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# The Greatest Generation

Doesn't take many words to make an impression, does it? *The Greatest Generation*.

When we hear it, we know it refers to the WWII generation, those men and women who looked defeat in the eye and said, "Put 'em up."

Put 'em up they did. Men, women, kids of all ages zeroed in on winning a world war. If the Allies were not victorious, life would drastically change, from the way we taught history to the World Series.

World War II is history, yet its interpretation and wisdom will change with every generation. The war was gigantic beyond scale and students will never know it all: Development of weaponry, strategy that had to succeed across the globe, politics, war crimes and criminals, this country changing from manufacturing to war manufacturing, enough blood to soak continents,



pain and confusion enough to last for generations, acts of heroism both noted and ignored. And so many graves with the bodies of young men and women, many on European soil.

That's war.

By the time the smoke cleared and guns silenced, America was a far different country. College was suddenly available to those veterans who previously couldn't qualify. Same with home ownership. Veteran clubs, like the VFW and others, opened their doors and provided places to celebrate patriotism with a couple new benefits: clambakes and bars.

The men and women who went to that war are fast fading. They never talked much anyway. Still, I am going

to miss the aging Greatest Generation and give thanks I was able to meet many of them.

What about you?

# A Reckoning with Righteousness

*By Rev. Richard J. Watts, Chaplain, DD214 Chronicle*

*Auld lang syne* and *Danny Boy* share virtues worthy of note:

1. Each is dragged out of the memory only once a year.
2. By the time each is sung, the chorus pretty much screws up the lyrics beyond recognition. Booze will do that to you.
3. Each is often accompanied by grown men holding each other and half-crying, "I love you, man."

With *The Plague* keeping us from *Drunken Recitals*, we are presented with an opportunity to pay homage to 2020. Homage? Certainly there were times and instances when we were so good, we wished our mothers were still here to watch. Most times, of course, it was little bit of good mixed with a little bit of bad.



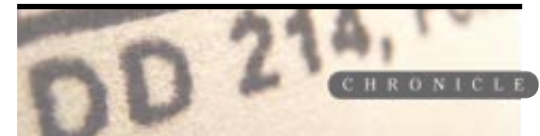
Now that we have the time, why not? The benefits far outweigh any risks. (Little early to bank on any statutes of limitation; careful what you leave in your notes.)

You know, don't you, this examination and judgment of our own behavior is a prayer. Of course it

is. It is a prayer to ourselves, an open, non-judgmental account of a specific time in our lives. Who better to examine and judge?

When we examine and judge, another idea wedges its way in: Change.

When we are more alert, we are able to see the value of change, and make change a vital part of our spiritual growth.



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## MAIL CALL



**S**o we were driving back to Periers, France, in Normandy, with Christian Levaufre, and Christian agreed to show me how to find the other side of what they have named “Chemin de l’Hopital,” the path to the hospital, a battlesite just outside Periers that ended with about 50 percent Americans killed or wounded, including my father, one of two company commanders on the scene. We drove there and took the first picture. Then we drove down the road a bit to turn around. As we approached the “Chemin” again, a group of maybe 30 people came up the road and stopped in front of us. It turned out to be a village walking group led by the town’s mayor, Gabriel Daube. Our being there at the same time they were was a total coincidence. The mayor, a high school classmate of Christian’s, asked Christian to explain the battle there, which he did, giving us picture two. Then the group walked along the unpaved farm road, and we drove on the paved road to the far end of the “Chemin,” where the principal monument is to the battle. When the two groups met, the mayor had a bouquet of flowers to lay on the monument, and, no doubt with Christian’s encouragement, handed them to me. It was the 75th anniversary of the battle and my father’s wounding, July 26, 1944. I was so honored to be given

this deeply considerate opportunity at that amazing moment in time. Thank you so much Mayor Daube and Christian Levaufre and the citizens of Periers!

– Steve Talbott

**L**iked your recent article in DD214. It made more sense than I’ve heard in a long time. No one comments on how Vietnam war started. Slowly by JFK and incompetently by LBJ and McNamara at a cost of over 59,000 lives. Your description of Congress is spot on. Three years ago I walked through that beautiful building and thought these people are in love with themselves and think they are the greatest. Marble floors gold drinking fountains. Thanks for a good read...

– Mark H. USAF 1966-70  
duty in SEA and Korea



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# 68W: Intimate with the Fragility of Life



**A**h, Stoney. That baby-faced, Southern boy with the soft accent and bright smile. Our medic MOS 68W.

He was from Cherryville, North Carolina. He was a first-rate medic with the 198th Light Infantry Brigade, one of three LIBs of Americal Division. All these years later, I still him see in the field, opening his mail. Someone would yell, "How's things goin' back home, Stoney?" His answer was always the same: "Things is turr-i-ble in Churr-i-ville." We never tired of that exchange.

Stoney was our medic. One of many troops who answered to "Doc."

While the rest of us were learning to qualify with an M-60, Stony and his classmates were learning to work on broken bones and sucking chest wounds, divvy up anti-malaria pills, load dead bodies

onto slicks, patch holes created by shrapnel, and soothe the frantic hearts of our bloodied comrades.

All that while bullets whizzed by, rockets and mortar rounds exploded, and he found himself an easy target. He was far too busy caring for a wounded troop to think of himself.

Medics brush away bullets and shrapnel as you and I brush away flies. Next time we meet for beers and war stories, remind me to tell you about Stoney, the sapper attack, and loading rounds into an M-60. Backwards.

A combat medic trains for the first time he will meet the real thing, maybe spurting blood, or bullets buried in the back, or the dead stare of a friend who will never again smile.

Will Docs ever face greater challenges? Doubt it.



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# Serving the Navy from bottom to top

By Brian Albrecht

**D**r. Duret Smith jokes that he started and ended his 28-year Navy career as a two-striper.

Well, yes. But those first two stripes were as a Seaman Apprentice. The last two sleeve-stripes were as a two-star rear admiral in the Navy Reserves.

"I've been at the bottom, I've been at the top, and the top is better in some ways," said Smith, 72 of Bay Village, with a smile.

Nowadays Smith is looking to add some new stripes of life experience after retiring last July as an orthopedic surgeon, specializing in hand and upper extremity operations, in Northeast Ohio since 1982.

Smith said the same life lessons he learned in the Navy will guide him on this new path. Without those lessons, "I wouldn't be where I am now," he said.

That experience started as a high school graduate in Syracuse, NY, who was a self-described "spirited lad," but lacking direction.

His father—a Marine veteran of such World War II battles as Tarawa, Tinian, Saipan and Okinawa—advised him to join the Navy in 1966. "He said go in, you need to learn a few things," recalled Smith, whose older brother was already serving in the Navy.

Smith hoped to become an interpreter, utilizing the Russian language he learned in high school. At boot camp he saw a poster of semaphore flags and Morse code symbols, and thought, "*Thank God I'll never have to learn that stuff.*"

So naturally the Navy put him in signalman school.

