



CHRONICLE

The Newspaper for Veterans and All Who Love Them.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020



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

War: Makes families weep, economies grow, and American youth die on foreign shores

By John H. Tidyman, editor

No leader, no victory.

Was Harry Truman our last leader? The case may be made. A bit odd, because Roosevelt couldn't pick his vice president out of a lineup. Roosevelt and Truman made an unlikely team, but it was the team the times called for.

Truman started the Korean War, and Eisenhower finished it.

Presidents since Truman have been sorely lacking.

Not long after the Korean debacle, we stepped gingerly but confidently into the Vietnam War. In a last-ditch effort to have a colony or two, the French lost to a smaller and less-equipped enemy that had leaders as well as patriots. If there was a lesson—and there was—ignorance won over education.

My friend Dick Lillie's cogent advice is, "Pick your battles." I'll never understand our eagerness to pack up our old kit bags and sally across the oceans. Costs of war are so large we can't understand them.

But we do understand blood and guts, lives lost on battlefields, children suddenly losing a parent.

It is difficult to go to war without Congress' approval. Why, then, has the U.S. joined a never-ending war in the Mideast, where loyalties change more often than you mow the lawn?

Here's one reason: Nothing against chickens, but Congress is pure chicken shit. Despite the almost indescribable stupidity, arrogance, and abject self-righteousness of men and women elected to legislate, they are big shots with no guts. Maybe it is easy with their money, perks, and staff set on kissing ass.

Congress creates bullshit. Pure bullshit. If we spread over our gardens

all the manure Congress creates, no kid would be hungry.

Until we destroy the planet, war will always be part of us. All I seek is wars with purpose. And as Dick Lillie said, "Pick your battles."



Faith: The Challenge of a Lifetime

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

If there's a heaven, I'm a'goin'. Well, if I can change for the better, I'll go. At this rate, it's touch and go. I sometimes think of what it is that God wants me to do. And then slap my forehead and remind myself I already know.

When the Bible was written, many of the passages quoted Jesus. Can't find a better teacher if we want to learn how to live a good life.

The Bible is not always an easy read. Some of us read and study the Bible all our lives. Many times, we read, but fail to understand. Many times, the advice and counsel appears simple. They are not.

I believe the Ten Commandments are good, as far as Commandments go, but they tell us what



not to do. Much more specific are the Beatitudes, because the lesson is clear.

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Ah, works. How many times do I have to be taught James 2:14-17?

Even more concerning: How often do I follow His word? Faith is not difficult, but faith without works?



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

The Chronicle would not exist without its advertisers.

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MAIL CALL

I just finished Michael D. Roberts' book, *Hot Type, Cold Beer and Bad News*, a retrospective of the newspaper industry in Cleveland in the very turbulent 60's. In these pages, Roberts tells the stories that gave meaning to the political and socioeconomic forces, factors, and follies of the times. I give this book 5 stars.

Michael D. Roberts was a reporter for the *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*, northern Ohio's largest daily morning rag. He went on to work on a countless varieties of stories in his quest to become an "ace." And get the bylines, he did, going on to build a 40-year(?) -long distinguished career in journalism.

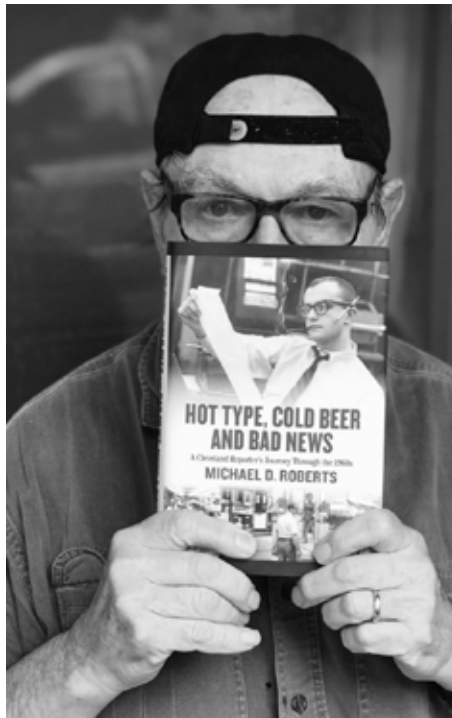
These are the stories of Cleveland, and Roberts plumbs the city's two major newspapers to tell the tale. The city's other major newspaper, *The Cleveland Press* (headed by Louis B. Seltzer), published each afternoon, competed fiercely with Tom Vail's *Plain Dealer*, and the competition between these two giants documents the history of Cleveland,

Roberts tells the stories behind the story, how they came into

being, all the work that was put into them, and how and why they made it into ink on a flimsy page of newsprint.

For example, one of the stories I found most interesting was the recounting of the exact incident that sparked the deadly Hough riots in 1967. (Define Hough riots, e.g., describe that incident briefly. It blew your mind. It should blow the reader's mind, too!) At that time I was working for the Cuyahoga County Sheriff at the time (Jim McGettrick) manning the radio for our cars, but I guess it took me 51 years to find this out this fascinating story.

The first half of the book is loaded with stuff like this. Any of



these names or incidents mean anything to you?

Carl Stokes and Seth Taft, Ralph Locher, Anthony Celebrezze, the Hough riots, the Glenville riots, Don Bean, Don Robertson, Robert Tidyman, the Beverly Jarosz murder, Phil Porter, Danny Greene and Shondor Birns, Sam Sheppard, the ethnic enclaves, the

simmering racial tensions and deep seated racism, Bus Bergen, Dennis Kucinich, Doris O'Donnell, James McGettrick, Bob Manry and Tinkerbelle, (how could any Clevelander forget that?), Paul Brown and Art Modell, and on it goes.

The second half of the book had to do with Michael Roberts' becoming an international reporter, on the *Plain Dealer's* spending account. Nine months in Viet Nam with our forces, then went on to Beirut (14 Arab jets were blown up by Israeli forces in retaliation for the hijacking of an El Al jet). Then on to Baghdad, Egypt, Palestine, Israel (think Six Day War covered from both sides), often meeting with "the bad guys," getting the story and all the background, being meticulous with detail, and often figuring out novel ways to get the story to Cleveland.

Roberts says, "Newspapers were once a unifying force in communities, a friendly visitor that arrived on your doorstep every day." How times have changed, wherein we now get a notification on our iPhone of every breaking story, signaled loudly by a quacking duck, roaring motorcycle, or wind chime tone on your—or whatever. I hope you consider this book.

Here's a link to buy the book: <https://amzn.to/2P4ti0l>

— Paul F. Tidyman, Vermont

VETS - YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

The past thirty-five years, on the Saturday before Christmas, a totally unique holiday tradition takes place. And this coming December will be no different. Loving hands of help focused on needy kids, and life-challenged men, women and families will again demonstrate the true spirit of Christmas and the Holiday Season.

Ninety-plus friends of **Vietnam Veteran, Dick Clough**, board donated Lakefront Lines buses near his home in Lakewood loaded with 200+ custom packed containers with merchandise together with a bus full of coats and another with oversized toys. Escorted by Cleveland Police, there are nine stops located in different parts of Cleveland beginning at 4 PM and ending after Midnight, and in between delivering Christmas to 1,200 inner-city kids, adults including previously homeless veterans, and families. The annual project is aptly called - **Tour of Good Cheer**.

To meet the needs in 2020 the **Tour** is partnering with **PAL** (Cleveland Police Athletic League), and working with **DD214** to reach support from the Veteran Community.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORT THE TOUR.

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Email Dick Clough / cloughcleveland@gmail.com for the complete story about Tour of Good Cheer.

Thank You!



Dick Clough & Friends
TOUR OF GOOD CHEER

HONOR GUARD

By Brian Albrecht



The emblem of the Joint Veterans Honor Guard of Northeast Ohio. The unit has been providing military honors for veterans' burials for the past 19 years.

Military honors performed at a veteran's grave became another casualty of the coronavirus this past spring and early summer.

