



The Long Shadow of Vietnam: What We Did, What We Learned

Her name was Carol. She told me when she walked in from my sister Meg's backyard graduation party. It was May or June, 1967. Carol and Meg were classmates and friends.

I was in the living room watching the Yankees game. My orders had been cut for Vietnam, where the Army was going through infantrymen like Whitey Ford through the batting order.

Carol said, "Meg says you're going to Vietnam. My fiancé is there now. His name is Bobby Zerilli. He's in the infantry. When he gets home, we're going to be married and he's going to work at his father's butcher shop. I know there are a lot of guys over there but, if you see him tell him I love him. His name is Bobby Zerilli."

I met Carol's fiancé in Nam, but neither of us made the connection for weeks. We both had New York accents and came from Queens. There were a half million troops in Nam, and 80,000 in the bush. This was as close to a mathematical impossibility as ever could be.

Weeks after I got there, we were talking and I was listening to him talk about the girl he was going to marry. "She's young. Just graduated high school."

He always told me that he knew he was going home, but made me promise that if he didn't that I would go see Carol.

A few months later, in a firefight, Bobby was hit. Dustoffs didn't arrive until daybreak. The next day we learned he didn't make it.

I rotated back to The World

months later. I never went to see Carol. Today his name is engraved at The Wall, Sgt. Robert Joseph Zerilli, Panel 44W line 033.

Tom Sweeney
Fisher House

STAYING ALERT TO MY immediate duties has brought relief from the sadness of being alone this Christmas. The skies are overcast, making the night even darker and more difficult to detect any activity around the village of Phu Long. Presently, Maj. Thien, commander and chief military official in charge of the security joins me in the bunker. As we look out over the village from the firing window of the bunker, Maj. Thien begins to ask me about my family and what it was like in America. I shared with him my marriage and hopes of a family, however dim that seemed to be at present and what it was like growing up in America – at least my part of it. I asked of his family. His wife and children lived in another part of the country and he truly longed to be with them and hoped that he would be able to see them soon.

"I wish my country could be like America, but great struggles loom ahead. Government corruption is bad, but nothing compared to what it would be like under a communist government." As dawn approached, we shook hands and he wished me a merry Christmas and said that he hoped I would be able to go home soon. That was the last time I ever saw Maj. Thien. Four months after



Photo: Kevin Connors

our talk, he was killed by VC insurgents who ambushed him. He was shot 30 times.

Buddy Sadler
198th Light Infantry Brigade
Americal Division

I WAS A YOUNG PRIEST, still in my twenties, in a parish in an eastern suburb of Cleveland. Frank was a high school student who came regularly to our parish religion classes. It was the mid-sixties. Frank's father had a stroke that left him incapacitated and I used to visit him

every Friday to talk with him and bring him communion. This had a dire effect on the family but after he graduated, when Frank went to Vietnam, the family developed new anxieties.

I was one of that breed of Catholic priests who at the time had a strong sense that social justice, a right and mutually beneficial relationship between people and groupings of people, was a constitutive part of the message and mission of Jesus. The education of our Catholic population about the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and the social



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■ VFW Post 3445 in Garfield Heights is making plans to celebrate its diamond anniversary. That's right — 75 years of fellowship, camaraderie, civic service, and looking out for our returning troops. The band kicks off at 4:30 on Saturday, April 16. Dinner will be served at 5:15. Tickets are \$10 for members, \$17 for guests. There are only 100 tickets, so malingersers will be shut out. The post is at 4727 Turney Road, in Garfield Heights. Telephone number is: 216-641-8828.

■ The Greater Cleveland Veterans Business Resource Council offers small business training this month and the subjects include marketing, finance, record keeping and business plan writing. Phone number there is 216-361-4506.

Paratransit Services Invaluable for Disabled Veterans

By Barry Goodrich

Navigating the Greater Cleveland area during the severe winter months is challenging enough for anyone. For Samuel Pitts, that challenge has been heightened since he was first diagnosed with MS back in 2003.

Pitts, who was stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky, Fort Benning, Georgia, and Fort Dix, New Jersey during his service in the U.S. Army from 1962-64, is one of hundreds of veterans able to use the services of the Cleveland RTA's Paratransit program. The Paratransit division of RTA is dedicated to providing transportation services to individuals with disabilities.

The innovative nationwide program was founded in 1978 and its services have never been more in demand. Due to the rapid increase in disabled Iraq War veterans, demand for Paratransit services is expected to double in the next decade.

"When I first started using it I was



working and getting rides five days a week," said Pitts, who resides on Walden Avenue in Cleveland. "I now use the service two or three times a month and have been very pleased with it. I have a scooter that I use and this is the only way to transport it."

Pitts is thankful for the low cost of the service (\$2.25 each way within a five-mile radius); it's available 24 hours. Whether it's a trip to the doctor's office, the barbershop, or the mall, Paratransit can be utilized when appointments are made in advance.

"It will take me anywhere I need to go," said Pitts, a former teacher in the Cleveland public school system. "It's been a great help to me."

RTA has a Paratransit staff of 185 with 77 public vehicles and 33 contractor vehicles. The service provides more than 1,700 trips each weekday and more than 540,000 rides on an annual basis. The door-to-door service is ideal for those who are unable to independently travel on public transit.

RTA was one of the first transit authorities in the nation to operate a fleet of totally accessible vehicles. The specially equipped Paratransit vehicles have taken that initial service to the next level.

The Paratransit program is available to all ADA certified veterans. For an ADA application, call (216) 566-5124. Hours are 8 to 4:30, Monday through Friday. More Paratransit information is available by visiting www.riderta.com.



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Treating Veterans as if They Were Shuffleboard Disks

Bill Denihan is the executive director of Cuyahoga County ADAMHS (Alcohol, Drug Addiction, Mental Health Services.) He describes himself as "a public servant, an honorable profession." He has previously served as Claims Director for Workers Compensation, director of the state of Ohio employment relations board, director of the state of Ohio department of highway safety, acting director of the state of Ohio department of natural resources, director of the Cleveland Department of Public Services, safety director for Cleveland, and Cleveland chief of police.

In other words, he knows his way around. More than that, Denihan has served as the go-to guy for troubled agencies.

STAND AT EASE *By John H. Tidyman, Editor*

Veterans suffering drug and alcohol addiction, mental illnesses, including those brought on by Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD), should be aware of the county assistance at ADAMHS.

