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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2024



*A Local Day  
of Mourning ...  
Page 5...*



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



Donald C. Stark

### *Honoring our veterans: Ashland County Fair's Walk of Honor & Service*

*By Hannah Martin*

The Ashland County Fair had a beautiful turnout for the Walk of Honor and Veterans Service on Monday morning. The veterans started their walk at the Veterans Building and marched around the walkway as people and visitors recognized them. Their walk ended at the pavilion, where the service occurred at 11 a.m. The crowd included senior citizens and children waving small American flags. Approximately 70 people gathered at the pavilion for the service. Once the service started, everyone stood as the flag was presented. The national anthem followed, and a prayer was recited.

"First and foremost, I want to begin by recognizing all those among us who have been a part of the U.S. military," said Mary Ann Dull. "It is your service and sacrifice that has kept our country safe and free." A moment was reserved for those mentioned to stand and be recognized for their service. "Veterans come from all walks of life, but they all share the same qualities: courage, pride, determination, dedication to duty, and integrity," Dull said. She also spoke about the Wall of Honor that will be going in the Veterans Building at the Ashland County Fairgrounds.

"This wall of honor features more than 770 photos of hometown patriots who have made Ashland County proud with their service — some even paying the ultimate sacrifice for their country."

Dull noted there is a section where they pay tribute to Ashland County veterans who were killed in action. She stated that if there is anyone in Ashland County looking for a loved one, they have kept a log of all the photos. "Please ask, and we will be more than glad to assist you in locating the photo," she said.

Don Stark, who also spoke at the service, shared briefly about his life and experience. "I'm here for Hospice of the Western Reserve, but I'm here for everybody that is seated in these chairs," Stark said. "I would like to speak about what has transpired over the last 10 to 12 years with how we are treated," he said. Stark then read "Stand at Ease," a piece he wrote for the DD214 Chronicle.

"I'm amazed by how many people nowadays take the time to use the thanks for your service daily," Stark said. "Just wear a cover or a hat or a t-shirt with your branch of service and get ready for people to step out of their routine to recognize our commitment to our country."

After the speakers, the service closed out with a beautiful rendition of "God Bless America."

**Don Stark**  
*Publisher/Sales Mgr.*  
*DD214 Chronicle*



Don Stark at the Mike

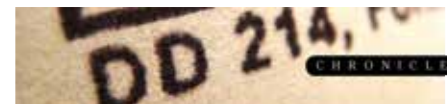
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# A Local Day of Mourning

By Joe Burdick

On a glorious Monday morning on August 26, 2024, over 100 people gathered at the Seven Hills City Hall to honor the sacrifice made by the 13 service members who paid the ultimate price for freedom at Abbey Gate in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021. I wanted to organize a fitting tribute to those 13 heroes, on the third anniversary of their passing.

My plan started in January; I contacted Senator JD Vance's office about making August 26 a National Day of Mourning. I contacted every Congressperson I could get an email for, but sadly, nobody responded. I decided to take it to a local level and reached out to my friend, Mayor Biasiotta of Seven Hills; he was on board right away.

I made a promise to Rachel Soviak when I first met her to help keep her son, Maxton's memory alive—a promise I intended to keep. From Berlin Heights, Ohio, Maxton was one of the 13 heroes.

As the day approached, I contacted surrounding cities, veterans, and active-duty personnel, inviting everyone to come and show their appreciation. I also reached out to my friend, Congressman Max Miller, to come say a few words. With the mayor's help, we had someone come to sing the national anthem; the color guard from American Legion Post

572 presented colors and played taps, and a wonderful prayer by Father Anthony Suso from Saint Columbkil Church. I also reached out to the Soviak family. Marilyn and Allison, sisters of Maxton Soviak, were in attendance.

The celebration started with the singing of the national anthem, followed by Mayor Biasiotta reading his proclamation. After the benediction, Congressman Miller had some beautiful words about duty, sacrifice, and honoring our veterans. I read the names of all 13 service members and asked everyone in attendance to say them with me. At the time, I had no idea how powerful this actually would be. After I spoke, Marilyn (Soviak) Dubbert said a few words of thanks to everyone for coming.

Along with the proclamation by Mayor Biasiotta,



Joe Burdick, State Senator Cirino, Mayor Anthony Biasiotta, Congressman Max Miller

I also received a proclamation from Mayor Kurtz of Independence, Ohio, and also I got one from Governor DeWine from the state of Ohio. I received 13 copies of the proclamations so I could send them to all 13 families so they would know that their child's name would not be forgotten. We owe it to our fallen heroes to say their names, we can't promise to "never forget" if we don't learn their names or their stories.

I have spoken to several of the Gold Star families after this day of mourning, and they were all grateful that a group of people in a city they had never heard of got together to honor the sacrifice their child made for our country. This day was not about politics; it was about honoring our fallen heroes!

I would like to thank the color guard, the veterans, first responders, active-duty personnel, Congressman Miller, State Senator Cirino, Mayor Biasiotta, and everyone in attendance for making this day special for the families of those 13 heroes.

I plan on making this a yearly event; hopefully, it will get bigger yearly. I also am not giving up on my goal of making it a National Day of Mourning. We owe it to them and their families

*Thank you,  
Joe Burdick/USN 1987-1995*



Joe Burdick with Marilyn and Allie Soviak and their families.



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# On PTSD, Moral Injury and Resilience

*Diana P. Congdon APRN*

## POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

The men and women leading this Class are the Knowledge Bank. They have lived War. I am an APRN Nurse Psychotherapist. I have learned from my patients, listening for hours over my 22 years practicing at the VA Medical Center in West Haven, CT. The Vet and I traveled the journey together, however far the Vet felt safe to travel.

PTSD, as it is mostly commonly referred to for our purposes, is the exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence by directly experiencing the traumatic event by witnessing the event as it occurred to others or by experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic events. PTSD is the Trauma that is caused by a life-threatening event.

The resulting intense level of anxiety caused by this Trauma is further intensified by nightmares and flashbacks that are unwanted and intrusive; they occur on their own without being triggered. This distress may last months or years, with triggers that can bring back memories of the trauma accompanied by intense emotional and physical reactions. Individuals suffering from PTSD often experience distress in several areas of their lives, specifically:

- **INTRUSIVE EXPERIENCES:** intrusive memories, flashbacks, distressing cues (fireworks);
- **AVOIDANCE:** people, places, activities, topics of conversation, memories/feeling reminders, social isolation, loneliness;
- **CHANGES IN THINKING/MOOD:** decreased interest in life, amnesia, chronic negative feelings like fear/horror/anger/guilt/shame, emotional detachment/estrangement, negative beliefs, inability to experience positive emotions;
- **AROUSAL/REACTIVITY:** agitation, irritable/angry outbursts, hostility, reckless or self-destructive behavior, hypervigilance, greatly increased startle response, considerably decreased concentration, and significant sleep disruption with insomnia/nightmares.