No color guards, no rifle salutes, no bugles playing "Taps."

Area volunteer honor guards, manned by veterans who usually perform this ceremony, went on a forced hiatus as limits on attendance at churches, funeral homes and cemeteries went into effect.

Most families were understanding, according to J. Mark Busch, funeral director of Busch Funeral and Crematory Services.

"Every family came in with the expectation that 'we know we can't do what we used to do, tell us what we can do,'" he said.

Most families went ahead with the veteran's burial without the ceremonial honors. But "many families who selected the Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery [in Seville] have delayed committal until there can be a full ceremony," he noted.

The national cemetery stopped doing memorial services from March 23 to June 8, due to the coronavirus, according to Daniel Williams, director.

The cemetery relies on about 32 honor guard teams to provide a final salute for some 3,000 burials each year. Active duty service members perform the ceremonial

flag folding and presentation to the family.

The ceremonies have since resumed but graveside attendance is limited to 30, and all persons including honor guard teams must wear masks, Williams said.

Additionally, Williams said the families of some 325 veterans buried at the cemetery during the ceremony shutdown are being contacted and offered the chance to attend a service for the deceased with full military honors. The services were being rescheduled for July through September.

Some families were upset about the forced lack of military honors, according to Williams.

"We understand what the family is going through, but it's a bad time for all of us," he said. "I'm just glad we're getting back to having services, and we can go back and capture all the ones who didn't have services."

Similarly, the Madison Community Funeral Team in Lake County plans to hold a combined service for the more than half-dozen burials they were forced to miss, said the group's director, Jeffrey Lynn.

That service will be held at the American Legion Post 112, 6671 Middle Ridge Road in Madison.

The Joint Veterans Honor Guard of Northeast Ohio resumed its duties in mid-June and is also

available to provide a ceremony for veterans who were buried without military honors during the shutdown.

Masks are now part of their uniform. Sanitizers are kept handy. Gloves were already worn for presenting the family with a "Battlefield Cross" framed document detailing a deceased veteran's service record and awards, and a small bag containing spent shells from the rifle salute.

A couple of guard members who are in a high-risk category for infection because of their age,

declined to go back out for now.

Joe Benedict noted that his unit has buried two veterans who were victims of the coronavirus. Social distancing has reduced contact between families and guard members, but the impact of the honors hasn't diminished.

"It still gets emotional. When you're up there and fire the volleys and play 'Taps', there's a lot of tears," he said.

"You don't get used to that. I don't want to get used to that. I want it to always have a meaning."



Photo courtesy James/ Kathleen Reilly

Sean Ennis, a member of the Join Veterans Honor Guard of Northeast Ohio, salutes during a past unit ceremony.



Photo courtesy of David Kovach

Members of the Joint Veterans Honor Guard of Northeast Ohio are shown during a past ceremony for a veteran's funeral at the Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery.



Photo courtesy James/ Kathleen Reilly

In addition to providing military honors at veterans' funerals, the Joint Veterans Honor Guard of Northeast Ohio also participates in civic events such as this appearance for a past Veterans Day program at Lakewood Park.



Our best friend. Unless ...

The Name Game

By Barry Goodrich

It's not always how you play the game, sometimes it's all about your nickname.

Nicknames have been a part of sports for as long as the games have been played. And who didn't grow up with a nickname in school (at least before political correctness reared its ugly head)? At 110 pounds and six feet, mine was "Spaghetti Arms."

No nickname was as mythic as The Babe. Let's face it, George Ruth could have been an accountant or a milkman. But Babe Ruth? That's the stuff of legends.

See if you can match the nickname with the player or the team...

- The Golden Bear
- The Iron Horse
- Sudden Sam
- The Splendid Splinter
- The Merry Mex
- Spaceman
- The Shark
- The Logo
- The Stilt
- The Purple People Eaters
- Murderers Row

Ted Williams, also known as Teddy Ballgame, finished his career with a .344 batting average and is widely considered as the best pure hitter in baseball history. He served in the U.S. Navy and Marines during World War II and the Korean War.

Sam McDowell was a six-time All-Star for the Cleveland Indians who struck out 325 batters during the 1965 season. A heavy drinker who later became an addiction counselor, McDowell served as the inspiration for the character of Sam Malone on the show Cheers.

Jerry West was one of the best pure outside shooters in the history of the NBA. A 14-time All-Star, he averaged 27 points per game for his career and won a pair of NBA titles before becoming a successful general manager.

The Minnesota Vikings defensive line of Alan Page, Carl Eller, Jim Marshall and Gary Larsen helped lead the team to three Super Bowl appearances in four years in the 1970s.

Lou Gehrig played for 15 consecutive years for the New York Yankees before missing a game. He hit 493 homers, drove in 1,995 runs and won six World Series with the Yankees before tragically passing away at age 37.

Jack Nicklaus is the career leader in major wins on the PGA Tour with 18. The Ohio State graduate won 117 tournaments worldwide, including the 1986 Masters at the age of 46.

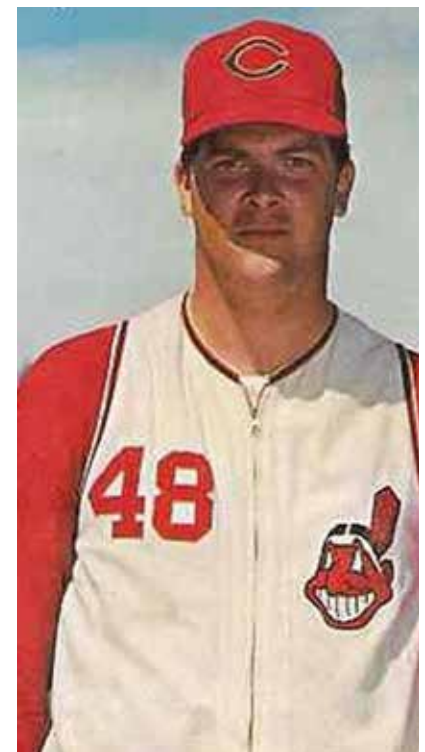
Wilt Chamberlain is the only player to ever score 100 points in an NBA game. Chamberlain won a pair of NBA titles with the Los Angeles Lakers and later became involved in the movie business. At age 45, the Cleveland Cavs tried to bring him out of retirement.

Lee Trevino won six major golf tournaments and is one of only four players to have ever won The U.S. Open, the PGA and the British Open. A public course hustler in his early days, Trevino once said "The only thing I'm afraid of is my wife."

The 1927 New York Yankees had one of the greatest hitting line-ups in baseball history with Earle Combs, Mark Koening, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Bob Meusel and Tony Lazzeri. That '27 team won 110 games.

Greg Norman won 89 golf tournaments all around the world, including two majors but he is known more for placing second in eight majors, including an infamous meltdown at The Masters.

Bill Lee pitched for the Boston Red Sox and Montreal Expos but was better known for his bizarre off the field behavior, including running for president in 1988 on a platform banning guns and butter.



NEOPAT Honors Late Marine Corporal Jeffrey A. Boskovitch

by Jerri Donohue

Kim Weisinger describes her older brother, Jeffrey Allen Boskovitch, as a prankster who peppered his letters from Iraq with jokes.

“He was friends with everybody,” Weisinger said. “He was a natural comedian.”

The Northeast Ohio Foundation for Patriotism (NEOPAT) chose Cpl. Boskovitch, who was shot to death in Iraq in 2005, as its 2020 Charles Kirby Wilcox honoree. Each year the nonprofit recognizes one of the 108 servicemen and women from northeast Ohio who have died in military service since September 11, 2001. The honor is named after a West Point grad who was killed in Vietnam in 1968.

NEOPAT unveiled a video tribute to Boskovitch at its gala in early March.

A 1999 graduate of Normandy High School in Parma, Boskovitch joined the United States Marine Corps Reserve and was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, Marine Forces Reserve in Brook Park. Aiming for a career as an Ohio State Trooper, he completed Cuyahoga Community College’s law enforcement program. He worked for National City Bank and the Geauga County Sheriff before being deployed in January 2005.