We visited Denihan to offer advertising and editorial support in *DD 214 Chronicle*, a newspaper for veterans in northeast Ohio.

In the last issue of *DD 214 Chronicle* was an excellent and timely interview with Robert Roerich, M.D., a psychiatrist who specializes in the disorder.

No deal, Denihan said, the money isn't there, he explained.



That could be. He told us that at a recent meeting with staff members, he cautioned half of them might not even have jobs next year. His budget will be reviewed and decided this summer.

As if that were not enough to keep him busy, he said he recently sent a bill to the VA in the amount \$300,000. He accused the VA hospital of refusing service to seven men whose behavior was problematic. The veterans, he said, were sent to his agency. That service is an added expense and furthermore, he said, the ADAMHS treatment is the same as the VA's restraints.

He said the situation was "contentious," and that he was seeking legal counsel to resolve the matter.

For its part, the VA answered a list of our questions with this statement: "Our mission is to provide every eligible veteran with the highest quality of care in the manner that is most appropriate for their specific needs, including mental health issues."

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki, commenting last month on a report detailing homeless veterans, said, "Providing assistance in mental health, substance abuse treatment, education and employment goes hand-in-hand with preventive steps and permanent supportive housing. We continue to work towards our goal of finding every veteran safe housing and access to needed services."

MAIL CALL

Reflections on the Medal of Honor, Death of an American soldier, D-Day, and *DD 214 Chronicle*; Our Readers Write

Please take the time to see the 2/503d's best. I'd not seen this production before. It pretty much brings together SGT. Guinta's experience together. He's a great example of our fighting men and the Army could not have selected a better example for the Medal of Honor. Watch this video. This is an articulate volunteer who exemplifies the finest qualities of the American combat soldier. Absolutely incredible video. Thank God we still have young men like this. Gentlemen, a genuine American hero. Humbling. <http://devour.com/video/medal-of-honor>

Ray Saikus
Cleveland

(Editor's Note: Sgt. Patrick Ryan Carroll, 25, was killed last month when insurgents attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan's Kandahar province, according to the Department of Defense. Carroll grew up in New London, in Huron County. He served in the 319th Military Intelligence Battalion, 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, XVIII Airborne Corps out of Fort Bragg, N.C.)

The Firelands area has suffered its first casualty of the war in Afghanistan. My immediate response to his picture in the paper brought tears of sorrow for a family I never knew nor even met. It saddens me greatly that such a young man with so much to live for was taken from our grasp by a shot fired from a group of individuals who stand for nothing but the sheer thrill of killing American soldiers. The picture also reveals one more thing; the



character and sense of humor his parents did so well to instill. For whatever the reasons, right or wrong, for going to war in Afghanistan, Patrick heeded the call and took up the sword to defend those very freedoms we all enjoy but fail everyday to appreciate. It sickens me to recognize how disconnected the American people are from our military defending our sovereignty worldwide. Most United States civilians seem to treat service in combat as though it is some television reality show; and all the while mischaracterizing the military service as someone's desire for war, like it is some sort of hobby. I believe the overt military policy in Afghanistan and Iraq is wrong. I, too, was fooled into believing the political manipulations of the powers that be; that is worth sending our best troops to defend our liberty in a land full of lawless people. Sadly, however, I believe we have let our own military down. While this does not in any way diminish the sacrifice put forth by Sgt. Carroll, it only bothers me more that I consented to requiring he be sent. How will this change the future of his family? Why must the lives of our sons and daugh-

ters continue to be put at such high risk, knowing full well the consequences of their deaths? The time is long overdue to withdraw our overt military forces from these two countries before any more of our fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters are laid to rest. President Obama, I call upon you to bring home our soldiers, sailors and airmen before further catastrophe strikes more American families. Sgt. Patrick R. Carroll, I stand at attention and salute you sir. Thank you, I love you and will always appreciate what you did for me.

Joe Bialek,
Cleveland, OH

I would like to thank *DD 214 Chronicle* for recognizing war veterans who served in America's wars and for giving coverage to those who have told stories of performing their patriotic duty. I am a Cleveland police officer assigned to Rhodes High School (School Resource Officer) and a veteran. I came across a wonderful, warm patriotic story while assigned at the school. A young soldier named Donald Owens volunteered to serve his country after D-day, serving as tank crewman for the 773rd Tanker Division. During the Lorraine Campaign in France, he met his fate after his tank was destroyed in battle by a German Panzer tank. He and other members of his crew were classified as MIA, and many were KIA. In 2008, Donald Owens' U.S. Army dog tags were found in a farm field in France and this finally gave closure to his family. Several caring people discovered

that Donald left to serve his country at age 17 without receiving his high school diploma from Rhodes. He subsequently had enough credits to graduate. His family was awarded his diploma in June of 2009, with the graduating class paying tribute to his family and his sacrifice to his country. I had the privilege of attending this ceremony. The Army has a tentative window in the late spring to bury this honorable soldier at Arlington National Cemetery with the possible attendance of the granddaughter of renowned Army general, George Patton. The Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps students of Rhodes High School would love the opportunity to attend and participate in giving his family the ceremony he deserves. With today's depressed economy, the school board cannot afford to finance this trip. I am calling on all veterans and businesses that support war veterans, to kindly donate to this cause by contacting JROTC Commander Forrester by email (Perry44Red@aol.com). For more details about the story of Donald Owens please contact Mrs. Myra Stone (Myrakstone@gmail.com) Librarian at Rhodes High School.

Ted Thomas, CPD

I received the *DD 214 Chronicle* for our department at Cuyahoga Community College. This is a fantastic newspaper and much needed in the community! I will make sure our students have access to it. Keep up the good work for our service members. Thank you.

Louis A. Busacca, Ph.D.
Director Veterans Upward Bound



Paratroopers of the U.S. 2nd Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade hold their automatic weapons above water as they cross a river in the rain during a search for Viet Cong positions in the jungle area of Ben Cat, South Vietnam on Sept. 25, 1965.