He served on two carriers, the USS Shangri-La and USS Saratoga. "It's nice to be on the big guys," Smith said.

Life aboard these floating cities ranged from routine to risky—plowing through heavy seas with 60-foot waves, coping with hazards including aircraft crashes and fires.

One "risk" Smith tried to avoid was encountering flag officers visiting the ship. "When you're an 18-year-old kid, you're scared to death to actually meet 'the flag,'" Smith remembered (at the time little knowing that he'd one day join those prestigious ranks).

Having "the flag" on board also meant "we had to spit-shine everything," recalled Smith, who once had to scale the ship's mast to cut down



Photo by Brian Albrecht

Duret Smith said he learned a lot from the Navy and misses his service aboard two aircraft carriers. "I would kill, just to be able to go on another cruise," he said.



Photo courtesy of Duret Smith

Duret Smith served a 28-year career in the Navy and Navy Reserves, retiring in 2005 as a Rear Admiral.



U.S. Navy photo

One of the ships that Duret Smith served aboard was the USS Shangri-La where he was inspired to become a doctor.

a hopelessly tangled admiral's flag that flew during the officer's visit.

Hazards were everywhere. Smith witnessed two of three fatal crashes during his tours, when aircraft hit the ship, attempting to land.

Refueling and rearming the ships while underway carried perpetual risks "when you're essentially nothing but steel and ordnance and fuel," Smith said.

But there was one incident that set Smith on his future medical career. His carrier, while cruising the Mediterranean, was called to assist when a Spanish aircraft

crashed. Smith watched from the signal bridge as the ship's medical crew unloaded injured victims from a helicopter, and thought, "*That's kind-of neat.*"

He'd hated going to the doctor as a kid, but suddenly the idea of serving in that profession had a certain appeal.

After his father died and Smith received a hardship discharge from active duty, he started his medical studies and later joined the Navy Reserve.

He enjoyed helping people, plus "it's challenging, intellectually,

because everything's changing," he said.

An orthopedic rotation and emergency room work on hands and tendons clinched his specialty. "I really liked the intricacy [of it]," said Smith, who still does some consulting work in that field.

He served in a variety of posts during his Navy Reserve career including Commander Naval Medical Forces Korea, planning medical evacuation plans in the event of war, and mobilization planning for Navy and Marine personnel during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

He also served with the 3rd Battalion 25th Marine Reserve Battalion (3/25) in Brook Park, on cold-weather and desert training missions, and assisting with funerals when 22 battalion Marines and a Navy corpsman were killed in Iraq in 2005.

The funerals were the downside of duty as a senior officer. "That was very tough, emotionally, the hardest. Looking into the eyes of a widow with little kids," he said. "But it's your job being a flag. You have to suck it up, and thank God it's not you."

Dennis McCarthy, of Columbus, who served as a Marine Lt. Gen. and former Assistant Secretary of Defense (2009-2011), first met Smith in 1984 as battalion commander of the 3/25 and remembered him as "a tremendous physician."

He also noted that Smith was "a great teammate, somebody who always kept the big picture in mind. He was the kind of sailor who fits in with the Marine Corps. Not all sailors do."

Smith was the only admiral he ever promoted, according to McCarthy, who recalled, "I was always, I wouldn't say surprised, but always impressed by how many [of his troops] that he knew personally. That's one sign of a good leader."

McCarthy said he appreciated Smith's subtle sense of humor. "That's one of the things I like about him. When you're in an infantry unit, spending some time under difficult circumstances, he's a guy who—to quote a favorite novel—is 'cheerful in any weather.'"

"He's a great person, and a great role model," McCarthy added.

Maurice (Mo) Hill, Navy Rear Admiral, met Smith when both were promoted to flag officers in 1999,

*Continued on next page*

*Continued from previous page*  
and said Smith had an affinity for working with both Navy and Marine personnel. "He bleeds Navy blue and gold, and Marine red and gold," Hill said.

The current mayor of Tom's River, NJ, also remembered that Smith had a no-nonsense approach to completing missions. "He's a direct individual who sees a problem and goes about trying to fix it," Hill said. "He goes after it full bore."

Yet Hill said the man who was dubbed "Hawkeye," after the TV Korean War surgeon in *M\*A\*S\*H*, was also "willing to buck authority now and then, when it had to be bucked."

"He's a salty guy. That's the enlisted part of him. No BS. You knew where he stood on everything. There was no gray area with Duret," he added.

They shared a commitment to getting an eye-view from the troops' level. Hill recalled that when they went on desert training in California, they camped in the field with Marine and Navy personnel, wearing rugged utility uniforms—eschewing the formal attire of other visiting senior officers. As

Smith remarked, "I never asked anybody to do anything I wouldn't do myself."

Hill noted, "We tried to impress on leadership, that you have to be embedded with the troops to see what they're going through. We wanted to be with the corpsmen and dental tech and docs to learn from their perspective and comments."

"He was somebody who led by example. That's what I always admired about him," Hill said.

He recalled their visit to a unit that was preparing to deploy to Iraq in 2003. The troops lacked some of the protective gear they'd need in a war zone, and Hill said that Smith ordered that nobody was getting on the plane until they had all the necessary gear. "Had he not been there, that might not have happened," Hill said.

Smith had a few close calls during his Navy career.

These included facing down armed Honduran vigilantes while trying to provide medical aid to villagers, and dashing into a burning building in Grenada to check for victims—"Not a real smart thing to do," as he recalled with a chuckle.

Since retiring from the Navy

Reserves (in 2005) and active medical practice, Smith has concentrated on enjoying life with his wife, Misha, two daughters from a previous marriage, and four grandchildren.

He still runs six miles, twice weekly, and is a clinical associate professor of the Baldwin Wallace University physician assistant program, and clinical assistant professor with the military's Uniform Services University of the Health Sciences. Once pandemic travel restrictions ease he'd like to do some

volunteer humanitarian assistance work, perhaps on an American Indian reservation.

And medicine. "I miss the surgery. I miss the patients, and the people you work with," he noted.

But he'll have more than memories to rely on. There are those "life lessons" that have always sailed with him.

"Focus. Work hard," Smith said. "The important things are the important things. Other things are not."

"Also, try to have some fun."





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# Her Life Teaches ... If Only We Are Eager to Learn

by Arthur H. Dorland

I was musing one day about child prodigies. Every once in a while you hear a report about some incredible youngster who accomplishes incredible things, and then you hear no more. What happens to them? By coincidence I ran across a magazine article about just such a child. Philippa Duke Schuyler was a half black/half white piano prodigy with an IQ of 185 interviewed by the *New Yorker* in 1940 when she was eight years old.

Why should readers of a US veterans' publication all these years later have any interest in this story? Philippa Duke Schuyler, half black/half white piano prodigy with an IQ of 185 died in a military helicopter crash at DaNang, Vietnam in 1967.

