



Military Order of the Purple Heart

AARON A. WEAVER CHAPTER 776



CHAPTER PURPOSE

To preserve the proud legacy of the Purple Heart Medal.

VOL 14, ISSUE 4

www.citruspurpleheart.org

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July-Aug 2017

2017-18 Officers

Cdr: Richard "Bud" Allen
Sr. Vice Cdr: Chuck Kanehl
Jr. Vice Cdr: Chris Boreland
Adjutant: Curt Ebitz
Finance Off: Joe McClister
Judge Adv: Frank Hayes
Exec Cmte man: Ray Michael
Alt Cmte man: Mike Schlaudraff
Sgt-at-Arms: Rick Allen
Trustee 3-yrs: Glenn Beaulieu
Trustee 2-yrs: Andy Viola
Trustee 1-yr: Zig Laska
Service Off: Joe McClister
Welfare Off: Gary Bain
Historian: Curt Ebitz
Chaplain: Mike Nemesh
Americanism Off: William Korber
Surgeon: Roland Hannon

Bimonthly Meeting



The Chapter's bi-monthly general membership meetings are held the third Tuesday of September, November, January, March, May and July. The meeting location is at the Citrus County Builders Association, 1196 S. Lecanto Highway (C.R. 491), Lecanto, which is located on the west side of S. Lecanto Highway approximately 1/2 mile south of S.R. 44. Any member desiring to place an item on the agenda should call Adjutant Ebitz at 382-3847 or e-mail info@citruspurpleheart.org.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, July 18, 1 p.m.

Citrus County Builders Association, Lecanto.

Chapter 776/Unit 776 News

A warm welcome is extended to the chapter's newest member, **Thomas Flynn**. He is a Spring Hill resident, USMC veteran of Vietnam, the recipient of two Purple Hearts and the past commander of Marine Corps League Detachment 708 in Brooksville.



A long anticipated Welcome Home to **J.B. & Anita Haskins**. It was great to see the two of them at the chapter's Armed Forces Day picnic upon relocating back to their Citrus County home after residing in Melbourne, FL the past half-dozen years or so.

Well deserved congratulations to Chapter 776's Patriot of the Year **Romy Camargo**, Associate Member of the Year **Linda Schlaudraff** and Volunteer of the Year **Gabriela Camargo**. Thank you for all that you do for the chapter, Order and fellow veterans.

Special thanks to guest **Bobby Gaudette** and Sgt. at Arms **Rick Allen** for volunteering their grill master skills as the Chef du Jour and Sous Chef de Jour, respectively, at the [See News page 2](#)



Chapter 776 & Unit 776 flag bears led the procession of flags for the Flag Day ceremony hosted by the Purple Heart City of Inverness at the Valerie Theatre in downtown Inverness. *Left:* Rick Allen, Annie Fair and Bud Allen.

Chapter Activities

Completed

May 4. Chapter 776 Patriots and Unit 776 Ladies turned out in force for a Welcome Home event for three returning service members. Both the chapter and unit gave each service member a Walmart gift card. Attending were Bud & JoAnn Allen, Sandy Cross, Fred & Linda Daniels, Curt & Mari-Elain Ebitz, J.B. Haskins, Frank & Carol Hayes, Richard & Mickey Hunt, Zig & Nancy Laska, Pat Michael, Joe McClister & Annie Fair, Ken Patterson and Josh Langston White.

May 20. The chapter enjoyed a terrific turnout for its annual Armed Forces Day picnic. Over 70 Patriots, Ladies and guests attended. Chapter officers were installed by Crystal River Purple Heart City Mayor Jim Farley. Citrus High School graduating senior Lauren Philipps, who was the 2017 recipient of the

Annual Purple Heart Anniversary Breakfast

Chapter 776's annual Purple Heart anniversary breakfast will be hosted by the West Citrus Elks Lodge 2693 on **Saturday, August 5 at 9:00 a.m.** The lodge is located at **7890 W. Grover Cleveland Blvd, Homosassa** about 3/4 mile east of U.S. 19 in Homosassa. The anniversary celebration will feature a delicious breakfast, plus a program honoring Purple Heart recipients and commemorating the 235th anniversary of the Purple Heart.

All Purple Heart recipients, family members of those who fell in combat, Associate Members, Unit 776 Ladies and their guests are cordially invited to attend. Attendees are requested to **register for the free breakfast by contacting:**

Frank Hayes (PH: 352-341-3603; Email: fwhayes127@yahoo.com) or Bud Allen (PH: 352-270-8436; Email: budsterfd@tampabay.rr.com).

Please indicate the number in your party and their names.



Completed, continued

chapter's \$1,000 endowed scholarship with the College of Central Florida, was presented a Purple Heart memento bracelet.

May 20. Patriot Marxuach presented a MOPH Leadership Medal & Certificate at the South Sumter HS NJROTC annual awards ceremony.

May 25. Attending the Academy of Environmental Science flagpole dedication were Bud Allen, Rick Allen, Curt Ebitz, Lee Helscel, Zig Laska and Josh Langston White. The chapter, which had previously donated \$150 for the 40' flagpole, also presented the academy with two 6' X 10' U.S. flags during the dedication.

