding and keeping the park and flowerbeds looking beautiful.

Many thanks, once again, to Elias Monuments of Madison for engraving and delivering the stones and benches to the park over the years.

Applications for stones and benches can be obtained by stopping by Winslow Supply Inc., 567 Benton Ave., Winslow, Maine or by calling 873-5608 and asking one be sent to you.

Please take a moment to visit our website at www.maineveteranspark.com

With Total Appreciation To All Who Have Served Our Country

WE SALUTE OUR FALL

The following Maine service members have given the

The families of these heroes were presented the Maine Gold Star Honorable Service Medal in recognition of their service

RANK	LAST	FIRST	MI	AGE	CASUALTY	COUNTRY	HOME TOWN	BRANCH	RANK	LAST	FIRST	MI	AGE	CASUALTY
CDR	SCHLEGEL	ROBERT	A	38	9-11-01	PENTAGON	GRAY	NAVY	LCPL	ROSA	ANGEL		21	3-13-07
MSGT	ANDREWS	EVANDER	E	36	10-10-01	QATAR	OLON	AIR FORCE	SGT	SWIGER	JASON	W.	24	3-25-07
LCDR	CLUKEY	ROBERT	E	33	11-3-02	ADRIATIC SEA	ORONO	NAVY	SGT	MCDONALD	EDMUND	W.	25	3-29-07
MAJ	AUBIN	JAY	T.	36	3-20-03	KUWAIT	WATERVILLE	MARINES	SPC	WILSON	CHRISTOPHER	M.	24	3-29-07
SPC	CUNNINGHAM	DANIEL FRANCIS	J.	33	4-4-03	IRAQ	LEWISTON	ARMY	SGT	PARKER	RICHARD	K.	26	6-14-07
1SG	COFFIN	CHRISTOPHER	D.	51	7-1-03	IRAQ	KENNEBUNK	ARMY	SGT	HOUSE	JOEL	A.	22	6-23-07
SGT	GOLDING	NICHOLE	D.	24	2-13-04	AFGHANISTAN	ADDISON	ARMY	SPC	DORE	JASON	E.	25	7-8-07
SGT	HOLMES	JEREMIAH	J.	27	3-29-04	IRAQ	NORTH BERWICK	ARMY	SGT	EMERY	BLAIR	W.	24	11-30-07
SGT	GELINEAU	CHRISTOPHER	D.	23	4-20-04	IRAQ	PORTLAND	ARMY	SFC	LOWERY	JONATHAN	A.	38	12-14-07
SGT	ROUKEY	LAWRENCE	A.	33	4-26-04	IRAQ	WESTBROOK	ARMY	PFC	SMITH	TYLER	J.	22	3-21-08
SPC	BEAULIEU	BEAU	R.	20	5-24-04	IRAQ	LISBON	ARMY	SFC	ROBERTSON	NICHOLAS	A.	27	4-2-08
CPT	TRANCHEMONTAGNE	DANIEL	J.	32	5-30-04	WASH., DC	PORTLAND	ARMY	SPC	BUXBAUM	JUSTIN	L.	23	5-26-08
CPT	CASH	CHRISTOPHER	S.	36	6-24-04	IRAQ	WINTERVILLE, NC	ARMY	LCPL	BERNARD	JOSHUA	M.	21	8-14-09
SSG	POULIN SR.	LYNN	R.	47	12-21-04	IRAQ	FREEDOM	ARMY	PFC	BROCHU	JORDAN	M.	20	8-21-09
SGT	DOSTIE	THOMAS	J.	20	12-21-04	IRAQ	SOMERVILLE	ARMY	SGT	KIRK	JOSHUA	J.	30	10-3-09
1SG	JONES	MICHAEL	D.	43	3-3-05	FT. DRUM, NY	UNITY	ARMY	SPC	SLACK	WADE	A.	21	5-6-10
SFC	DOSTIE	SHAWN	C.	32	12-30-05	IRAQ	LEWISTON	ARMY	SSG	SILK	BRANDON	M.	25	6-21-10
SPC	HUMBLE	JOSHUA	U.	21	2-26-06	IRAQ	APPLETON	ARMY	SSG	SHAW	ERIC	B.	31	6-27-10
SGT	COREY	DAN	A.	22	3-13-06	IRAQ	NORWAY	ARMY	PFC	SPRINGER, II	CLINTON	E.	21	10-24-10
SPC	HARRIS	DUSTIN	J.	21	4-6-06	IRAQ	PATTEN	ARMY	1LT	ZIMMERMAN	JAMES	R.	25	11-2-10
SSG	KELLY JR.	DALE	J.	48	5-6-06	IRAQ	RICHMOND	ARMY	SPC	HUTCHINS	ANDREW	L.	20	11-8-10
SSG	VEVERKA	DAVID	M.	25	5-6-06	IRAQ	UMO STUDENT	ARMY	PFC	MCLAIN	BUDDY	W.	24	11-29-10
CPT	DAMON	PATRICK	D.	41	6-15-06	AFGHANISTAN	FALMOUTH	ARMY	PFC	SPRINGMANN	TYLER	M.	19	7-17-11
PFC	SMALL	ANDREW	R.	19	8-11-06	AFGHANISTAN	WISCASSET	ARMY	CPT	BRAINARD	JOHN	R.	26	5-28-12
CPT	KEATING	BENJAMIN	D.	27	11-26-06	AFGHANISTAN	SHAPLEIGH	ARMY	SSG	WING	JESSICA	M.	42	8-27-12
CPL	LIBBY	DUSTIN	J.	22	12-6-06	IRAQ	PRESQUE ISLE	MARINES	SFC	HENDERSON	AARON	A.	33	10-2-12
SSG	CIRASO	KRISTOFER	R.	26	12-7-06	IRAQ	BANGOR	ARMY	SGT	GARVER	COREY	E.	26	6-23-13
SSG	ROSS	ERIC		26	2-9-07	IRAQ	KENDUSKEAG	ARMY						

Source: <http://www.maine.gov/veterans/recognition/maine-her>

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Thank You Veterans!

