



All gave some, some gave all

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Beirut Memorial Chapter 642

Serving the Combat Wounded

Volume 2

March/April 2018

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Chapter Officers

Commander: Grant Beck
Sen. Vice: Joe Houle
Jun Vice: Stan Walker
Adjutant: John Cooney
Finance: Chadd Jackson
Comm.: Tim Haney
Alt Comm: John Holmes
Trust 3 yr: Gene Putz
Trust 2 yr: Bill Treadwell
Trust 1 yr: Mike Rooney
Service Off: Jim Foyil
Chaplain: Marshall Drennen
Sgt at Arms: Marshall Drennen

**FRATRES AETERNI
(Brothers forever)**

Meeting second Tuesday of the month
at 1900, Military Relocator Realty
building, 1923 Lejeune Blvd.
Jacksonville NC 28546

Chapter membership statistics as of 02/28/2018

Lifetime members: 762 Help us save postage, send me
Associate Members: 7 your email address
Total Membership: 769

Semper Keeping You Informed

Direct all praise, comments or gripes to the editor at
910 455-1353, 1006 Oak Dr, Jacksonville NC 28546

Military Order of the Purple Heart Mission Statement

The mission of the Military Order of the Purple Heart is to foster an environment of goodwill and camaraderie among Combat Wounded Veterans, promote Patriotism, support necessary legislative initiatives and most importantly, provide service to all veterans and their families

Welcome New Patriots

We want to welcome the new patriots that have joined us since the last newsletter. Please come out and attend meetings and functions. We have pending, 1 new member since the last newsletter.

"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers. For he today that sheds his blood with me, shall be my brother." - William Shakespeare, from "King Henry V"



HAVING TROUBLE READING COMPUTER TEXT? HERE'S A TIP -

To make text bigger or smaller hold down the Ctrl key on your keyboard and turn the small wheel in the middle of your mouse. This will change the print size to either larger or smaller depending on which way you turn the wheel.

Calendar of Events

- 13 Mar – Monthly Chapter meeting at 1900, 1923 Lejeune Blvd.
- 14 Mar – Field Medical Training Bn. Graduation at 0900, Bradley Hall, Camp Johnson.
- 21 Mar – Corpsmen Memorial Meeting at 1800 at 1923 Lejeune Blvd.
- 10 Apr -- Monthly Chapter meeting at 1900, 1923 Lejeune Blvd.
- 18 Apr -- Corpsmen Memorial Meeting at 1800 at 1923 Lejeune Blvd.
- 28 Apr – Vietnam remembrance ceremony at the wall at 1000.

NOTE: * Denotes full Purple Heart attire

Chapter Van

The Chapter van is available for chapter members or spouses that are Wheel chair bound, for transport to medical appointments and chapter functions. Any other use needs to be approved by the commander.



sustain active-duty troops in building resilience and helping recovery: realwarriors.net or 1-866-966-1020.

- Camp Lejeune MCCS resilience programs -- Includes classes on stress management, anger management, suicide awareness, prevention and more for families : mccs-lejeune.com/health or 910 451-2865.

Know guns, Know Peace, Know Safety. No guns, no peace, no safety

Hotlines for Military

If you are struggling with thoughts of suicide, the following resources are designed to assist troops in crisis. More info about all programs is available at: usmc-mccs.org/suicideprevent.

-National Suicide prevention lifeline -- A 24 hour hotline for those considering suicide. 1 800-273-TALK (troops and vets press #1)

- Military onesource – Free counseling and telephone consultation for troops and their family members:militaryresource.mil or 1-800-342-9647.

- Real warriors program – maintained by the defense centers of excellence to support and

Chapter Happenings

During this initial period of 2018, we kicked it off with the taking down of the Fallen Warrior Tree at the base exchange, see pic below:



Pic taken by exchange security person, the little guy is the adj's grandson.

Our finance officer, Patriot Campbell decided to step down and Patriot Jackson volunteered as the interim finance officer. An audit was held and all found in order.

Also during the period we received four proclamations and in turn gave out four letters of appreciation and two Purple Heart parking signs to businesses. We are up to 91 businesses now in the proclamation program. If you frequent an establishment and you deem them worthy let the Adjutant know and we will consider them for this program.

Patriots attended the Change of command for the Field Medical Training Bn CO. Capt. Smith departing and Capt. Waggoner aboard.