CSU Chapter of Student Veterans of America to Hold Reverse Raffle for Tillman Foundation

The Tillman Foundation, founded by Pat Tillman's widow and parents, provides scholarships to veterans --- above and beyond the GI Bill. A dinner and reverse raffle will be held March 26 at CSU. According to Robert Shields, Coordinator, Veteran Student Success Program, the goal of the foundation is \$3.6 million in annual scholarships. "That was the annual contract he had with the Arizona Cardinals before he decided military service to his country was more important." Shields said Cleveland State has two Tillman Scholars. "The Foundation is more than worthwhile; with its scholarships, it continues Pat Tillman's vision of America." Additional information can be found at www.ohiostms.com

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Vietnam: A War of Words

By Grady Tylerman

The young boys who fought in Vietnam were wonderful fighters. Irreverent, too. Over the course of that very long war, they created perfect slang; it was descriptive, easily understood, and sort of fun, too.

Here are examples:

Grunt: a popular nickname for an infantryman in Vietnam.

Shake'n'Bake: An officer just out of officer school with no combat experience.

LRRPs: Small patrols that packed very lightly. Dropped in enemy territory, they didn't want to engage the enemy, but collect information before getting out. A most stressful, nerve-wracking, important, and dangerous as hell assignment.

Rock'n'Roll: Flipping the switch on an M-16 so it would fire continuously. A magazine held 20 rounds. A good shooter could fire 60 rounds in a half minute. It was the topical application of "fire superiority."

Zippo Party: Part of a search and destroy mission in which the straw-thatched homes of the Vietnamese were set on fire.

Xin loi: A Vietnamese phrase meaning, "Excuse me," but used by American forces to mean, "Tough shit," or, "Sorry about that." Said repeatedly after Zippo Parties.

Charlie Six Step: a bamboo viper. It was said a bite left you with time to either walk six steps or light a cigarette.

Willy Peter, Wilson Pickett: An artillery round carrying white phosphorous and used to mark targets.

Bring Smoke or Bring Pee: To direct heavy artillery or air power on a target.

Pop smoke: An order or declaration before setting off a smoke grenade. The smoke was often used by helicopter pilots as a directional aid when making deliveries or carrying out wounded and dead.

Prick 25: The lightweight field radio carried by RTOs, or radio-telephone operators. Its official designation was PRC-25.

P-38: A small, flat-folding can opener. Only 1 1/2 inches long, it was often worn around the neck with dog tags. It was used to open C-Rations and the rare, warm, 3.2 can of beer.

Two-digit midget: A troop with fewer than 100 days left before boarding the *Freedom Bird* and flying back to *The World*. Troops with fewer than 10 days left might say, "Six and a wake-up."

Funny Papers: Maps. A *blue line* was a river.

From One Generation to the Next; Bonds Shared by the Warrior Class

By Dennis Thrasher, Pilot Officer, Royal Canadian Air Force

STEWARDS OF TRADITION AND HONOR

I remember the first time I was saluted as an officer. I had just graduated from the Military College and had my first stripes on my sleeve. I was walking across the Naden Naval Base in Victoria, B.C. on my way to a ship I was to command for a brief trip to Seattle (the Air Force often did illogical things such as put Air Force Officers in charge of boats).

As several swabbies approached, they snapped off a salute and I looked around to find the officer so I could salute, too. Then I realized they were saluting me. I hastily responded with a salute albeit I was embarrassed about being saluted. A Chief Petty Officer observed this from the deck of the boat. I had actually saved the CPO's life by carrying him out of the Rockies on a training mission, so we had a closer relationship than you might expect. Once aboard, this is what he said to me.

"I saw that misstep you took about getting saluted and how embarrassed you looked."

I told him one of the guys who saluted me was a fellow I went to high school with, so I felt a little sheepish. I will never forget what he said to me. Rather sternly he admonished me, "Lieutenant, never be embarrassed about returning a salute. It's not about you, or who you are, or where you came from; it's about your rank. Many, many men have served their

country in that rank and some have died honoring the duty it stands for. Those men saluted you because it is a sign of respect for the uniform you wear, and in keeping with our traditions. They know who the boss is, and sometimes it's you and most often it's someone else with even more stripes on his sleeve. The stripes are there because he earned

lives on the line.

Today, I wear the crest I wore on my uniform. It is sewn on to my blazer.

Sometimes I am asked if it is a designer logo or country club crest. I answer softly and with pride, "No, it is the Royal Canadian Air Force crest I wore on my uniform." I enjoy saying that and always say it with pride.

Saying that often evokes the memory of that first salute because my military service is one of the best things I ever did.

My service was not about me. It was about standing tall with generations of warriors. I am honored to have earned and worn that crest.

A year ago, I went home to Canada to join my father in the Veterans Day parade. We marched in the lead group, side by side, two old warriors marching once again for their

them. Don't take it personally, because it isn't personal. It is an honor to wear that uniform and if you fail to return a salute it shows disrespect to the men and women who salute the uniform you wear and I won't have it."

I never missed a salute again, never took it as a measure of my own worth but of the worth of many men and women, officers and enlisted alike.

Yes, there is something about wearing the uniform of your country, standing amidst a group of like minded warriors who also put their



Your Man in Santiago Has a Wrap Sheet

By Christopher Joyce, Tobacconist

TOBACCONIST

A few years ago, I was in Santiago, soaking up more cigar knowledge. It was certainly the place to learn: at General Cigar, home of renowned cigar maker Ernesto Perez Carillo, founder of La Gloria Cubana.

At one point I was applying the wrapper to cigars, under the watchful eye of a supervisor. It takes manual dexterity to wrap properly, and years to become accomplished. The supervisor who was watching us told me she could have me working in three weeks. Another would-be wrapper, she said, would take a month. A third, she said, had no chance at all. Simply didn't have it.

Wrappers are vital to the appearance, but more than that, vital to flavor. There are five primary wrappers for cigars: Connecticut shade grown, Connecticut broadleaf maduro, African Cameroon, Sumatran,



Christopher Joyce

and Ecuadorian.

Lots of cigar makers and smokers believe the wrapper is a major contributor to flavor. I go a step beyond: I think the wrapper provides 75 percent of the flavor. That's regardless of size, shape, filler, or binder.

Most people think my percentage is off. Maybe it is, but it is the result of a few decades of tasting and evaluating cigars.

Wrapper type is important to me when new cigar smokers stop in, or women stop by to purchase for their lovers. When I query them about tastes and preferences, my recommendations are going to be greatly influenced by wrapper flavor and strength.

