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See page 15

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STAND AT EASE *By Don Stark, Publisher / Sales Manager*

Two thousand and twenty-two! Yikes! Like it or not, the clock seems to click quicker than it used to.

While the time flies by, I hope that good things are happening for you. We at *DD214 Chronicle* are experiencing a very healthy growth spurt here at our newspaper. We are now delivering to nearly six hundred locations and many new advertisers.

Being sought out by advertisers that would like to use the *DD214 Chronicle* for a sales instrument to share their good fortune is very refreshing, and a reward for a job well done. Thanks to our entire staff.



This coming March/April edition, we will be adding an Event Calendar, and a Classified Section to inform *Chronicle* readers in regard to available jobs, rentals, real estate and services, etcetera. We will introduce our Classified Section by offering four lines of copy at no charge for the March/April issue. See page four for details.

Veteran's organizations are invited to use our Event Calendar for your special events. Please see our "SAMPLE" page in this issue
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

- Don Stark

The God Within Us

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

When we counsel on faith, it is often an intimate and rewarding process. For both parties. For one, it provides comfort and understanding and for the other, it is a necessary reminder of God's grace and wisdom.

A few years ago, a young trooper and I met over coffee. After the comfort of a few sips, he told me, "I'm tired of this prayer business."

It was hardly the first time I had heard this complaint and it was usually cloaked in frustration. God, it appeared, was failing to fulfill His part of the bargain.

"Ask and thou shall receive. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened." Matthew 7:7.

That is a promise.

When I asked the trooper why he thought "this prayer business" failed him, his answer was familiar. He said, "God doesn't answer me. Doesn't answer in any way, shape or form. Like I said, I'm tired of it."

We talked about prayer, this mysterious conversation between us and our Creator. Like all of us, the trooper's idea about prayer, in this instance, might be misdirected.

We have prayed yet not prayed at all. When we plead, "God, if You get me out of this jam, I'll never do this again." That's not a prayer, is it? It is a deal between us and God.

God doesn't make deals.

But God listens when we truly pray and He answers. Prayer isn't a recitation of promises; it is a most important conversation. That means prayer

should have no distractions, no false promises, and no debate.



When I pray, I told my trooper, I want to focus on this conversation. I seek out a place without noise, or other voices, or traffic, or cheers at a football game. To do any less insults the definition of prayer. We insult ourselves as we insult God.

He and I talked about important conversations in our lives. The success from those important conversations is a clear reflection of our listening. When we ask, "How does this machine operate?", we listen closely to the answer and are grateful that our query was answered.

It is the same process when we have questions, or requests, or even distrust of God. Prayer is a conversation. We have our questions, or frustrations, or doubts, and we pray, "God, share with me that which I don't understand." That is what we do when we pray. Then we listen.

The conversation between us and God becomes easier as we learn. Just as man was created by God, God is within each of us. Prayer, this conversation between God and each of us, provides answers, or solutions, or a perspective we had not previously considered.

It is then our prayers are answered.

Our conversation slowed to a finish. The trooper stood, offered his hand in friendship, and made his way to the door.

My spiritual satisfaction was my reward. I prayed a prayer of thanksgiving. I hope my young trooper felt the same.

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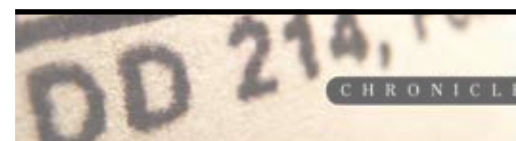
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see page 14

Editorial Statement

DD214 Chronicle is committed to its readers: Veterans of every generation and all who love them. The printed newspaper is delivered across northern Ohio without charge to more than 500 locations: libraries, colleges and universities that welcome veteran students, VFW and American Legion posts, city halls, Veteran Administration offices and health care facilities, organizations in support of veterans, advertisers, political offices, and Veteran Service Commissions. DD214 Chronicle also maintains dd214chronicle.com and DD214 Chronicle/Facebook.

The Chronicle would not exist without its advertisers.
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EVENTS

Thurs., 11/11, 11:00am - 12:30 pm
Veterans Day Ceremony

The City of Lakewood's annual Veterans Day Ceremony will take place Thursday, November 11, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. at the Veterans Memorial in Lakewood Park. Lakewood's annual Veterans Day observance is a tribute to the men and women who served our country in the armed forces.

Lakewood Park, 14532 Lake Avenue

Sat., 11/27, 10:00 a.m.
Holiday At The Hildebrandt

Hildebrandt Building, 3619 Walton Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113
2169619093

Sat., 11/27, Noon
13th Annual Turkey Trot Trail

Grand River Cellars, 5750 Madison Road, Madison, OH 44057

Sat, 11/27, 7:00 pm
Tina's 80th Birthday Bash!

Celebrate the birth of "The Mod" with a night of fun and music. Doors open at 5:00 pm. \$10 Advance, \$15 Day of Show. Music Box Supper Club, 1148 Main Ave. (west bank of the Flats). Cleveland, OH 44113
216-242-1250

Sat, 11/27, 7:00 pm
Ballet Theatre of Ohio's Nutcracker

Akron Civic Theatre, 182 S. Main St., Akron, OH 44325
3302532488

Sun, 11/28, 12:00 pm
Stones Brunch Featuring Gimme Sugar

Doors open: 11:00 am
\$10 Advance, \$15 Day of Show
Music Box Supper Club, 1148 Main Ave. (west bank of the Flats). Cleveland, OH 44113
216-242-1250

Sun, 11/28, 10:00 am
Virtual Family Fun Storytime

Euclid Public Library, 631 E. 222 St., Euclid, OH 44123
2162615300

Mon, 11/29, 9:00-11:00 am
Lakewood Family Room Art Exploration Drop-In

An opportunity for young children (2-5) and their caregiver to explore and create through different mediums. This is a drop in program, but does require registration. Masks are required for adults.