She was born in a wealthy area of Harlem two years into the depression. George Schuyler, the father, wrote for his living and wrote exceedingly well. A Northern born black journalist, he had been sent by his paper upon menacing undercover trips into the deep South to investigate American racism, as well as into East Africa and Liberia to reveal black on black slavery, something perhaps as little known then as it is now. Philippa's mother Jody was the "black sheep" of a rich white Texas cattle and cotton family that could have posed for a Faulkner novel. These two very different, distinct people met and married with the acknowledged grand design of producing a biracial child whose natural and evident superiority would proclaim the one way, as they saw it, to solve America's race problem. Miscegenation—mass miscegenation—was to be the answer. An invigorated miscegenated new generation would replace the failing segregated old one. If only.

And lo, they did produce just such a child. Philippa Schuyler was a project, a product you might say, of what the parents considered scientific breeding. When the girl reached thirteen they revealed to her for the first time volumes of diary entries documenting all this. In spite of the parents' obvious and prideful love for their daughter, you can't help wondering what sort of damage this must have done. Suddenly and without

**Philippa used every device and deception to evade her minders, slipping into an *ao dai* beneath the conical rice straw hat and blending into the native population, much to the annoyance of the uncooperative US officials ... hazardous journeys into places other journalists didn't go, especially in the northernmost reaches of the republic, Quang Tri and the DMZ.**

preparation—she was an only child enjoying little contact with others her age—Philippa would confront an uncomfortable image staring back at her in the bathroom mirror: a lab rat at large, a "study", a livestock experiment. Wasn't that inevitable? How could these intelligent parents not see, not foresee?

She was also protected from the inconveniences of her racial identity. The well appointed Edgecombe Avenue apartment was an economic and cultural world away from your typical Harlem dwelling. This is where the young child learned piano by the age of three and had worked her scholarly way through Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Romans and Greeks* a year later. She was shielded from black poverty.

Philippa not only played piano but composed pieces of her own. For ordinary schooling, required by law at the age of eight, the parents enrolled her in a Catholic convent school. By this time she was becoming quite a celebrity, the admired friend of important people like Mayor LaGuardia, and written up in the press. Concerts were arranged together with radio appearances. Life was tantalizing and good for the little mixed race genius. But she was growing up.

And now there were concerts all over the world, arranged for the most part by her ambitious, not to say pushy, mother. It's no secret that a parent's displaced ambition can be an intolerable burden for

the child, and that was to come. By her teenage years and moving on into adulthood Philippa Schuyler was concertizing across the world and performing before movers and shakers like the Queen of Belgium, Albert Schweitzer, and leading figures in the newly decolonized countries of Africa. Some of these events were glamorous affairs, attracting sophisticated and appreciative audiences in London and Paris. Others, especially in Africa and South America, involved stays in dicey hotels under gunfire from local revolutionaries. When she played for Schweitzer at his hospital in Gabon she was furnished a flashlight and large stick to goose the snakes on the way to the privy. Not every concert performer would accept such conditions; material was congealing for future writings.

But things began to change musically and personally. The now grown up half caste artist, beautiful to behold and masterful on the keyboard, was still in comfortable demand in the concert halls of Europe and much of the rest of the world. In the United States, though, the blush was deserting the peach and bookings she got were primarily before black audiences. American racism began locking the recital hall doors. Less and less was Philippa Duke Schuyler of Harlem the precious and crowd pleasing child prodigy.

The increasingly driven--and driving—mother, Jody, who was also

principal booking agent, was unable to fix this. Ignoring it altogether, which seems today a possible approach, was somehow not possible. Acceptance by the American musical world became the great unattainable goal, a grail in a distant cloud, choking off all success in the wider world. By sudden and painful steps Philippa Schuyler began to wash out her black background.

First thing to go was her name. Philippa Duke Schuyler now appeared on recital notifications as Felipa Monterro y Schuyler, Spanish or Latin American *concertista*. Alternatively she began to conceive her unwhite heritage as Polynesian, certainly not black. A most unfortunate climax: she had been impregnated by the desirable and cultured—and very dark—foreign minister of Togo, Georges Apedo-Amah, a man who traveled the distinguished circles she knew well in Paris. Philippa was a beautiful woman and had a number of brief, unlucky affairs, this least lucky of all. Despite sincere commitment to Roman Catholicism and amid personal torment, she left the not-to-be child at a discreet and none too hygienic Mexican clinic that catered to US women with certain inconvenient medical problems. Apedo-Amah was not consulted. A despairing diary entry of the pianist, no longer quite so young and hopeful, says plenty:

I am a beauty—but I'm half-colored so I'm not accepted anywhere. I'm always destined to be an outsider, never, never *part* of anything....I hate my country and no one wants me in any other. I am emotionally part of nothing and that will always be my destiny.

As income from foreign recital appearances began to wither, the disappointed pianist turned to another skill set, news writing. She had after all no shortage of first hand, up close experience in lands abroad. Besides her journalism she managed to publish over the years five books, one of these, *Good Men Die*, is treated below. Surprising for us is a pronounced and unshakable conservatism. Where did that

*Continued on next page*



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 come from? How many Harlem born authors glue themselves to the political right? Her black father George Schuyler, a curious favorite of the Caucasian elitissimo H. L. Mencken, gradually and more and more journaled down the right hand news column lane, drifting so far to the right that eventually no one would publish him. This at a time when not many blocks away Malcolm X is rising from the ghetto's sooty New York mist. Philippa Schuyler became in consequence the primary source of income for her parents, and it would stay that way, another oppressive burden. About this same time "Felipa Monterro" went on a paid lecture tour for the John Birch Society.

She came to Vietnam in 1966 under the auspices of the State Department and at the personal invitation of Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge. They expected her to stay a couple of days performing for wounded American soldiers, then leave. Only she had no intention to leave. Pointing out her accreditation as a journalist, Philippa used every device and deception to evade her minders, slipping into an *ao dai* beneath the conical rice straw hat and

blending into the native population, much to the annoyance of the uncooperative US officials. The loose cannon of a journalist was behaving badly. During this trip and the next she accomplished hazardous journeys into places other journalists didn't go, especially in the northernmost reaches of the republic, Quang Tri and the DMZ. One dicey night she claims was spent in a village taken over by the VC after sundown. An individual Charlie entered her hut and sat for a while on the very bed she occupied, but did not distinguish the American stranger in the darkness. Stories like this populate *Good Men Die*, published posthumously in 1969. *Good Men Die*, a hard book to find nowadays, is nevertheless a compelling read if you can will yourself past the insistent ultraconservative viewpoint. Philippa Schuyler had a visceral contempt for Communism, surely not unrelated to a comfortable, privileged childhood, Harlem or not. She was given little reason to question her advantages. But be advised, excitable hypertensive leftists should avoid this book in the interests of health and ideological composure. The author is not pro-war, but she is pro-winning at costs

few were willing to meet even then.