Weisinger said her brother was engaged to be married and looked forward to his post-deployment life. But he never complained about his assignment in Iraq as a scout sniper.

“He told me he had made friends with a lot of civilians over there,” Weisinger said.

One day, Boskovitch stopped a



little Iraqi boy toting a paper bag. When he discovered a puppy inside, the corporal negotiated a purchase price of twenty-five cents and three jelly beans. He frequently mentioned the dog - dubbed “Beans” - in his letters. Beans became a beloved companion and he planned to bring her home to Ohio.

On August 1, 2005, enemy

forces ambushed two sniper teams, including Boskovitch’s, in hilly terrain near Haditha. The bodies of five men were recovered that day, but Boskovitch was listed as Missing in Action. After receiving this news, his family spent that night in a church, praying for his safety. The next day, however, the 25-year old Marine’s body was discovered about two miles from the attack site. He had extricated himself from the ambush but the enemy later caught up to him.

“He ran pretty far until he was eventually shot,” Weisinger said.

The corporal’s mother, Kathy Boskovitch, resolved to bring Beans to the States as her son intended. It took several months but the German Shepherd mix eventually made her way to Ohio, where she finished her life in peace.

“There were so many kids and teachers who wrote her letters and sent dog treats,” Weisinger said. “She did a couple of school visits.”

In addition to saluting living veterans and those who, like Cpl. Boskovitch, made the ultimate sacrifice, NEOPAT supports current military personnel. The nonprofit provided \$100,000 in emergency financial assistance to servicemen and their families in 2019. For more information, visit www.neopat.org

Award-Winning Podcast Traces Roots to Tri-C

Debra Gipson says College screenwriting courses led to honor from Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C®) gave Debra Gipson the voice to share what can now be called her award-winning story.

Gipson recently received a 2020 Communicator Award of Distinction from the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts for an episode of her “Dear Michelle” podcast. The international awards program is one of the largest in the communications profession.

Screenwriting courses from Tri-C honored the work that led to the honor, said Gipson, who grew up in East Cleveland. She said the College

had “a huge impact” on her career.

“That background has proven invaluable to me,” Gipson said. “I construct my episodes using much of what I learned about character development and story structure in those classes. Honestly, in the absence of that training, I doubt I would have won.”

Judges reviewed more than 6,000 entries before selecting winners.



Others honored in her category include entities such as ESPN Films, Morgan Stanley financial services and Cornell University Alumni Affairs and Development.

Gipson’s podcast shares her life adventures in a series of heartfelt letters addressed to

Michelle Obama. In her letters to the former first lady, Gipson discusses how she rose from poverty

and abuse to find success.

Her background includes earning a law degree from the University of Pittsburgh and serving in Iraq with the U.S. Army. In 2014, she testified before a Congressional subcommittee about the transition from military to civilian life.

Gipson turned to Tri-C in 2017 after deciding to “take a chance” and shift her career away from law. The Richmond Heights resident is currently focused on growing her podcast, studying screenwriting and working toward a Masters of Law degree in health policy.

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

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



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Among the defense contractors with the highest sales to the Armed Forces:

Force Protection, Inc. was a manufacturer of ballistic- and blast-protected vehicles from the United States which have been used in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and other hot spots around the world. The company was acquired by General Dynamics in 2011.

Advanced Armament Corporation or AAC is an American company that develops and manufactures firearms, firearm suppressors, muzzle devices and related accessories.

Academi is an American private military company founded in 1997 by former Navy SEAL officer Erik Prince as **Blackwater**, renamed as **Xe Services** in 2009 and known as Academi since 2011 after the company was acquired by a group of private investors. The company received widespread notoriety in 2007, when a group of its employees killed 14 Iraqi civilians and injured 20 in Nisour Square, Baghdad for which four guards were convicted in a U.S. Court.

Argon ST is a subsidiary of The Boeing Company headquartered

in Fairfax, Virginia, United States, that specializes in systems engineering and provides C4ISR (command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) solutions to a wide range of customers. Argon ST's efforts include developing systems for signal intercept and identification, airborne imaging systems, threat warning systems, electronic intelligence, active electronic warfare systems, communications reconnaissance systems, torpedo countermeasures systems, imaging systems, communication systems, wireless networks and navigation systems. Argon ST systems support a full range of military and strategic units including surface and sub-surface, airborne, and land-based platforms serving defense, homeland security, and international customer needs.

U.S. Ordnance-Defense Systems and Manufacturing—often referred to as **USORD** is a firearms manufacturer located in McCarran, Nevada, 20 minutes

outside Reno, Nevada. Since 1997, the Nevada corporation has designed, developed and manufactured military small arms, machine guns and replacement parts.

U.S. Ordnance specializes in producing new, enhanced versions of the mature, combat-proven Mk43/M60E4 and M2, making and testing them according to U.S. military technical specifications and instructions. Only U.S. Ordnance manufactures the Mk43 machine gun.

The company's primary weapon systems are the M2HB, M2A2 (QCB), the Mk43/M60E4, the M60D Enhanced and the M16/M4/M203, all of which are NATO sanctioned. U.S. Ordnance sells these to governmental agencies in the U.S., including law enforcement and the military, and to federally approved foreign leaderships and militaries. It also facilitates training for its products.

McQ Inc is a defense and electronics company in Fredericksburg, Virginia, that specializes in remote

monitoring and surveillance equipment and systems for government and industry. McQ Inc designed and produces the OmniSense unattended ground sensor system equipment.

TriWest Healthcare Alliance is a Phoenix, Arizona based corporation that manages health benefits under the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) VAPCCC program in Regions 3, 5, and 6.[1] On October 1, 2018, TriWest's contract for VAPCCC was expanded to cover Regions 1, 2, and 4.

Knight's Armament Company (KAC) is an American firearms and firearms parts manufacturer, best known for producing the Rail Interface System (RIS) and the Rail Adapter System (RAS) grips for firearms use. They currently produce a variety of firearms, specifically AR-15 rifles. One of their best known rifles is the SR-25 semi-automatic sniper rifle.

"Mama always said life was like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get."

While we are in quarantine, are movies the best entertainment? For lots of us, they are. Some suggestions for watching: Watch alone. No sense having your kids ask questions that have no answers. Also, stay with comedies. Enjoy your beer: it is cold, good for you, and you can burp a lot and often. Smoke 'em if you got 'em.

Best 10 military comedies:

1. M.A.S.H.
2. Major Payne
3. Biloxi Blues
4. Good Morning, Vietnam
5. Dr. Strangelove
6. Hot Shots
7. Forrest Gump
8. Stripes
9. Catch 22
10. Private Benjamin



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His Closest Brush With Combat Was a Dramatic Helicopter Landing

by Sam Gisselman

Our Sergeant Major, Big Cat, had been pumping me up all week about going on my first combat patrol, asking if I was excited to “get my first taste of action.” “Yes, Sergeant Major.” It had been all I could think about. But the evening before we were to set off in our helicopter to a team site, I had all-night radio watch. The next morning my eyes burned and my body ached from fatigue as we hopped on the Huey, and I was too tired to feel like it was anything but business as usual. As we flew across the open desert, the drone of the helo’s engines and the cool breeze flowing through the open doors lulled me into a stupor. Big Cat sat across from me and watched as I had tried to fight off sleep.

After what felt like an hour, Big Cat and the door gunner perked up and looked down toward the ground. Other members of the group followed suit, and suddenly, the helo rapidly gained altitude, making a wide circle over a mud-hut village that was split in half by a silty river. The helo climbed until we couldn’t make out the people we had seen wandering the streets, and the small white bongo trucks that weaved their way through the village were barely visible. We began circling the village from high above, and I tried to ask Big Cat over the noise of the helo’s engines what was going on. He threw up some unrecognizable hand gestures, so I nodded like I understood and went back to dozing.