Not saying the filler blend or binder doesn't have a lot to say, just saying the dominant influence in flavor is the wrapper.

In other news, I got a couple questions from my last column, in which I wrote about Fidel Castro ruining his own cigar trade.

Q: Will Cuban cigars soon be available here?

A: Hard to say, though I do believe that before we pack it in, we'll be able

to purchase Cuban cigars here.

Q: With all the competition Fidel created in Latin America, will Cubans be inexpensive?

A: A quick glance at Habanos prices in Spain and Canada indicate not. Smokers of premium cigars may be in for some sticker shock when they see the prices. At that point, American consumers will decide whether real Cubans are worth the price.

Q: Are some Latin American cigars on a par with Cubanos?

A: The quick answer is 'no.' Only a Cuban tastes like a Cuban. But the competition has produced lots and lots of excellent cigars and the competition will only get more intense when (and if) Cubans are finally allowed to be sold and enjoyed here. Remember, I think Cubanos are an acquired taste, like unblended Scotch. They're not for everyone.

Christopher Joyce manages Dad's Smoke Shop, on Lorain Avenue in Kamms Corners.



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DD 214 Chronicle Editor Back in Classroom; This Time for CCW License

By John H. Tidyman, editor

CCW AND HANDGUNS

The last time I carried a weapon was 1968, and it was an M-16. What a weapon it was. Lightweight, simple to break down and clean, and easy to fire, whether on automatic or full automatic. By taping together three magazines in the form of a Y, I was able to fire almost 60 rounds in fewer than 60 seconds.

That was long ago and far away. Times change, and I've decided to go to classes for my CCW license, and then purchase a handgun.

In addition to all the other news about crime, two incidents helped me make my decision.

Last summer I had to deliver materials to all the Cleveland recreation centers. When I told my friend, a Cleveland police officer, he said, "I'm not letting you go in those neighborhoods alone." Before we left, he handed me a holstered 9mm automatic and said, "Put this in your



A bullet buffet: Fill your plate.

pocket. You'll feel more secure." He was right.

The second happened last summer in my wonderful hometown, Lakewood. A couple stopped for ice cream at United Dairy Farmers on Detroit Avenue. They were walking up Wagar Avenue when a couple of criminals robbed them. The criminals put guns to their heads.

In Lakewood? Four blocks from my house? After the victims left one

of the world's great ice cream stops? I'm a United Dairy Farmer Irregular; best ice cream on the West Side of Cleveland.

Kim Rodecker was a guest on our radio show, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again." He is an NRA-certified instructor for concealed carry. The staff at his place is former Marines.

I stopped at his Brookpark Road office to sign up and pick up some

training materials. A very attractive woman was signing up. When the paperwork was completed, she told me why she was there. Her age and her inability to run. When she left, Kim said she was typical of many new students.

Learning to properly and safely handle a handgun is going to be an interesting learning experience for me. Classes start soon. I'll keep you posted, okay?



Who dressed this guy?

A Moment for Fashion

By Addie King

Most men look good in uniform. (Women, not so much.) According to my own research, more women have fallen in love with the Navy officer dress whites than have fallen in love with the Navy officers wearing them.

Same with the Marines. Somehow with Marines, it makes sense to add a saber to the outfit. You don't see them anymore, but I always thought the Merchant Marine uniform was dignified and impressive.

The Ike jacket was attractive for its simplicity and utility. It's clear

that Patton's hookup, pearl handle revolvers and a helmet, was not selected by his wife. When I first saw it, I wondered if the person dressing him was pulling a joke on the general.

Now comes this Army dress uniform, which might better be used to scare crows from corn fields. First of all, black and blue works for Marines and the faces of soldiers engaging in bar-room brawls. But it doesn't work here.

While all the decorations are legitimate, it's a matter of overkill. It's more than a fruit salad; it looks

more like the top of my compost pile. What, did the seamstress run out of buttons? Outdoors, those front jacket panels will flap in the breeze. It wouldn't hurt if the cuffs were properly tailored; a half inch of dress shirt should show.

And the beret? Much better worn by members of the French Resistance. The boots? Unless soldiers in dress blues kick doors open instead of using the handles, they are a distraction.

Little wonder Navy guys always get the girl.

THIS LITTLE PIGGY WENT TO HELP SOME PEOPLE WHO REALLY NEEDED IT.



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As an energy company, Dominion provides a vital public service. But we also know that giving back to the communities we serve is not just good business—it's also the right thing to do. That's why Dominion works to build strong communities in the places where we live and work, delivering both volunteer and financial resources to help keep them healthy and vibrant. This year Dominion, its charitable foundation and employees will invest more

than \$20 million and 125,000 volunteer hours in programs that help make life brighter—from preserving valuable wildlife habitats and enhancing math, science and technology instruction, to supporting food banks and homeless shelters and underwriting outreach programs in the performing arts. To learn more about how we're putting our energy to work for our communities, visit www.dom.com, keyword: foundation.



Report from the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee

By Senator Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio)

The oath taken by men and women in our military services has changed over the years and over the wars. In 1775, new recruits took this oath: *I have, this day, voluntarily enlisted myself, as a soldier, in the American continental army, for one year, unless sooner discharged. And I do bind myself to conform, in all instances, to such rules and regulations, as are, or shall be, established for the government of the said Army.*

Today, they say: *I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code*

of *Military Justice.*

From the Continental army to the volunteer army, much has changed, yet much remains the same. All give some. Some give all. It is our solemn responsibility to ensure that our veterans receive all they have earned.

There are an estimated 890,000 veterans in Ohio. Yet only a fraction of these veterans receive services from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

In many ways, veterans across Ohio represent the very character of our nation: sacrificing in times of war and returning home to become teachers and factory workers and firefighters and business and civic leaders.

Too many veterans are still



From 1775 to today; The Soldiers' Oath

waiting for their honors and benefits. One of the responsibilities I take most seriously is to help all Ohioans – particularly veterans – utilize the benefits they have earned. My constituent services office (216)522-7272 is ready to help.

As a member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, my knowledge and understanding of the difficulties suffered by veterans is current. That's why I introduced the Benefit Rating Acceleration for Veterans Entitlements (BRAVE) Act, which would allow veterans who qualify for total disability through the VA benefits rating system to qualify for Social Security benefits as well. I also introduced the Veterans Disability

Fairness Act, which would require the VA to address disparities in disability claims ratings.