Lakewood Family Room East in Fedor Manor (12400 Madison Avenue)

Mon, 11/29, 9:00-11:00 am
Coffee with a Cop

Join members of the department for coffee and conversation. There will be no agenda or speeches — just a chance to ask questions and to get to know your neighborhood officers.

The participating officers won't provide coffee, but they will have some tokens to give away to those who stop by. This is a drop-in program. No registration. The relationship between residents and the police, and also hearing business in the precinct. Einstein Brothers, 14615 Detroit Avenue

Tues, 11/30 All Day Event
Thank Yule for Being a Friend: A Golden Girls Musical Adventure

Music Box Supper Club, 1148 Main Ave. (west bank of the Flats). Cleveland, OH 44113
216-242-1250

Wed., 12/1, 10:00 am - Noon
Lakewood Family Room New Moms Support Group

Whether you are a first time mom or not, each new baby can bring its own set of challenges and questions. Connect with other moms and get support from an early childhood educator and a Postpartum Doula/Certified Lactation Consultant. This is a drop-in program, but does require registration. Masks are required for adults. For those with babies under one year.

Information about placing an event listing, costs, other requirements, deadline, etc.

Contact cloughcleveland@gmail.com
DD 214 Chronicle

MAIL CALL

A tragic day in Vietnam and, years later, a metamorphosis

Louis H. Pumphrey

February 4th marks the 54th anniversary of one of the darkest days of my life—the horribly-gruesome killing of U.S. Army 1st Lt. Billy Joe Blacksten, 23, of Versailles, Missouri, who served with me in the First Infantry Division in Lai Khe (LieKAY), South Vietnam. His death occurred early in the Tet Offensive during a nighttime rocket and mortar attack.

On the night of the assault I was in a bunker next to my “hooch” (barracks), along with about eight other GIs, around 100 yards from where Lt. Blacksten died.

About 8 a.m. February 4th, 1968, Sgt. Wilson stepped into our bunker and stoically said, “Lt. Blacksten was killed last night.”

It was a horrible moment. I fell into such a state of shock that the rest of the day I was emotionally numb, moving in slow motion.

Lt. Blacksten's death should not have happened. Sgt. Wilson said the officer was sitting in a small bunker, but was facing its entrance when a mortar round exploded just outside the opening, blasting hot shrapnel into Lt. Blacksten's head and upper body.

Spec 5 Dick Klapprood was the only other GI in the bunker when it happened. He was sitting where I had sat a day or two earlier with Lt. Blacksten during an afternoon attack, which was to the side of the entrance. Later that day Dick told me he regretted shining a flashlight on Lt. Blacksten right after the explosion. I immediately told Dick, “Spare me the details”, which he did. We talked about something else.

Truth be told, when I was drafted in 1966, I was what you might call a “baby hawk” regarding the war. My rationale was that North Vietnam was trying to take over South Vietnam, South Vietnam was our ally so therefore we had a moral obligation to defend South Vietnam.

Even after Lt. Blacksten was killed I defended the war. In retrospect I think it was because subconsciously I did not want to admit that Lt. Blacksten's life was wasted. It took me decades to accept the reality that his life and those of more than 58,000 young perfectly-healthy Americans were wasted—sent to

Vietnam to kill communists and today Vietnam, a communist country, is our ally against China. What did the ultimate sacrifice suffered in Vietnam by members of the Army, Navy Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard accomplish? Absolutely nothing. Same goes today for lives that were wasted in the Middle East.

I think Lt. Blacksten's immensely-tragic and senseless death three days after his 23rd birthday during an unnecessary war galvanized my opposition to war, along with the realization that politicians cynically and shamelessly manipulate us with their fear-mongering rhetoric. President Lyndon B. Johnson intimated in a speech that if we didn't defeat the communists in Vietnam we would be fighting them here. Did that happen?

President George W. Bush lied to Congress when he said Iraq President Saddam Hussein had “weapons of mass destruction” when in reality, Bush was the one with weapons of mass destruction.

I have been an active member of Veterans for Peace for several years, wearing either my 1966 army field jacket or 1968 dress uniform and carrying a peace flag at events drawing large crowds. I promoted peace on the world stage when the Republican National Convention was held in Cleveland in July, 2016.

I appreciate the thought when people say, “Thank you for serving our country,” but I sometimes reply, “I did not serve my country. I served deceitful, lying, fear-mongering, war-mongering politicians and their war-profiteering bed partners.”

Those truly serving our country are the medics, nurses, doctors and mental health professionals who work very very hard to mend as best they can the psyches and bodies of those ravaged and savaged by war. They're the real war heroes. Not those who kill and destroy. That's not heroic. It's barbaric.

Drafted in 1966, Louis H. Pumphrey was a reporter, then editor, for the U.S. Army's First Infantry Division newspaper in Vietnam from July, 1967 to July, 1968. He lives in Shaker Heights.



Department of Veterans Affairs photo

Tons of waste were burned in open pits in Iraq and Afghanistan, producing toxic smoke and potential adverse health conditions, according to veterans.

Are burn pits ‘the Agent Orange of our generation’?

By Brian Albrecht

Back in 1967 and 1970, Army aviator Ron Schwachenwald was flying missions in support of aircraft dumping Agent Orange from the skies during the war in Vietnam.