## MORAL INJURY

Moral Injury is a fairly recent concept to PTSD and provides a very important means to understanding the profound trauma inflicted upon the individual who has experienced the trauma of War. Moral Injury is the distressing psychological, behavioral, social, and spiritual aftermath of exposure to trauma in which people may perpetrate, fail to prevent, bear witness to, or learn about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations. Moral Injury is a normal human response to an abnormal traumatic event.

Psychiatrist Jonathan Shay developed this concept while working with Vets at the Boston VA. His definition required three components: Moral Injury is present when: 1. there has been a betrayal of what is morally right, 2. by someone who holds legitimate authority, and 3. in a high-stakes situation. Brett Litz added modifiers to encapsulate the moral anguish experienced by Vets during War: perpetrating, failing to prevent, or bearing witness to acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs. PTSD focuses on fear-related symptoms. Moral Injury focuses on symptoms related to guilt, shame, anger, and disgust. Litz suggests that cognitive dissonance occurs after a perceived moral transgression resulting in stable internal global attributions of blame,

followed by the experience of shame, guilt, or anxiety, causing the individual to withdraw from others. This demoralization can lead to self-harm or self-handicapping behavior. Brock and Lettini discuss Moral Injury as souls in anguish, not a psychological disorder, based on the struggle within the Vet with a lost sense of humanity. Feelings of Shame and Guilt can become major obstacles to the Vet reaching out for fear of being judged, which can then result in withdrawal or concealment. This impedes corrective and reparative experiences, and with more time passing, the Vet may come to believe that he/she is unforgivable

## RESILIENCE

Psychologically, Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress. Resilience gives the individual the strength needed to process and overcome hardship. The Trauma of War is very painful and drastically alters the individual's life. And, Resilience can involve significant emotional distress. Resilience focuses on aspects of that individual's life that he/she can control, modify, and grow with. It encourages a feeling of empowerment to overcome, grow, and improve one's life.

- **RESILIENCE CAN BE LEARNED:** The individual can change his/her behavior, thoughts, and actions.
- **RESILIENCE CAN BE BUILT BY:** Connecting with empathic and understanding individuals, individually or in groups;
- **PRACTICE SELF-CARE:** Engage in a positive healthy lifestyle and practice mindfulness and spirituality;
- **AVOID NEGATIVITY:** In the forms of negative thinking and alcohol/drugs;
- **DEVELOP GOALS:** Set realistic/achievable goals, start small;
- **FIND PURPOSE:** Look for real reasons for hope and learn from your past.

Individuals with Moral Injury can believe that they do not deserve to feel better. Shay describes the process of Recovery as purification through the communalization of trauma. Further, Shay stated that Moral Injury could only be absolved when the trauma survivor is permitted and empowered to voice their experience. It is important for Veterans with Moral Injury to see a path toward renewal and reconciliation.

## Author's Biography

Diana P Congdon, an APRN Nurse Psychotherapist, graduated from Columbia University School of Nursing in 1969. She secured a Masters in Psychiatric Nursing from Adelphi University and worked in a variety of positions, including 10 years with the Yale School of Nursing in a Joint Academic and Clinical Appointment. She taught at the school and administered a Treatment Inpatient Unit of a Community Mental Health Center. Eventually, she took a position with a VA hospital, assuming an Outpatient Clinical Nurse Specialist position in their Outpatient Substance Abuse Clinic. She supervised Graduate Nursing Students, Chaired Committees, and practiced Individual and Group Therapies. After 22 years with the VA, she retired and continued her work at a small private counseling center, expanding her private practice. She presented the above information as part of a course sponsored by the Baldwin-Wallace University Institute for Learning in Retirement from January to February 2022. Entitled "Once Upon a Distant War: Vietnam, Myth, and Music," the course was the brainchild of two Vietnam veterans: Mary Reynolds Powell, an Army nurse in Vietnam from 1970-71, and Doug Bradley, a U.S. Army combat correspondent in Vietnam during the same years.

# Farewell to John (JC) Sullivan - A Great Loss to the Veteran and Irish Communities

*By Jim Riley*

Sadly, we have to say goodbye to one of our own.... Our good friend and frequent contributor to this paper, John (JC) Sullivan, passed away in Cleveland on September 22, 2024 surrounded by his family.

Everyone who met JC will remember his humor, his patriotism, and his intelligence. In recent years, he began writing and soon became a frequent contributor to the DD 214 Chronicles, the Irish Echo (based in New York), and the Mayo News in Ireland. His articles can still be found on the internet.