FALLEN MAINE VETERANS

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STATE	COUNTRY	HOME TOWN	BRANCH
IRAQ		S. PORTLAND	MARINES
IRAQ		SOUTH PORTLAND	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		CASCO	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		BANGOR	ARMY
IRAQ		PHILLIPS	ARMY
IRAQ		LEE	ARMY
IRAQ		MOSCOW	ARMY
IRAQ		LEE	ARMY
IRAQ		HOULTON	ARMY
IRAQ		BETHEL	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		OLD TOWN	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		SOUTH PORTLAND	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		NEW PORTLAND	MARINES
AFGHANISTAN		OAKLAND	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		SOUTH PORTLAND	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		WATERVILLE	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		ORONO	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		EXETER	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		SANFORD	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		SMYRNA MILLS	MARINES
AFGHANISTAN		NEW PORTLAND	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		MEXICO	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		HARTLAND	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		DOVER-FOXCROFT	ARMY
KUWAIT		GLENBURN	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		HOULTON	ARMY
AFGHANISTAN		TOPSHAM	ARMY

TO ALL FALLEN HEROES WITH TIES TO MAINE WHO HAVE DIED IN THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM

RANK	LAST	FIRST	MI	AGE	CASUALTY	COUNTRY	HOME OF RCD.	BRANCH	ME RELATIVE/TOWN
CPL	KENNEDY	BRIAN	M.	25	3-20-03	KUWAIT	HOUSTON, TX	MARINES	MELISSA DERBYSHIRE, (MOTHER), PT CLYDE
CW4	HALVORSEN	ERIK	A.	40	4-2-03	IRAQ	BENNINGTON, VT	ARMY	HALVOR A. HALVORSEN, (FATHER) RICHMOND
LCPL	BRUNS	CEDRIC	E.	22	5-9-03	KUWAIT	VANCOUVER, WA	MARINES	GRANDPARENTS, BANGOR
SGT	MCMILLIN	HEATH	A.	29	7-27-03	IRAQ	CANANDAIGUA, NY	ARMY	ETTA MAY MCMILLIN, BIDDEFORD
CW5	SWARTWORTH	SHARON	T.	43	11-7-03	IRAQ	VIRGINIA	ARMY	BERNARD MAYO, (FATHER)LITCHFIELD
SSG	CHERRY	CRAIG	W.	39	8-7-04	AFG	WINCHESTER, VA	ARMY	ROY CHERRY, (FATHER) WINDHAM
L CPL	ARREDONDO	ALEXANDER	S.	20	8-25-04	IRAQ	RANDOLPH, MA	MARINES	VICTORIA FOLEY (MOTHER)BANGOR
MSG	HORRIGAN	ROBERT	M.	40	6-17-05	IRAQ	AUSTIN, TX	ARMY	MARY HORRIGAN (MOTHER)BELFAST
2LT	COUTU	MATTHEW	S.	23	6-27-05	IRAQ	NO. KINGSTOWN, RI	ARMY	UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
SPC	LUCAS	JOSEPH	A.	23	12-5-05	IRAQ	AUGUSTA, GA	ARMY	JEFFREY LUCAS SR., (FATHER) WISCASSET
SPC	MERCHANT	CHRISTOPHER	S.	32	3-1-06	IRAQ	HARDWICK, VT	ARMY	AMBER BRAGG, (DAUGHTER) BANGOR
SPC	SCHNEIDER	MATTHEW	E.	23	8-28-06	IRAQ	GORHAM, NH	ARMY	ANDREW E. SCHNEIDER, (FATHER) KITTEERY
SSG	JACKSON II	WILLIAM	S.	29	11-11-06	IRAQ	SAGINAW, MI	ARMY	SISTER, WARREN
SPC	LITTLE	KYLE	A.	20	5-8-07	IRAQ	W. BOYLSTON, MA	ARMY	MICHAEL LITTLE, (FATHER) NO. BERWICK
MAJ	OLMSTED	ANDREW	A.	37	1-3-08	IRAQ	COLORADO SPGS, CO	ARMY	BANGOR
SPC	TAYLOR	DEON	L.	30	10-22-08	AFG	BRONX, NY	ARMY	NO. ANSON
SGT	BALDUF	KEVIN	B.	27	5-12-11	AFG	NASHVILLE, TN	MARINES	RICHMOND
CPL	GOYET	MARK	R.	22	6-29-11	AFG	SINTON, TX	MARINES	PHILIP & NANCY CURRAN, (GRANDPARENTS), WESTBROOK

Source: <http://www.maine.gov/veterans/recognition/maine-heroes/fallen-heroes.html>