The defoliant, named for the color of its label on 55-gallon drums, was part of 20 million gallons of herbicide applied to deprive the enemy of food and cover in more than 4.5 million acres of countryside in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Though they were told, “in generalities,” that exposure to the toxic chemical could be harmful, and Schwachenwald made sure to stay clear of the dispersal path, he wasn’t overly concerned.

“The mission was first. When you’re told to fly into anything, you do it,” said Schwachenwald, 85, of North Ridgeville. “It was part of everyday business. But your bravado overcomes your common sense, sometimes.”

Thirty-five years after that war, the mission was different, but the

invisible risks were eerily similar for his son, Ron Schwachenwald Jr., 52, of North Olmsted.

The Army mechanic was deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan where “burn pits” near his bases sent clouds of choking smoke and a noxious smell aloft, sometimes resulting in a wet, hacking cough laden with what GIs called “Iraqi crud.”

Often, “it was overwhelming,” Schwachenwald recalled. “Sometimes it smelled different from a normal fire, like what the hell are they burning?”

Actually, almost anything. Medical and human waste, munitions, electronics, plastics and more. Tons of it. All doused with jet fuel and ignited to produce a toxic mixture of pollutants including the same dioxin contained in Agent Orange.

An estimated 2.4 million Vietnam vets were potentially exposed to the poisonous effects of Agent Orange, and initially, veterans were frustrated in submitting disability

claims to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for illnesses they believed were caused by the defoliant. The VA said there was insufficient scientific evidence to link the two.

Twenty years of court battles, Congressional lobbying and two national acts resulted in the VA recognizing some 17 health conditions presumed to be caused by Agent Orange exposure. These include Hodgkin’s and Parkinson’s disease, leukemia, prostate and respiratory cancers, and ischemic heart disease.

Now, a similar effort is being waged for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan regarding the possible effects of burn pits. According to some estimates, upwards of 3 million service members could have been exposed to pollutants produced by burning tons of waste every day.

The VA rejected 78 percent of 12,582 disability claims filed from 2007-2020 involving health conditions blamed on burn pit exposure.

But the VA has also established an Airborne Hazards and Open Pit Registry to collect data from veterans regarding burn pit exposure, and so far 224,226 vets (including 4,879 from Ohio) have registered. Some 91 percent report being exposed to burn pits, and 32 percent had respiratory problems during deployment.

The problems facing veterans filing disability claims for burn pit exposure is similar to those once encountered by Agent Orange vets, according to Robert Chisholm, founder of the Rhode Island law firm Chisholm Chisholm & Kilpatrick Ltd (CCK).

According to CCK, some 16 commonly reported health conditions blamed on burn pit exposure include prostate, lung and respiratory cancers, hypertension, asthma and multiple myeloma.

Filing a burn pit disability claim can be difficult due to limited scientific knowledge about the health

Continued on next page



U.S. Air Force photo

Some 20 million gallons of herbicide was applied to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, potentially affecting millions of American service personnel and civilians.

Continued from previous page
effects of certain environmental hazards, and limited documentation of an individual's exposure, Chisholm said.

In making a claim, veterans "need to make a statement as to what burn pit they were near, how long they were exposed, then get an expert medical opinion linking what [health] condition there is to that exposure," he noted.

Vietnam veterans were able to overcome these challenges when Congressional action in 1984 established that the VA should presume that a disease is service-connected when there is a statistically significant association between the occurrence of the disease and exposure to Agent Orange, according to Chisholm.

He believes it will take similar Congressional action to ease the burden for burn pit vets, and there are pending legislative proposals to do just that.

President Joe Biden also noted last Veterans Day that the administration will expand efforts to examine lung and breathing problems, and rare cancers, that might be associated with toxic exposure.

Biden has speculated that his son Beau's deployment to a base in Iraq that burned 147 tons of waste daily may have contributed to his fatal brain cancer.

The VA has made changes regarding its handling of burn pit disability claims. A spokesperson noted that in the prior 78 percent denial rate "much of the past reporting

did not consider the full context of claims activities for veterans who were exposed to burn pits. VA is now providing more complete reporting on this issue."

The VA acknowledges burn pit exposure (not necessarily connected to a health condition) in disability claims of veterans who served in the Southwest Asia (SWA) theater of operations, and recently added respiratory conditions including asthma, sinusitis and rhinitis to chronic disabilities based on SWA service. The VA has approved 94% of 1.6 million disability claims (of all types) by SWA vets.

Additionally, the VA spokesperson said a new evaluation model is being piloted that "will consider possible relationships of in-service environmental hazards to medical conditions." This model will continue to "leverage" scientific research, and monitor veterans health and claims data, with the goal of reducing the burden of proof for vets impacted by exposure and speeding the delivery of health care benefits.

Any change in the handling of burn pit disability claims couldn't come soon enough for people like Rosie Lopez Torres, who founded the Texas-based nonprofit Burn Pits 360 (burnpits360.org) in 2009 with her husband, a former Army captain who has suffered illnesses he blamed on toxic exposure during his deployment to Iraq, and was denied disability benefits.

Torres said it took 10 years for her husband's symptoms to surface. "It's like an IED [improvised

explosive device] going off in your body," she said.

Burn Pits 360 maintains its own registry of 10,000 veterans with health conditions they blame on burn pit toxins. The most common conditions are "definitely lung disease, and a lot of cancers," Torres said.

Her goal with the group is to "mobilize the American people and hold people accountable in Congress," Torres said. Additionally, the VA needs to "step up with the health care. They're not developing specialized health care for people affected by exposure to burn pits."

The Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) has made the burn pit issue a top priority, calling it "the Agent Orange of our generation," according to Kaitlynn Hetrick, an IAVA associate in government affairs.