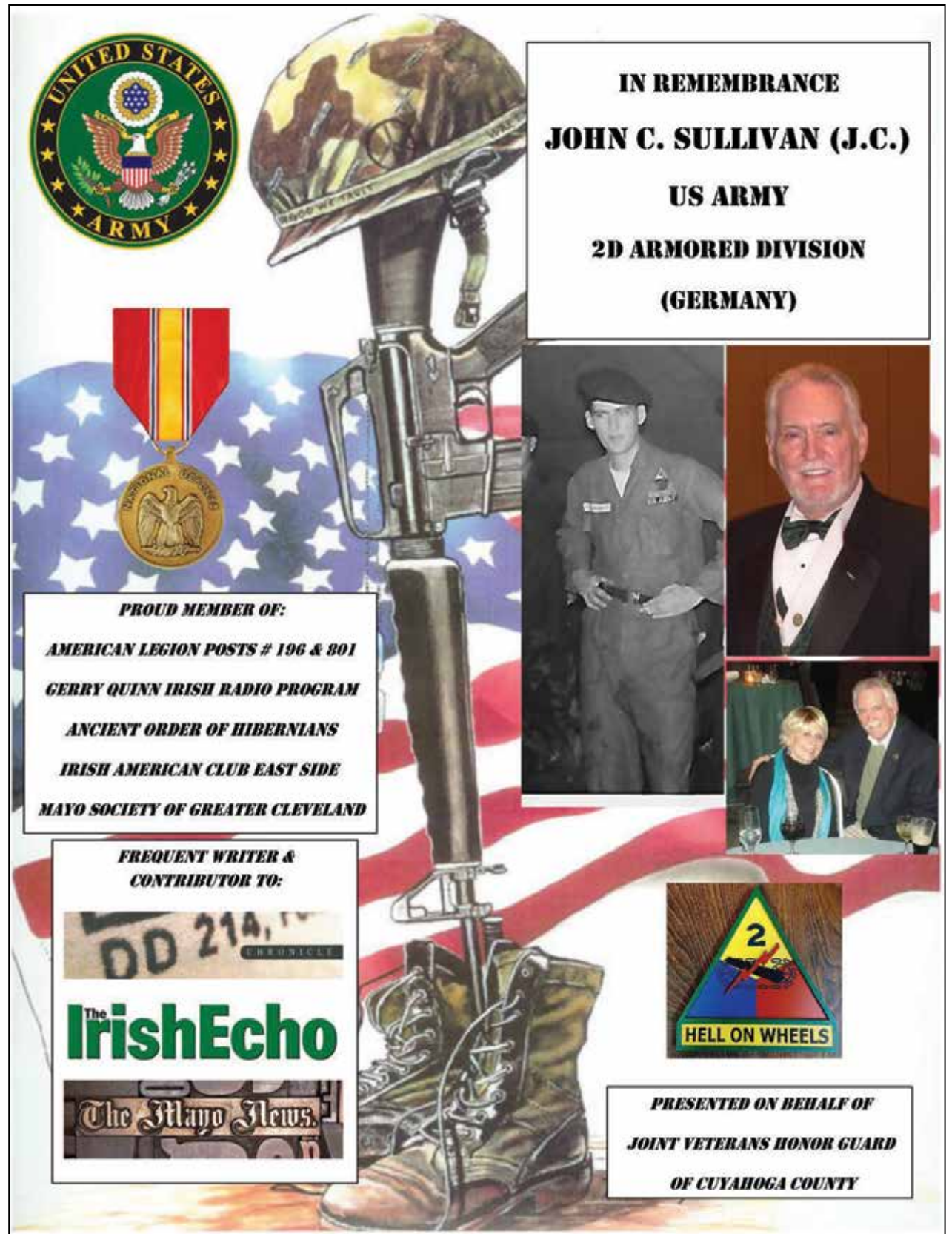
On active duty, JC served with the 2d Armored Division "Hell on Wheels" in Germany. He continued serving his country and fellow Veterans when he became commander of American Legion Posts #196 and 801. He's been a very devoted and active alumnus of Benedictine High School class of 1960.

One time, JC went on the local Gerry Quinn Irish Radio Program to discuss an article he had written about a local Irish event. The listeners and Gerry Quinn took an instant liking to him, and for the next twenty years, JC became one of the co-hosts of the show. It can be heard at 1420 AM every Sunday from 10 until noon. JC would live-stream the interviews and guest performers and later post them to the show's website and Facebook page.

If there was a local Irish event, chances are JC would be there. He was a proud member of the Mayo Society of Greater Cleveland and the Irish American Club East Side. He became active with the Ancient Order of Hibernians both in the Cleveland and Akron areas and eventually became a national officer for the organization.

He stayed active in his community when he later served on Northfield Village's council. He leaves behind his family and many, many friends. He will be missed by them all.

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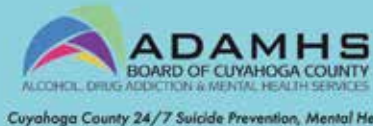
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# Chaplain's Corner by Rev. Willie Springer



Christians on January 7 that commemorates the birth of Christ and is usually observed as a legal holiday, this means Christmas lights, trees decor, advent calendars”. However we celebrate, let’s remember the purpose of the celebration. We are thankful that Jesus is the reason for the season. Again, let’s give Thanks to our Lord and Savior. Let’s be thankful for the price that was paid upon Calvary for our salvation, that was given to us freely. Our sins’ debts have been paid in full if we only believe.

John 15:13 “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” I truly believe when one serves our country, we serve One Nation Under God.

I wish everyone a very Happy Thanksgiving, a very special Merry Christmas, and the New Year of 2025.

*Blessings,*  
Rev Chaplain Willie Springer MAPT  
Executive Director of Northern Ohio Veterans Association  
Berea, OH. 44017  
wspringer@cityofbera.org

*Hello-Hello-Hello*

Thank you for your undivided attention; I am grateful to bring you a two-part Chaplain's Corner in this series. Note that November brings Thanksgiving. Let's give thanks. December brings Christmas. Let's be thankful for who the reason for the season is. Let's give thanks.

Now that I have your attention, Let's speak about Thanksgiving; Webster describes Thanksgiving “as a public acknowledgment, or a celebration of divine goodness, or the act of giving thanks: maybe a prayer of expressing gratitude”. What are we thankful for? Can you relate as we move forward? Feel free to add to all your gratitude to your Thanksgiving.

I'm so grateful to be thankful for our Lord and Savior, who has brought us this far by Faith, and not by sight. Giving us new Grace and Mercies each day. I'm Thankful for families, jobs, food on the table, clothing on our backs, and shelter in the time of a storm. I'm thankful for health and strength. I'm thankful for the United States of America, Our Veterans who have served our country, and Our Men and Women who are standing in harm's way for our country's Freedom. May God Bless America!!! Let thy light continue to shine and reflect with a prayer of gratitude this coming Thanksgiving,

Webster define Christmas as a “Christian feast on December 25 or among some Eastern Orthodox

VETERANS



COFFEE

With Chaplain Willie  
Executive Director of  
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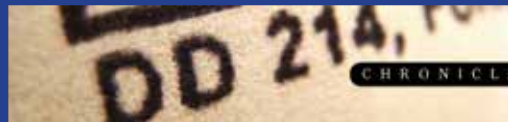
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Breakfast provided by: Sips & Such Social House



*No Veteran Walks Alone!* ®



By Jim Riley

## Veterans Day Benefit Concert: Sunday, November 10, 2024

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Medina High School Auditorium

777 East Union Street

Medina, OH, 44256

*Please mark your calendars!*

The Men of Independence Chorus and the Brass Band of the Western Reserve are proud to present a free concert on Sunday, November 10, at Medina High School to honor and support our veterans.

This will be a free concert open to the public, but donations are encouraged.

100% of the donations will be given to the Medina County Veterans Memorial Fund and the Cleveland American Veterans Association.

**VETERANS RESOURCE FAIR**

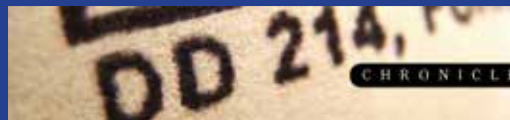
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THANK YOU TO THE VETERANS COMMITTEE FOR THEIR SUPPORT.