It was during the second trip to Vietnam, spring 1967, that she began to develop an interest and sympathy new to her and a complete reversal: the black soldier. These dark and disparaged young men responded to her and helped in any way they could; white ones ignored her, like white audiences. Had she lived longer this might have become a theme in her work.

On May 9, 1967 Philippa Schuyler died. She was on a mercy mission evacuating Vietnam orphans from Hue to DaNang where it was hoped they would be safer. At 1810 hours that Tuesday the military evacuation chopper on its approach to DaNang somehow escaped control and plunged into the sea. Regrettably its hyper-accomplished young woman passenger had never learned to swim. The guns trained on each other in the lifelong battle against herself fell silent, it was over.

There followed international news attention, a funeral parade in New York and a packed service at St Patrick's Cathedral, Cardinal Spellman presiding. And then Philippa Duke Schuyler, together with everything she had done

and been, was siphoned away into the vast, impenetrable ocean of oblivion, and there she has stayed. Nobody notices anymore.

Some months after, the stricken mother Jody hung herself in her Harlem bedroom.

This is a story of racial rejection, segregation, denial, escape. It is also a story of brilliance---brilliance defeated and overwhelmed by primal attitudes. There is compassion in the story as well. What do we learn here? A young woman was once an extraordinary and troubling figure in so many ways: the early preternatural accomplishment, a tenuous and evaporating fame, disillusion, her death in a struggling far away nation raked by war and her own country's manic urge to prevail. And what is left? Philippa Duke Schuyler is today forgotten together with her work. The coffin is empty. The white life of the child genius lies a bleached skeleton submerged beneath the tide of time. And in terms of how we think today, did even her short inconvenient black life ever really matter?

*Arthur H. Dorland, US Navy enlisted clerk 1964-1967; Naval Support Activity Saigon 1966-1967*



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*Our assistance includes but is not limited to:*

**Financial Assistance:**

- Rent and mortgage payments
- Utilities: Gas, Electric and Water
- Food and personal Hygiene items
- Certain Medical
- Dental Program for eligible Veterans
- Transportation to and from VA Medical Centers in Cleveland, Parma and Akron.
- Grave markers and flags
- Notary Public & DD 214 Certification for Veterans & Families
- Free public transit on the MCPT in Medina County
- County Veterans ID card

**Service Assistance:**

- Preparation of forms and paperwork
- Documentation of claims and pertinent data
- Proper submission of claims and prosecution of appeals to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Submission for awards records, decorations and medals

*Our services are FREE of charge!*



**Our Pledge**

When you come into the Medina County Veterans Service Office you will be assisted by one of our knowledgeable associates. The people that work in the Medina County Veterans Service Office have a compassionate understanding of the problems which confront veterans, widows, widowers, and their families.

Sincerely,  
Veterans Service Staff



**210 Northland Dr. - Medina, Ohio 44256  
(330) 722-9368**

[veterans@medinacountyveterans.org](mailto:veterans@medinacountyveterans.org)  
[www.medinacountyveterans.org](http://www.medinacountyveterans.org)

# Veterans at Towers Assisted Living

When John's wife, Shirley, passed away, he found himself at loose ends. Shirley had managed the household – cooking, cleaning, laundry, even scheduling any maintenance work that needed to be done to the home they shared. John discovered that he was beginning to feel lonely in their big house and overwhelmed by everything he suddenly needed to do – and his skills were no match for Shirley's. It was time to downsize and find a place where he would be comfortable and someone else would do the heavy lifting.

He found his new home at Towers Assisted Living. As a part of the St. Augustine Health Campus, the Towers offered all the comforts and independence of his own apartment, along with meals, housekeeping and social opportunities. The VA benefit that John qualified for clinched the deal and he learned there were a number of veterans living at the Towers. He would be in good company.

For eligible veterans looking for financial assistance, Towers Assisted Living participates in a special program with the Veterans Administration. The VA offers a Special Pension with an Aid and Attendance (A&A) benefit, which helps pay for care in your own home, a nursing home or an assisted living facility. The Special Pension allows for eligible veterans and surviving spouses to receive help with assisted living and personal care as well as care due to blindness or physical or mental incapacity. To learn more about qualifying for the VA benefit, call the Veterans Administration at (800) 827-1000.

The Towers Assisted Living is situated on the St. Augustine Health Campus, located on Detroit Avenue in Cleveland, just west of the Gordon Square Arts District. To see if Towers Assisted Living is right for you, please call 216-634-7444 or visit [staugministries.org/st-augustine-health-campus/assisted-living-2](http://staugministries.org/st-augustine-health-campus/assisted-living-2)



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Call 216-634-7444.



7821 Lake Ave. | Cleveland, OH 44102 | [www.staugministries.org](http://www.staugministries.org)

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## Veterans Service Center

at Lorain County Community College

The Student Veterans and Military Members Center at LCCC assists all veterans, guardsmen, reservists and their dependents transitioning to a successful educational career. You've done your duty, now let us help you prepare for your future.

LCCC's Veterans Service Center is a one-stop shop where you can:

- Learn how to maximize your veteran's benefits
- Learn about other scholarships available
- Talk with a Veterans Certifying Official
- Meet with a Counselor
- Explore all that LCCC has to offer

**Call LCCC's Veterans Service Center at 440-366-7685**

**or visit [www.lorainccc.edu/veterans](http://www.lorainccc.edu/veterans)**

**or email our office at [veterans@lorainccc.edu](mailto:veterans@lorainccc.edu).**

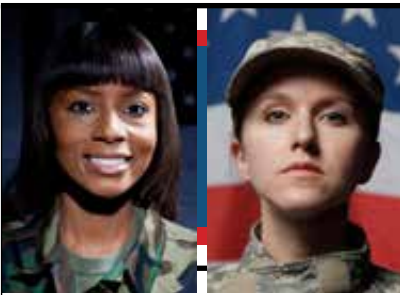


*"LCCC was my best choice because I knew there was a military and veterans presence here."*

**Anna Lupson**, Navy veteran and LCCC psychology student who is using her veterans benefits to attend school. She plans to continue her education through LCCC's University Partnership program.



**Lorain County  
Community College**



# Marine Tradition Continues for Local Nurse

by Brian Albrecht

When the coronavirus pandemic hit, Southwest General Health Center nurse Niki Giakoumakis stepped up like a Marine, volunteering for intensive care unit (ICU) duty on the COVID front lines.

The former ICU nurse was working in the endoscopy department. But she recently recalled, "I said I can help, whatever you need."

So she was ready to strap on the protective gear and hit the beaches. Just like old times, in a sense.

Giakoumakis, 45, of Westlake, said that one of her lasting impressions of her five years of active duty in the Marines, 1993-1998, was "the camaraderie and the ability to serve with some of the most committed people, who always put the nation, their squad, ahead of themselves."

That commitment still lingers, as the single mother of four children balances nursing with college studies to become a nurse anesthetist.

It's the kind of life direction that the Boston, Mass., native was seeking after graduating from high school.