Many veterans with disabilities are eligible for tax breaks like the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) – a refundable federal income tax credit – in addition to assistance preparing income tax returns through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. VITA sites are located throughout Ohio. To find a VITA near you, call 1-800-906-9887.

When an American leaves family and friends, and embarks on a journey to uphold our values as a member of the United States Armed Forces, it is a great sacrifice. Many service members do not come home. For those who do, a grateful nation must ensure that veterans receive all they have earned.

THE CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

Why Veterans Make Great Students: Straight from the Doctor's Mouth

by Robert Shields, M.S., M.A. Coordinator, Veteran Student Success Program

Margaret Payerle received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from The University of Akron and her Ph.D. in English from Case Western Reserve University. She teaches at Cleveland State University in the Developmental Mathematics Program and the Women's Studies Program. She has been involved in Cleveland State University's Veterans Education Services Program since November 2008, teaching both mathematics and women's studies, and is conducting research in teaching veterans in both her areas of expertise. She has twice been chosen one of Cleveland State University's "Women Who Make a Difference."

In the spring of 2009 Dr. Margie Payerle welcomed her first students to a veteran-only math class at CSU. The experience of teaching in a veteran-only class has changed her life and her teaching in ways she could not have imagined.

Q: Are veterans different than non-veterans in the classroom?

A: As a result of their military training, veterans bring a number of strengths to the college classroom. They are dependable, focused, motivated, and serious. They arrive on time, they have their materials ready, and they are prepared to learn. They are engaged learners who ask questions, make constructive comments and offer suggestions. They are also natural leaders in the classroom. Their discipline makes them excellent role models for younger students, although many of the veterans are not much older than other students.

Q: Give me an example of veterans in your classroom.

A: One of many strengths they have is the ability to bond with each other. They understand the value of teamwork. One of the most successful teaching strategies I use with my student veterans is the small group

tutorial study session. Last semester I had five veterans who met with me regularly before my first class of the day. This strategy served three purposes: It gave them extra time to master the material. It enabled them to get acquainted with each other as fellow veterans — they tapped into that common bond they shared. Third, the students were able to take advantage of group mentality wherein each one took responsibility for the success of the group.

Q: Were there tangible results?

A: Absolutely. By the end of the semester, they were helping each other more than I was. They checked each other's work, explained how they came to understand and solve a problem, and to each other, they were always encouraging.

Q: What about you? Do your veterans change you?

A: Yes, in the best ways. Veterans have honed my skills as a teacher. In deal-

ing with their challenges, both physical and emotional, I have to think harder about how to explain a mathematical concept; I become more creative at making alternate arrangements for the student who may miss some classes. I have learned to tune in to their emotional state, to detect when one of them is under particular stress or experiencing frustration.

Q: Are there professional rewards for you?

A: Even though I am not one of them, I try always to earn their trust. Their trust and their confidence in me and my abilities are the greatest rewards any teacher could ever imagine.

Bob Shields served 30 years in the U.S. Coast Guard as both an enlisted man and officer. At the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, he taught Marine and Environmental Science. In addition to his work at CSU, he manages a community garden and is the Chairman of the Sierra Club in Ohio.

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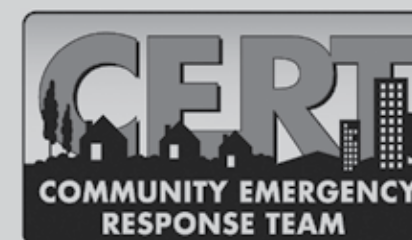
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justice ramifications of that teaching were paramount in the ministry that I exercised. Racism, poverty, sexism, and war were objects of great concern. There were riots in Cleveland during those years and unrest was building at the universities because of the war in Vietnam.

Frank came home from the war in 1968 and he was not the same, well-balanced young man who had left. He was anxious, unable to sleep at night, unable to concentrate, extremely irritable and in need of a much more professional kind of counseling than I was able to help offer him.

When I asked him what happened to him in Vietnam, he said: "I was a gunner on a helicopter and we flew low over the forests after they dropped napalm and defoliants. My job was to shoot anything that came out of the forest, that could still move. I shot rabbits and deer, I shot women and children, I shot everything that moved and I could see them close up."

I gasped. These kinds of "waging war" were not yet commonplace and I was absorbing the shock. "My God!" I said, "Frank, even in a just war this would be illegal and immoral. How could they make you do this?"

"I still see them ... I still see them ... I wake up when I see them every night," Frank sobbed.

Within a year I would have been educated about the history of Vietnam, the origins of this war, and the illegality and immorality of the war itself and the methods used to wage it. I was doing draft counseling and soon was arrested in the Cleveland Cathedral, suspended from the priesthood and later was arrested again at the Dow Chemical Company's lobbying office in Washington D.C.

I am still deeply grateful to Frank and though I have lost track of him, I pray for him daily. He called me to a mission of speaking truth to power without fear.

Rev. Robert Begin
St. Colman's Church

I LEFT VIETNAM IN NOVEMBER 1971 after serving in the Army Nurse Corps at the 24th Evacuation Hospital for a year. For years after, when there was a level of anxiety in my life - moving, concerns about my children, changing jobs - I had a recurrent dream. In my

dream, a colonel dressed in fatigues stood at the 90th Replacement Battalion, hand on his left hip, right index finger pointed at me, telling me I had to come back. No matter how much arguing I did or explaining that I had another life, he kept telling me I had to return. That dream disappeared when I began to write about my time in Vietnam. Ten years later, my book, *A World of Hurt: Between Innocence and Arrogance in Vietnam*, was published.

Why did that dream come crashing into my post-Vietnam life?

My experience in-country was not a bad one. I worked in internal medicine, not the emergency room or surgery. I was able to do my job and do it well. I met my husband four months after I arrived in-country and our connection sustained us both.

Why did that dream come crashing into my post-Vietnam life? And why did it leave? Deep inside my soul my overwhelming response to everything I witnessed in Vietnam was helplessness. I could do nothing to change the situation. I could take care of soldiers, but I could not stop what my country was doing to them or to an ancient people and country half a world away.

Once I began to tell the story, I was no longer helpless. I have not been helpless since, no matter what our country does.