We buried past commander Mac McGee, he passed unexpectedly on 8 February. Mac was a corner stone of our chapter and will be sorely missed. Although, not in a major position in the chapter for a while he fulfilled many small important duties.



Patriot McGee paying respects



Some Patriots participated in the Chilly Chili poker run, hosted by the Rolling Thunder.

At the February Monthly meeting, John McGee was presented with the decorative paddle pictured below. John and his buddy Kevin were instrumental in the establishment of the Hatteras Wounded Warrior vacation fund. In case you are unaware, this fund allows a wounded warrior and his/her family to travel to Cape Hatteras and spend a week at no charge. This is open to Iraq and Afghan Purple Heart recipients from May through August. Patriot McGee did oversee this program but due to his passing contact the Commander or me for arrangements. You young guys and gals need to take advantage of this program otherwise it will be discontinued.



Six patriots attended the NC Department Quarterly meeting hosted by our chapter. See pic below, we are in the back:



The next two months are not real busy. We are preparing for our annual Memorial Day Ceremony, 28 May. We held a brief meeting of the key figures after our monthly meeting. General Dickerson will be the guest speaker. We have another Field Medical Training Bn. Graduation on 14 March. Here as in the past, we will present the honor graduates from the

Corpsmen and Religious Programmer's side of the house with plaques from the chapter for their accomplishments.

Law of Mechanical Repair – After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch and you'll have to pee.

Blood Test to detect TBI

A new type of blood test is being used to detect mild [traumatic brain injury](#), Army researchers have announced.

It is the first blood test for use in evaluating mild [TBI](#) to be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, according to a Feb. 14 release from the [Army Medical Materiel Development Activity](#).

“There are blood tests for many diseases on the market, but this is the first one dedicated to traumatic brain injury,” said Army Lt. Col. Kara Schmid, project manager for the Neurotrauma and Psychological Health Project Management Office at the USAMMDA at Fort Detrick, Maryland.

“For the first time, medical personnel won't have to rely only on a description of the incident and symptoms, but will have access to an objective marker of injury to the brain, all from a simple blood test,” Schmid said. “This test holds promise to change the practice of medicine for brain injury.”

The goal is to have the blood test ready for fielding to the force in the next year to 18 months, Schmid told Military Times.

The blood test can help fill a critical need to quickly evaluate injured troops in remote locations, where there is a “knowledge gap” in assessing how severe the injury is, said Army Col. Sidney Hinds, coordinator of the DoD Brain Health Research Program.

[[Health experts warn concussions present major challenges to military health.](#)]

The Defense Department has been working for more than a decade to find ways to diagnose and evaluate TBI in service members. TBI has been called the signature wound of the recent wars, with more than 375,000 cases diagnosed since 2000. More than four in five of those cases are considered to be mild TBI.

Of the 375,230 TBI cases, the Army has had 220,014 cases, with 50,937 in the Navy, 50,995 in the Air Force and 53,284 in the Marine Corps, according to [DoD records](#).

The new blood test works by identifying two protein markers that are specific to the brain. After an injury, these rapidly appear in the blood. Medical professionals can then evaluate the patient and assess whether the patient needs a CT scan and other treatment. Limited user testing will be done at three military treatment facilities in this fall, while two more configurations of the product are in development, Schmid said.

The current version of the analytical tool, also referred to as an assay, can be used in military hospitals with clinical laboratories. Deployed units would see future versions that are in the works for combat support hospitals and, potentially, battalion aid stations, Schmid said.

“We are currently developing a configuration of the assay that could be supported, logistically, at the point of injury,” Schmid said.

However, she added, decisions to deploy it will depend on several factors including approved uses for it, and what providers are available to use it at the point of injury.

The U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command worked with Banyan Biomarkers, Inc. to develop the technology, and Banyan Biomarkers received FDA approval to market the brain trauma indicator, or BTI. The effort has also included scientists at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, the University of Florida and partnerships with industry and academia.

“When we started this development effort, many people were skeptical that you could find brain proteins in the blood after a head injury, especially in those classified as mild TBI,” Schmid said. “This test will open the doors to what blood based biomarkers can do for the evaluation of TBI.”

Law of Probability – The probability of being watched is directly proportional to the stupidity of your act

Veteran's Suicide

Veteran suicide is a pressing national issue in the United States. While veterans make up just under 9 percent of the U.S. population, they account for more than 18 percent of all suicides.

