

Military Order of the Purple Heart

AARON A. WEAVER CHAPTER 776



CHAPTER PURPOSE

To preserve the proud legacy of the Purple Heart Medal.

VOL 9, ISSUE 1

www.citruspurpleheart.org

January-February 2012

2011-12 Officers

Cdr: Ray Michael
Sr. Vice Cdr: Richard S. Allen
Jr. Vice Cdr: Lee Helscel
Adjutant: Curt Ebitz
Finance Off: Phil Pasay
Judge Adv: Carl Bertoch
Exec Cmte man: Rudy Weddle
Alt Cmte man: Richard Hunt
Sgt-at-Arms: Richard A. Allen
Trustee 3-yrs: Joseph McClister
Trustee 2-yrs: Allen Bell
Trustee 1-yr: Leon Zimmermann, Jr.
Service Off: Joseph McClister
Welfare Off: Mike Schlaudraff
Historian: Curt Ebitz
Chaplain: Ernie Tucker
Americanism Off: John Auble
Surgeon: Jim Ralph



Bimonthly Meeting

The Chapter's bimonthly 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 mile south of S.R. 44. Any member desiring to place an item on the agenda should e-mail Adjutant Ebitz at info@citruspurpleheart.org or call 382-3847.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2:00 p.m.
 Citrus County Builders Association,
 Lecanto

Member News

A warm Patriot welcome to Chapter 776's newest life members Patriots **Glenn Beaulieu, John Carlson, Richard Elliott, Stephen Mills** and **Larry Nelson**. Patriot **Beaulieu**, an Army veteran of Vietnam, transferred from Chapter 552 Enfield, CT and resides in Homosassa. Patriot **Carlson** is an Army veteran of Vietnam and resides in Hernando. Patriot **Elliott** is an Army veteran of Vietnam and resides in Homosassa. Patriot **Mills** is an Army veteran of Vietnam and resides in Citrus Springs. Patriot **Nelson**, a Marine Corps veteran of Vietnam, transferred from Chapter 87, Tampa, FL, and resides in Bushnell.



Member continued, page 2.

Chapter Activities Completed

October 31-November 10. Chapter 776 Patriots Dick Allen, John Carlson, Don Guard, Lee Helscel, Richard Hunt, Dave Murphy, Tony Skrapits and Ernie Tucker shared their military service experiences with students as part of Citrus County's Veterans in the Classroom program.

November 5. Helping to man the chapter's display during the annual Veterans Fair were Cdr. Ray Michael, Sr. Vice Cdr. Dick Allen, and Patriots Rick Allen and Harold Layman.

November 10. Chapter 776 was represented at the Inverness Primary School annual veterans program by Cdr. Ray Michael and Patriot Richard Hunt.

November 11. Chapter 776 and Unit 776 participated in Citrus County's Nineteenth Annual



Chapter 776 Massing of the Colors attendees. Left: Phil Pasay, Cdr. Ray Michael, Rick Allen, Mike Schlaudraff, Curt Ebitz, Ann Fair, Mari-Elain Ebitz, Pat Michael, Marie Williams, Marie Raymond, Linda Schlaudraff and Theresa Pasay.

Veterans Day Parade with two floats, several vehicles and a motorcycle manned by Patriot Ernie Tucker. Other chapter members participating were Patriots Dick Allen, Rick Allen, Ken Bradshaw, Curt Ebitz, Lee Helscel, Richard Hunt, Zigmund Laska, Ray Michael, Phil Pasay, Mike Schlaudraff and Cal Shoop. Unit 776 members included Ann Fair, Nancy Laska, Pat Michael, Theresa Pasay, Marie Raymond and Marie Williams.

November 12. Chapter 776 had a tremendous turnout for the annual Military Ball hosted by Citrus Det. 819, Marine Corps League. Chapter members attending were Neville & Joyce Anderson, Sandy Cross, Don & Sue Guard, Curt & Mari-Elain Ebitz, Richard & Mickey Hunt, Harold & Pat Layman, *Completed continued, page 2*



Seventh Annual Purple Heart Ceremony

Please mark your calendars, spread the word and plan to attend!