Her military family—an Army vet stepfather and two stepbrothers who had served in the Navy and Marines—influenced her decision to join the service.

She chose the Marines, given her competitive nature. As Giakoumakis said, "They're the best."

But being the best comes with a price. Boot camp at Parris Island was "devastating," she recalled. "It was challenging, the hardest thing I ever had to go through—mentally, physically, emotionally."

She persevered and became an Aviation Supply Specialist, maintaining the arresting gear used on aircraft carriers for landings, that can stop a jet moving at more than 100mph in two seconds.

Working on the flight training line at bases in the U.S., Okinawa and Japan was "pretty fascinating, but it did cause some hearing loss," Giakoumakis said. "We dealt a lot with younger pilots, practicing, and it was fun to watch. We'd take bets on whether they'd hit it (the arresting line)."

But there was a down side. She

missed her family, plus she was the victim of an attempted sexual assault by her supervisor. "Looking back, I was 19 years old, I didn't want to cause any problems," Giakoumakis recalled. But she said she knew it was wrong, and summoned the nerve to report the man, who was subsequently court-martialed.

The incident resulted in advice she'd later give to her three daughters. "The thing I told my girls all the time is, when you feel something is wrong, don't ignore it. If it feels wrong, it's wrong," she said.

Determination and her Greek Orthodox faith got her through the rough spots, Giakoumakis said.

She met and married her husband in the service, and they had their first child in 1997, prompting them to subsequently leave the service so they could settle someplace and raise a family. But where?

Her husband, a Clevelander, suggested his hometown. Giakoumakis didn't know anything about the city, and recalled asking her husband, "Do you guys even have a football team?" That was the big joke."

But "the cost of living in Boston was insane," she said, so they came the North Coast where Giakoumakis has been taking classes at Ashland University and Cuyahoga Community College.

The divorcee was thinking of becoming a firefighter or paramedic, but chose medicine because there was shortage of nurses at that time.

Mick Munoz, an administrator with Tri-C's Veterans Initiative, said Giakoumakis is typical of the more than 600 veterans attending the college, in terms of being a bit more mature, worldly and self-confident than other students.

Munoz, who also served in the Marines, said traits from that service are evident in Giakoumakis. "Leadership, for sure, and courage—to step up during COVID, willing to move back to her old department to help people," he said.

"Camaraderie, the esprit de corps, the sense we all have that the mission is bigger than any of us," he continued. "She acts tough, and is tough, no doubt about it. But if people are in need, she'll help them

*Continued on page 21*



Photo courtesy of Niki Giakoumakis

Niki Giakoumakis said joining the Marines was "the best decision I ever made in my life."



U.S. Air Force photo

Marines work on a land-based aircraft arresting gear system like the ones that Niki Giakoumakis helped maintain during her service in the Marines.



Photo courtesy of Niki Giakoumakis

Niki Giakoumakis dons protective gear at Southwest General Health Center where earlier this year she volunteered to go back to the intensive care unit to handle a wave of coronavirus patients that fortunately never materialized.



U.S. Navy photo

A Navy Hornet is shown snagging the arresting line during a landing on the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz. Niki Giakoumakis maintained arresting gear as a Marine Aviation Supply Specialist.



Photo courtesy of Niki Giakoumakis

Southwest General co-worker Amanda Vraja, left, said Niki Giakoumakis "can switch from tough love to caring in a heartbeat."



Photo by Brian Albrecht

Niki Giakoumakis said "the things I learned in the Marines, I still carry with me," as the single mother of four balances nursing work with studies to become a nurse anesthetist.



# Army Veteran Charted New Course in the Navy

by Jerri Donohue

**D**e Ann Williams watched as Seabees parked bulldozers festooned with “Beat Army” signs along the playing field. American soldiers and sailors deployed to Kuwait were about to play touch football, concurrent with the 2006 Army - Navy game in the States.

The Massillon, Ohio native knew she would be happy whichever team prevailed. She’d served in the Army from 1986 to 1994, and then joined the Naval Reserves in 2000.

“I win every year,” she said of the annual match-up.

Williams attended boot camp straight out of high school, finishing as Platoon Honor Graduate. Stationed at Fort Clayton, Panama, she advanced from PVT E-1 to SPC E-4 in just 14 months.

“The military became part of me,” she said. “I realized it was who I was.”

She later earned parachutist qualification and in 1990 she deployed with the 82nd Airborne Division to Saudi Arabia. Williams had a husband and a toddler by then. She went to the USO tent to watch a VHS tape received from home—it was her daughter crooning her ABCs. When her parents sent Williams a small potted Christmas tree with battery operated lights, tent mates stacked their gifts beneath it to open on Christmas morning.

Female soldiers observed local customs when outside the wire.

“We had to be fully covered, not show any skin,” Williams said. “And we had to be accompanied by a male.”

She recalled a shocking incident that occurred one day when she returned from a trip into town for supplies. A Saudi guard at the gate offered the American soldier driving her jeep a million dollars for Williams.

After that deployment, she reunited with her family at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Then, in 1993, the Army sent Williams to Camp Coiner, Korea on a hardship tour. She was forced to leave her two-year old son and her daughter, then in kindergarten. Her mother-in-law stayed on base to care for them.

In Korea, as in Saudi Arabia, Williams worked in casualty reporting. She taught conversational English during off hours and developed an enduring appreciation for Korean culture because of its respect for elders and devotion to family and friends.

When she returned to the States, Williams’ son stunned her when he asked, “Are you my Mommy?”

For Williams, the incident highlighted the hardships her career caused her family.

“I signed up; they didn’t,” she said.

*Continued on next page*



FEMALE VETERANS REPORT Partially Sponsored by  
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If you are willing, together we could drive change. Please choose to help. I believe in Cleveland. Thank you.

Paid for by Ross DiBello for Cleveland

*Continued from previous page*

She was nearing the end of her contract, and so the Army let her leave during a drawdown.

She attended college, became a paralegal and divorced.

"I felt I was missing part of me," Williams said of her decision to join the Reserves when her youngest child started school. The Army rejected her because she'd been out for six years, and so she enlisted in the Navy as a Legalman Petty Officer Third Class.

"I don't swim," Williams said. "I'm afraid of water and I'm terrified of sharks. That was a problem."

She was eager to learn Navy ways, though. Her initial six months on active duty became three years. She worked for the Judge Advocate General's Corps, preparing wills, powers of attorney and sometimes representing the government in cases she can't discuss.

Her 15 years in the Navy included seven on active duty and three deployments.

Although her children witnessed her struggles, her son has been a Marine for 10 years and her stepdaughter enlisted in the Air Force. Both successfully met her challenge to be Platoon Honor Graduates.

Williams, who did not experience gender-based discrimination

in either branch, encourages women to consider a military career.

"I never really saw myself as a female, just a soldier or a sailor," Williams said.