## AO Cleveland Operations in Cleveland and Surrounding Areas



<b>9 Nov</b>	7:30 pm	Cleveland Cavaliers Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse	Veteran's Salute To Service	
<b>9 Nov</b>	10:00am-Noon	Northern Ohio Veterans Association (NOVA)	Monthly Coffee Chat	Berea Rec Center, Berea
<b>10 Nov</b>		Various USMC Organizations & Marine Corps Leagues	US Marine Corps 249th Birthday	
<b>10 Nov</b>	3:00-7:00 PM	Guitars 4 Veterans	Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser	VFW #2533 W. 150th & Lorain
<b>10 Nov</b>	2:00 PM	Brass Band of Western Reserve	Veterans Day Concert	Medina High School
<b>11 Nov</b>	11:00 AM	Joint Veterans Council of Cuyahoga Cty. & City of Cleveland	Veterans Day Ceremony - Military & Police Units	Medina High School
<b>11 Nov</b>	11:00 AM	Joint Veterans Honor Guard & City of Lakewood	Veterans Day Ceremony	Veterans Circle at Lakewood Park
<b>13 Nov</b>	11 - 3:00 PM	RID-ALL Green Partnership and NEOPAT (40 Vendors)	Veterans Resource Fair	Estabrook Rec Ctr. Cleveland
<b>30 Nov</b>	12:00 Noon	VFW Post #2533	Buckeye Bash: OSU/Michigan	W. 150th, So. of Lorain
<b>1 Dec</b>		Disabled American Vets (DAV) and Guitars 4 Vets	Dinner, Christmas Carols & Bingo	Veterans Home, Sandusky
<b>7 Dec</b>	10:00 - Noon	Northern Ohio Veterans Association (NOVA)	Monthly Coffee Chat	Berea Rec Center, Berea
<b>7 Dec</b>		Various VFW and American Legion Posts	Pearl Harbor Remembrance Events	



# Forest City Supply Takes Army Surplus Into Next Generation

By Brian Albrecht

So, what's in Santa's rucksack for vets or anyone else with an appreciation for field-tested, American-made, reasonably-priced military surplus gear? Welcome to Forest City Supply ([www.Forestcitysupply.com](http://www.Forestcitysupply.com)), a Cleveland business that takes the old Army surplus retail concept to a new level.

"We're not some small cramped store with stuff cluttered all over the place," said co-owner and operations manager Ron Sommer. "This takes army surplus into the next generation." According to Sommer, Forest City Supply, 3212 W. 25th St., covers 15,000 square feet of what may be the largest military surplus seller in the state.

Its inventory numbers in the tens of thousands of items, Sommer said, nearly all purchased from U.S. Department of Defense sources, and aimed at outdoors/camping/survival enthusiasts.

Products include backpacks, pouches, duffel bags, shelters, boots and shoes, bedding, first aid kits, field and assault packs, hydration packs and carriers, extreme cold weather gear, tools, apparel, and more. The surplus is bought by the pallet, then inspected, divided, and priced according to the condition – new, excellent, good, or defect. Forest City will also buy or trade items from customers. The store basically covers "anything you need if you're going survive outside," Sommer said.

Along with the product, you get an explanation, a feature sometimes lacking in surplus stores. "Most of the surplus stores out there still have the old way of doing surplus. They'll tell you what something is but not how it works and what it could be used for," Sommer said. "We're doing it different. We're doing it better."

According to Sommer, the shop gets a mix of people, including "outdoorsy types" and sometimes active-duty service members seeking to replace lost or stolen gear. Part of the appeal of American-made products is that they're more durable than more expensive foreign items, and "they're not going rip when you brush up against a branch," he added.

Forest City has been a family-oriented business since its inception in 2022. Sommer said the venture initially started as a means for him and his wife and co-owner Rachael to teach their children – daughter Maddie, 13, and son Zeke, 6 – what it means to run a business. "After doing some research, we thought, why not buy equipment from the military and see if we could resell it," Sommer recalled. "We bought \$300 worth of elbow pads, brought home a pallet, and unloaded it into our living room. My wife thought I was absolutely nuts, but within a day, they were selling. "What I thought would take a year sold in a couple of weeks, so we bought more stuff, added some variety, and the next thing you know, I had to quit my job [as an automotive sales manager]. We were growing so fast."

The army surplus concept also aligned with the family's own interests in the outdoors. "We do a lot of camping, hiking, and backpacking. We're trying to take the kids to all the national parks before they turn 18," said Sommer, 43, who is not a veteran, but his father served in the Air Force.

Before long, his wife left her job as a research operations manager to help run a business, which allows time for the couple to concentrate on the care of their daughter, who is being treated for lymphoma. Sommer said he enjoys the work's "flexibility, being able to spend time together as a family."

The future looks bright for Forest City Supply, according to Sommer. "We can't keep up [with demand]. It's continuing to grow, and we've got tons of room for growth," he said. Future plans include offering training courses in such subjects as hiking and first aid.

To which Santa might add a hearty, "Ho-Ho-HOOAH!"

(Forest City Supply is open Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For additional details, call 440-207-0782.)



Forest City Supply has been a family-oriented business for Ron and Rachael Sommer since its inception in 2022. The couple is shown with their son, Zeke, and store employee Jonathan Sabo.



Forest City Supply products are displayed in simulated outdoor settings throughout the second-floor store on West 25th St.



*You won't miss the door of Forest City Supply, an entry that encompasses its blend of military surplus in outdoor settings.*



*Open space and woody décor are featured in the Forest City Supply showroom.*

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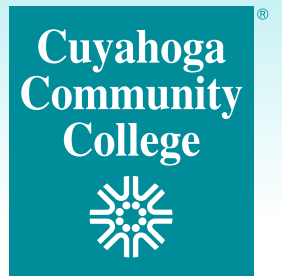


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22-0935

# General George Patton's Flag

By Barb Smith

My husband Bob and I have visited Bastogne, Belgium, three times in the past year. We hold in our hearts treasured memories of the places we have toured, the kind citizens and inquisitive children we have met, and thoughts of gratitude and wonderment for our brave soldiers who selflessly sacrificed their youth, limb, and life to liberate Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944.

During our third visit from Sept. 3-Sept. 8, our education on the Battle of the Bulge continued. At noon on Sept. 4, we drove to the General George S. Patton Memorial just beyond the city center of Bastogne. The stone monument is tucked in the back corner of a parking lot, below a four-story apartment building on Merceny Square, flanked by the flag of Belgium to its right and the American flag to its left. We parked and walked across the huge five-point star on the walk and studied the chiseled details of Patton's face. The monument is dedicated to General George Smith Patton, who broke the siege of Bastogne on December 26, 1944, to relieve the encircled 101st Airborne Division 1944, who had stood their ground under great peril for six days. General Patton's grandson, Lt. John Waters of the 4th Armored Division, unveiled the monument on September 8, 1963. We traced the historical route on the information board to the right of the monument.