May 28. Attending the Fallen Heroes Remembrance Ceremony were Bud Allen, Rick Allen, Curt & Mari-Elain Ebitz, Zig & Nancy Laska, Richard & Mickey Hunt, Ray & Pat Michael, Nancy Weaver, Savannah Weaver and Josh Langston White. Associate Member Robert Dunn and Honorary Member Barb Mills also attended.

May 29. Patriot Bud Allen was the Master of Ceremonies for the Old Homosassa Veterans Memorial commemoration of Memorial Day. Patriot Allen's granddaughter, Eve, sang the National Anthem. Other chapter/unit members attending were JoAnn Allen, Logan Allen, Rick Allen, Troy Allen, Curt & Mari-Elain Ebitz, Zig & Nancy Laska, Joe McClister & Annie Fair.

May 30. Patriots Rick Allen and Ray Michael represented the chapter at the Florida National Cemetery Memorial Day Ceremony.

June 7-11. Chapter 776/Unit 776 delegates at the Department of Florida State Convention in Jacksonville were Bud & JoAnn Allen, Rick Allen, Richard & Mickey Hunt, Nancy Laska, Ray & Pat Michael, Joe McClister & Annie Fair and Mike & Gail Nemesh.

June 14. Associate member Fred Daniels was the organizer of the Floral City Flag Day Ceremony.

June 14. Rick Allen, Sandy Cross, Fred Daniels, Richard & Mickey Hunt and Ray Michael represented Chapter 776 & Unit 776 at the Florida National Cemetery quarterly memorial service for unattended veterans.

June 14. Chapter 776 and Unit 776 flag bearers for the evening Inverness Flag Day ceremony were Bud. Allen, Rick Allen and Annie Fair. Other chapter/unit attendees were Sandy Cross, Curt & Mari-Elain Ebitz, Frank & Carol Hayes, Richard & Mickey Hunt, Chuck Kanehl, Joe McClister, Vikki Pietras and Mike & Linda Schlaudraff.

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From Acting Cdr. Richard "Bud" Allen

Patriots and members,

I recently returned from the Department of Florida State Convention and had an enjoyable time with 776 members and fellow Patriots from around the state.

Once again Chapter 776 received many awards for its outstanding contributions to the Order. We were finalists in every category including Chapter of the year! I am proud to say that for the 10th year in a row we sold the most 50/50 raffle tickets and the winner was not only sold by 776, but the winner is a member of our chapter---Zig Laska! What a thrill to read that name with his wife Nancy sitting in the audience! Thank you members and friends for all your support. It's because of you that we have stayed on top all these years. There are some new prizes in the works for next year, so stay tuned and hold on for the ride.

Due to Department Commander Lee Brown having been elected as the Region IV Commander, newly installed Chapter 776 Commander Richard Hunt, who was a past Department Commander, was elected again as the Department of Florida Commander during the Department's annual state convention. Also, newly installed Chapter 776 Sr. Vice Commander Mike Nemesh was elected as the Department Sr. Vice Commander. I was elected Department Finance Officer and reappointed as Chief of Staff. Chapter 776 Patriots Rick Allen and JB Haskins are the new Department Sgt. at Arms and Judge Advocate, respectively, for the coming year. Charlie Dykes from the West Palm Beach Chapter was elected as the Department Jr. Vice Commander and Tom Hennessey of the Gainesville Chapter was appointed as the Department Adjutant.

The election of Patriots Hunt and Nemesh as Department Commander and Sr. Vice Commander, respectively, made necessary the special general membership meeting on June 27 to accept nominations from the floor to fill the vacated positions of Chapter 776 Commander and Jr. Vice Commander. Jr. Vice Commander Chuck Kanehl will assume the position of Sr. Vice Commander in accordance with chapter bylaws.

I understand that the Armed Forces day picnic was a great success with over 70 attendees and that the food was outstanding. This fun time gets bigger and better every year; so try to make it next year and join in the camaraderie. I was at my squadron gathering in Pensacola and was unable to attend, but sent my family of associate members in my place.

Remember our next bimonthly general membership meeting is 1:00 p.m., July 18 at the CCBA building on C.R. 491, Lecanto. Also our annual Purple Heart anniversary breakfast hosted by Elks Lodge 2693 on Grover

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News, continued

chapter's Armed Forces Day picnic.

Thanks to the support of **Chapter 776 members, supporters, and Doug Jennings** of the chapter's Denver Detachment, the chapter got more donations for the Department of Florida 50/50 raffle tickets than all of the Department chapters combined, raising well over half of the \$6,262 pot. This is the 10th consecutive year that our chapter has been the top fundraiser for the Department's 50/50 drawing. Also, kudos to Chapter 776 Patriot **Zig Laska** who won the 50/50 prize of \$3,131.