For no reason that I can

remember, I opened my eyes a few minutes later, and a second after that, the helo started to drop. As we dove, the floor fell out from beneath us, and my rifle that had been sitting between my legs rose in front of my face. Adrenaline coursed through my body as I reached out with both hands and squeezed the buttstock. Only my harness kept me from slamming into Big Cat, or flying out of the helo as we dive bombed the ground.

Big Cat smirked as we plummeted and remained eerily calm. Huggy Bear, as stoic as can be, peered out the helo door like a passenger on a long road trip. I gathered my wits as the helo forcefully leveled off, smashing my body into my seat. We banked hard to the left, missing by only a few feet the mud huts that had been only the size of Lego blocks seconds before. We raced over the huts and fields like a trackless roller coaster, flying by a local who had stopped and watched with amazement as we whizzed by. The adrenaline rush got me high, and I



found myself smiling and laughing. I was caught up in the thrill of it and, embarrassed, wondered later why I’d reacted as I had.

I was a year and a half into my service, and not wanting to look like a boot, I rarely took pictures, showed outward signs of emotion that might make me seem out of my depth, or talked during my

outings with Huggy Bear or Big Cat. Being a lowly corporal at the time, I was always on edge around them. One mistake and I would be pulling weeds and painting signs for the rest of my time with the unit. After what seemed like dozens of banks and turns, the helo threw its nose up in the air to brake. Before the chopper touched down, Big Cat threw off his harness and rose out of his seat. He was smiling and looked to be in a good mood. The team site, he said, had been taking fire upon our initial approach.

We’d come close to combat, but still had no contact. I’d always been comfortable with my rifle, and now

that I was deployed, I craved the chance to see what I could do with my weapon when it really counted.

My mind quickly snapped from our dramatic landing and my feeling of embarrassment to the combat patrol ahead that day. Finally I’d get my chance to go on patrol and gain some real combat experience. But at the mission briefing, my name wasn’t on the list; the team didn’t know who I was and didn’t feel comfortable with me coming along. I asked Big Cat if there had been a mistake. No mistake, he said, and there was nothing he could do either.

I wasn’t the only one left behind. Big Cat introduced me to the team’s Joint Tactical Air Controller (JTAC) who brought me with him to the mortar pit. The Army mortarmen there were as fluid and efficient with their mortars as I was with my rifle.

As the mortars thundered and the mortarmen scurried about, I sat and wondered why I was even there. The majority of my Marine Corps career I had trained for combat, and now I wanted the chance to do what I’d been trained to do. The opportunity was right there in front of me, but still out of reach.

Sam Gisselman joined the Marine Corps in 2011. He was deployed to Afghanistan in September 2012 and a month later was promoted to corporal. He returned home in May 2013, and within the next year was promoted to sergeant. Gisselman left the service in April 2015 and enrolled in college. He’s currently studying human physiology at the University of Oregon.



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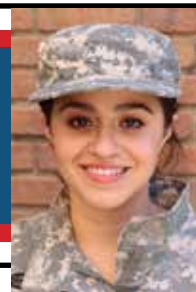
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DD 214 CHRONICLE ★ WOMEN'S REPORT ★



After 110 Years of Aviation, Navy Gets Its First Black Female Fighter Pilot

Military.com | By Oriana Pawlyk

The U.S. Navy has its first Black female tactical jet pilot.

Lt. j.g. Madeline Swegle recently completed the service's Tactical Air (Strike) training program in the T-45C Goshawk, the Navy announced Friday.

The milestone makes Swegle, a Naval Academy graduate, the first known Black woman who has been certified for the TACAIR mission, and she could go on to fly fighters such as the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, EA-18G Growler or F-35C Joint Strike Fighter.

The Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) congratulated Swegle on her achievement via Twitter.

"Swegle is the @USNavy's first known Black female TACAIR pilot and will receive her Wings of Gold later this month. HOOYAH!" the post states.

Photos of Swegle celebrating next to a T-45 trainer at Naval Air Station Kingsville, Texas, surfaced earlier this week from Twitter user @paigealissa. "Just my best friend making history," she wrote.

According to the Navy, Swegle, of Burke, Virginia, is assigned to the Redhawks of Training Squadron (VT) 21 at the Texas base.

Lt. j.g. Madeline Swegle is the first known Black woman to have



been certified for the TACAIR mission. (U.S. Navy)

Her achievement comes as pilots have said the Navy's aviation community needs more diversity in its ranks.

A 2018 investigation by Military.com revealed that Black pilots are rare in the service, particularly in fighter units. According to Navy data provided that year, just 1.9% of all pilots assigned to the F/A-18 Hornet, EA-18 Growler, E-2 Hawkeye and C-2 Greyhound were Black.

Women also make up a small percentage of aviators in the service. As of 2018, the Navy had 765 female pilots, less than 7% of all pilots across the ranks, according to the Pensacola News Journal.

There have been pioneers. The

late Rosemary Mariner became one of the first eight women in the Navy selected to fly military aircraft in 1973. She was certified to fly the A-4C and the A-7E Corsair II, and became the first woman to fly a tactical fighter jet the following year, the service said. Mariner retired as a captain.

Meanwhile, Brenda Robinson became the first African American female graduate from the Navy's Aviation Officer Candidate School, earning her wings in 1980, according to the nonprofit organization Women in Aviation. She was the first Black woman certified for C-1A carrier onboard delivery carrier landings the following year, the group said. Robinson retired in 2008.

Despite early strides, women

have still faced barriers. For example, the Pentagon did not lift a decades-long policy that prohibited women from flying in combat until 1993.

Shortly thereafter, Martha McSally, now a Republican senator from Arizona, became the Air Force's first female pilot to fly in combat in 1995. An A-10 Warthog pilot, McSally retired as a colonel in 2010.

In 1999, Shawna Rochelle Kimbrell became the first female African American fighter pilot for the Air Force, flying the F-16 Fighting Falcon. Kimbrell, now a lieutenant colonel, flew combat missions in Operation Northern Watch over northern Iraq in 2001.

There was another history-making military achievement this week. A female Army National Guard soldier graduated from the grueling Special Forces Qualification Course (Q Course) Thursday, making her the first woman to join the Green Berets.

Editor's note: This story has been updated to correct Martha McSally's rank at retirement.

Oriana Pawlyk can be reached at oriana.pawlyk@military.com. Follow her on Twitter at @Oriana0214.



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Canal Park keeping baseball alive during pandemic

By Barry Goodrich

With the Akron Rubber Ducks sidelined this season, Canal Park has taken on a decidedly different feeling. But there are familiar sounds that echo through the Park on nights made for baseball – the crack of the bat, chatter from the dugout and the cheers of small gatherings of loyal fans.

Despite the cancellation of the Minor League season, the Rubber Ducks organization has been back in business since mid-June, hosting area high school games featuring seniors who were denied a final season as well as travel team tournaments.

Thanks to the backing of team owner Ken Babby, who also owns the Class AA franchise in Jacksonville, Fla., the Rubber Ducks have a staff of 35 full-time employees who show up for work each game day, including front office staff, grounds crew and concession workers.

“It’s full go at the park right now,” says Kyle Hixenbaugh, the club’s manager of promotions. “We get between 100 and 200 spectators for each game and we have caution tape over most of the seats. We’re doing our best to get around this and still keep the game of baseball here.”

All team employees are temperature checked each time they



enter the building and the same procedure applies to all players and coaches who will take the field for any given game. “We haven’t had any issues at all here,” said Hixenbaugh.

The Rubber Ducks have one main concession stand open for each game although the team’s popular The Game Grill & Bar is closed. Last season, the Grill was the home of the team’s signature sandwich The Squealer – a foot-long hot

dog stuffed with pulled pork and wrapped in bacon, topped with shredded cheddar cheese and drenched in barbecue sauce.

“We’ve got to keep as much revenue coming in as we can,” said Hixenbaugh, a Logan, Ohio native and Ohio University graduate. “It’s been very tough across Minor League baseball...we’re one of just a handful of parks that are hosting games.”