Hetrick said IAVA (iava.org) efforts include support of federal legislation that would make it easier for veterans to file disability claims related to burn pits; easing the burden of proof and establishing a presumptive status like Agent Orange.

The IAVA has surveyed its own membership on the issue and found that 86 percent of respondents reported exposure to burn pits during deployment, and 88 percent believe they may have symptoms of health conditions related to that exposure.

Among those conditions, "respiratory symptoms seem to be the most common. Migraines, lung cancers and other types of cancers are also

prevalent," Hetrick said. "It's the same type of elements seen with 9/11 responders."

Hetrick is optimistic regarding passage of legislation regarding burn pit exposure, noting that veterans' struggle for Agent Orange disability benefits may have provided a cautionary tale "to make sure that veterans don't have to go through that again."

One area that won't be affected by these efforts is "Gulf War Syndrome," a medically unexplained multi-symptom illness that is covered by a VA presumption of a connection to military service.

If you're a veteran considering a burn pit disability claim, the Hetrick advised making sure you have entered your information on the VA's burn pit registry (<https://veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/AHBurnPitRegistry/#page/home>).

She added, "Don't let them ignore you. If you are not going to advocate for yourself, who is?" (Hetrick also noted the IAVA offers a free Quick Reaction Force case management assistance service, 1-855-91RAPID or, www.quickreactionforce.org.)

Attorney Chisholm said Iraq/Afghanistan claimants might argue that because the same dioxin in Agent Orange, covered for Vietnam vets, has been found in burn pit emissions, exposure to this "herbicide agent" could also qualify them for coverage.

Ron Schwachenwald believes the VA has done a good job in

Continued on page 9



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BURN PITS continued from page 6
identifying the issues, and his own exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam figures into his current VA disability payment.

But he looks to his son's future with uncertainty.

"You kind-of wonder," his son agreed, regarding his burn pit exposure which so far has not created any major health problems for him. He has filed with the VA's burn pit registry, just in case.

Others still live with the reminders.

In 2002 former Army nurse Mary Reynolds Powell attended a luncheon marking the 20th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. The occasion was celebratory, and ominous.

Three fellow Vietnam veterans sat at her table. They'd all laid concrete slabs for the hospital where she had worked in Long Binh, from 1970-71. The hospital site had been a rubber plantation, but all the trees were gone. No one wondered how the foliage had disappeared.

All three of those vets had brain tumors, and had just visited a friend who'd worked with them in Vietnam and was dying from a brain tumor.

"Only then did a light bulb go off in my brain," Powell recently recalled. "Agent Orange!"

Ann Kelsey, 75, of New Jersey, was attached to the Army's special services to run libraries in Vietnam's Cam Ranh Bay area where base perimeters were sprayed with defoliants.

Though she hasn't had any health conditions resulting from that exposure, Kelsey noted, "There was point in the mid-2000s when over 20 women that I knew there had died from ovarian cancer."

"A lot of WACs (Women's Army Corps auxiliary) who served in Long Binh, they were secretaries and that kind of thing, and the VA never gave any of their

service-connected requests for disability any credence at all," Kelsey said. "Their position was they could not possibly have been sprayed by Agent Orange; if you weren't under the planes dropping it from the air, you had no claim."

Consequently, when it comes to her health, "I've been very diligent for the last 50 or so years. My doctors all know I was there, and exposed," she said.

She also noted that the Agent Orange toll among Vietnamese civilians (an estimated 2 million with cancer or other illnesses) continued after the war. "It's in the food chain. There are still kids with birth defects being born right now," Kelsey noted.

History repeats itself, according to Kelsey, whose great-grandfather fought for the Union during the Civil War, and unsuccessfully tried to get government aid for health problems he suffered after the war.

Additionally, she noted, "I have couple friends who were in the Gulf War and have issues they attribute to the burn pits. They've gotten the same lack of interest from VA that guys with Agent Orange issues got back in the '80s."

"We completely failed to learn any lessons from our whole misadventure in Vietnam."

Powell believes those lessons should stress teaching the military tactics "that includes their impact on our soldiers and the environment."

She is not optimistic.

"The longer war lasts, the more gets justified, and less attention is paid to the potential harm to our own soldiers (or environment)," Powell said. "Admitting the negative effects of our tactics on our troops may lead the public to question. If answers can be put off for an extended time, even if the problems are eventually recognized—like the impact of Agent Orange—it's yesterday's war."

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“WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA” AT THE OHIO VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK, 12/18/2021

These photos were taken by Steve's My Dream Photo, to thank the volunteers that hung wreaths; shared, A Prayer for All Veterans; played both the National Anthem initially and taps to close the ceremonies as all gathered with a hand on the wall for a peaceful moment of remembering our fallen. Both the Korean and Vietnam walls were garnished with a wreath at each panel, one hundred wreaths in total. Thanks to all the volunteers!



Honor Home – Women Veterans Campus Transitional Housing for Women Veterans & Children

Honor Home – Women Veterans Campus Family & Community Services Inc. (FSC) is excited to announce in 2022, with funding from The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), FCS Honor Home Program will be opening a new campus to serve homeless Women Veterans with or without children. FCS has acquired two new properties which will create a Woman Veteran's only campus. One of the four-bedroom homes will be for single Woman Veterans and the other is for Woman Veterans and their children. These new homes will provide an opportunity for them to work towards permanent housing. The program assists with case management, connections to the VA, Stark County Veterans Service Commission, and other local community partners. The residents are offered therapies such as art and life skills on-site and virtually. During their stay, the whole family receives advocacy and encouragement from our support workers.