Chapter 776's Annual Purple Heart Ceremony honoring Citrus County's fallen heroes and wounded warriors will be 11:00 a.m., Saturday, February 18 at the Florida National Guard Armory, Crystal River. With approximately 500 persons attending last year's ceremony, this is the chapter's signature activity and the county's premier veterans ceremony. All members are urged to support this event with their attendance. **Please make every effort to attend with your spouse and guests! Please wear the MOPH overseas cap, PH tie and blazer, if you have them.**

Member, continued

Chapter 776 Patriot **Floyd Craig** recently transferred to Chapter 465 in Douglasville, GA. A Navy veteran of Vietnam, Patriot Craig relocated to Douglasville to be near family members while undergoing treatment for cancer. Please keep him in your prayers.

Hearty congratulations to the chapter's newly formed **LAMOPH Unit 776** for earning recognition as the Best Ladies Auxiliary entry in Citrus County's Nineteenth Annual Veterans Day Parade. Now 22 members strong, Unit 776's accomplishment and enthusiasm are applauded and appreciated.

A very special thank you to Chapter 776 Sgt-at-Arms **Rick Allen** and wife **Carol** for their creativity and dedication in singularly constructing the chapter's float for Citrus County's Nineteenth Annual Veterans Day Parade. Thanks to their hard work, this was the chapter's best-decorated float ever and the parade's best theme entry.

Attendees at the chapter's annual Pearl Harbor dinner and holiday social were delighted to see charter member and past commander **J.B. Haskins** and his wife **Anita** in attendance following his long illness that kept him in foxhole defilade since April.

Chapter 776 Jr. Vice Cdr. **Lee Helscel** was the winner of the kayak package for this year's Homosassa Arts Craft and Seafood Festival raffle drawing. Other winners were: Dan Craft of Crystal River, boat package; Darlene O'Berry of Homosassa, golf package; Millie Smith of Crystal River, dad's package; Mary Beth Maginn of Homosassa, mom's package; Michelle Marcic of Beverly Hills, get-a-way package; and Elaine Moore of Homosassa, miscellaneous package.

A "job well done" is extended to Patriot **Richard Hunt** for his hard work as the coordinator for Citrus County's Nineteenth Annual Veterans Day Parade, which had over 100 entries and thousands of spectators lining the streets of Inverness. Thanks to his single-handed efforts, the parade is a model for other communities to follow.

Heartfelt thanks to those Chapter 776 members who sold and/or purchased raffle tickets for the Homosassa Craft & Seafood Festival with special thanks to Proud Supporter **Olive Radeker** for being the chapter's top raffle ticket seller for the second consecutive year. The chapter sold 507 tickets raising \$654, which exceeded last year's total of \$447. Also, special thanks to Honorary Member **Neville Anderson** for his generous donation of gifts for the Pearl Harbor dinner and holiday social.

Completed, continued

Zigmund & Nancy Laska, Ray & Pat Michael, Barbara & Jim Mills, Phil & Theresa Pasay, Mike & Linda Schlaudraff and Rudy & Jeanne Weddle.

November 13. Patriots Curt Ebitz and Mike Schlaudraff carried the chapter's national and organizational colors and Ann Fair carried Unit 776's organizational flag for the annual Massing of the Colors ceremony. Other chapter members attending were Rick Allen, Fred Daniels, Ken Bradshaw, Don Guard, Richard Hunt, Joe McClister, Ray Michael and Phil Pasay. Unit 776 members attending were Sue Guard, Mari-Elain Ebitz, Pat Michael, Theresa Pasay, Linda Schlaudraff, Marie Raymond and Marie Williams.