I took a photo of Bob. Two city workers appeared at the flag pole intending to take down the American flag. "WAIT!" I exclaimed! Please, gentlemen, we are taking photos. "We are just changing the flag. We'll be done in a moment."

I breathed a sigh of relief. They approached us. They introduced themselves as Jean and Marc. Marc extended the flag to Bob. "Would you like it?" Tears flooded his eyes, Bob whispered, "Yes." Many more photos later, we thanked Jean and Marc again. "Our honor."

"We're driving to Etlebruck tomorrow to tour the Patton Museum," I said. "We'll make sure to take a photo there with our General Patton flag!" Marc smiled as Jean drove away.

Sept. 5: Docent Susan was grateful to have Americans visit the General George S. Patton Museum in Etlebruck, Luxembourg. She shared that Etlebruck had been under Nazi occupation for four years and four months. Patton's Third Army liberated Etlebruck in December 1944. Etlebruck is known as "Patton Town." She kindly

invited us to participate in the 80th anniversary of Etlebruck's double liberation on the weekend of Sept. 21-22, 2024. "General Patton's grandson, Benjamin Patton, will be here, and you could probably meet him." "We will be in the Netherlands celebrating the 80th anniversary of Operation Market Garden," Bob said. "Sadly, we cannot be in two locations at the same time, Susan." I added, "I would love to have told Benjamin the story of our special Patton flag."

Before leaving the museum, Susan snapped a photo of us in front of the Patton prototype statue. "A mile walk from here, you can see the actual monument," she stated. "The Memorial Park is located at the edge of the town where the Americans pushed back the Germans to recapture Etlebruck," she added.

Before entering the Patton Memorial Park, I snapped a photo of Bob pointing to the plaque: Avenue John F. Kennedy John F. Kennedy is Bob's favorite president. Bob was a sailor aboard the carrier USS FDR off the coast of Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962.



Bob & Barb under Patton statue- Patton Museum



Patton's monument



Bob holds flag with Bastogne city workers



Bob shakes hands with city worker



Patton's Former Headquarters

At the General George S. Patton Monument, the city workers were hard at work laying and watering new sod for the upcoming festivities. We thanked them for honoring our soldiers. "We are honored to do it."

On Sept. 7, the tour of Patton's flag continued with our friend and guide, Fabiano. We stopped at the Patton Monument in Arlon, Luxembourg. The monument is exactly on the site where General Patton addressed his men on their way to Bastogne for the "Battle of the Bulge" in December 1944.

The text below the bronze medallion of Patton's profile on the 1957 stone obelisk reads: "From this point on December 24, 1944, General Patton sent forth the Third Army into the battle of the Ardennes."

Later in the day, just outside Luxembourg, Fabiano snapped a photo of us holding our Patton flag in front of a magnificent stone mansion just outside the city center of Luxembourg. The plaque reads: "In this building, General S. Patton, Jr. had his headquarters from December 21, 1944, to March 27, 1945."

We viewed the gravesite of General George Patton, Jr., amongst his soldiers in the Luxembourg American Cemetery.

From an article by U.S Army historian Kevin Hymel: "On December 9, 1945, Patton was sitting in the back of his limousine when his driver, PFC Horace Woodring, sped too fast over a railroad crossing in Manheim, Germany, and plowed into the passengerside of a left-turning Army truck heading into a depot... At 5:55 pm on December 21, 1945, General George S. Patton, Jr. passed away in his sleep."

Hymel, K. (2020, Dec. 21). The Death of a General: George S. Patton, Jr. The National World War II Museum. <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/>

general-george-s-patton-jr-death

Now, at home, we reflect on our third trip to Bastogne, Belgium. We will remember Jean and Marc, who gifted us this special symbol of World War II at that serendipitous meeting at Patton's Monument in Bastogne on Sept. 4, 2024. We are grateful to Fabiano for the places we have taken this special keepsake, paying homage to one of America's greatest battlefield commanders. On Veteran's Day, we will remove our Patton flag from its frame, fly it with pride, and perhaps sing "Happy Birthday," as George Smith Patton, Jr was born on November 11, 1885, in San Gabriel, California.

Barb Smith: [ussfdr82@gmail.com](mailto:ussfdr82@gmail.com)



Patton's grave

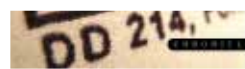


Patton monument-Ettlebruck

From the DD214 staff...



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- individuals with a mental condition
- individuals who have a loved one (family, spouse, etc.) with a mental health condition.

Visit [www.namigreatercleveland.org](http://www.namigreatercleveland.org) for more information on all programs and resources.

# Newly Arrived Afghan Interpreters Adjust to New Life, New Challenges in USA

By Jacob Arnett

In December of '22 and January '23, I wrote an article for The Chronicle called "Christmas, Afghanistan" about my interpreters who were awaiting a possible relocation to America under the Special Immigrant Visa program, or SIV, as it is commonly referred to. I highlighted two brothers, Emal and Ahmad Shah, and wrote about their difficulty in making a living for their respective families under the watchful eye of the Taliban. Could you imagine going for a job interview in Afghanistan, where your life is at risk if you were discovered to have worked with the Americans, then trying to confidently explain where you were working and with who for the last 5-10 years? Seems like a rough interview. Frankly, it doesn't end up happening,

so these families have been struggling monumentally these last few years. To make matters worse, many of them were already unemployed before the invasion as the drawdown of US troops closed many bases, and there were few interpreter jobs anyway, so money was tight before the Taliban took control. Having highlighted these issues in my previous article, a few of our readers donated several hundred dollars to these guys with me to help float our Afghan friends along. You know who you are! Before the end of this article, I will humbly request you to once again decide if you have a few bucks you could spare to help out some families directly. I'll guarantee

100% goes directly to them. That said, I'm happy to announce the arrival of one of the brothers, Emal, to the great state of Texas! While not here in the States, his brother, Shah is at least safely in Qatar at a facility for Afghan refugees with his family, patiently awaiting his transport to the States. There's not enough room to give the several pages of what efforts it took to make this happen!

Over a decade ago in Afghanistan, I worked with another former U.S. Marine named Jack, who not only got to spend time working with Emal and Shah, but he also felt the kindness and trust I had in them. He and I agreed they were exceptional in making complex relations with many tribes seem easy. We had seen other sites in Afghanistan similar in size to ours, which had experienced myriad issues between the supervisors and the Afghans, sometimes causing issues with the U.S. Army personnel. Even deadly ones. I relied on these guys to assist me with 100 Afghan

guards from various tribes, 24/7/365. They briefed me in advance of discontent, tribal issues, and guys who were "no good." I changed company policy on leave times because of the number of Afghans I had employed from the mountainous northern regions of Badakhshan, bordering the Himalayas, granting them an extra 3-5 days leave with travel time. We became a model for fair treatment of these Afghans, and the results proved this over the years. This harmonious and effective Afghan force simply could not have been achieved without Shah and Emal.