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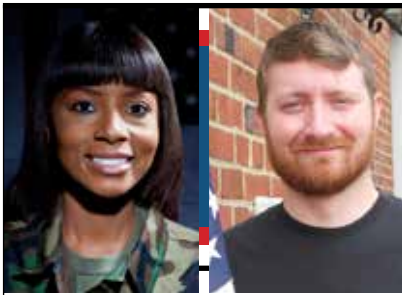
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Lorain County Community College Helping student veterans reach their goals

Marcia J. Ballinger, Ph.D., President, Lorain County Community College

As president of Lorain County Community College, I have the privilege of congratulating graduates as they cross the stage and receive their diplomas. Many of our graduates wear red, white and blue cords, signifying their elite status as military veterans. These are the some of the graduates who inspire me the most: those who have served our country and return home ready to apply their skills to a civilian career.

It is my belief that every student's dream matters and at LCCC, we understand each student's journey is unique. This includes the veterans of all ages and ranks who come to LCCC to prepare for the next stage of life after military service. From short-term certificates to associate degrees,

Since 2009, more than 750 veterans have earned degrees and certificates at LCCC. In fact, many veterans earn more than one credential, making them even more employable in Northeast Ohio.

and even bachelor's and master's degrees, LCCC and the University Partnership have the in-demand programs that guide veterans on a path to success.

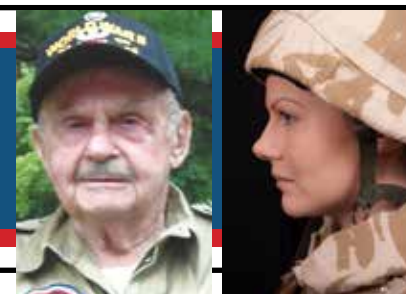
When veterans begin the enrollment process at LCCC, they can expect personal, tailored support services from our Veterans Services

Center. The Center acts as a liaison with the Veterans Administration to certify enrollment for students utilizing G.I. Bill or Vocational Rehabilitation benefits, ensuring veterans receive full use of their benefits.

But our work supporting veterans doesn't end with navigating

benefits, we offer comprehensive supports to ensure students can achieve their goals, no matter what life challenges they face. In collaboration with other LCCC support services, such as the Advocacy and Resource Center, the Veterans Services Center helps veterans access the resources needed to remove any barriers to academic, career and life goals. Scholarships for veterans and emergency aid are available through the LCCC Foundation. With LCCC's Prior Learning Assessment program, veterans can receive college credit for their work and life experience in the military. And LCCC's student veterans club helps students build a sense of community within our campus.

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These support services have proven results in helping veterans reach graduation. Since 2009, more than 750 veterans have earned degrees and certificates at LCCC. In fact, many veterans earn more than one credential, making them even more employable in Northeast Ohio.

LCCC's high level of academic and personal support helped Chelsea Pires transition from active duty to civilian life. After six years in the U.S. Air Force, Pires returned to her hometown of Amherst with a clear idea of her intended career field. She spent her military career stationed in Italy as a military dental assistant and

enjoyed the work. She wanted to stay in the dental field, but with a new job title and a salary that would provide for her family.

So, Pires came to LCCC for the support she needed to turn her military training into a satisfying career. With guidance from her advisor, Espy Correa, Pires decided to enroll in LCCC's dental hygiene

program. Pires earned an associate of applied science in dental hygiene in 2021 and soon after began her new career at a local dentist's office.

I'm so proud of Chelsea, and all our student veterans who are reaching their goals—no matter what their dreams may be. For those who have previously started college classes but have taken a break, LCCC offers options that make returning to college easier than ever. For students who are interested in quickly retraining, LCCC delivers more than 60 Fast Track programs in in-demand fields. Many of these short-term certificates can be completed in 16 weeks or less, are tuition free for students, and easily stack with associate degrees, should students decide to continue their education.

I am grateful to our country's veterans for their service and sacrifice. I encourage veterans to explore their community college and allow us the opportunity to serve them. And I look forward to congratulating even more veterans as they cross the graduation stage this spring.

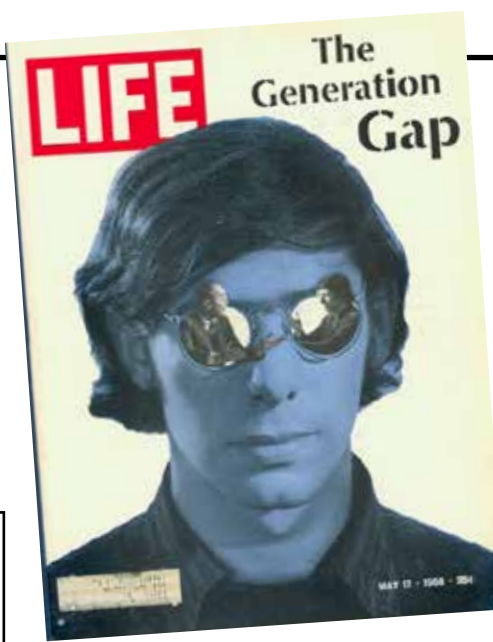
For veterans interested in getting started or continuing at LCCC, please visit www.lorainccc.edu/veterans to schedule a meeting with Veterans Certifying Official.

Spring semester classes at LCCC begin on January 18, February 21, March 21 and April 4.

More information is available at www.lorainccc.edu/enroll.



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Boomers: A Most Remarkable Generation

By John H. Tidyman

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It was the worst of times. Nixon and Watergate, murders of JFK, RJK, and Martin Luther King,

Jr., race riots, murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner, Vietnam War, LBJ, Altamont, Charles Manson, thalidomide, National Guard and Kent State, Mi Lai.