November 16. Chapter 776/Unit 776 members attending the Crystal River High School Navy JROTC annual evening parade and dinner were Dick & Joanne Allen, Rick & Carol Allen, Ken & Barbara Bradshaw, Curt & Mari-Elain Ebitz, Joe McClister & Ann Fair, Richard & Mickey Hunt, Zigmund & Nancy Laska, Ray & Pat Michael, Phil & Theresa Pasay, Marie Raymond and Marie Williams.

November 18. Representing Chapter 776 at the Central High School Navy JROTC annual evening parade were Rick Allen, Lee Helscel, Richard & Mickey Hunt and Leon Zimmermann, Jr.

December 7. Fifty-seven members and guests attended the Chapter 776/Unit 776 annual Pearl Harbor dinner and holiday social at the Café on the Avenue. The delicious food, high spirits and warm camaraderie made it a memorable evening. Ninety-one year old Pearl Harbor Survivor Ted Archambault and his wife Marie were the honored guests. The chapter's special guests were Proud Supporters Lee & Olive Radeker and Charlie & Margaret Alexander.

Future

January 17, 2:00 p.m. Chapter 776 bimonthly meeting, Citrus County Builders Association. Following the meeting, a very important presentation will be given on the procedures for obtaining VA payments of at least \$1,000 per month for veterans and/or their spouses residing in an assisted living facility or nursing home. **Spouses are encouraged to attend. Mark your calendar so that you do not miss it.**

February 18, 11:00 a.m. Seventh Annual Purple Heart Ceremony, National Guard Armory, Crystal River.

March 4, Inverness Primary School Veterans Dinner & Program, 5:00 p.m., Line Ave., Inverness.

Cdr. Ray Michael presented a MOPH life member certificate to Patriot Stephen Mills at the November bimonthly meeting.



Cdr. Ray Michael presented a MOPH life member certificate to Patriot John Carlson at the chapter's annual Pearl Harbor dinner and holiday social.



Veterans Day Parade 2011



Sr. Vice Cdr. Dick Allen, driving Patriot Rudy Weddle



Chapter 776's newly formed LAMOPH Unit 776 float that was selected as the "Best Ladies Auxiliary Entry" for Citrus County's Annual Veterans Day Parade. Front, left: Ann Fair and Linda Schlaudraff Back, left: Nancy Laska and Theresa Pasay.



Chaplain Ernie Tucker



Phil Pasay tows the Unit 776 float.



Chapter 776 Sergeant-at-Arms Rick Allen and wife Carol proudly stand before the Chapter 776 float that they constructed for Citrus County Florida's Nineteenth Annual Veterans Day Parade theme, *A Patriotic Salute to America's Military Aviators*.



Front: Marie Williams, Pat Michael. Back: Marie Raymond.



Pearl Harbor Survivor and WW II Marine Corps veteran Ted Archambault and his wife Marie were the event's honored guests. Ted was 92 years old on December 25.



Pearl Harbor Dinner/Holiday Social



Past Chapter Patriot of the Year Rudy Weddle and wife Jeane.



In appreciation of their faithful support, Proud Supporters Lee & Olive Radeker were the special guests of the chapter.



Special guests of Chapter 776, Proud Supporters Charlie & Margaret Alexander of Alexander Real Estate, converse with Mari-Elain Ebitz prior to dinner. Alexander Real Estate has printed the chapter newsletter free of charge since its inception in 2004.



Past Chapter 776 Cdr. J.B. Haskins and wife Anita.



In Memoriam

It was recently learned that Chapter 776 Patriot Ronald Sparks, formerly of Beverly Hills, Florida, passed away at his residence in Bowling Green, Kentucky on September 16, 2011. Patriot Sparks retired from the U.S. Army as a senior noncommissioned officer. A Purple Heart recipient, he was a combat veteran of the Korean War and Vietnam War. Taken captive by the North Vietnamese, he demonstrated great personal fortitude in surviving as a Prisoner of War. His beloved wife, Judy, survives him.