To help address the issue, the Northern Virginia Technology Council is sponsoring a University Challenge "hackathon" Wednesday in McLean at its Capital Data Summit, to present ways that big data analysis can be used to address a serious national challenge. The summit is designed to showcase big data assets and capabilities in the region that can serve commercial and government interests, as well as society at large.

The University of Virginia is sending a team of five undergraduate students to compete in the hackathon. The team has been working for nearly two months to "hack" into the factors that can lead to so many veteran suicides, leveraging data science tools and techniques to analyze and propose solutions to the problem. Their sources included Department of Veterans Affairs statistics, demographics data from regions throughout the nation, death statistics and others.

During a recent internal competition at UVA the team presented its findings to four judges, each in the data science field, and won the internal competition, earning its place in the Capital Data Summit competition. The team members, and their competition, will be judged on the basis of their choice of data, their analytical techniques, their understanding of and insight into the subject matter, and the quality of their presentations. "This Northern Virginia Technology Council challenge led to a group of talented students looking at a very important social problem and increasing our understanding; it does not get any better than that," said Phil Bourne, director of the UVA Data Science Institute, which is sponsoring the UVA team.

The team is proposing ways in which social media and other data can be used to identify and locate at-risk veterans and offering solutions. Team leader Soukarya Ghosh, a first-year computer science major, heard

about the UVA hackathon from a friend just a few hours before a planning session in January, and showed up "out of sheer curiosity."

"The concept of looking at data which could cause tangible change in our communities is what really struck me and I was convinced to form a team to take on this challenge," he said.

Ghosh's team soon developed a program to analyze veteran tweets for patterns that might indicate behaviors and attitudes that could suggest depression and suicide.

"My group was able derive a number of correlations between veteran suicide rate and variables such as uninsured rate, urban/rural living location, and access to firearms," he said. "Although these facets remain correlations, we plan on diving into deeper research to find root causes such as unhappiness caused by social isolation, poverty, etc."

He said the team also will further address shortcomings at the Department of Veteran's Affairs, such as wasteful spending.

"There is no one right answer that will stop suicides once and for all; however, with small steps, like providing accessible healthcare to all our veterans and creating a strong community around them, can help them settle back into civilian life," he said.

He added that the exercise is helping him collaborate effectively with his peers, and he plans to use the skills he's developing to address additional large scale societal problems.

Data Science master's student Ali Zaidi presents hackathon research for his team during recent internal competition. UVA judges include, left to right, Phil Bourne, Michele Claibourn, Ron Hutchins and Don Brown. (Photo by Dan Addison, University Communications)

"Data science brings out opportunities for teams to come together and attack a problem that no one person could even begin to address alone," said Arlyn Burgess, the DSI operations director who coordinated the internal competition. "Beyond their excellent technical abilities, the teams creatively found data sources and methods to address the way

that we support our veterans when it comes to the difficult issue of suicide. These kinds of data-informed recommendations are going to change the world we live in, and we are excited to be part of it.”

Rahul Batra, a first-year computer science major on the team, signed on because of an interest in the interaction of technology and societal issues.

“Whether it is through something as simple as optimizing the way people interact with a system at a grocery store or through something broader like combatting bullying, technology always plays a large role in people’s behavior,” he said.

“When I heard that the DSI at UVA was offering this project I was thrilled because data analysis is a field that’s been completely changing the way companies operate, and it is interesting to see it now being taken to a policy level with relation to the government.”

Batra said he is happy to “tie together” science, technology and society concepts with computer science skills to work on policy objectives that could enact change.

“After collecting data, interpreting it, and running tests, at the end of the day we still needed to reason with it and create subjective policy recommendations,” he said. “This part of the project wasn’t something that we necessarily are taught in our classes, however it is equally important to our success as engineers to be able to communicate what our findings really mean.”

The merging of a range of skillsets by the team has impressed Don Brown, a chaired professor of computer science, and one of the UVA competition judges.

“This talented team of students has given us new insights into the crisis of suicide among those who served our country,” he said. “As a veteran myself, I very much appreciate their work and am impressed by their technical accomplishments in a very short period of time.”

Law of Bath – When the body is fully immersed in water, the telephone will ring.
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Pilot program pairs pups with veterans suffering with PTSD

Sarah Birman, an instructor at Canine Companions for Independence, trains a future service dog in Santa Rosa, Calif.