Each of us has memories of our generation. Those memories should be collected in a book. For all us Boomers, I'm putting together a book of those memories.

Will you add your stories? The stories are funny, sad, outrageous, riotous, remarkable—just like we were.

They can be sent to
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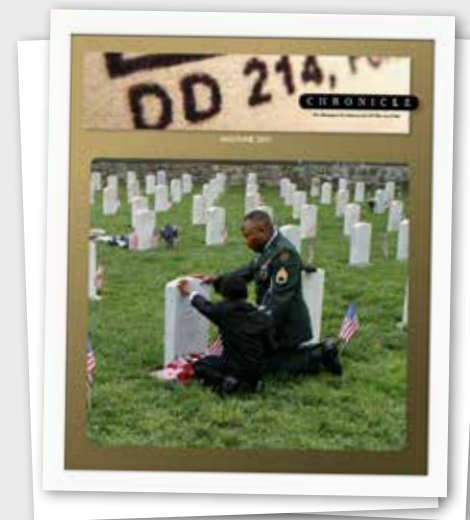
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U.S. Air Force photo

Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Milton A. Moritz, of Cleveland, was flying a B-25 bomber on a shuttle mission when his aircraft with five other crewmen disappeared in South America in 1943.



DPAA illustration

This map shows the path of 2nd Lt. Milton A. Moritz on his ill-fated flight. He and 645 other American service members were reported missing in action in South American operations during World War II.



Photo courtesy of Gaye Moritz Rule

Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Milton A. Moritz was reported missing in action during a shuttle flight over South America in 1943. The daughter he never knew, Gaye Moritz Rule, of Lakewood, has spent a lifetime hoping for the discovery and return of his remains.



Photo courtesy of Gaye Moritz Rule

Milton A. Moritz, left, is shown with his brother, William, whom Milton adored, according to family stories.

Lakewood woman still waits and hopes for recovery of MIA father she never knew

By Brian Albrecht

Gaye Moritz Rule has been waiting a lifetime for her father to come home.

Six months before the Lakewood woman was born, her father, Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Milton A. Moritz, was reported missing in action in 1943 after the B-25 bomber he was piloting went down in the jungles of South America.

Since that disappearance of her father and five other crewmen, Rule has waited for an answer, just like the families of the 81,600 American service members missing in action since World War II.

The U.S. hasn't stopped looking for these MIAs, and Rule hasn't stopped hoping for an end to an enduring mystery.

Her father, who grew up on W. 139th St., was a 1938 graduate of John Marshall High School who was majoring in business administration at Ohio State University. He planned to open an auto parts business after graduation.

But Moritz dropped out of college with only a semester remaining,

to enlist in the Army. He became part of the South Atlantic Ferry Command which transported aircraft and supplies to the European theater via a U.S.-to-South America-to-Africa route. That path avoided winter storms in the North Atlantic that confronted flights to England.

Some 646 American service members were reported missing in action in those South American operations, most due to aircraft crashes either over land or sea.

On May 11, 1943, Moritz, 23, took off from an airfield in British Guiana, on a direct, five-hour flight to Belém, Brazil. There were no weather concerns, and no position reports or radio contact from the B-25.

Parachutes were reportedly

sighted along the flight path, and search aircraft dispatched. Nothing was found.

The search continued for another 30 days before Moritz and his crew were listed as Killed in Action/No Body Recovered.

Back in Cleveland, news of Moritz's disappearance hit hard.

His cousin, Carol Moritz, 96, of Rocky River, recently recalled, "Of course we were all devastated. What a tragedy. I still can't understand how he could just disappear. It's like he went into a black hole."

She remembered that he had a "wonderful personality. He was outgoing and friendly. Just

a nice guy. I had a big crush on him when I was a kid."

The pilot's wife, Margaret, initially was optimistic. "We've been hoping and praying all the time that 'Mike' would show up soon," she

told a newspaper reporter. "I know he will and I shall never give up hope."

There was reason to hope, given the amazing story of another Army pilot, who'd flown the same route a month before Moritz disappeared. That pilot's aircraft was brought down by a heavy storm, crashing in the jungle. This sole survivor of the crash spent several days traveling through the jungle and swamps before stumbling across natives in Dutch Guinea who took him by canoe to an Allied air base.

In an eerie coincidence, three months after Moritz disappeared, his cousin, also an Army pilot, was shot down during a B-17 bombing raid over Germany, and reported missing. It was later learned he'd been captured and finished the war as a POW.

The family's optimism eventually faded. "Every time we'd hear something we'd hope it was good news, but nothing," Moritz said. "Gaye is still so hopeful. I don't have hope.

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"I still can't understand how he could just disappear. It's like he went into a black hole."

— Carol Moritz

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I guess I'm too practical. But I feel sorry for her, not having anything concrete, really."

As Rule, 78, grew up, she was told stories about her father, who bore such an uncanny resemblance to her that family conversation would momentarily stop when she walked into the room.

Time may have healed the wounds of loss for the Moritz family but the former Bay Village school teacher refuses to give up. "I've always seen the glass as half-full," Rule said.

Under these circumstances, "who wouldn't?" she added. "It's your father, not that I know what that means. But you just don't know. I don't think you can just shut everything out. It (his loss) has just always been a thread through my life."

The Moritz family has provided DNA samples to match to any remains possibly found. Rule has also given investigators a photo of her father wearing a leather flight helmet and jacket, the same items he would have been wearing when he was flying.

Though she noted, "I'll be shocked if they find anything other than his dog tags," she has nonetheless gathered items to put in his casket including his childhood marbles, a little totem pole souvenir from Detroit, and his service medals.