She retired as Legalman Senior Chief Petty Officer in 2015. Beginning in 2003, she worked with County Service Commissions in Ohio. She became Executive

Director of Stark County Veterans Service Commission in 2017, leading a team of subject matter specialists to help vets and their dependents. She uses her experience and knowledge to mentor her staff.

"They will impact the veterans and their families," Williams said. "That is my passion. I love what I do!"



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# Anything But Ordinary Dutch Teenagers In The Resistance

by Nancy Peacock, Book Editor

Readers who enjoy a spine-tingling account of historical sabotage must surely ask themselves this essential question: Would I have the courage to do the same?

In *Three Ordinary Girls* (Citadel Pres, 2021), historical non-fiction author Tim Brady examines that question as he recounts the unlikely exploits of three Dutch teenagers who spent five years as spies, saboteurs—and even assassins.

On May 10, 1940, a terrified Dutch nation looked skyward and saw the German Luftwaffe dropping bombs on their cities. Five days later, the Nazis had conquered the Netherlands. Truus Oversteegen, age 16, and her sister Freddie, age 14, watched the Germans march into their hometown. In many ways, the sisters were logical candidates to join the Dutch Resistance. The girls were part of the socialist youth movement and their family was already hiding Jewish children escaping from Germany.

Truus and Freddie began their resistance work by passing out anti-Nazi pamphlets and putting up homemade banners. Then they met a man who was organizing a resistance cell to carry out acts of sabotage. He ended the conversation by asking, “Do you think you could shoot someone?”

That fall the girls were given their first assignment to assassinate an SS officer. The sisters’ performed their roles while experiencing a reaction that reveals the psychological effects of sabotage. After they were safely home, “they curled up together and cried.”

The third “ordinary girl” was Johanna Schaft, the only child of a secondary school teacher and his wife. When the German occupation came, Jo was a 19-year-old student of law at the University

of Amsterdam. She quickly joined other students in opposing the Nazi persecution of Jews and intellectuals. She began her work in the resistance by stealing identification cards from local citizens to provide ID for people hiding from the Nazis.

Taking on the name Hannie, she sought out the resistance and offered to take on more dangerous assignments. One of her first was to contact Truus and Freddie at a hospital in a neighboring city where they were working and hiding out. The girls

bonded immediately and began taking target practice to hone their shooting skills.

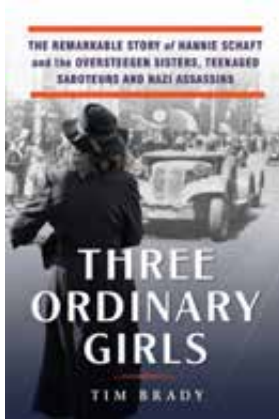
In addition to assassinations, Hannie became part of a team to blow up factories and railroad bridges, as well as to locate and map German defenses on the coast

of Holland. Truus impersonated a German Red Cross nurse in order to smuggle Jewish children through a public train station. Freddie worked with her sister as an accomplice in the assassinations and sabotage.

One of the many difficulties of working in the resistance involved the assassination of Dutch collaborators. When a German was assassinated, the Nazis retaliated by arbitrarily killing Dutch prisoners. But the Germans were less vengeful when the resistance killed a Dutch citizen. During and after the war, some criticized the resistance for taking the lives of its own people. According to the author, the girls remained unrepentant about their roles.

“We had to do it,” Freddie insisted. “It was a necessary evil, killing those who betrayed good people. I never felt pity. One does not shoot a human but the enemy, a traitor.”

Truus had an even simpler response to their heroic service: “I never got used to it.”



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## WHAT YOU MISS BY NOT READING HEADLINES

(and wise ass comments.)

**Billionaire Tilman Fertitta says he laid off 45,000 employees quickly as a 'favor'**

*In his defense, said at least he let them leave early and beat traffic.*

**7-Eleven owner charged with selling homemade hand sanitizer that burned 4 kids**

*Well, Red China Marketing Department said it would work.*

**Iowa woman drives to police station to have meth tested for coronavirus: cops**

*Well?*

**Gucci is selling denim overalls with grass 'stain effect' for \$1,400**

*shit stain said to be just behind.*

**Mayor tells cops to crack down on large gatherings. They found his wife at a party**

*Offended because he wasn't invited.*

**If Massachusetts bill becomes law, using this curse word could cost you \$200**

*It ain't supercalifragilisticexpialidocious it it?*

**Convict in South Dakota wants to pick drug for his execution**

*I'd like to get stoned and chug a bottle of Boone's Farm*




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# New Director named at Ohio Department of Veteran Services

**P**rior to being appointed as Director of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services on Jan. 14, 2019, Maj. Gen. Deborah Ashenhurst (U.S. Army, retired) served as the Senior Vice President, Military Strategy of R2 Associates.

Ashenhurst retired from the U.S. Army and the National Guard in October 2015 after more than 37 years of service. In that time, she served at all levels of command.

In 2011, she was appointed by Ohio Gov. John Kasich to the cabinet-level position of Adjutant General of the State of Ohio, commanding the 17,000 service members of the Ohio National Guard, the Ohio Naval Militia and the Ohio Military Reserve. She served as Adjutant General until January of 2015. Her career culminated by serving as a Special Assistant to the Vice Chief, National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C.

Ashenhurst received numerous awards and decorations, including the Army Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (with one Silver and one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster) and the Joint Service Commendation Medal.

Gen. Ashenhurst resides with her husband, Col. Jim Ashenhurst (U.S. Army, retired), in Hilliard, Ohio.



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Would you **HELP** our Korean War Veterans Association (KWVA) memorialize 1,822 Ohio veterans Killed In Action during the Korean War by engraving their names on the 16 blank black granite panels at the Ohio Veterans Memorial Park in Clinton Ohio?

For just \$30 per name we can achieve this with your help so those Korean War Veterans who are 87 to 95 can see this accomplished. Please mail your donation to KWVA Chapter 138, PO Box 4788, Akron, Ohio 44310. The KWVA Tax Exempt number is 14-1671031.

# Here are benefits you may not be aware of

## Homelessness

### Preventing Homelessness

Veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless can call or visit their local VA Medical Center. The VA can connect you with comprehensive programs to prevent loss of housing.

**Contact:**

Call the VA National Call Center for Homeless Veterans now at:

1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838)

Find VA and Ohio Homeless Veterans Health-care & Assistance at: [www.visn10.va.gov/mental\\_health\\_care\\_line.asp](http://www.visn10.va.gov/mental_health_care_line.asp)

### Short-Term Assistance

Each County Veterans Service Office provides short-term financial assistance to Veterans and their families. The amount and type of assistance varies according to the individual abilities of each county.

**Contact:**

Contact your local County Veterans Service Office for more information.

Veterans can find their local office by calling: 877-OHIO-VET (877-644-6838)

Or visiting the website: [www.ohiovets.gov](http://www.ohiovets.gov)

## Home Loans

### VA Home Loan Guaranty

Veterans who have completed 24 months of continuous active duty and have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable or who are currently serving on active duty or in the National Guard or the Reserves

or are honorably discharged from these components are eligible for guaranteed loans to purchase, repair or refinance a home.