<http://www.maine.gov/veterans/recognition/maine-heroes/fallen-heroes.html>

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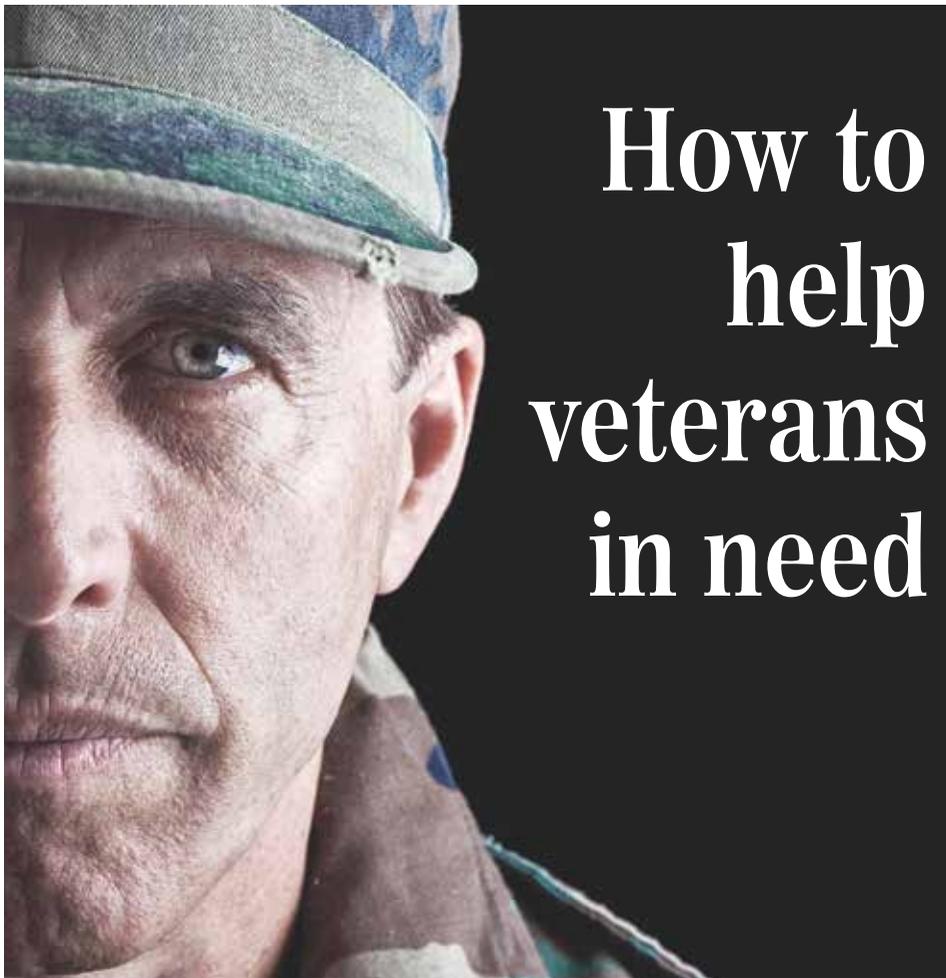
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How to help veterans in need

Millions of men and women serve in the military and make the sacrifices that such service requires. Risking their lives to serve their countries, veterans sometimes endure mental and physical trauma, returning home to face uphill battles as they deal with their injuries.

Many veterans in need are not just in need of medical attention. Learning that their efforts and sacrifices are recognized and appreciated by the ordinary citizens they protect can make a world of difference to veterans as they recover from their injuries. Men, women and children who want to help veterans in need can do so in various ways.

- **Visit a veterans hospital.** Contact a local veterans' hospital to inquire about their volunteer programs. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs notes that each year more than 75,000 volunteers spend more than 11 million hours in service to America's veterans. Visiting veterans at the hospital to hear their stories can lift their spirits and aid in their recoveries. In addition, veterans' hospitals may have volunteer opportunities that make it easier for hospitals to operate at optimal capacity.

- **Help a neighbor.** Unfortunately, many veterans return home with injuries that affect their ability to make it through a typical day without assistance. Dis-

abled veterans may be unable to do their own grocery shopping or maintain their homes. If a neighbor or nearby veteran is facing such hurdles, offer to do his or her shopping or mow his or her lawn. Such tasks won't take much time but can make a world of difference to veterans.

- **Offer professional services free of charge.** Professionals who want to help veterans can offer their services free of charge. Accountants can offer to prepare veterans' tax returns for free, while attorneys can provide legal advice to veterans who need it. Contractors can help disabled veterans by offering to make alterations to their homes for free or at cost.

- **Employ social media to help local veterans.** Many people who want to help local veterans might not be able to do so more than one day per week. But some veterans may require daily assistance. Men and women can start a locally-based Facebook group for fellow members of their community who want to pitch in to help local veterans. Such a group can make it easier to share information and arrange help for veterans in need.

Many veterans return home from serving overseas in need of help. Offering such help can improve veterans' lives while letting them know their efforts and sacrifices are appreciated.

Remembering Our Veterans November 11, 2017

We pay tribute to heroes, past and present, for unwavering service to our country...

In Honor Of
Vincent Arsenault
U. S. Army

I miss you, Dad.
Love, Peter

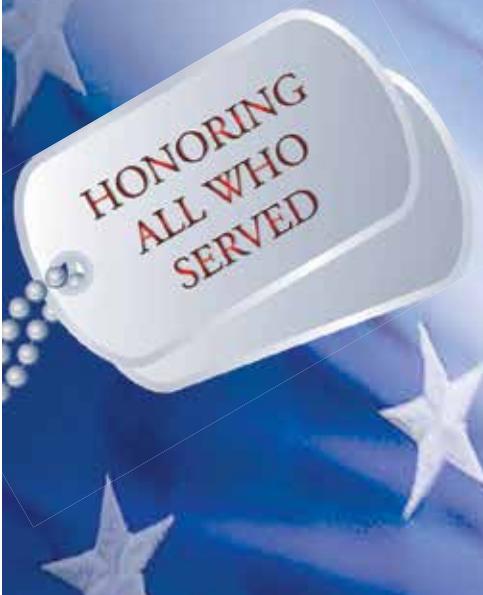
In Honor and Memory Of
Richard V. Awalt
Sergeant

You were a light in my life
that burns forever
Love you forever.
Your Sister, Gloria

THANKS
For Serving Our
Country!

Dad, Wendell E. Brown and
His Brothers, Myron,
Laurice and Nelson;
My Brother, Lloyd W.
Brown and Our Uncles,
Arthur L. Benner and
Clarence R. Jones
Love, Linda J. Brown

Remembering Our Veterans



In Honor Of
Norman B. Buck
 January 12, 1924 - August 25, 2013

Always in my heart.
Sadly missed by Nephew, Mike

In Honor Of
Sergeant Philip C. Buck
 U.S. Army Air Corp. - WWII
 November 13, 1920 - March 29, 2007

You are in my thoughts and prayers from morning to night and from year to year.
Sadly Missed by Son, Mike

In Honor Of
Francis Crocker
 Corporal

Thank you for your service to our country!
Gary and Kathleen

In Honor Of
Guy F. Davis
 Air Police Squad,
 U. S. Air Force and Reserves
 December 29, 1932 — March 2, 2011

We were always so proud of you, and your service.
Love: Wife, Arlene, Children: Patricia, Cindy, RoseMarie, Charlene, Scott and Families.