She has filed freedom of information requests for records of official inquiries regarding her father's disappearance, and kept in touch with Army officials.

Early last year she received an update stating that an effort would be made to contact historians and research groups in South America to see if any information regarding the lost flight could be found.

That effort has already started, according to Sgt. 1st Class Sean Everette of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) which handles the recovery and identification of America's missing service members.

Everette noted that the DPAA and previous agencies tasked with that mission have recovered 3,283 MIAs. Of those, 1,608 involved downed aircraft. Of the 1,469 World War II identifications, 684 were aircraft-related.

When a possible MIA site is identified, an investigative team is sent to the location to confirm its existence, followed by recovery specialists who search for remains. In the case of downed aircraft, "we do not go out to try to determine what caused the plane to crash," Everette said. "Our purpose is to recover the unaccounted-for service members."

Any remains discovered are sent to one of two DPAA labs, in Hawaii

and Arkansas, for identification.

"Multiple lines of evidence go into making an identification," Everette said. These include DNA matching, the work of forensic anthropologists and dentists, and isotope analysis which can indicate what region a person came from (based on dietary markers in bones).

Families can opt for funerals with full military honors or a small private ceremony. Regardless of the funeral chosen, the impact of a MIA recovery can be "very profound for the family," Everette said.

"For some families it gives them closure. At least now they know what happened to their loved one," he added. "Even if they didn't know them personally, that service member has been a presence in their life, for their entire lives"

"For a lot of these families, these (MIAs) are still very much a part of their family."

When and if Rule is notified that her father has been found and heading home, she said, "I'll be happy, and sad . . . as most of life is."



DPAA photo

Once a possible MIA site has been identified, a team of investigators from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), like this one shown working a site in India, will search the area for remains.



Photo courtesy of Gaye Moritz Rule

Gaye Moritz rule provided investigators with this photo of her father, B-25 pilot Milton A. Moritz, wearing his flight gear, in the hopes it would aid in his identification if his remains are recovered.



Photo courtesy of Gaye Moritz Rule

Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Milton A. Moritz, left, posed for a photo with his first cousin, Herbert, who was also a pilot who was shot down over Germany during World War II and taken prisoner.



Photo courtesy of Gaye Moritz Rule

A family reunion in 1937 included Milton A. Moritz, third from left, who was described by relatives as a handsome, easy-going guy.

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The Harry Donovan Jr. Valor Home of Summit County Transitional housing program for homeless male veterans. Contact: 330-773-7000. Facebook: Harry Donovan Jr. Valor Home of Summit County.



Veteran's Haven of Warren and Youngstown Counties goal is to promote housing stability, to male and female veterans and their families. Through transitional housing for male veterans, Transition-In-Place housing for veteran families and a Service center which is open to all veterans in the community. Contact: 330-409-9139. Facebook: Veteran's Haven.



Freedom House of Portage County. Transitional housing program for all single veterans. Contact: 330-673-0705. Facebook: Freedom House



Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), provides services to low-income veterans and families in order to assist in stabilizing housing. Available to those living in Lorain, Ashtabula, Stark, Medina, Summit, Portage, Geauga, Trumbull and Mahoning counties. Veterans experiencing COVID-19 housing emergencies call 855-234-7310 or email ssvf@fcsohio.org



Honor Home of Stark County Transitional housing facility for homeless single male veterans and **women veterans with children**. Support is provided via the Advisory Committee. Contact: 330-631-3075. Facebook: Honor Home.

More information at Family & Community Services, Inc., <https://fcsserves.org/> or 330-676-3069

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 **Lorain County Community College**



Tommysan, Culinary Specialist WWII

Need to feed a small army? Vegetarian? Pescatarian? Gluten-Free? If you face a constant stream of “mobile munchers” or unappreciative guests, we know a man for the job.

During WWII, nearly every enlisted man worked the kitchen at some point. KP duty, or kitchen patrol, was one of the worst assignments a soldier could pull. Late to roll call or annoyed an officer? Then, KP duty was prescribed. Doled mainly as punishment, scores of grumbling soldiers spent hours cutting vegetables and scrubbing pans. But, what if you were permanently assigned to KP? What then? Would your view of military life be jaded?

Plucked six months shy of graduation, Tom found himself permanently assigned Kitchen Patrol (KP). Maybe it was an unlucky draw. More likely, the brass noticed his short-order cook experience. Tom worked the grill at Jake’s Stake Diner in Cleveland (Dennison).

Drafted—Tom recounts leaving Cleveland, “I took a train out of Terminal Tower on January 20, 1945. I was only 18 for a few months when I was drafted. I didn’t know anybody, maybe I’d seen a few guys. We got on a troop train and headed to Indiana. After basic [14 weeks of training], I left Camp Atterbury, Indiana, and got on a boat.”

Tom’s story begins like any other grunt. Waking at 4 am, endlessly prepping food, and serving the troops. But, in the fall of 1945, Tom had more on his plate than just chow. Barely out of boot camp, he was peeling potatoes and prepping for invasion. He was moving rapidly from line cook to enemy lines on a troopship cruising the Pacific.

Victory in Europe—Following the Pearl Harbor bombing (December 7, 1941), America joined the war on two frontiers, Europe and Asia. After four grueling years, Victory in Europe was declared (May 8, 1945). Unfortunately, as Europe celebrated, resistance in the

Pacific continued. In the summer of 1945, buoyed by the European victory, military commanders prepared to invade the islands. Sadly, early estimates projected nearly a quarter-million casualties. Just 18 and barely out of boot camp (mid-April 1945), Tom found himself peeling potatoes and prepping for invasion.