The Marine mentioned above, Jack, and his wife really stepped up to the plate once Emal and his family ar-



*"We can go back to school!" (daughters at school in Texas)*

ived. Purchasing a minivan for this young family with their own money, I really couldn't even comprehend the level of selflessness that they showed to this young family living not so far from them in Texas. Honestly, I watched politician after politician from both American political parties discuss their interest with me via phone calls and emails, only to fall by the wayside once the Ukraine war started and Afghans were all but forgotten. I'm happy to say we silently served in the background for our guys after the media ceased to give attention. Marines never forget. So, God bless Jack and his family for upholding the standard for all Marines. Emal's children...the look on their faces. It truly brings a tear to my eyes. Away from the Taliban, these girls have as much

as a 180-degree turn for the better in life here in America. Despite our many faults as a country, they can still pursue an education here as far as they want to go. The struggle their parents face as immigrants will be an example and an inspiration to them as they adapt to their new home, make friends, and grow into strong and confident young American women.

As nice as it sounds to have helped our Afghan interpreters get here, we have quickly learned in our work with them that those lucky enough to arrive in the USA, are immediately faced with the challenge of finding jobs that pay a living wage to afford the exponentially higher cost of living here in the states. I had a conversation recently with an Iraqi interpreter who has been living in the fairly affordable state of New Mexico and is considering moving back to Baghdad due to the cost of living here now that the security situation there has improved. Afghans certainly don't have this option. Not with the Taliban in power. This is why I'm requesting that you please donate something, if you can afford it, towards a small investment in a couple of families that have the potential to make us feel TRULY proud as Americans. Your kindness will pass on through their generations as people who truly needed us to provide love and support for them when they needed it most. My friends, I look forward to our next communication. Semper Fi.

P.S. If you would like to donate, contact [jacobarnett@gmail.com](mailto:jacobarnett@gmail.com) We've set up a "gofundme



*Emal and his daughters love their first American car!*

# Civil War Fomented by Demon of Unrest

By Nancy Peacock

In a year consumed by political drama, it would be hard to imagine an era more closely matched to today's electoral divide than the one that precipitated the American Civil War. Author Erik Larson examines the critical five months before the first shots were fired to deliver a narrative shockingly modern and familiar.

In *The Demon of Unrest* (Crown, 2024), Larson explores the central question of how and why the war happened.

"How on earth did South Carolina, a primitive, scantily populated state in economic decline, become a fulcrum for America's greatest tragedy?" Larson wrote. "And even more bewildering, what malignant magic brought Americans on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line to the point where they could actually imagine the wholesale killing of one another?"

As a master storyteller, Larson identifies key individuals on both sides who played a critical part in the unfolding tragedy. He follows these individuals through the events that sparked a civil war and led to the death of 750,000 Americans.

One of Larson's central tenets is that both northern and southern states underestimated the emotional fervor on the other side.

In the north, Abraham Lincoln has just been elected president of a country whose individual states have been fighting with each other over slavery for decades. Previous political compromises had only brought more conflict. With every new day, slavery became more intolerable in the northern states.

In the south, the slave-holding planters saw themselves as an aristocracy called the chivalry. Their rules of etiquette were taken from a book titled *The Duello*, written as a code of honor in dueling, but more accurately, serving as a genteel justification for maintaining their privileged lifestyle. As one planter explained, the chivalry "were the nearest to noblemen of any possible in America."

Slavery was a bedrock element of this self-anoint-

ed aristocracy. As one planter explained to outgoing President James Buchanan in December of 1860, "Slavery with us is no abstraction – but a great and vital fact. Without it, our every comfort would be taken from us. Our wives, our children, made unhappy – education, the light of knowledge – all lost and our people ruined forever. Nothing short of

initially less than enthusiastic, he found a receptive audience in Charleston, South Carolina.

During the week before Christmas, 169 delegates met in Charleston and voted to secede from the union. Ruffin was thrilled.

"As I now write, after 10 p.m., I hear the distant sounds of rejoicing, with music from a military band, as if there was no thought of ceasing," he noted in his diary.

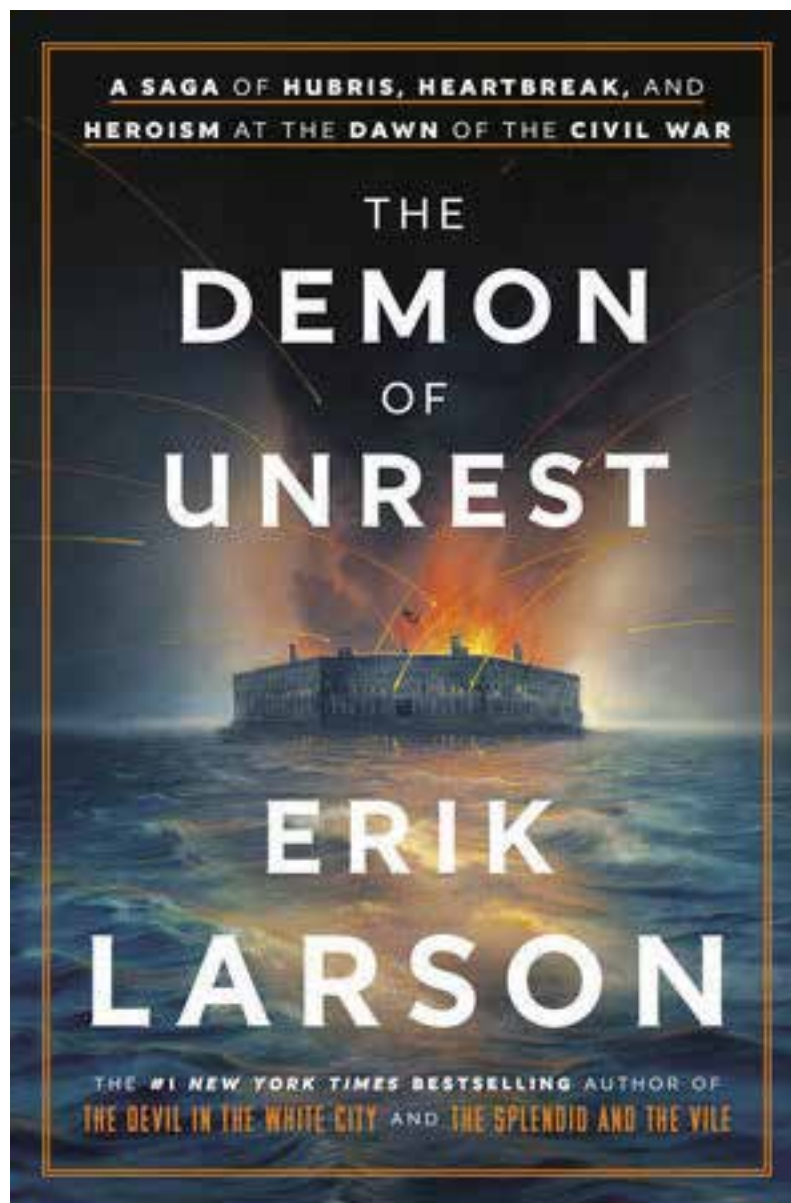
Although the mood in many Charleston households was jubilant, there were people like Mary Chestnut, wife of one of the delegates, who perceived the tragic implications of what secession could bring. Larson uses Chestnut's diary entries as one of the few southern voices sounding a note of caution. When news of the secession ordinance reached the house where she was staying, the mood was somber.