In Honor Of
Harry Dixon Jr.
 Tech 5

We appreciate your service and all you went through during WWII.
Love, Carol, Gwyn and Families

In Honor Of
Richard E. Fowler Sr.
 Airman 2nd Class - Korea
 October 13, 1936 - January 8, 2010

If tears could build a stairway and memories a lane, we'd walk right up to Heaven and bring you back again.
Always in our hearts, Your Loving Family

In Honor Of
Ronald Gamage
 Private

Thank you for your service to our country.
From your seven grateful children, Tony, Ellen, Carol, Bruce, Dean, Susan and John

Vincent W. Gill

May you be at peace and free of pain. We miss and love you always.
Ma, David, Alton, Frankie, Ronald, and Kerry

In Honor and Memory Of
Douglas F. Gleason
 May 7, 1925 - Sept. 17, 2002
 WWII U. S. Army & U. S. Air Force
 Also in Paratroopers

Thank you for the wonderful days we shared together. My prayers will be with you until we meet again.
Never forgotten, always loved. Marion and Family

In Loving Memory Of
Gerald (Ged) Grant
 SGT 1st Infantry Division, WWII

Always in our thoughts,
Peg, Gerry, Dave

In Honor and Memory Of
N. Richard Hallee
 Eighth Army Signal Corps.
 Communications Technician
 Korean War

Your family thanks you for your service to our country.
We love and miss you!!

Remembering Our Veterans



*Thanks to
Hallowell's
Greatest
Generation,
Decorated for
Christmas by
Buckie Lord*

In Honor and Memory Of
George Hamel

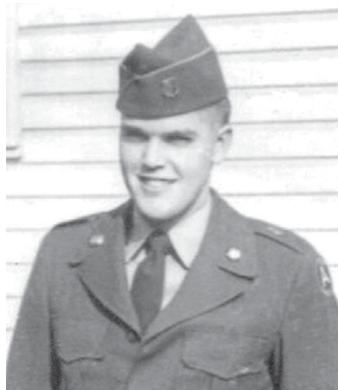
Airman 2nd Class - Petty Officer
U.S.S. Gilbert Island



Oct. 24, 1931 - May 29, 2011

Thank you for teaching us the value
of service, honor and duty.
You will always be our hero.
We Love and Miss You Every Day

In Honor Of
Lloyd E. Heald
For Your Army Service



*Your proud and loving family,
Vernie, Linwood, Linda, Larry, Leslie*

In Honor and Memory Of
Roger Jones
August 4, 1943 - December 17, 2013
U. S. Navy Seaman 1st Class



You are loved forever
and missed so very much.
Love, Marion

In Loving Memory Of
Val Labrie, Sr.
July 24, 1924 - November 2, 2002
WW II



Your wings were ready,
but my heart was not.
*Love and Miss You Forever
Love, Marion*

In Honor Of
Roland H. LeClair
CPL, Army, WWII
July 23, 1921 - Oct. 9, 1994



It's been 23 years you've been gone.
May God's angels guide you and protect
you throughout time.
*Still Remembered by Kevin & Pat LeClair,
Darlene Franklin, Kerry LeClair, Nephew
Brandon, Niece Jasmin and her son Mason, too!*

In Loving Memory Of
Ralph A. Lee



A proud WWII Veteran!
*Forever missed and always loved,
Your Wife and Family*

*In Honor Of All the Veterans
Who Served in World War II...
The Greatest Generation*



Thank you!
Roger "Buckie" Lord

In Honor Of
Roger Lord, Jr.



You look up to those before you.
We look up to you.
Proud of you!
Love, Sharon and Family

Joseph A.L. Martin
Staff Sargent



We are proud that you served and thank
you for making our world a better place.
Love, your family

Remembering Our Veterans

Riley E. Mercier
SRA



Thanks for your service.
*We Love You,
Gram and Gramps*

Owen V. Mercier
Corporal



Thanks for your service.
*We Love You,
Gram and Gramps*

In Honor Of
Robert G. Mosher
Aug. 24, 1928-April 16, 2012
USN Chief Petty Officer



Your courage and bravery
still inspire us all, and the memory of your
smile fills us with joy and laughter.
*We miss you and love you always.
Jean, Joan, Robbie and Denise
and their families*

In Honor Of
Wilder G. Purdy
1st Lieutenant
Co-Pilot B-24 Liberator, WWII



You will remain in our hearts forever.
Love, From Your Family

Edward Roy, CPL



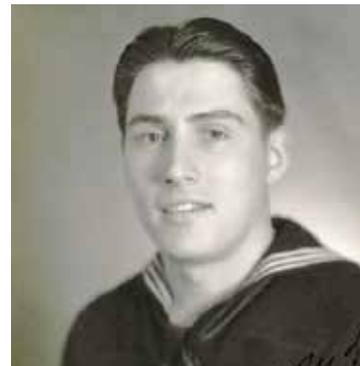
Thank you for lighting up our lives
with your presence.
Love, Your Family and Friends

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"The Jewish Legion" World War I
Fought The Turkish Army in Palestine



Samuel Shapiro USN

Samuel Shapiro
P/O 3rd, Navy World War 2
Military Aide De Camp to
Governors Ken Curtis and
Joseph Brennan



Samuel Shapiro USN

In Honor and Loving Memory Of
**Specialist Wade Alan
Slack**
707th EOD CO



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Family and Friends*

In Loving Memory
**Hubert and
Catherine Thayer**
U.S. Marine Corps, WWII



Love, Gene and Becky

In Honor Of
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November 2, 1924 - April 24, 2017



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Ervin Tyler
Corporal in the Army



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with an appreciation for our
country and the freedoms
they enjoy.