Based on purchase price and local limits, a down payment may not be required. Eligibility is also extended to unremarried surviving spouses. Periods of required service are less for Veterans of earlier wartime service.

**Location in the United State Code:**

38 USC 3702

**Contact:**

Loan Office, Cleveland VA Regional Office

877-827-3702

website: [www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans](http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans)

### Ohio Heroes Program

The Ohio Housing Finance Agency offers all benefits of their first-time home buyer program to Ohio's heroes at an interest rate that is lower than the going interest rate.

**Eligibility:**

- Be active military, Active Reserve or a Veteran.
- Also eligible for this program: fire-fighters, EMTs, paramedics, healthcare workers, police officers and teachers.
- Meet the income and sales price limits.
- Be a first-time home buyer (have not owned in the last three years).
- Qualify for the loan requested and have a signed purchase and sales agreement.

**Contact:**

Ohio Development Services Agency

888-362-6432

website: [myohiohome.org/ohioheroes.aspx](http://myohiohome.org/ohioheroes.aspx)

## Injury Compensation

### Service-Connected Injury/ Disability Compensation

Injury or disability compensation is a monetary benefit paid to Veterans who are disabled by an injury or disease that was connected with active military service.

- Disability compensation varies with the degree of disability and the number of dependents, and is paid monthly.
- Veterans with certain severe disabilities may be eligible for additional special monthly compensation.
- The benefits are not subject to federal or state income tax.
- The payment of military retirement pay, disability severance pay and separation incentive payments known as Special Separation Benefits (SSB) and Voluntary Separation Incentives (VSI) affects the amount of VA compensation paid.

**Eligibility:**

To be eligible, the service of the Veteran must have been terminated through separation or discharge under conditions other than dishonorable.

**Contact:**

Your County Veterans Service Officer can explain the requirements for disability compensation and provide assistance to properly complete all applications for this benefit.

Veterans can find their local office by calling: 877-OHIO-VET (877-644-6838)

Or visiting the website: [www.ohiovets.gov](http://www.ohiovets.gov)



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**Public Service Announcements**

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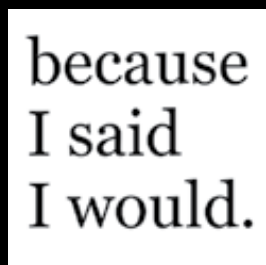
**Bereavement Support**

Losing a loved one due to COVID-19 is especially hard. With many families unable to hold proper funerals or memorial services, they are struggling even more in the bereavement process. Because I said I would is organizing volunteer service projects to help bereaved families find comfort and closure in this difficult time.

**Endurance Meals for Frontline Healthcare Workers**

Because I said I would is sending free lunches to frontline healthcare workers in regions hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic so they have one less thing to worry about.

For more information, visit [becauseisaidiwould.org/covid19](https://becauseisaidiwould.org/covid19)



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Rocky River, OH 44116

# Australian War Bride Recalls First Snow, Homesickness—and Love

by Jerri Donohue

Ruby Battaglia and her fellow war brides crowded against the passenger car windows, enthralled by their first snowfall. They weren't allowed off their train during its stop in Chicago, but an African-American porter who witnessed their excitement hustled outside and made a snowball for them. The Australians passed it from one to another until it melted.

Battaglia fondly recalled that winter afternoon in February 1946.

"To this day, I still enjoy the snow—in the beginning," the 95-year old Fairview Park resident said.

Ruby Shelberg was working for a Brisbane sign company when she met U.S. Army Air Corps Sergeant Joseph Battaglia. He entered the shop, politely doffed his cap and asked to place an order.

"He had black curly hair," Battaglia said. "My heart did a flip-flop. It was love at first sight for me, not for him."

The sergeant made frequent - and sometimes unnecessary - trips to the business. He eventually invited the hazel-eyed blonde on a date.

Before long, they were making frequent trips to the beach and dancing to American music on Sundays at Brisbane Town Hall.

"All the Americans would go and jitterbug and teach it to the Australian girls," Battaglia said. "Could Joe ever jitterbug!"

But she felt uneasy as the couple grew closer. Finally she told her American boyfriend that she didn't want to leave her family.

"And I don't want to get married," he said.

They broke up.

Four days later, Joe Battaglia called her and their courtship resumed.

Eventually Joe learned the Army was sending him to New Guinea, and he asked Ruby's widowed father for permission to marry her. A World War I veteran, Mr. Shelberg liked the GI. But Ruby was just 17 years old, whereas Joe was an "old" man of 24. Mr. Shelberg advised the couple to wait a year.

Joe shipped out. When he was scheduled for R&R in Australia eight months later, he called Ruby's father and got his blessing to marry her

during his leave. By then, Ruby was 18.

Despite rationing, she bought a pretty new dress for the ceremony with clothing coupons friends gave her. The newlyweds honeymooned in a seaside town, and then her groom returned to New Guinea.

When the war ended a year later, Battaglia's husband traveled back to the States with the American military. She sailed with more than 600 Australian warbrides and 200 children on the *SS Mariposa*.

Battaglia's eldest brother had been killed fighting in Libya, but her father, sister and two surviving brothers - also Australian Army veterans - came to the dock to see her off.

"The sight of them crying and waving good-bye haunted me for many years," Battaglia said. "If the boat had turned back, I would have got off. Many others felt the same."

Twenty years passed before Battaglia returned to Australia. She never saw her father again.

The ship picked up more war

brides in New Zealand and Hawaii, then still a territory, before heading to San Francisco.

When they weren't seasick, the women had fun.

"We were treated royally," Battaglia said. "The food was marvelous. And they had all sorts of programs for us."

Battaglia estimates the voyage to San Francisco took 11 days. She then traveled to Ohio by train. What she found alarmed her.

"I cried because I thought Cleveland was the ugliest city, the city of dead trees," she said.

She cheered up when her husband explained the trees were "sleeping" through the winter.

"And then, in October when the leaves changed colors, I wrote to my family that Cleveland must be the most beautiful city in the world," Battaglia said.

Meanwhile, she struggled to connect to her Sicilian-born parents-in-law.

"They spoke Italian," Battaglia

said. "They were very volatile. They used to scare me sometimes."

Her homesickness intensified until her husband arranged to take her to Australia by steamship for a visit. The trip was cancelled when Battaglia became pregnant with their first child.

The couple bought a home in Cleveland where Joseph Battaglia and his brother owned a grocery store. Later, Joe became a salesman for food products.

Battaglia embraced motherhood.

"I thought, 'If I can't go home to my family, let's have a family here,'" she recalled. "When we had six children, I said, 'That's enough family.' But then we had another two! I ended up with eight wonderful children."

As she was raising their five daughters and three sons, Battaglia frequently wrote to her family in Australia, but only called home once.