Mary Reynolds Powell
Captain, Army Nurse Corps
24th Evacuation Hospital

I AM IN VIETNAM THREE DAYS when the 1968 Tet offensive sweeps the country. Bad timing for a novice war correspondent. So I find Peter Arnett, the Associated Press Pulitzer Prize winner who has been in country since 1963. I cling to him.

Saigon is full of mean, nasty fire fights. We set out for one dressed in sports shirts. Along is Eddie Adams, the AP photographer, who in a few days will win his Pulitzer Prize with a stunning execution photo.

On the outskirts of town we encounter a fight between South Vietnamese troops and Viet Cong. As we approach, the fire suddenly escalates and forces us into an abandoned hut with a dirt floor and a roof of flattened soft drink cans.

We are laying there, the perspiration on Adams' face running in rivulets through the squints of his crow's feet. Arnett is giving a play by play of the fire fight.

"Ours, theirs, ours, theirs, theirs, theirs..."

He looks over and says this could be the worst fight he has witnessed.

Holes are appearing in the roof, the sky is wonderfully blue.

"Ours, theirs, theirs ..."

Fear collects in my stomach and travels north through me on a trip that I never knew could be so spiteful. I'm sorry to be here, believe me.

Suddenly, an American army sergeant appears cursing and yelling for us to go, go now. We rush out and he points to a cemetery 25 yards away and says to run like hell. I run wildly, my glasses bouncing on my nose, the world is a rock and roll of vision and sound.

We climb a five-foot brick wall and fall into the graveyard, exhausted. The firing continues. We seek the cover of gravestones, watching chips of stone spin from ricocheting rounds.

I am startled to see an old man with a white beard crawling toward me with a tray of beer bottles. He is selling the beer and will make change.

Arnett, lying behind a tombstone next to me looks over, and with the absurdity that only Vietnam can render says: "For God's sake, don't over tip him."

Michael D. Roberts
Chagrin Falls

IT WAS LATE JUNE, 1969, and I was home on 30-day leave after graduating from Army OCS at Fort Belvoir,

Virginia as a Second Lieutenant with orders to Vietnam as a Transportation Officer. A favorite watering hole back in the day was the Lakewood Village, a fine establishment to this very day. At that time, it served as a "draft" clearinghouse for our generation with many of the male patrons deeply concerned with their current draft status: 1-A, 2-S, and 4-F to name a few, and also a departure and return spot for GIs leaving for and (hopefully) returning from the 'Nam. With the Fourth of July holiday a few days away, many at the bar were planning for a long weekend of debauchery; beer, sex, and rock'n'roll at the infamous Lake Erie island resort town of Put-in-Bay, Ohio. As I was leaving, I was asked by the bartender if I was going to the Bay (as in Put-in-Bay) this weekend. I was about to answer no when I reconsidered and replied, "Yes, I am going to the Bay this weekend," and he said he would see me there. As I got to the door I said "No, you won't — I'm going to Cam Rahn Bay!"

Dave Plagman
Rocky River, Ohio

AS A VFW POST COMMANDER, I would have to say Vietnam and my experiences while serving there have helped me throughout my life, and especially now that I have to try and assist our new and younger members returning from yet another unpopular war.

In many ways, these young kids today have it tougher than we did. First of all, we were only obligated to serve one tour of duty. You could go back, but only if you agreed to, and many did! We may not have had the array of military hardware they do today, but killing someone still leaves a scar on you for life, just like it did for our Vietnam combat veterans. Ask any veteran from any era, they all will tell you they didn't want to be there. Our country called us, and we were obligated. I am still very proud of my service time, and I'd do it again even under the same circumstances.

On a lighter side of my service, I still have many friends I'm in contact with, guys I wouldn't have known if it weren't for serving. I also take great pride from my VFW Post because of the truly great things we do here.

Commander Dennis Pilny
Post 3345 Strongsville

"I was blind, and now I can see." Remarkable Advances in Cataract Treatment

FITNESS

Cataract surgery has come a long way in the past few decades. What once required a week or more in the hospital is now an outpatient procedure.

The quality of vision patients can achieve after cataract surgery has dramatically improved as well. Until recently, patients who had cataracts (a clouding of the natural lens in their eye) received a new lens that corrected only one type of vision, usually distance. They still needed glasses for many tasks, such as reading.

Today, cataract patients can choose to upgrade to lenses that offer multiple points of focus or correct for astigmatism, often freeing them from the need for glasses entirely.

The use of "premium" lenses has

increased dramatically since Medicare changed its policies to let patients choose these lenses if they are willing to pay an additional fee, which typically ranges from about \$1,000 to \$2,500 an eye.

Ronald R. Krueger, MD, an ophthalmologist who specializes in cataract surgery and laser vision correction at Cleveland Clinic's Cole Eye Institute, explains that although premium lenses can be used to correct vision in patients who do not have cataracts, cataract surgery is still their primary use.

"We can help patients select the type of lens that will allow them to



get the additional benefits that they want from cataract surgery," he says.

The premium lenses available today include:

Toric lenses. These can be very effective in treating corneal astigmatism. "These lenses deliver the most success of any premium lens today," Dr. Krueger says. "They are real-

ly a slam-dunk."

Multifocal lenses. As light enters the eye, these specially curved lenses "split" it to correct both near and distance vision, allowing patients to do most regular activities without glasses.

Accommodating lenses. These lenses attempt to move with the eye, focusing much like the natural lens does, to provide clear vision at multiple distances.

Dr. Krueger says that about 5 percent of cataract patients nationwide choose premium lenses for both near and distance correction, but specialized centers use them in closer to 30 to 40 percent of their patients.

Such specialists also can provide a "mixed" approach, such as correcting one eye with one type of lens and the other eye with another type of lens to provide maximum visual quality.

As with any type of eye surgery, insertion of premium lenses carries a small risk of problems including infection, glare, corneal swelling, blurred vision and incorrect lens placement. Most problems are very treatable.

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The Glorious Roar and the Endless Road: Kick Starting Spring

By Murrill Murphy, Jr.