Black Ale Project supports veterans' causes

BY KATE CONE
Correspondent

Dave Pappas couldn't remember a particular date or time that he decided to help his fellow veterans. Hearing stories about injured vets, depressed and suicidal vets and those who roamed homeless, Pappas rose to the occasion by tapping the people he knew in the beer business.

"You can't avoid the news," Pappas said recently. "Every time you turn on the television or radio you hear another story about wounded men and women returning from combat with PTSD, depression and some without limbs. I wanted to help."

A non-combat Marine veteran of the Persian Gulf Conflict, Pappas created the Black Ale Project. Explaining how it works, Pappas first talked about his love for highly hopped beers. "I had been traveling all over northern New England on weekends for a few years, tasting lots of great craft beers. I like dark beers with lots of hops, so I blogged under the name 'Hophead.'"

In his travels, Pappas met many brewers and brewery owners and knew them to be generous benefactors to local causes. So he came up with a way to collaborate with them.

"I didn't want to create an official nonprofit organization," he said, "so if a brewery agrees to work with me, I ask them to create a black ale of some type, choose a local veterans' charity for which they want to contribute the proceeds of the sales of the beer, announce an event where the brewery releases the beer to the public and, when the beer is sold out, write a check to that charity."

Pappas doesn't handle the money, nor does he choose to write off any expenses he incurs in his travels.

Why a black ale? Pappas' blog, Hophead, used as logos, a black jacket, helmet and motorcycle, all the things he wore and the bike he rode on his craft beer travels.

"Again, I'm a big fan of dark beers, as is my wife. This also gave brewers a chance to create a recipe for a beer that wasn't one of the ever-popular India Pale Ales (IPA) that crowd every beer menu. Some brewers were thrilled to be able to make a beer they had experimented with back in their home brewing days. We even get people who come out to the release party to support veterans and they tell us, 'We didn't think we liked black ales, but this is delicious.'"

So far, the Black Ale Project has raised \$30,953 with only 15 of the 22 participating breweries reporting.

"That means seven breweries are still selling their ales or recently sold out and are compiling their sales — meaning more money to come for deserving vets," Pappas said.

Local Maine breweries participating in the Project include Mason's Brewing Company in Brewer, Foundation Brewing Company in Portland and Atlantic Brewing Company, Bar Harbor. Foundation's co-owner John Bonney said, "We decided to donate to the local chapter of Pets for Vets. We love dogs and were donating to various dog causes anyway, so it was a no-brainer for us to give to an organization that helps match dogs with veterans with needs."

Foundation, which also collaborated with Willamette Valley Hops, donated \$5,350, which Bonney said allowed Pets for Vets to now focus more on training the dogs instead of spending most of their time fundraising. Pets for Vets announced that this one donation would allow them to make three more matches in the Maine community of vets. Foundation's ale was a black IPA called Sergeant Stubby, named after a Boston Terrier that served in WWI and returned with his owner as a decorated "soldier." He now resides at the Smithsonian, preserved and wearing the coat covered with medals.

Chris Morley, owner of Mason's Brewing Company at 15 Hardy Street in Brewer will release of its black IPA called Batch 99 on Veteran's Day, Nov. 11. For the most up-to-date information on hours and events, see www.facebook.com/masonsbrewing or call 989-6300.

"The crew that brewed our collaboration beer was made up of all first responders or veterans," Morley said. "We were humbled and honored to do this with Dave Pappas, who should be recognized for this great project."

Morley hasn't identified the charity that will be the recipient of his sales proceeds, "because we might donate to more than one. We are still deciding."

Atlantic Brewing Company donated the \$1,000 it raised to the U.S. Coast Guard unit in Southwest Harbor.

"Every New England state except Rhode Island has participated," Dave Pappas said, "and I'm going to approach the people down there soon." Not to be left out, Ballast Point Brewing Company in California chimed in, releasing its ale last May. Pappas would love to see breweries all across the country take on the Project.

There is room for helping out the Black Ale Project. Pappas suggests people talk the project up at their favorite tasting rooms. If people know a brewer, or if they are a brewer themselves and are interested in initiating the making of an ale to help vets, they can email Dave Pappas at: dave@blackaleproject.org.

- Brewers: choose a style of black ale to brew;
- Brewers: choose a local veterans' charity, so you'll help a neighbor;
- Sell the beer until it's sold out;

- Write a check for the amount of the sales proceeds to that charity.

"Since I am not a 501c3 (nonprofit) organization, I act as a facilitator," Pappas said. "I can't collect money, so if people want to donate, I suggest looking on the websites of participating breweries (found on the Black Ale Project's website), then click on the name of the charity and make a donation directly."

Contact Info: Black Ale Project: www.blackaleproject.org Dave Pappas: dave@blackaleproject.org Pets for Vets: www.petsforvets.com



Photo by Dave Pappas

Foundation Brewing Company made a black IPA called Sergeant Stubby, a real-life Boston Terrier that served in WWI.

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Courtesy of Mason's Brewing Company;
 Mason's Brewing crew on brew day for their Black Ale Project beer. It's a black IPA called Batch 99: (left, standing) Dave Pappas; (on ladder, bottom to top) Chris Morley, owner; Scott Magnin, assistant brewer; (top left) Forrest Brown, head brewer; (top right) Josh Leach.

Courtesy of Atlantic Brewing
 Atlantic Brewing's bartender Phil Gatlin gives the thumbs up to their Black Ale Project brew called Proteus.



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VA provides a long list of ways to donate to veterans

Some patients have no connection to the outside world

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

Maine veterans come to the VA Maine Healthcare System in Augusta or one of the eight outpatient clinics around Maine for appointments, medical services and long-term needs. Frequently, they don't have family members nearby, and in some cases, they don't have any relatives to visit them and bring toiletries, reading materials or clothing. As Chief of Voluntary Service at U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Augusta, Jonathan Barczyk has developed what he calls a wish list of volunteer opportunities that can appeal to the schedules and budgets of volunteers and donors.