COURTESY OF CANINE COMPANIONS

By MATTHEW M. BURKE | STARS AND STRIPES Published: February 25, 2018

The Department of Veterans Affairs is studying how service dogs might be able to help veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder. Though the results are years away, a group helping with that research isn’t waiting to pair its pups with servicemembers.

Canine Companions for Independence Inc. — a nonprofit in Santa Rosa, Calif., that’s been providing service dogs for people with physical disabilities since 1975 — is preparing to launch a pilot program that will train and pair dogs with veterans with PTSD based on a curriculum developed for the VA study.

PTSD is an anxiety disorder caused by the psychological wounds of war and traumatic experiences. Symptoms include anger, paranoia, anxiety and withdrawal from society.

CCI aims to begin pairing dogs with veterans by the middle of this year, with up to 20 placements by mid-2019, said instructor Sarah Birman.

“This is the first time — aside from the VA study — that we will be training dogs in specific skills that are designed to address the symptoms of PTSD,” she said. “As we’ve worked with veterans with PTSD through the VA study, we’ve had the opportunity to really get to know them, hear some really incredible stories of the ways in which the dogs have helped them.”

For its pilot program, CCI is accepting veterans who live within 90 miles of its Santa Rosa campus, but hopes to expand nationwide over the next few years.

Service dogs have been used for years to benefit those with physical disabilities; however; there is no scientific literature that says the animals are equally beneficial to those with PTSD. A 2011 attempt to study the issue was scuttled because of dog bites and

was later canceled over concerns about the animals' health and training.

At the end of 2014, the VA kicked off the current study, which it says is more comprehensive and more tightly controlled, with new partners, including Canine Companions.

The most recent group of participants received their dogs in December, Birman said. After 18 months, the VA will compile and publish the results.

Caleb Davisson cuddles with his service dog, Velvet. The former Marine was paired with one of the first dogs trained for Veterans Affairs' PTSD study at Canine Companions for Independence.

COURTESY OF CALEB DAVISSON

Birman said CCI has confidence in the protocols and training techniques, and believe that it will benefit some veterans.

"We believe that dogs can be trained in tasks that can help mitigate aspects of PTSD and help someone in their process of recovery along with other resources that exist already," she said.

Velvet's help

Caleb Davisson, 30, is a former Marine sergeant whose PTSD diagnosis came after a 2011 combat deployment to Helmand province, Afghanistan, where the then-scout sniper's platoon counted more than 200 confirmed kills.

"I was having all of the typical symptoms," he recently told Stars and Stripes. "I was scared to go out in public because I might be around a lot of people. I was depressed. I was withdrawn from everything, basically; hypervigilant all the time."

Davisson said his marriage fell apart and things began to look dire before he decided to seek help. In 2012, he got out of the Marines and headed back to Iowa to live with family. He sought treatment for PTSD through the VA. That's where he learned about the study. Davisson fit the criteria, and in the summer of 2015 moved to Santa Rosa to work with Birman and CCI. He was paired with one of the first dogs trained by CCI for the VA study, a black English Labrador named Velvet.

Velvet knows about 20 commands, said Davisson, who uses "block" and "behind" the most. When he delivers those commands, Velvet acts as a barrier in front or behind him in a crowded public setting, ensuring that people don't get too close. She also knows how to turn on lights before Davisson enters a room and can clear a room of people before he enters, barking three times if she spots someone.

Velvet "helped me out more than I ever thought she would, just by the commands she performs," Davisson said. "But honestly, aside from the fact that she is a service dog and she's trained to go out in public and all of that, I think just the companionship itself has been the most beneficial out of everything, just having her there all the time and unconditional love."

Davisson said Velvet's help has been immeasurable, because she forces him to take responsibility for her well-being – to get out of bed, to walk and feed her. She protects him from PTSD triggers and has given him the confidence to go to school and get his bachelor's degree in construction management. He has developed ambitious business plans and has started a family.

CCI's program will start with about five local veterans, whose dogs will be selected based on temperament, energy levels, confidence and reactions to stimuli, Birman said. For example, they are looking for dogs with a high level of confidence, those that interact or snuggle with their handler, those attuned to their handler's emotional state and are not reactive to loud sounds.

CCI officials will be looking to fine-tune all of their processes, from application procedures to pairing and training handlers and their new furry companions – and to fit the new program into its existing model. It will expand to about 20 placements during the first year.