Hixenbaugh, now in his fourth

season with the Rubber Ducks, had many promotions planned for the 2020 season, events that will now be rolled into next year. “With all the construction in Akron, we were going to re-brand as Conetown U.S.A. with the players wearing bright orange construction jerseys. We had also planned to honor the 100th anniversary of the Negro Leagues with uniforms from the Akron Black Pirates team.”

Last year, the Rubber Ducks hosted a Shawshank Redemption Night for the 25th anniversary of the iconic movie filmed at the Mansfield Reformatory. Players wore prison jerseys and Bob Gunton, the actor who portrayed the Shawshank warden, was on hand. The team even had a Morgan Freeman impersonator handle the public address duties.

“When we first came back in June, we weren’t committed to hosting any games but now we’ve had over 100 of them here,” said Hixenbaugh. “It’s really filled the void for us.”

And, as they say in baseball, there’s always next year.

“We’re 100 percent confident the Rubber Ducks are going to be playing baseball here next year,” said Hixenbaugh.

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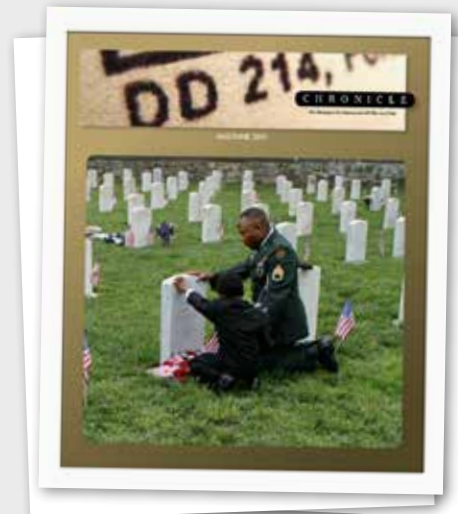
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Retired Navy Pilot and Wife Accept New Mission: Farm Animal Rescue

by Jerri Donohue

On their farm in Richfield, former Navy pilot Dennis Flanagan and his wife, Terri Flanagan, flanked their 17-year old Belgian draft horse. Happy Trails Farm Animal Sanctuary in Ravenna had approached the couple last fall about adopting Flynn, a once malnourished, seriously ill horse.

"We don't have to go looking for anything," Flanagan said of the abused or neglected creatures he and Terri welcome to Farm Flanagan. "They find us."

Circumstances thrust informal rescues upon the couple when Flanagan was still in the Navy. While attending Kent State University's flight program during the Vietnam war, he had witnessed fellow students hurl "babykiller" and other insults at a recruiter. The unflappable sailor impressed Flanagan, and so he lingered to talk to the man. Flanagan eventually enlisted, retiring as a Lt. Commander in 1993. After a second career flying for United Airlines, he retired again in 2016.

Meanwhile, the Flanagans had purchased their farm. One day a stranger pulled into the driveway and handed Terri a shoebox full of chicks hatched in a classroom project—with no plan for the aftermath. The Flanagans soon added three goats, pets of a friend who'd died, to the menagerie that also included cats and dogs.

In the years since then, they've been the last resort for horses, ponies, goats, pigs, rabbits and barnyard fowl. When an individual refused to pick up the box of 30 peeping chicks he'd ordered, the post office summoned Flanagan. "Gump" came to the family as a potbellied piglet born in a forest to abandoned pet parents. Now 15 years old, Gump is a whippersnapper compared to 30-something Fleury, a Welsh brood mare.

Flanagan shrugs off the formidable expense of providing food, shelter and medical care for these beasts.

"It's like any hobby people have, boats, whatever," he said.

Several sources help. Flanagan gets wood shavings for barn stalls from a nearby saw mill. Farmers sometimes donate inventory overflow of spinach, strawberries or watermelons. After Halloween, people bring the Flanagans their pumpkins, a favorite meal for goats. Local food banks can't distribute dented cans of vegetables, and so the farm receives these. Terri transforms the contents into porridge for the chickens.

"Part of our mission is to keep as much out of landfills as possible," Terri Flanagan said. "And to share, share, share."

Flanagan delivers compost to a community garden in Cleveland, for example.

As they grew up, the couple's five children pitched in with chores. Today volunteers help out. A heart patient swept the barn ceiling for aerobic exercise. Teenage girls groomed horses and children with autism cuddled rabbits, who need attention and affection. One little boy met goals in his Individualized Education Program (IEP) doing twice weekly "bunny care."

People and animals connect at Farm Flanagan in other ways, too. It offers a friendly space for prospective foster parents to mingle with teenagers needing homes. Small scout troops and women and children staying in temporary housing make field trips. The Flanagans want to invite others.

"We would love to do more with veterans," Terri Flanagan said.



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Community West Foundation Grantee Spotlight: Laundry Love

For many of us, laundry is a chore, a household-must-do and always on the horizon. Imagine if you couldn't afford to wash your clothes on a regular basis? Imagine if you had to choose between paying for groceries or washing your clothes? Unfortunately, many people in our community are faced with this tough decision.

For Janice Snyder, who has spent the past 30 years in Lutheran Ministry, this was unacceptable. She discovered Laundry Love, a national program that helps people in need afford clean clothes. She first read about the program in a religious magazine and decided to bring it to her congregation at Messiah Lutheran Church and School, located in Fairview Park.

"Everyone needs to feel they are important, heard, and loved" comments Janice when we talked about her program over the phone. The last Thursday of every month at Leo's Laundromat in Fairview Park,

Janice and a group of volunteers assemble for more of a family gathering than an outreach program. They pay for people's laundry, provide a free casual meal, and offer free books to the kids from 6-8 p.m.

When asked who gets their laundry cost covered, Janice emphatically replied, "Everybody!" It turns out, they kindly ask everyone that comes through the doors during their program if their group can cover their cost. Some guests decline saying, they have the means to pay. Others are shocked by receiving an unexpected blessing with statements like, "Thank you! Nothing good ever happens to me."

The word has gotten out. A homeless woman heard about the program and drove over in the car where she was living to get to the laundromat. She cried when she was able to finally wash her coat.

Janice coordinates all the fundraising for the program on her

own and recently received a grant from Community West Foundation. She also receives donations from several local restaurants to help

provide meals along with the laundry service. "We build relationships from the very beginning," Janice said. "We are making friends with our neighbors, in real time."

The COVID-19 pandemic has set Laundry Love: Messiah back a bit. They haven't been able to hold community meals in a few months, but they have teamed up with the laundromat management to still provide free laundry for those in need. To fill the gap, Janice has used part of the CWF grant to create a Free Little Pantry installed on the Messiah campus to provide discreet access to non-perishable food items to people in need. Janice hopes to expand the program once the social distancing rules are lifted. "I'd like to have pop-ups in other areas with the additional funds we've been granted,"

Janice explained. "I would be happy to share what we've been doing the past three and a half years so that other groups can hold their own Laundry Love events. We have plans in the works to expand the laundromat into a sort of community center where people can register to vote and receive free health checks."

Janice is the Admission Coordinator at Messiah Lutheran School and is an active servant to the community through her ministry at Messiah Lutheran Church. Her husband, Mike, is busy hosting Cleveland's Morning News with Wills and Snyder on WTAM, but still finds time to support his wife's ministry. The couple lives in Lakewood, has three adult children and a 2-month-old granddaughter.

For more details on the Laundry Love program, visit: <http://www.messiahchurchfairview.org/CommunityMinistry.aspx>

Or search Laundry Love: Messiah Fairview Park on Facebook.



The Chroniclers of World War II

By Brian Albrecht

The woman with burned-off fingerprints. The best way to shoot yourself to escape the Russian front. The horror of POW captivity that never ends. The moment when you're dead certain you're about to be killed.

These are a few of the memories that come to mind with the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, finalized in the September 2 signing of the Japanese surrender.

During the past three decades I've interviewed more than 200 Northeast Ohio veterans of World War II, as a reporter for The Plain Dealer and co-author with James Banks of the book *Cleveland in World War II*.