Victory in Japan—Fortunately for Tom, the war came to a screeching halt. By late summer 1945, the first atomic bomb dropped over Hiroshima, followed by a second over Nagasaki. On August 14, 1945, news of the Japanese surrender ignited spontaneous celebrations around the world. Fireworks erupted, American flags unfurled, and ticker-tape parades rained down on joyful celebrants. Invasion bound and awash with relief, Tom and his mates partied late into the night and again the next day. “We were on the boat. Everybody was so excited when we heard the news about Japan’s surrender. We were preparing for invasion. We were real

happy.” Joyous and bittersweet, it was a sober reminder of the price of freedom, nearly 418,500 Americans would not come home.

Rumors of going home loomed large. Servicemen wondered, “When can we go home?” Not so quickly, it turns out. Discharge was determined by points earned. Single, with less than 8 months of service, Tom did not have enough points for discharge and he would serve another year.

“Once, I met General Joe Stillwell at Clark Airfield in the Philippines. He looked at me and said, ‘What are we gonna have for dinner?’ One of the nurses here [at St. Augustine Health Ministries] helped me look him up on the internet. It’s amazing what you can find. They called him ‘Vinegar Joe’ but he was nice. Not all the brass were nice.”

Occupied Japan—On August 28, 1945, an armada filled Tokyo Bay as President Truman approved the terms of surrender. After the Philippines, Tom sailed into Japan.

Continued on next page



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There was a great deal of work to do. Tasks ranged from minesweeping for unexploded ordinances, disposing of chemical munitions, demobilizing Japanese soldiers, and repatriating civilians to nursing and evacuating POWs.

Life for Tom as a military chef took an upswing. "I was a cook for the 25th Infantry stationed in Nara, Japan. There were lots of L4 and L5 [Grasshopper] planes coming in and out." Grasshoppers were needed for reconnaissance, transport, and evacuation. "We served the 91st Field Artillery Battalion. We were a small outfit. I worked alongside 7-8 Japanese men in the kitchen. I picked up parts of the language very quickly. I remember their tradition of bowing. They called me 'Tommisan' and the little Japanese children always asked for candy bars."

Holidays 1945— Service during WWII had many ups and downs. Following the victory, commanders promised fresh dinners for Thanksgiving—no canned turkey. This was easier said than done. Everything had to be shipped. The supply chain was over-stressed, and there were so many shortages during WWII that rations were issued. Initially, only bacon, butter, and sugar were rationed; but rationing grew to include milk, cheese, eggs, coffee, and cooking fat. Baking without staples? It gives a whole new meaning to shortages.

When asked, Tom replied, "Oh, there was so much hydrated stuff, eggs, and stuff... seldom any meat of any kind. When we had meat, it was very thinly sliced roast beef (aka s--- on a shingle). We did what we could. For holidays overseas, the meal was the main event. Tom couldn't shine every day, but he finagled a feast worthy of home. What is the key to serving a small army? "Planning ahead... and, when all else fails, improvise!"

"I was stationed in Nara for over a year. For me, the service was a great experience, wonderful. As cooks, we were freelancers. We were a small outfit, just 4 of us. We stuck together. We could come and go as we pleased. We would go to the cabaret whenever we could. Everyone loved American Big Band music. They [the Japanese] were modernizing. They still had geishas, but they liked the west. They were very friendly."

Eventually discharged from Fort Sheridan, Illinois, in 1946, Tom finished high school at Cleveland College. After graduation, Tom entered the newspaper world and married his wife, Mary Ann. Retiring in 1952, Tom worked for both the *Cleveland News* and the *Plain Dealer* for 50 years. Outside of his military career, he has lived his entire life in Cleveland. Now, Tom resides at St. Augustine Health Ministries. Surrounded by caring professionals and attentive staff, Tom spends most days enjoying the music of his youth, reminiscing with nurses, and talking with his wife. In November events honoring over two dozen service members, were held across St. Augustine Health Ministries. Planned by Recreation Therapy staff, distinguished attendees including men and women from all five branches of the military. Each event featured a commemorative service, tokens of appreciation, and a special luncheon. Tom was happy to be on the receiving end of the meal.

It has been 75 years since Tom cooked that 1945 holiday meal in the Pacific, but he remembers the army with fondness. Retired veterans like Tom are eligible for the Veterans Aid and Attendance Benefit (A&A). This special pension connects eligible veterans and surviving spouses with a supplemental financial resource. If you know a veteran interested in learning more about the A&A program, please contact the Veterans Administration at 800-827-1000.



General. A large percentage of the money allotted for the ration is spent for meat; therefore it is important to exercise great care in the selection and preparation of this food. The maximum number of servings will be obtained only if the recipes in this section are followed exactly. These recipes recommend low cooking temperatures which lessen shrinkage of the meat.

Creamed Chipped Beef Yield: 6 Gallons, Servings: 100 (8oz ea)

Ingredients:

- Beef, dried, chipped 7 lbs
- Fat, melted 1 pound (1/2 No. 56 dipper)
- Flour, sifted 1-1/4 pounds (1-1/4 No. 56 dippers)
- Milk, evaporated 12- 14-1/2 ounce cans
- Water (for milk) 1-1/2 gallons (6 No. 56 dippers)
- Pepper 1/4 ounce (1/2 mess kit spoon)

Directions:

1. Separate beef into small pieces.
 2. Mix melted fat and flour; stir until smooth.
 3. Mix milk and water; heat. Add gradually to flour mixture, stirring constantly.
 4. Add chipped beef and pepper. Heat to boiling; reduce heat and simmer about 10 minutes.
- Note: Serve hot over toast.





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