Many businesses and organizations might want to consider volunteering and donating as a team or group effort, especially around the holidays, Barczyk said. With so many tech-savvy veterans, the facility offers wireless hot spots and iPads to allow veterans to Skype with distant friends and relatives. He also welcomes information technology volunteers who could help residents learn how to use a computer or tablet and get online.

Some of the VA volunteers prefer to work with hands-on projects, and he provides them with plenty of opportunities. For example, some of the Togus campus buildings have old windows with pulleys that sometimes get stuck. A volunteer who prefers to do fix-it work might find that type of chore the perfect way to donate hours.

"It's not that the volunteers take the place of employees," Barczyk explained. "But with older buildings, there is always something that needs attention, and having an extra pair hands can be a big help to employees and ultimately improve the veterans' environment and experience."

For those veterans with limited financial resources, gift cards are always appreciated, he said. Walmart, Hannaford's and Tracfone gift cards are especially useful to the many

homeless veterans the VA serves.

Depending on the volunteer assignment, all individuals must have at least a minimum background check. Drivers need to pass a physical examination, provide proof of insurance and have a good driving record. The staff provides necessary training for specific tasks; volunteer assignments will pair those individuals with their skills, interests and availabilities. Many people want to learn more or want to volunteer but aren't sure where they would fit. For more information, call 621-4886 or email jonathan.barczyk@va.gov.

Barczyk said that although he and the VA staff greatly appreciate the many helpful donations for residents and patients, some items they can't accept or currently have in good supply. That list includes afghans, jigsaw puzzles, used clothing, stamps, outdated magazines, dental floss, after-shave or hand lotion, and blank greeting cards and envelopes.

"Due to infection control policies, we are unable to accept used clothing or bedding, walkers, canes, or crutches," he said. "We also can't accept personal memorabilia and artwork."

The Voluntary Service offices are at the VA Togus Medical Center in Building 205, off 810 Eastern Avenue in Augusta. Directions and GPS coordinates can be found at maine.va.gov/locations/directions. Items can be brought to Room 307. Call 621-4886 for more information about types of items needed, including new household items for transitioning homeless veterans.

The Internal Revenue Service recognizes donations as tax deductible "donations to the United States." Donations can be designated for a specific purpose or can allow the Department to decide how the donated funds will be used. Donated funds made by check should be made out to "VAVS" and sent to Voluntary Service, 1 VA Center, Augusta, ME 04330.

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2. Parking Lot Shuttle Driver (Wed.-Thurs. and on call)
3. Bangor Eye Clinic Volunteer (weekdays)
4. Community Living Center 73 – Feeding patients (must complete on-site training)
5. Community Living Center Volunteers (weekdays)
6. Community Living Center Baking Volunteers – (weekdays)
7. Prosthetics Escort – (weekdays)
8. Facilities Management Volunteer repairs, cleaning, etc.; (weekdays)
9. Endoscopy Escort/Clerk (weekdays)
10. Human Resources Desk Clerk (weekdays)
11. Patient Representative (Mon.-Wed.)
12. Information Technology Volunteers (weekdays)
13. Hospital Greeters and Guides (weekdays)

FINANCIAL DONATIONS FOR ONGOING PROGRAMS:

1. Holiday Meals (for patients' family members)
2. Comfort Items (nail/toenail clippers, denture cream/cleaner, small bottles of body wash/lotion, toothbrush covers, mouthwash, deodorant, electric/high quality disposable razors, large cans of powder; no alcohol-based products)
3. Canteen/Coupon Books
4. Wheelchairs (for veterans at Togus)
5. General Welfare Funds

SPECIAL REQUESTS/PROJECTS:

1. Nintendo Wii Console
2. Gas Cards (\$25)
3. Tracfone Cards
4. Hannaford Gift Cards (\$25)
5. Walmart Gift Cards (\$25)
6. Over-the-Ear Headphones (new only)
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How to show appreciation for U.S. military personnel



Military personnel are unsung heroes whose sacrifices for their country make it possible for hundreds of millions of people to enjoy freedoms that many people across the globe do not have. In recognition of those sacrifices, many people want to show their appreciation to both active and retired servicemen and women. Fortunately, there are many ways to do just that.

- **Pitch in at home.** According to the United States Department of Defense, the United States military currently deploys active duty personnel in nearly 150 countries. Many of those troops are separated from their families for months at a time, and that separation can make things difficult for their loved ones back home. If a neighbor's spouse is deployed overseas, offer to help around the house. Whether it's mowing their lawn, dropping their kids off at school or inviting the whole family over for dinner one night each week, such gestures can go a long way toward easing the burden faced by spouses of deployed military personnel.

- **Send gifts to active personnel.** Servicemen and women on active duty do not enjoy many of the luxuries that tend to be taken for granted back home. But men and women who want to show their appreciation can send care packages to active personnel serving overseas. An organization such as

Operation Gratitude (operationgratitude.com), which to date has sent nearly 1.3 million care packages to active personnel, sends care packages filled with snacks, entertainment, personal hygiene products and handmade items. This provides active personnel a taste of home while also letting them know their extraordinary efforts are appreciated and not forgotten.

- **Volunteer at a veterans hospital.** Unfortunately, many servicemen and women return home from their deployments with injuries or health conditions that require long-term care. By volunteering at veteran hospitals, men and women can help veterans overcome their injuries and provide much-needed help to staff at hospitals that could use a helping hand. Visit volunteer.va.gov for more information.

- **Make a financial donation.** For those who want to support servicemen and women but don't have much free time to do so, financial donations can go a long way toward improving the quality of life of active and retired military personnel. Many programs work with veterans to improve their quality of life, and such organizations rely heavily on financial donations to make their missions a reality.

There are many ways that civilians can express their gratitude to active and retired military personnel.