The men and women of World War II uniformly shrugged off any praise. Just doing their jobs, they said. Their heroism lay in quiet resolve.

How Arnold Green, of Strongsville, told his story in 2007 was as vivid

as his war experience.

Green was among the civilians and Marines captured when the Japanese attacked Wake Island in 1941. The POWs were sent to forced labor camps in Japan.

In describing their treatment that included brutal beatings, Green suddenly stopped, stood and stepped into a gray zone of time and reality.

Hands at his sides, eyes clenched shut, head bowed, Green spoke in rapid, apologetic Japanese phrases, repeatedly bowing, physically flinching again and again from the remembered blows.

Green spent 44 months in captivity, and made a vow that lasted a lifetime: "Never again will anyone ever take me prisoner."

In 2012, Mona Lowery, of Middleburg Heights, stared at her hands as if they belonged to someone else, long ago, who grabbed hot anti-aircraft shells as they came off the conveyor belt at a Cleveland

factory during World War II. The process burned off her fingerprints, leaving permanent fingertip numbness and scars of pride.

"Well, so I lost my fingerprints," she said with a shrug. "So what? I'm still doing things at 86, and that's OK."

Former German soldier G. Peter Ertel, who settled in Bath Township after the war, recalled in 2011 the horrors of serving on the frozen Russian front.

The desperation to escape prompted some soldiers to fill their boots with water, allowing it to freeze so they could be sent home, even if it meant amputation of both feet.

When choosing another option, shooting yourself in the leg, Ertel said it was advisable to fire through a loaf of bread so telltale gunpowder stains wouldn't be left on the self-inflicted wound.

Ertel was saved by being transferred to France to defend against

the Allied invasion. He surrendered to the first American soldier he saw.

When a German tank aimed its gun at the house where William Bristow had sheltered with other GIs during the Battle of the Bulge, it was one of those moments when you just know you're soon going to be dead.

"We thought, 'Well, OK, this is going to be it.' We all kind-of bowed our heads and said a few prayers," Bristow, of Strongsville, recalled in 2018.

Inexplicably, the tank didn't fire, but instead moved to another position where the GIs were able to disable it and kill the crew.

That incident and others in combat represented no less than "one of the most profound life experiences that I've ever had," according to Bristow.

The same could probably be said of all those who fought and ultimately prevailed, 75 years ago.

Woman Treads Father's Career Path

by Jerri Donohue

Margery "Margie" Jones acknowledges the hardest part of deployment.

"Some days you're working fourteen, fifteen, sixteen hours,"

Jones said. "It's just tiring."

Jones, who lives in Fairview Park, enlisted in the Army right after completing a degree in political science.

"It's something I always wanted to do," she said. "I look up to my Dad a lot and wanted to follow in his footsteps. I was born in Fort Hood, Texas."

After her years on active duty, Jones joined the Reserves. She was working as a police officer in Buckeye, Arizona when the Army sent her to Afghanistan with military police in 2012.

"We did security for bases and for any routes going from base to base," Jones said.

For 12 months at Camp Salerno, she and three other people occupied a cramped, unairconditioned room made of plywood. Showers and bathrooms were a trek away. Poor Internet and phone service complicated efforts to stay in touch with family. Jones shrugs off these inconveniences.

"You just learn to adapt," she said.

Her daily interactions with local nationals, who often asked for food or water, were mostly positive.

Some lobbed rocks and bottles at passing Army vehicles, however. Uncertainty caused unrelenting stress.

"You never really knew what was going to happen," Jones said.

"We were always on high alert. We always got attacked."

Jones was back in the States when her Army contract expired in 2016. She switched to the Air Force Reserve.

"I wanted to try something different," she said. "I chose to stay in policing, but it's called security forces in the Air Force."

Jones deployed to Kuwait in 2018 to supervise security personnel at Ali Al Saleem air base.

Despite this demanding job, she found life easier than it had been in Afghanistan.

"Kuwait isn't under attack," Jones said. "It's not like Afghanistan and Iraq."

With improved iPhones, she could call home more frequently. She still shared quarters with three roommates. Like many deployed servicemen and women, she missed her privacy.

"You can't get away from people,"

Jones said. "There's no such thing as 'alone time.' You really don't have freedom over there. You can't do what you want."

The reservist anticipates additional deployments, but said it is rewarding "to go out and serve our country."

"I plan on staying in the military for a full twenty [years]," Jones said.

Her father's civilian job as a correctional officer influenced Jones's decision to make law enforcement her career. She is currently a police officer in North Olmsted.

Even though Jones followed in her Dad's footsteps, he has reservations about these choices.

"I wouldn't say he's happy," Jones said. "I didn't choose the safest career path. It's different when your only daughter does it."




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Churchill's First Year against Hitler Embraced *The Splendid and The Vile*

By Nancy Peacock

Erik Larson could not have anticipated this year's pandemic when he set out to write his newest bestseller. But the master storyteller's choice of subject matter—the sacrifice and national unity displayed by the British people during the Nazi's relentless bombing of London—could not be more well timed as an example for what a country can endure with great leadership.

The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz (Random House, 2020) describes Winston Churchill's first year as prime minister from May 10, 1940 to May 10, 1941. On his first day in office, Churchill created a new position—minister of defense—and then appointed himself, taking on the oversight of the military and the mobilization of the British people in their war efforts.

Larson gives us the political, military and social demands Churchill faced while leading his country during its "darkest hour." Within days of Churchill taking office, France, Belgium and Holland surrendered, leaving England alone to fight the Nazi war machine. Luftwaffe Commander Hermann Goring boasted that his bombers would obliterate the Royal Air Force in a

matter of weeks and England would then bargain for peace. On June 5, the Luftwaffe began bombing the English mainland, but Hitler specifically requested that London be spared. This gave England time to plan for an expected land invasion. In the meantime, Churchill relentlessly lobbied American president Franklin Roosevelt to join the fight against Germany.

Churchill's family mobilized with the rest of the country. His son Randolph joined Winston's old regiment. His teenage daughter Mary became an anti-aircraft gunner assigned to the heavy-gun battery in Hyde Park. (By the end of the war, Mary was promoted and in command of 230 female volunteers.)

Larson includes many personal stories of Churchill's family and friendships during that first year. Through the nightly bombings, England's young upper-class

"smart set" still frequented high-end nightclubs and restaurants. "London social life was lively," Mary wrote. "Despite the blackout, theaters were full, there were plenty of nightclubs for late dancing after restaurants closed, and many people still gave dinner parties, often organized round a son on leave."

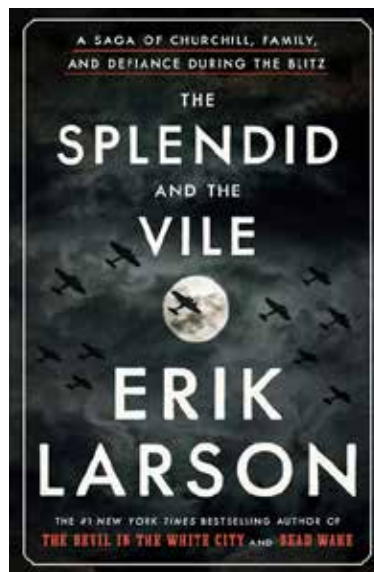
On weekends, Churchill's family and government officials left London in an automobile caravan for Chequers, the prime minister's official country residence, where German bombers were less likely to find them.

On Sept. 7, 1940, the Luftwaffe began the Blitz campaign in which London was bombed for 57 consecutive nights. The title of this book is taken from the diaries of John Colville, Churchill's private secretary. On one such evening, Colville knelt in a dark second-floor bedroom and watched the bombing raid in awe: "Nothing could have been more beautiful ... the searchlights

interlaced at certain points on the horizon, the star-like flashes in the sky where shells were bursting, the light of distant fires, all added to the scene. It was magnificent and terrible ... Never was there such a contrast of natural splendor and human vileness."