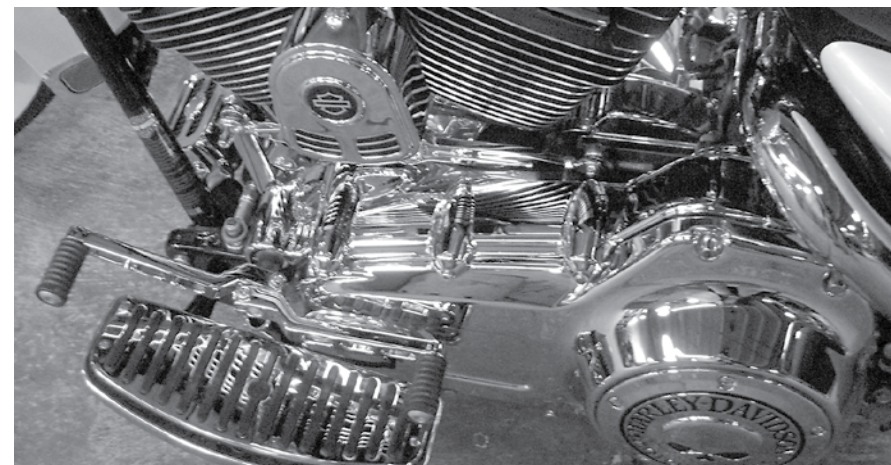
THE SILENT GRAY FELLOWS

Some people wait for cherry blossoms or reports from spring training. Not me. My ears are waiting for what I call, "The Glorious Roar."

It is that spring day when Mother Nature tells Harley riders, "Okay, you can go out again," and Harley riders roll their hibernating beasts from the garage. Fluid levels are checked, batteries reattached, and tires squeezed. In almost every instance, the Harley owner is smiling. A new season of riding is about to begin.

When a Harley is started, a quick twist on the throttle produces The Glorious Roar, the unique and powerful sound of a Harley. Maybe it's a Fat Boy, maybe a Sportster, maybe a Dyna Glide or Road King. Whatever the model, The Glorious Roar is unique.

Every ride is unique, but all have similarities. Maybe the first is pride. Like the 82nd Airborne, we're All American. We can trace our history to 1903, when Mr. Harley teamed with three Davidson brothers. The



Power spoken here. The second century of Harley Davidsons.

team built three motorcycles. Each were painted gray and came to be known the Silent Gray Fellows. Don't ask me where Silent came from.

The first Harleys cost about \$200, but before you start wishing it was still 1903, consider this: The average annual income in the U.S. was just a bit over \$700. Today, the median income is \$46,000 and the median for two-income households is \$67,000.

Harleys are egalitarian. *Fortune*

magazine publisher Malcolm Forbes, Elizabeth Taylor, Jay Leno, and Tina Turner love their Harleys. But Harleys' appeal is hardly limited to the rich and famous. Insurance agents, chefs, postal workers, small business owners, actors, musicians, landscapers, teachers, lawyers, politicians and bureaucrats, nerds as well as BMOC, soldiers, salesmen of all sorts love their Harleys.

The only thing I can think of that merits this type of devotion is dogs.

If you have a Harley and a dog who loves you, I say you're blessed.

Riding alone is a transient and ephemeral pleasure, but riding with a group of the like-minded is even better. Allow me to introduce you to HOGs, Harley Owners Groups. Its mission is simple and glorious: "To ride and have fun."

Harley-Davidson helped organize the first HOG in 1983, and today there are groups in just about every state, including Alaska. Just one in Alaska, but still.

HOG members ride and have fun, but there's more than that. You meet and enjoy other Harley enthusiasts, trade information about Harleys, and take wonderful rides. Wives and girlfriends most welcome.

Murphy has been riding Harleys for almost 30 years. Today it's a 2008 Road King, customized at City Limits Harley Davidson in Palatine, Ill. The dealership is committed to veterans. You're welcome to look at the Road King, but do yourself a favor and first put on sunglasses.

Veterans of Foreign Wars: Centuries of Service

By Ricky LeClaire

As kids, we clambered over the artillery in the front yards of VFW posts and in the fall, we watched VFW members get together for clambakes.

As veterans ourselves, today we see it from another perspective. Veterans of Foreign Wars is part camaraderie, part civic service, part helping other veterans. In Ohio, the VFW has 68,000 members.

And what a history the VFW has; it was the original veteran-helping-veteran organization and began when troops returned from the Spanish-American War. In 1899.

In addition to war, there were other, important events. Henry Bliss was the first guy killed in an automobile accident. Cincinnati beat

the Cleveland Spiders twice, 16-1 and 19-3. The plague showed up for the first time in Hawaii. Sherlock Holmes took his first breath. Quite a year, 1899.

The VFW mission — then and now — was simple: Honor the dead by helping the living. Simple, yes. Easy, no. In 1899, there was no medical care for wounded or crippled veterans. No pensions. No nothing.

From a group of guys who decided their service shouldn't be kicked aside as the next generation of cannon fodder was sworn in, the original VFW chapters were formed in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Colorado.

From these small groups of men, the idea grew and by 1915, 5,000 veterans were members. Twenty years

later, it was almost 200,000. (If you must know, today there are 2.5 million members, and 9,000 posts.)

The VFW added its brain and muscle to some major administrative battles, including the creation of the Veterans Administration, the G.I. Bill, our national cemetery system, and compensation for this latest generation from the warrior class.

Battles big and small, but each important to veterans: the improvement in the VA medical system, making the VA a cabinet post,

and awarding millions of dollars in scholarships.

The VFW does lots more than that, and on a local level, the VFW provides a place where veterans can relax with other veterans, be part of a team helping returning veterans, assisting widows and their children. Members hold dances and dinners, play golf and sometimes travel, but most of all, they get a special satisfaction knowing they are part of a the best military tradition: Honoring the dead by helping the living.



Of Teachers and Students and Swings

By Tony Ganda PGA

AUTOMATIC PRESS

In the late '70s, headlines sounded more like death notices: Jack Nicklaus, the Golden Bear, was finished.

When Nicklaus won the 1980 U.S. Open, editors backtracked and said the Golden Bear has come out of hibernation. Jack Nicklaus won a second major, the PGA, in 1980. All was good for several years.

Erudite and experienced golf writers soon fell victim to their own cynicism, and agreed Jack was a great champion, but all champions succumb to time and age.

Then, in 1986, Nicklaus won his green jacket for the record-setting sixth time. Not only was Jack back, he went on to win another eight majors on the Champions Tour.