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Eagle-head canes honor Maine veterans

BY GRACE K. VON TOBEL
Correspondent

For Donna and George Gunning, every day is Veterans Day. Since 2008, they have created and given 3,310 eagle-head canes to veterans at no charge.

George had been carving wood for many years and was a master craftsman before he started making canes. In the beginning, George carved every single cane. Eventually, he could not keep up with the demand. At that point, he selected his best eagle head carving as a mold for casting. Now, when a veteran receives a cane, it is a hand-carved cast eagle-head cane.

Producing a cane takes time. First George paints the eagle head and attaches it to the cane. Then the name of the recipient is wood-burned down the shaft of the cane.

His wife, Donna, applies the emblem of the branch of service (U.S. Army Corps, Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Air Force, Maine National Guard, Maine Air Guard), the name of their unit and war in which they served. Then she applies a flag and symbolic representations of ribbons, medals and commendations as appropriate to each particular veteran. No rank is listed, because whether given to a private or a general, the basic cane is the same. Donna is adept at computer research to assure they have the correct spelling and information about each veteran. She also has craft skills to apply the finishing touches to each cane.

Together the couple fill their days with dedicated work to honor U.S. veterans. They receive phone calls from either veterans, their relatives or friends.

The Gunnings provide a cane to any Maine veteran and relying on voluntary donations for funding. Because the materials to produce a cane cost about \$20, they appreciate donations. When asked why they do what they do, George Gunning said: "It's just a really



Wood carving by George Gunning in the lobby of Togus VA Medical Center.

good feeling!"

His wife echoed his sentiments: "We're lucky, we're fortunate. It's a real way to say thank you for your service."

This generosity comes from the heart of a Korean War veteran who served the nation in San Diego in naval electronics. It was in San Diego where he met and married, Donna, who grew up in a Navy family. Together they raised their three children in Maine to respect the United States, they said. Their daughter, Sharon, served a tour of duty for her country in the U.S. Navy.

As their picture was being taken,

George said with a twinkle in his eye, "We've had 60 years together. I'm the cute one; she's the smart one. It works for us."

Over the years, the Gunnings have provided canes to both women and men, young combat-wounded from Desert Storm, older Vets from WWII. One woman was a Korean veteran who was a nurse in a M.A.S.H. unit and knew the reality from which the movie and TV shows were created. Some veterans cherish the gift and leave their cane as an heirloom for their family.

The stories shared by the veterans



Donna and George Gunning hold eagle-head canes they create for Maine veterans.

and their families could fill many books.

George recalled the first veteran for whom he made a cane, a WWII veteran who had been a P.O.W. in Germany. His story as a Jew in a German prison camp touched George. From there on, he was committed to making canes for veterans.

Not all veterans are combat veterans. The Gunnings broke with tradition when they chose a policy based on their belief that if you put up your hand, vowed to protect your country

More CANES, PAGE 27

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Canes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

and served your time, then you deserve the honor of a cane. In many cases, it is simply a matter of luck if you were sent behind a desk or in front of enemy fire — both are honorable and necessary. Their criteria is a willingness to risk oneself for country.

Gunning, at 85, has had numerous health concerns that have been treated at the Togus VA Hospital, the oldest VA hospital in the United States. Gunning carved a large eagle with outspread wings flying over a rippling American flag and donated it in honor of the 150th anniversary of Togus in 2016. It is on display in the lobby.

When asked why he did such a generous thing, he said, "Been going there 20 years. They cut me open, healed me up, took care of me. They provided me with excellent medical care, so it was an honor to do this for them. How could I accept payment?"

If you want to honor a veteran with a personalized eagle cane, you may call George and Donna Gunning at 445-2078 and request one. Remember: they do not sell these canes, but welcome donations.



George Gunning holding a work-in-process: his wood carving of an eagle in flight. *Photo by Grace K. Von Tobel*



Photo by Grace K. Von Tobel
Donna Gunning at work.



Photo by Donna Gunning
Hand-carved eagle head cast used in making canes for veterans.

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Monmouth students interview veterans for Masks of War art project

BY KEITH EDWARDS
Staff Writer

Olivia Caron knew her grandmother, Crystal Guerrette, had served in the Army, but until she took on a U.S. Studies class project, the Monmouth Academy sophomore didn't know one of the biggest reasons why she served 28 years in the Army was to honor her father.

In an interview for a class project in which students interviewed military war veterans about their service and experiences, Caron was told by her grandmother she had joined the Army, serving stateside as a medical nurse for 28 years including during Operation Desert Storm, to honor her father, who enlisted in the military but had to leave before his service was up to care for his mother who got cancer.

"She was proud to serve for him," Caron said.

Caron said she also learned about some of the difficulties of being a woman serving in times of military conflict.

Students, after interviewing local veterans as part of the project, took the information they learned from them and did some research into what they talked about. They presented their research, in words and photographs and artwork, Monday night in "The Masks of War" presentation.

The masks piece of the project added an art component. Students were given plain face masks and told to paint them to reflect what they'd learned about their veterans' experiences and how they had been changed by war.

Caron's mask had camouflage on one side of the mask, to reflect how proud her grandmother was to wear her uniform, dark skin-colored on the other side, to reflect that Guerrette saw dirty things during her service, and a red cross to reflect that she was a nurse.



Photo by Elise Klysa

Monmouth Academy junior Sierra Cummings shows a copy of the "National Geographic" issue that inspired her social studies teacher, Jocelyn Gray, to create an art project on U.S. war veterans as a way to learn about living veterans and their war experiences. Cummings selected Sgt. First Class Christopher Field of Durham, who currently works at Camp Keyes in Augusta, as the focus of her project. Cummings said she's known Field since she was little and thought that he'd be perfect for the project.

Student Jessica Withee interviewed Dave Needham, a co-worker of her mother's, about his service in the Navy during the Cold War, Grenada Conflict and Persian Gulf War. The mask she did for the project included an American flag motif on one side with helping hands on it and 10 dots circling an eye of the mask surrounded by a blue sea. The mask comes complete with big ears on its sides, one of them with a heart inside it.