"We sat staring in each other's faces," she wrote.

Meanwhile, in Charleston Harbor, U.S. Maj. Robert Anderson was responsible for a small garrison of Army regulars guarding Fort Sumter. With provisions running low and only 75 soldiers in a facility designed for 650, he repeatedly sent requests to Washington for guidance on how to proceed. But the government in Washington was in transition and outgoing President Buchanan wanted to leave office without provoking any more southern backlash.

In a speech to Congress, Buchanan said no state had the right to secede, but that the conflict "has assumed such vast and alarming proportions as to place the subject entirely above and beyond Executive control."

In other words, Congress would have to fix the problem. Buchanan could not. Larson summarized it this way: "The pace at which the Union began to disintegrate was breathtaking and Lincoln had yet to set foot in Washington."



*The Demon of Unrest* bookcover

separation from the Union can save us."

No one defended slavery more vociferously than Edmund Ruffin, a 66-year-old Virginia slaveholder and firebrand. His hatred of all things Yankee drove him to take on the cause of promoting secession throughout the south. While his native state was



Larson describes in fascinating detail the events that culminated in the attack on Fort Sumter. The bombardment lasted 34 hours, with no deaths or injuries during the attack. The Union forces surrendered on April 14, 1861. Mary Chestnut's husband was said to have predicted that the total amount of blood to be shed over a war for secession would "fill a lady's thimble."

Instead, Lincoln immediately issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 troops. Four years later, to the day after Major Anderson was forced to evacuate the fort, the American flag was raised again.

In the book's epilogue, Larson described some of the outcomes of individuals caught up in the Demon of Unrest that precipitated the destruction of the south.

Larson saved the last vignette of his book for Ruffin, who, at the age of 70, had lost his health, family, property, and central cause. In the last paragraph of his 4,099-page diary, he took one last shot at his enemy: "I hereby declare my unmitigated hatred to Yankee rule – to all political, social and business connection with Yankees – and to the Yankee race. Would that I could impress these sentiments, in their full force, on every living southerner, and bequeath them to everyone yet to be born!"

Ruffin then turned his loaded musket on himself and pulled the trigger. The Demon of Unrest had claimed its most rabid supporter.



Book author, Erik Larson

# USSVI National Convention: Cleveland Ohio Week of August 19th, 2024

By Bill Sync

Cleveland, Ohio, August 19 - 24, 2024 — More than 550 Submarine veterans and their guests attended the United States Submarine Veterans, Incorporated (USSVI) yearly Convention held in Independence Ohio this past August. Numerous activities and events were held for the Sub Vets and their guests. The USSVI Cleveland Ohio Cod Base hosted the Convention and provided a chance to show off the great city of Cleveland and its outlying communities. Attendees were provided the opportunity to take a wine and brewery tour, take a Cleveland Bus Tour, visit the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, take a Lake Eire Dinner Cruise, attend a Guardians baseball game, tours of the USS Cod Submarine Memorial, and ride the Cuyahoga Valley Railroad. US Submarine Force Staff YNSC Ben Hopson (a native of Cleveland) threw out the first pitch for Friday night's Guardian Game.

In addition to the national convention there were several individual Submarine Groups that held their own private reunions during the week with past crewmembers of the USS Ohio, USS Jallao, USS Ronquil, and USS Skate.

On Wednesday afternoon a panel discussion was held concerning the current state of the US Submarine Service facilitated by Mr. Ed Bartlett

*Continued on page 24...*



Rich Ullum USSVI Cod Base member greets a USSVI Sub Vet at the Embassy Suites Rockside hotel.



USSVI Sub Vets on the way to the Football hall of Fame





**PEACEFUL AND PROUD**  
HONORING ALL WHO SERVED



**HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE**

**Join us for a free Virtual Veterans' Café**  
**Thursday, December 12, 1 p.m.**

Learn how volunteers are serving fellow veterans through our Peaceful & Proud program. Connect and share stories with other veterans via your cell phone, iPad or laptop. **We'll get you connected.**

**To register:** Email Nate Gradisher at [ngradisher@hospicewr.org](mailto:ngradisher@hospicewr.org) or visit [hospicewr.org/VetCafe](http://hospicewr.org/VetCafe) for upcoming dates.

800.707.8922 | [hospicewr.org](http://hospicewr.org)



## USSVI National Convention

*Continued from page 23*

of Bartlett Maritime Corporation. A brief history was given of submarines and then a panel discussion was held addressing the current crisis in submarine maintenance through aggressive, innovative measures. Bartlett Maritime is headquartered in Cleveland and seeks to leverage the industrial capacity of the Great Lakes region and the extensive experience of the company's leadership team in the naval shipyard and nuclear-powered submarine industry.

The Cleveland Terminal Tower turned Blue and Gold for the American Submariners in Cleveland for the USSVI 2024 National Convention. On Friday at 4 p.m. the USS Cod Submarine Memorial hosted a Submarine Tolling of the Boats, a Ceremony Honoring Lost and Fallen Submariners. The event honored over 3,839 submarine veterans who lost their life in military service abroad submarines. In the Navy, a submarine is referred to as a boat. During the ceremony, a short description of what happened to each submarine was read, followed by the number of sailors lost on the boat. A ceremonial bell was then rung in memory of each submarine as part of the observance. The public was also invited to this unique event and learned about some of the traditions and history of the "Silent Service."

During the Saturday night awards dinner special guest Vice Adm. Robert M. Gaucher Commander, Naval Submarine Forces and Allied Submarine Command addressed the current state of the US Submarine Fleet and took several questions from the audience. USSVI National Officers were introduced, and National Commander Bill Andrea made a brief presentation. The incoming National Commander Jon Jaques followed up with comments.