Unified under Churchill's leadership, England refused to capitulate. Eventually, Hitler's attention turned to Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of Russia, and the Blitz was abandoned in May 1941. Between Sept. 7, 1940 and May 11, 1941, the Blitz killed 29,000 London citizens and injured 28,556. Casualties for the entire United Kingdom during the same time span totaled 44,652 civilians killed and another 52,370 injured.

Many books have been written about England's resilience against Hitler's Germany. By examining the first year of Churchill's leadership, Larson focuses on the British people and their courageous resolve before America joined the war effort to defeat Hitler. It is especially instructive these days to see how superlative leadership can unite and inspire a nation to make the sacrifices necessary to prevail against an overwhelming adversary.



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Staying the Course

U.S. Army veteran Timothy Kelly overcame obstacles to earn a degree and pursue a career in social work



Finish what you started. As Timothy Kelly's life crumbled around him a few years ago, he reflected on those four words. He heard the message often while taking classes at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C®). It took on new significance after his mother passed away.

"My three-year plan with Tri-C turned into a six-year plan," Kelly said. "But that's OK."

Because he did finish what he started. The 56-year-old U.S. Army veteran graduated from Tri-C in May with an Associate of Arts degree. In the fall, he plans to begin working toward a bachelor's degree in social work at the University of Akron.

Such a future once seemed unlikely for Kelly. The Cleveland man said he

lost his purpose after serving 12 years in the military with multiple tours in Kuwait, Iraq and Bosnia. He talked of spending two decades as a "wanderer," isolating himself with drugs and alcohol while dealing with the effects of PTSD.

Kelly began turning things around after seeking help from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and enrolling at Tri-C. He set his sights on becoming a social worker to repay the help he received.

He started well, struggled after his mother's death, and then recommitted himself to his courses.

Today, Kelly balances his classwork with a full-time job as a resident assistant at an inpatient treatment facility. He also serves as a certified peer specialist, supporting other veterans struggling with mental

health issues, psychological trauma and substance abuse.

"I've always been a helper," he said. "Even when I was at my worst."

Kelly credits his success to working hard and not giving up. To stay on track, he writes his goals on pieces of paper and posts them on doors around his house. He has even drawn his future office — including everything he plans to put on his desk — so that he can visualize his next step.

He expressed gratitude for the counselors, instructors and Veterans Education Access Program staff he worked with at Tri-C. He says they saw something in him that he did not see in himself.

"I want those who helped me to know what they do matters," he said. "I want to succeed for them."

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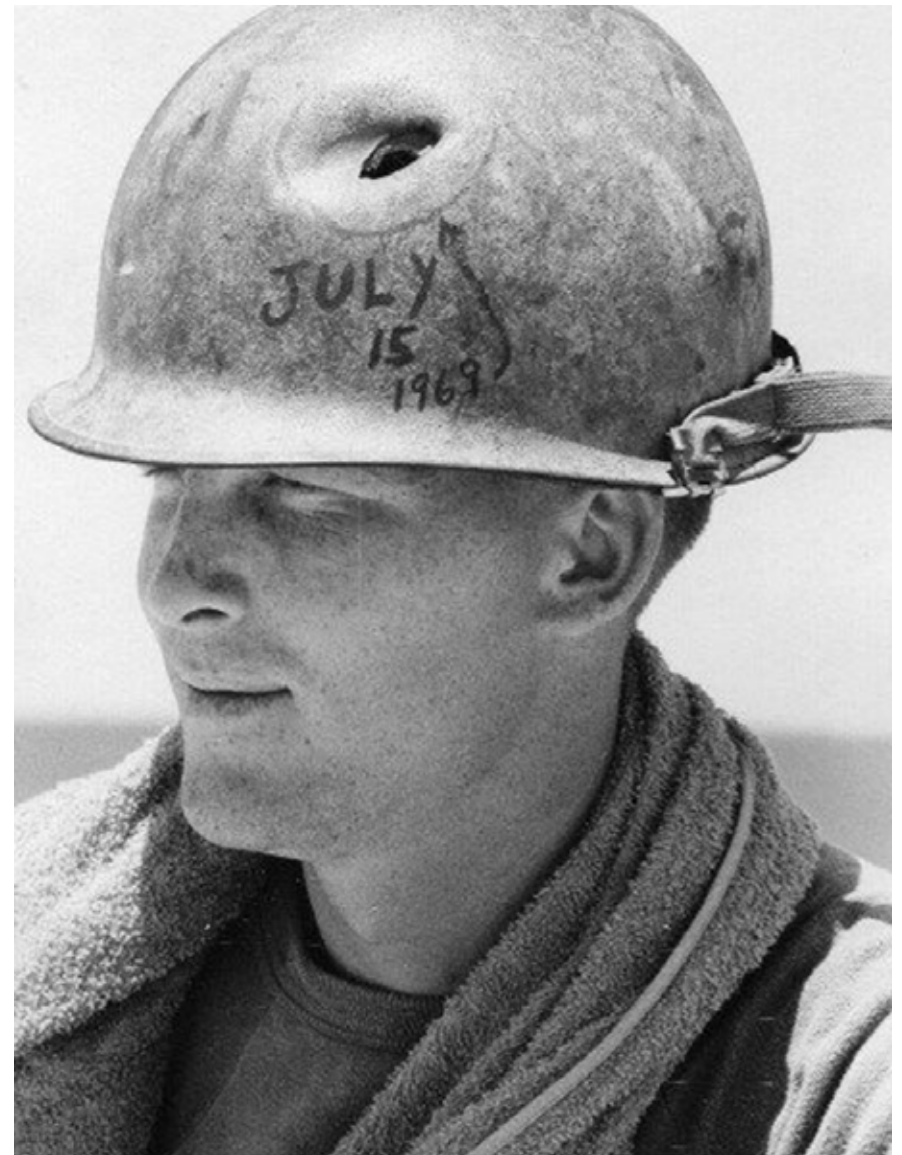
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“There is no such thing as closure for soldiers who have survived a war. They have an obligation, a sacred duty, to remember those who fell in battle beside them all their days and to bear witness to the insanity that is war.”

- LTG Harold “Hal” Moore Jr.



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A large advertisement featuring a photograph of a young girl in a pink hoodie hugging her knees against a wall. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.



CLEVELAND CAN LEAD POLICE-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A Message for the Community from The Cleveland Police Foundation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Answering a New Call of Duty

ADAM SMITH WANTED TO REDIRECT HIS DESIRE TO SERVE FOLLOWING A COMBAT INJURY. HE FOUND NEW FOCUS AT TRI-C.

Standing atop a mountain outcrop in the Uruzgan province of Afghanistan, the unmistakable hiss of danger stabbed at U.S. Army Sgt. Adam Smith's senses. He barely had time to move before the incoming warhead arrived.

The concussive blast from the explosion launched Smith into the rocks below. He shredded both elbows and busted multiple body parts while slamming back to the ground.

That day in 2014 ended his military career. It also made him realize what it means to need help.

"I've been at a very low point," the 34-year-old said. "So when I see other people suffering, when I see someone struggling or feeling hopeless, it hurts me. I want to make things better for them. I want to make things right."

Achieving that goal brought Smith to Cuyahoga Community College and Tri-C's Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Humanities Center, where there's a focus on civic engagement and leadership.

He's driven by the same ideal—a desire to serve—that prompted him to enlist in the Army after graduating from Ashtabula County's Grand Valley High School.

Smith became a paratrooper in the Army's famed 82nd Airborne Division during his decade in uniform. He deployed to Afghanistan twice and spent a combined 31 months in the combat zone before being wounded.

After returning home to recover from multiple surgeries, Smith looked around Northeast Ohio and saw a new way to direct his energy.

He began by volunteering with Safe Passages, an initiative designed to connect opiate addicts with treatment. The program is run in partnership with local police departments. Smith said he has shepherded 38 people to treatment.

"That really got me into my 'I-have-to-do-something' mentality," Smith said.

He rode that momentum into Tri-C. Smith enrolled last year after visiting the Veterans Education Access Program office at Metropolitan Campus, where he found an energy level that matched his own. The connection to the Mandel Humanities Center at Eastern Campus soon followed.