"I never called again because I got

*Continued on next page*



Continued from previous page so upset hearing their voices," she said.

Battaglia befriended nine other Australians after placing an ad in the newspaper, seeking Aussie war brides. They met every month for years.

"We'd all start singing Australian ditties," Battaglia said. "Our husbands would listen and enjoy ...I'm the last one."

She made 10 trips to Australia, but things had changed.

"Because I was so involved with my own family, I couldn't wait to leave again," Battaglia said. "I didn't belong."

She and five of their children were at Joseph Battaglia's bedside when he died in 2010.

Ruby Battaglia cherishes memories of their 66-year union.

"We were thoroughly romantic with each other even to the end," she said. "It never died, the romance between us. Not many people can say that."



Continued from page 12 out, for sure."

His sentiments were echoed at Southwest General where Jenny Hartley, clinical manager of the endoscopy department, noted that Giakoumakis is "the kind of person who doesn't back away from a challenge. She just thrives in a situation like that.

"She has a very positive, outgoing personality, and comes to work every day ready to do whatever it takes to get the job done," Hartley added. "She's always pleasant, great with patients. She's a straight shooter. You always know what you're going to get with Niki, never any fluff. That's what I love and appreciate about her."

Amanda Vraja, a friend and co-worker, wasn't worried or surprised when Giakoumakis volunteered to go back to the ICU. "She's a good

nurse. I knew she was going to be OK," Vraja said.

"She's tough. She's probably one of the toughest people I know. But caring," Vraja added. "She's a very strong-willed person, a hard worker, and she expects that hard work from everybody else."

Hence, what Giakoumakis described as her go-to saying—"Suck it up, buttercup."

In a blunt, but tactful way, she added.

"That is Niki to the core (or Corps as it were). It is what she is," said Julie Kimsal, of Avon Lake, who met Giakoumakis at the gym five years ago and the two became fast friends. "She tolerates zero BS in her world."

Giakoumakis trains in cross-fitness, boxing and Yoga, and the resulting strength is reflected in her life and personality, Kimsal said.

"She is very, very strong, phenomenal. Most of the guys try to keep up with her," she said. "She's very outgoing, and she has a very dry, wicked sense of humor."

Giakoumakis also loves to travel and spending time with her kids, Kimsal noted.

A bit of the old Marine training goes along with that parenting, according to Giakoumakis, who said she tries to pass along such service traits as "mental toughness, emotional stability and having confidence."

Her son, Chris Salveter, 20, of Westlake, said, "She's tough, but fair. She just wants the best for me. She wants me to do what she couldn't do at my age, so she pushes me to do better," he said.

That includes lending him a hand in his studies at Tri-C in fire science and becoming a paramedic, possibly

a nurse like his mom someday.

Her advice to her kids or anyone considering a stint in the service is to take advantage of the benefits, particularly education, and travel as much as you can. She said her travels to Hiroshima, target of the first atomic bomb attack during World War II, and a visit to the Enola Gay (the airplane that dropped that bomb) at the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum in Washington, provided a balanced and invaluable insight into that historic event.

She's thinking of going back into the service herself, possibly the National Guard.

Looking back, she credits the Marines with giving her lifelong skills in being tactful, loyal, committed and above all, always doing your utmost.

As she said, "Either put 110 percent effort in, or don't do it."

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## **CLEVELAND CAN LEAD POLICE-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### ***A Message for the Community from The Cleveland Police Foundation***

Clevelanders should be aware and reassured that reform initiatives are well underway thanks to the efforts of The Cleveland Police Foundation (CPF) through its strong partnership with the Cleveland Division of Police and emerging relationships with business, community and philanthropic organizations.

Just over a decade old, the CPF is an independent alliance of business and civic leaders, law enforcement organizations and individuals committed to the ideal that an educated, well trained and modernly equipped law enforcement agency leads to a safer community. CPF works proactively to support and invest in programs, community policing initiatives and engagement, and events that foster stronger relationships between citizens and police officers as well as the Cleveland Police Charities.

With support from St. Luke's Foundation, the ***Cultural Transformation Project*** was launched in Cleveland's 4th Police District. A cultural diagnostic survey was developed to provide an honest assessment of the District's internal culture and as a catalyst and roadmap for innovation and institutional change. Program elements have improved internal relationships and operations. And the program is helping police officers to be more empathetic and culturally responsive to the communities and neighborhoods they serve. *Now the Foundation is seeking additional philanthropic support to implement this successful program in all of Cleveland's Police Districts.*

**The Public Safety Career Pipeline Program** engages high school students in underserved areas in leadership development activities and empowers them to build their social capital and equip them with the skills in preparation for a successful career in public safety. The goal is to close the gap between high school graduation and the eligibility age to apply for law enforcement and other public safety employment opportunities. We are literally creating a "pipeline" of qualified candidates.

CPF will soon introduce **Neighborhood Engagement Tools** for community organizations to help them gain access to resources and information about CPF Programs so they can effectively collaborate with us.

These programs and other initiatives developed by the CPF, Cleveland Division of Police and partner organizations are positioning Cleveland as a national leader in fostering change and improved community relations with law enforcement. It is a challenge the CPF has embraced and is passionately committed to.

For more information about The Cleveland Police Foundation and how you can support our work, please visit [www.clevelandpolicefoundation.org](http://www.clevelandpolicefoundation.org) and/or send inquiries to [info@clevelandpolicefoundation.org](mailto:info@clevelandpolicefoundation.org).

# Veterans Day remembrance:

**M**y dad, Sigmund B. Mikolajczyk, enlisted in the Army right out of high school as WWII raged, and served as an engineer stationed in Manila Bay in the Philippines.

As a young boy I'd often go up to the attic and look through a small, smooth gray pouch containing some coins and other trinkets he brought back.

A quiet, very private man, dad would never talk about his experiences, despite his little boy asking often about what he did in the conflict and how it 'really was' in the war.

No whining or cajoling would persuade him to divulge those deep hidden secrets (traumas?).

Only once, that I can recall, did he ever break his silence. Contemplating my usual question one day up in the dusty attic, he grinned, blue eyes twinkling, and replied: "I helped build the bridge over the River Kwai."

Love you and miss you, Dad. (He left us much too soon, dying from brain cancer in 1976 at age 52 - indeed a member of 'The Greatest Generation'.)



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This year's "Management Top 250," published by *The Wall Street Journal*, ranks the best run U.S. companies based on customer satisfaction, employee engagement and development, innovation, social responsibility and financial strength. Dominion Energy was **ranked as the top electric and gas utility**. And military publication *G.I. Jobs* ranks Dominion Energy top in our industry and 5th among all U.S. companies. It marks the 10th consecutive year Dominion Energy has been recognized as a military-friendly company. So to each and every one of our 16,000+ dedicated employees, THANK YOU for your commitment to excellence, your dedication to community and most of all for the energy you bring to this company each and every day.

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