The USSVI currently boasts an active membership of over 13,000 active members and their website can be accessed via USSV Home Page - United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. ([ussvi.org](http://ussvi.org)). Proof of designated as Qualified in Submarines along with annual dues is the only requirements for joining.

In 1964 the USSVI was founded with the following creed:

*"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation towards greater accomplishment and patriotism to the United States of America."*

Next year's Convention is scheduled for August 2025 in Orlando, Florida.



*USSVI Cod Base member Mike Burk honors all who have passed on*



*Mike Mihalisin Tolling the Bell for each Submarine that never returned*



*The crowd attending the Tolling of The Boats at the USS Cod at Cleveland's Harbor Honoring all the Submariners that never returned from patrol*



# VETERAN APPRECIATION DAYS IN

# Kent

**NOVEMBER 20  
6TH-14TH 24**

## *KSU Football Military Appreciation Day* **WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 6TH**

Kent State vs. Ohio University  
7PM

Kent State football salutes our nation's heroes as it faces off against the Ohio University Bobcats on Wednesday, November 6.



All are welcome to be a part of an unforgettable evening dedicated to our military personnel. Priority and discounted game tickets are available to current service members and veterans.

## *KSU Veterans Day Commemoration* **FRIDAY NOVEMBER 8TH**

Kent Campus Student Green  
11AM-1PM

KSU thanks and recognizes all those who served honorably in the U.S. military. Senior Vice President and Provost Melody Tankersley, Ph.D. will provide a welcome followed by keynote speaker Maj. Allison Brager, Ph.D.



## *American Legion Post 496 Hero's Ruck* **SATURDAY NOVEMBER 9TH**

Veterans Memorial 201 East Erie St., Kent  
Registration Fee \$35  
8AM-3PM

Veterans and non-veterans alike are encouraged to participate in the American Legion Post 496 Hero's Ruck fundraising event. All proceeds generated help provide companion animals from the Portage Animal Protective League (APL) free of charge to veterans or first responders.



## *PARTA Veterans Day Ceremony* **MONDAY NOVEMBER 11TH**

Veterans Memorial,  
201 E. Erie St., Kent  
1PM-2PM

For more than two decades the Portage Area Region Transportation Authority (PARTA) has hosted a commemorative event on Veterans Day to honor and celebrate veterans for the sacrifices they have made.

This year PARTA recognizes Post 496 of the American Legion for their efforts to alleviate PTSD in veterans with their pets for vets initiative.

## *Veterans Career Expo* **THURSDAY NOVEMBER 14TH**

Kent State Student Center (RM 218)  
11AM-2PM  
11AM-12PM (Veterans only)  
12PM-2PM (Non-veteran students & Alumni)

The 2024 Veteran Career Expo will feature 30 local and regional organizations looking to hire for internships, full-time, and part-time positions.

All KSU students are welcome, however, student veterans have priority from 11 AM to 12 PM. Veteran partner resource agencies will also be available.



# ATTENTION

## • Vet-2-Vet Classifieds •

*This Classified page has been added, particularly for veteran units, VFW's American Legions, DAV's etc., to advertise Get-Togethers, Fund Raisers, BBQ's and the like, for your advertising needs. Please Join Us!*

**Five bucks per line of copy with free bolding and color. Contact (216) 323-4699 or donaldstark408@gmail.com**

**Looking for some fun volunteer work to support our Veteran Community? If you have an interest, please forward an e-mail to donaldstark408@gmail.com**

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**Contact Dick Clough**  
 cloughcleveland@gmail.com  
 216.226.9040

### Veteran Tribute

Cleveland Police Foundation has established a special fund to honor Bill Denihan the long-time government administrator, community activist, and veteran who passed on in June. Bill was an avid painter in retirement and donated many of his artistic creations of Cleveland scenes to raise money for charity. Please consider donating to the "Denihan Community Art Fund" to help underwrite local veteran artists. Thank you.

#### Details:

[www.clevelandpolicefoundation.org](http://www.clevelandpolicefoundation.org)

### Landscaping

Stark Landscaping & Snow Removal  
 (216) 978-1293

**Urgent!** Need for established Honor Guard Rifle Teams at The Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery. For more information please contact: **Cal Curtin Administration Officer @ (330) 335-3069 ext.11508 or email: Calvin.curtin@va.gov**




**CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS AND SPONSORS!**

**2024 PAL WRESTLING PROGRAM**

Contact Sgt. Bob Kumazec (Ret.)  
[clevelandpal@yahoo.com](mailto:clevelandpal@yahoo.com)

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Four of each of the perks listed above.

Join online at  
[clevelandpolicefoundation.org/friends](http://clevelandpolicefoundation.org/friends)

or contact  
 Rick DeChant, Executive Director  
 (216) 536-6776  
[rdechant@clevelandpolicefoundation.org](mailto:rdechant@clevelandpolicefoundation.org)

Bring your Family and Help us honor our Veterans on Nov. 11  
with a candle light vigil at dusk  
Refreshments will be available



**REMEMBER** the Fallen. . . **HONOR** those who Serve. . . **TEACH** our children the value of Freedom.

Welcome to the OH0272 - Wreaths for Ohio Veteran's Memorial Park's Wreaths Across America Page.

On December 14, 2024 at 12:00 pm, OH0272 - Wreaths for Ohio Veteran's Memorial Park will be helping Ohio Veteran's Memorial Park to Remember and Honor our veterans. We will be placing Remembrance wreaths along the 125-foot Granite Memorial Wall in honor of Ohio veterans. Please note, we generally place approximately 100 wreaths so there may not be enough wreaths for every volunteer to place, however, all are welcome to join us in remembering and honoring these veterans.

<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/166760/Overview/?relatedId=166475>

The Ohio Veterans Memorial Park located in Clinton, Ohio,  
Invites all to visit the home of "The Longest Free Standing Memorial Wall" in the USA.  
We honor active service, Veterans and  
**"WE REMEMBER THE FALLEN"**



8005 S Cleveland Massillon Rd, Clinton, OH 44216  
OVMP.ORG





# REVS

Race to end **veterans suicide**

**22k ★ 2.2 Mile**

Presented by: Lorain County Veterans Service Commission  
Lorain County Chamber of Commerce



# NOVEMBER 9, 2024

## ELY SQUARE PARK, ELYRIA, OHIO

**22K, BATTLE BUDDY, REVS RELAY START: 8AM**

**2.2 MILE RUN/WALK START: 9AM**

**FOR SPONSORSHIP  
OPPORTUNITIES  
CALL 440.284.4625**



**SIGN UP TODAY!**

*All participants will receive a finisher medal  
Cash prize for overall male and female 22k winners  
Music by DJ Spat - New flatter faster course route*