Chapter 776 members elected or appointed as 2017-18 Department of Florida officers are **Richard Hunt**, State Commander & Coordinator for the Fallen; **Bud Allen**, Finance Officer & Chief of Staff; **Rick Allen**, Sgt. at Arms; **J.B. Haskins**, Judge Advocate; **Ray Michael**, Bushnell National Cemetery Representative; and **Mari-Elain Ebitz**, Webmaster.

Unit 776 Ladies elected or appointed as Department of Florida LAMOPH officers are **Gail Nemesh**, President; **Annie Fair**, Sr. Vice President; **Pat Michael**, Treasurer; **Linda Schlaudraff**, Sgt. at Arms; **Mickey Hunt**, Parliamentarian & Marshal; **Nancy Laska**, 2-Yr. Trustee; and **Sandy Cross**, Secretary.

A "job well done" to **Bud Allen** for his outstanding job as the Memorial Day Master of Ceremonies at the Old Homosassa Veterans Memorial.

A very appreciative "thank you" to **Gary Marriage of Nature Coast Financial Advisors** for being the CCBA fishing tournament \$1,500 Purple Heart Sponsor for the third consecutive year and to Patriot **Colin Pearl** for donating embroidered fishing shirts to fellow Patriots participating in the fishing tournament.

Congrats to Patriot **Josh Langston-White** on his recent appointment as the United Way of Citrus County Mission United Coordinator.

The remains of Departed Patriot **Rudy Weddle** were inurned at Arlington National Cemetery on June 6 with his beloved wife **Jeane**, family members and Chapter 776 Patriot **Don Paddy** & wife **Bea** paying their final respects. Thank you, Don and Bea for representing the chapter.

World War II veteran Patriot **John Foley** has been diagnosed with terminal cancer and is under the care of Hospice. John conveyed the sad news with the same courage that he displayed during the battle for Okinawa, as a Marine infantryman and NYPD officer.

Proud Supporter **Paul Stevio** had surgery to correct an irregular heartbeat at Shands Hospital in Gainesville on May 11.

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Citrus High School graduating senior Lauren Philipps was presented with a Purple Heart bracelet by newly installed Commander Richard Hunt as a memento for being the 2017 recipient of the chapter's \$1,000 College of Central Florida Endowed Scholarship.



Chapter 776 Associate Member Col. Curt Ebitz Jr., USMC, presented a Proud Supporter plaque to Tina Anderson, daughter in law of Departed Chapter 776 Honorary Member Neville Anderson, in recognition of her faithful support of the chapter and veterans. Following the death of Neville, Tina has continued the provision of flags on a consignment basis to the chapter for its fundraising partnership with the Citrus County Tax Collector Office that benefits the Citrus County Veterans Foundation. The plaque will be hung next to the painting of the Marine in combat (center) that was painted by Neville.



Chapter 776 during the academy's flagpole dedication. The flag was the first to be raised on the academy's newly installed 40' flagpole.

Unit 776 Ladies Annie Fair, Mari-Elain and Nancy Laska attended the Memorial Day ceremony at the Old Homosassa Veterans Memorial to remember those who gave their lives defending our country.



Academy of Environmental Science students unfurled the U.S. Flag donated by



Welfare Officer; Will Korber, Americanism Officer; Zig Laska, Trustee; Mike Schlaudraff, Alternate Executive Committeeman; Mayor Jim Farley; Richard Hunt, Commander; Mike Nemesh, Sr. Vice Commander; Rick Allen, Sgt. at Arms; Curt Ebitz, Adjutant; Ray Michael, Executive Committeeman; Joe McClister, Finance Officer. *Not Present:* Chuck Kanehl, Jr. Vice Commander; Glenn Beaulieu, Trustee; Frank Hayes, Judge Advocate.

Chapter 776 officers for 2017-18 were installed by the Purple Heart City of Crystal River Mayor Jim Farley during the chapter's annual Armed Forces Day picnic. *Left:* Rowland Hannon, Surgeon; Andy Viola, Trustee; Gary Bain,

Future

July 25, 1:00 p.m. Purple Heart Proclamation, Board of County Commissioners, County Courthouse, Inverness.

August 5, 9:00 a.m. Purple Heart Anniversary Breakfast, hosted by W. Citrus Elks Lodge, 2396, Grover Cleveland Ave., Homosassa.

Commander

Cleveland Blvd, Homosassa is 9:00 a.m., Saturday, August 5. Please be sure to sign up, bring your family and join us for a free breakfast and a special time!

As always, thanks for your support. You make our chapter the premier chapter in the Department of Florida.

Always moving forward, "Bud"

News

Bonnie Korber, wife of Patriot Will Korber, is slowly recovering from surgery on May 15 at Citrus Memorial Hospital to correct an irregular heartbeat.

Patriot **Romy Camargo** had surgery on May 3 in Cleveland, Ohio to re-implant a stimulator that has greatly improved his breathing.

Sgt. at Arms **Rick Allen** was hospitalized with severe abdominal pain and **Gregg Cross**, husband of Associate Member Sandy Cross, for blood clots in his lung. Associate Member **Linda Schlaudraff** had a painful bout with kidney stones.