I bring this up because golf writers wonder aloud if Tiger Woods has seen his best days. *Can Tiger get over his personal problems and get back in the winner's circle? Can he regain the swing that won for him 14 majors and a total of 71 PGA tournaments?*



Photo: A.M. Roberts

Tony Ganda

Not so fast, please.

Woods' swing has changed throughout his career. From Harmon, Haney and now Foley, and these teachers were

just since 2000. Questions about Jack v. Tiger or vice versa are of two different times and conjure up "what ifs."

This "what if" mentality is just for entertainment, period. Sylvester Stallone's latest "Rocky" movie just posed the same question for boxing: What if?

Getting back to Tiger's changing teachers, with what some say is unnecessary frequency, must be taken with a grain of salt. Just because Jack Nicklaus had one lifetime teacher, Jack Grout, doesn't mean numerous teachers for Tiger is a bad thing. The teacher-student relationship in golf, much like in life, isn't subject to iron clad rules.

Some professional golfers opt for no teacher at all. Lee Trevino was quoted once as saying, "When somebody out there can beat me, then I'll consider him as a teacher." Lee never had a teacher.

Today's rising star Bubba Watson does not have a teacher for his game. The truth is some golfers have unique swings and for a period of time can play with the best. But when they get in trouble, it quickly gets worse. If no teacher understands the unique swing, adjust-

ing it is very difficult.

Me, I believe golfers should have a teacher or teachers to fall back on no matter what their swing looks like. Jim Furyk's golf swing was taught by his father, a club pro, and it is unlike any other. Today's newest touring pros have been taught in the proper PGA training programs.

One of the myriad joys of golf is its intimacy. We're able to study players one at a time, even compare the swings.

Right now many of us are enjoying Johnny Vegas' game, his successes and his setbacks. (Great name for a high-stakes gambler, too.) He's young, enthusiastic, and best of all, he's brought his game to the most demanding arena of all, the PGA Tour. And his swing? Television commentators regularly slow the video and show us the details. The smart money is on a long and successful career for him.

If your game needs the trained and experienced eye of a PGA professional, I hope you'll give me a call and arrange for a lesson: 440-725-2910 or e-mail tonyganda@hotmail.com.

Until then, I'll see you at the turn.

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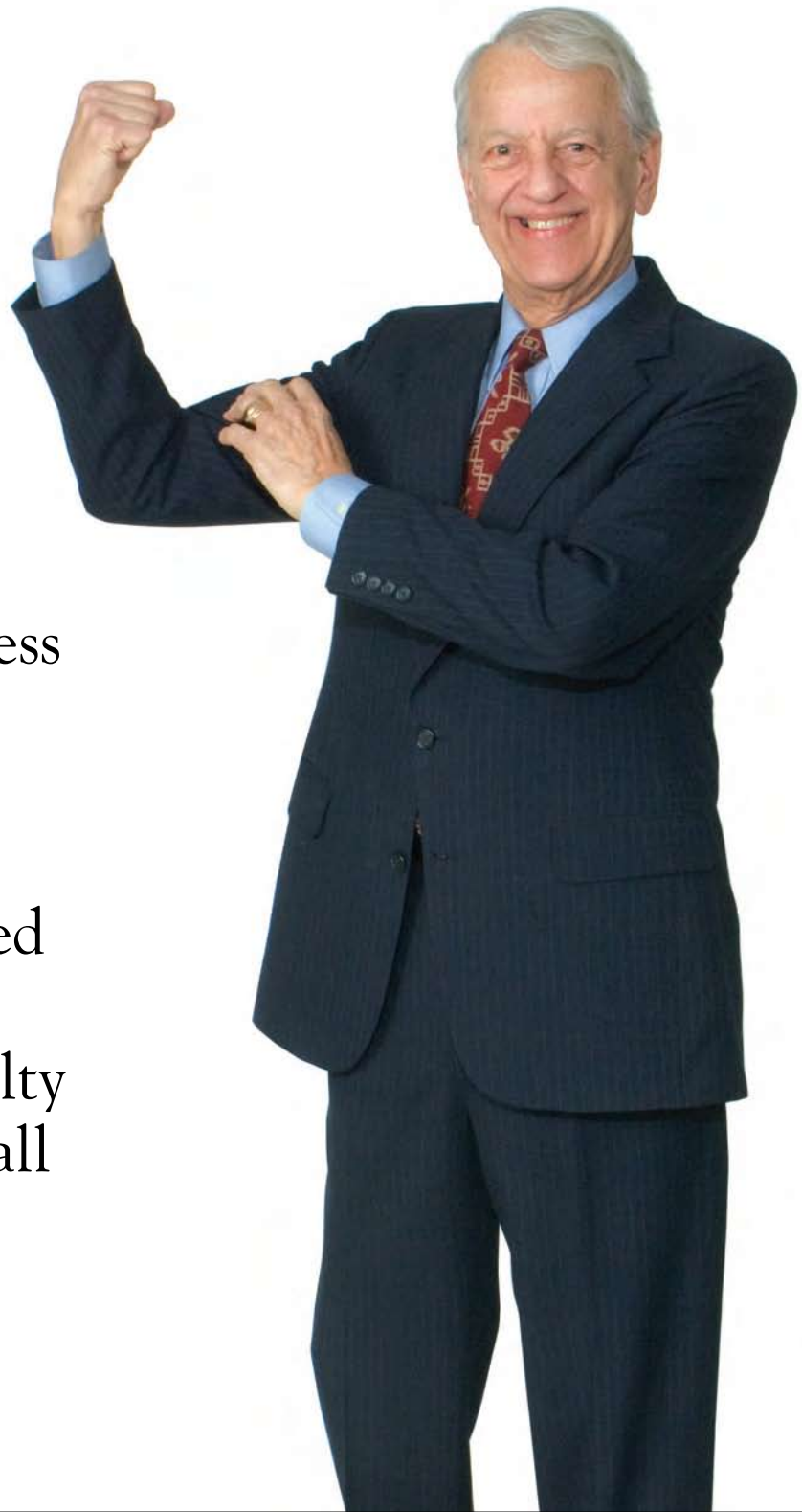
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At 82, Fred Griffith is a great example of what the MetroHealth specialists at The Senior Health & Wellness Center refer to as healthy aging. The Senior Health & Wellness Center provides access to the services you need and use most as you age - including primary and specialty care and skilled nursing. It's all there under one roof, to help you keep living the life you love. Just like Fred.



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