She said the helping hands reflect that Needham, who served as a sonar technician on submarines and later as a counselor, valued helping others; the 10 dots were for Needham's 10 family members and reflected, she said, "the struggle of taking care of your family while still doing your job"; and the ears reflected that he, in both his jobs, was a professional listener. The heart in one ear, she said, was in part because the heart was on the

same side of the mask as his family and because "he always says to listen to your heart."

Social studies teacher Jocelyn Gray, whose own husband is a veteran of the war in Iraq and whose family has had many people serve in the military, said part of the inspiration for the project came to her after she read a National Geographic article about soldiers who suffered brain injuries from blasts in Iraq and Afghanistan and who, guided by an art therapist, painted images on masks to symbolize themes from their experiences, such as death, pain, and patriotism.

Students also read the article before doing their projects. Then they each interviewed a veteran, preferably someone they already had a relationship with. She said nearly all students were related to, or knew, a veteran, though many said they'd never talked with them about their war experiences. Some students reported they knew a veteran but that person told them they weren't comfortable being interviewed.

Gray said she warned the high school students to anticipate that some veterans would not want to talk about their experiences. Multiple students interviewed teachers.

Julia Johnson, Cheyenne Pease and Mariah Herr interviewed Tom Menendez, their math teacher, when they attended Monmouth Middle School. Menendez served in the Army in Vietnam.

Pease said Menendez acknowledged he lost some friends in the war, but he didn't really want to talk about that.

But Johnson said he also described going to Vietnam as kind of like a vacation, a chance to get away.

Their mask included a helicopter in a war zone on one side, and a beach and

More MASKS, PAGE 29

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Photo by Elise Klysc

The poster project for Jocelyn Gray's social studies class became a family affair as Monmouth Academy student Olivia Caron, center left, chose her grandmother, a Desert Storm war veteran, as the focus of her project. From left are Erin DeCoteau, of Lewiston, and her 2-year-old daughter, Haley; U.S. Army veteran Crystal Guerrette; Caron; Greg Caron, 3-year-old Leaha; 2-year-old Harper DeCoteau; and Sarah and sister, Sophie Caron of Monmouth. Guerrette retired after 28 years of service as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. She said she was proud her granddaughter was doing the project.

Masks

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

palm trees on the other.

Sierra Cummins interviewed Army Sgt. Christopher Field, a friend of her mom's who works at Camp Keyes and has deployed, following conflicts, to Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan.

She said she learned a lot about the life of a soldier. She said Field is a "happy go lucky guy" who said he didn't suffer major negative impacts during his service, but was changed by it, including now not being fond of loud noises.

The mask she made after interviewing him featured sunshine and blue sky on much of the mask, but with a cloud and lightning bolts on its side.

McKenzie Stevens, Valerie Fullerton and Elizabeth Mason interviewed Rich-

ard Howard, a substitute teacher at the school who served in the Navy during the Cold War.

They said Howard told them he had a largely positive experience while serving. Their mask was painted in a red, white and blue motif to reflect Howard's patriotism with a brick wall because he told them his service provided structure in his life. It also had white on one side and black on the other because, Howard told them, his service opened his eyes to more aspects of the world, including civil rights.

Each student interviewed Monday about their interviews said the project was an eye opener.

"I learned a lot about what some people had to go through — like what it felt like when they got back," Withee said. "I learned we need to have more respect for them, because they went through so much."



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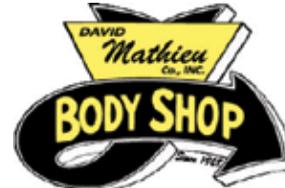
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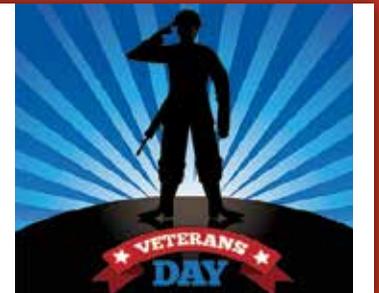
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HARTLEY'S COUNTRY ~ PROUD SUPPORTER OF MAINE VETERANS PROJECT



The Maine Veterans Project was born from an outstanding ATV ride that raised funds to fight veteran suicide. After seeing the overwhelming support from our awesome community, I decided it was time to take our event to a new level and the Maine Veteran Project came to fruition.

We are dedicated to preventing veteran suicide right here in Maine for our Maine veterans. Since our conception on July 09, 2015, MVP has provided an impressive number of home improvement services, benefit-related services, heating fuel assistance and many other services.

Adam over at Hartley's Country decided that the first 10 veterans of the new Windy Warrior - Adrenaline Therapy Program should arrive in style. In some of the newest, fastest sports cars and trucks they sell.

"What an awesome day...I don't even have the words for the validation we received today from our veteran skydivers that our Windy Warrior - Adrenaline Therapy Program is the real deal. Each individual that jumped personified exactly what we aim to deliver."

Huge thanks to Congressman Bruce Poliquin for spending a solid four hours with our veterans at Vacationland Skydiving and Hartley's Country for supplying some very awesome, very fast cars to take out. Big thanks to Volk Packaging Corp, Bold Coast Energy and Hartley's for sponsoring our first 10 jumpers. And all the veterans that believed in this program and everyone that supported them at the drop zone.



The Windy Warrior Adrenaline Therapy Program takes an outside of the box approach to dealing with PTSD and suicide prevention by taking to the skies. "Jumping out of an airplane is one of the most extreme things anyone could ever do in their lifetime, much like combat. So, that's what we're trying to do. We are trying to recreate combat in a fun and safe way." Combining therapy and sports opens up that adrenaline rush, and most importantly it gives these vets a piece of mind. After taking the plunge, these veterans would recommend this jump of a lifetime to all service members, especially those struggling with life after combat. If you would like to learn more about the Windy Warrior Program visit their Facebook page.

HARTLEY'S



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