Along the way, he co-founded a "veterans think tank" called Complex Questions at Metro Campus to discuss community issues and—more importantly—develop action plans to create solutions.

"The idea of serving isn't something that disappears once you leave the military," Smith said. "This is a way for us, now as citizens, to continue making a difference. There is so much we can accomplish as veterans."

Smith is working toward an Associate of Arts degree at the college with a focus on history. This spring, he'll begin an internship at the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument on Cleveland Public Square. (His work as a Mandel Scholar connected him to the post.)

The internship fits with Smith's ambition of someday working as a historian at a museum.

Smith expects to graduate from Tri-C in 2021. He hopes to continue his education at Case Western Reserve University after transferring through the Cleveland Humanities Collaborative, a partnership between the institutions.

Along the way, he plans to continue finding ways to lift his community. One idea involves planting orchards on vacant lots around his Garfield Heights neighborhood.

"Problems represent opportunities," Smith said. "It's just a matter of taking action and realizing that small steps can lead to big changes. Why do I feel like I have to do it? Well, someone has to ... and it might as well be me."



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Jim Banks: professor, historian and friend to warriors

By Brian Albrecht

I'd like to believe that Cuyahoga Community College knew exactly what it was doing in 1966 when it assigned its new history professor, Jim Banks, to an office in the barbed-wire-enclosed psychiatric ward of the former Crile General Hospital.

Not that Jim was crazy, though he might have looked out the tiny chicken-wire-screened window of his steel office door and wondered about teaching in a collection of old Army barracks and hospital buildings scattered on a 150-acre weed-choked lot in Parma, newly designated as the college's western campus.

But the setting would later contribute to Jim's subsequent 54-year commitment to veterans, a dedication often described by others as a driving passion. As a Tri-C professor recently remarked, "You don't meet Jim, you encounter him, like a force of nature."

The Army hospital—named for famed Cleveland surgeon George Crile, who served overseas during World War I and later co-founded the Cleveland Clinic—treated wounded GIs during and after World War II. The hospital complex, which shut down in 1964, had a way of seeping into your bones, "almost like a form of historical osmosis," Jim, 80, says. "It grabs you, literally by the heart and mind."

His mission become more than teaching history. His efforts helped establish memorials to POWs and veterans in a campus garden, and seminars to educate vets and their families about post-traumatic stress syndrome. He also brought in notable military speakers for historic commemorations, and created a repository of veterans' testimonies and artifacts in the Tri-C Crile Archive Center for History Education.

The question now – after Jim and more than 200 full- and part-time Tri-C employees were laid off in June – is what happens next? Jim's legacy and personal future drift in the ether

of the unknown.

So perhaps it's an appropriate time to bestow a snappy salute to a historian, teacher and author, a walking repository of military knowledge, every veteran's buddy and a longtime friend of mine.

All from a guy who originally wanted to be an astronomer when he grew up.

Jim was an adopted child. His adoptive mother told him that he was abandoned in a basket left in a hotel lobby in Gary, Indiana. She later helped him buy his first serious telescope for star-gazing. "My God, it looked like a bazooka," Jim recalls with a laugh.

The telescope lasted longer than his dream of becoming an astronomer when Jim says he "hit the wall in flames" after encountering the harsh reality of scientific studies at Purdue University and switched to history.

At college, he not only landed a future career, but a wife, Paula, and they jumped in their '56 Chevy to travel to his first teaching job at Medina high school in 1963.

There, and later at Tri-C, Jim developed a distinctive teaching style that relied more on utilizing resources other than textbooks. "I always tried to merge the textbook history with something that was tangible and personal," Jim says.

So when he taught special courses involving World War II and POWs, local veterans became part of his classroom instruction, telling their stories in graphic and emotional detail.

One of his early students was Ed Foley, now a professor of business at Tri-C. "He's a great storyteller, almost theatrical, and really makes things come alive," Foley says.

Jim was particularly adept at linking the history of Crile Hospital with the campus and contemporary events, according to Foley. "He has a 'let's

remember where we came from' passion," he says. "He's deeply connected to making sure we never forget the sacrifices and values that veterans have taught us."

Jim's father was a World War I Army vet who served in France, but rarely talked about his service other than telling his son about the hardships and suffering of war—such as seeing starving civilians foraging for food in garbage cans. One year, Jim donned his dad's old uniform for Halloween.

At Tri-C Jim got involved in campus visits by the traveling Vietnam memorial walls, and partnered with the History Channel, Rand Corporation and the A&E network on special commemorative programs at the college that once included an appearance by Sen. John McCain, former Vietnam POW. Jim remembers when he gave McCain a Tri-C book bag, the senator peeked inside and joked, "Where's the loot?"

Along the way Jim started collecting items for the Crile Archives, founded in 1994. "Scrounging" is how he describes the process that included gleaning an original Crile hospital bed from a local garage sale. He found a mannequin to display a nurse's uniform at a woman's clothing store that was going out of business. A vintage wheelchair came from the college's theatrical prop department.

I encountered Jim's scrounging talent when I worked with him on our 2015 book, "Cleveland in World War II," and he somehow came up with a dozen scrapbooks bulging with clippings from the old Cleveland Press newspaper during the war. They proved to be an amazing resource. And with each discovery we made in those volumes of crumbling, yellowed newspaper, Jim would flash a giddy grin like he'd just found a priceless nugget while panning for historical gold.

Veterans, many who'd been treated or worked at Crile Hospital, and their families, donated photos, artifacts, documents and testimonies. Jim particularly remembers George Novak, a regular contributor and Army vet, who served in both the European and Pacific theaters during World War II: "He never said much, but whenever I talked to him he would tear up and just say, 'You're going to get some stuff.'"

Jim filled a tiny room over the Tri-C theater, then moved to larger quarters adjoining the school library.

The Crile Archives are "a fabulous little collection," according to Andrew Richmond, owner of Wipiak Consulting and Appraisals, of Marietta, who recently evaluated the archives for insurance purposes. "That kind of collection, particularly

as it relates to the military and veterans health care, just doesn't exist in many places. It's a valuable resource, absolutely."

The archives have been regularly used as a "field trip" for students of Tri-C history professor Tom Lyon. "I tell them you're about to step into a time machine. It's just a treasure trove of primary source material," he says. "It provides students with a tangible connection to the past."

To Jim, the collection represent a legacy of veterans past and present, and a physical embodiment of the mantra "from healing to learning," reflecting the site's history from hospital to college, posted in the archives.

"There would be no Crile Archives to preserve the history of the college if it weren't for Jim Banks," says Rick DeChant, former head of the Tri-C Veterans Initiative who now has his own consulting firm, DeChant Strategic Connections.

He describes Jim as a personal mentor, guide and counselor, and cited "his understanding of the importance of military history and values of service."

DeChant is also one of many who have noticed an uncanny resemblance between Jim and a portrait of George Crile, painted by a hospital patient, that hangs in the archives. Right down to the neatly trimmed white mustache.

But his connection with history and veterans goes much deeper, according to J. Mark Busch, co-owner of Busch Funeral and Crematory Services, who has worked with Jim on the Vietnam memorial wall visits to campus and other veterans projects at Tri-C.

"Jim has far greater than a passion, he has an emotion about the story of veterans and how we need to preserve and share those stories, now and for the future," Busch says.

As for Jim's future, this "consummate teacher of history," in and outside the classroom "is not one to sit still," Busch says. "If Jim Banks isn't on the battlefield for veterans, I don't know where he would be."

Mary Reynolds Powell, an Army nurse who served in Vietnam, also notes, that "as a historian, Jim has a true sense of connecting the present to the past."

To her, the greatest value of the Crile Archives is "not just the dates and the battles and specific historical facts, it's the stories [of local vets] that people can identify with."

"I wish there was a project for him," she adds. "That's the source of his life."

Paula Banks, Jim's wife of 58 years, also wonders how he's going to use the energy he seems to constantly generate.

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