There will be frequent follow-up meetings to determine how the veterans are benefitting from the dogs and to see whether there are any unforeseen benefits.

If all goes well, CCI could start admitting police, fire and emergency medical personnel to the program, Birman said. It could also

start rolling out the program in regional centers in the next few years. The group has also been fundraising to open a PTSD-dedicated building on its campus.

“We’ve had the opportunity to learn a great deal through the screening process, the placement process, of course the training process with the dogs and also the team-training with veterans with PTSD, and we feel now, as the VA study is wrapping up, we feel like we’d like to carry that momentum forward,” Birman said.

“Service dogs are another tool that is available to veterans,” she said. “I think the more options that we make available to people the more people will be able to hopefully find something that works for them. PTSD can be an incredibly debilitating condition and really tremendously isolating, and so, if through these dogs we can make a difference in the lives of even just a handful of veterans, then it will absolutely have been worth it.”

Davisson said he plans to continue working with and supporting CCI. He is excited for other veterans with PTSD who might get a chance to enter the program.

“I’ve had the best experience with Canine Companions for Independence,” he said. “They make some awesome dogs. [Velvet] is perfectly docile; perfect behavior. She never makes any mistakes. She’s just phenomenal ... I wholeheartedly believe veterans will benefit from these dogs, without a doubt.”

Law of Random numbers – If you dial a wrong number, you never get a busy signal; someone always answers.
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From the Commander

Last meeting initial nominations were put forth for the elected offices in the Chapter. Next meeting (March 13th) any additional nominations can still be presented. It appears the same names are being nominated again, which is not really a problem in one sense as long as those nominated still want to hold office. If those

of you who do not desire to hold office choose not to run, no problem. HOWEVER, we STILL need your support in other ways that take up nothing more than a few hours of your time during a month. For example, attend a monthly meeting at the Military Relocator bldg., second Tuesday of each month at 1900. 1923 Lejeune Blvd next door to Century 21. Other ways you can help YOUR Chapter is by occasionally participating in one of the information booths we man from time to time for an hour or so. These are usually in the evening or on weekends. Finally, as I’ve talked about many times, bring a Purple Heart recipient that you know about to a meeting and get him into the Chapter. Our normal recruiting drives used to be in conjunction with the annual Christmas leave travel program where we helped pay travel expenses home for the holidays. This past Christmas the numbers we sent dropped to 29. That’s good news in a way because it possibly meant there were less wounded and that’s a GOOD thing. The bad part of the low number might have been because the word wasn’t spread around well enough about this excellent program. Getting more of the younger Marines/Corpsmen into the Chapter will help this along with our Outer Banks Vacation program. What’s that all about you ask.....come to the next meeting and find out! It’s FREE!!!

Semper Fi, Grant

From the Adjutant

Patriots -- It has been a sad month for the chapter. We buried one of our long time members and one that did much to move this chapter where it is today. Patriot Mac will be missed, he wore many hats. He handled the JROTC leadership program, Maintained the Bibles for deceased members next of kin.

Maintained the chapter van at his residence. He took over Chaplain when Patriot Stankowski moved to SC and he was the point of contact for the Hatteras Wounded Warrior Vacation program. He was also past chapter commander and maintained the chapter chronology for several years. The chronology is the chapter history and what we get our reports information off of. Now, you can see how much he will be missed. RIP MAC!

We must move on and move on we will. We are growing, increased to 769 with one pending, largest in NC and second largest in the US. Let's keep that going, the bigger we get the more clout we have on Capitol Hill.

During February's meeting we had nominations for the next year's officers. We are looking for young blood to carry forward. Many of us old farts are wearing out. I have been adjutant for 14 years and I'm getting tired, I will be looking for a replacement in the future. Commander Beck is going for his fifth year and he says this is his last. We NEED some of you to step up. We will have nominations during the March meeting again after which we will hold elections. If you want to get involved let someone know or when we asked for nominations, speak up and let us know. Nuf said.

In closing, as always I show my appreciation for all of you. Without you all we would have no chapter. So thank you for joining and those of you that can help out, thanks so much.

Semper Fi, John

Corpsmen Memorial Foundation CMF

Below is the Maquette sculpted by Abbe Godwin the originator of the Beirut Memorial and the Vietnam Memorial in Raleigh

Donations can be sent to CMF PO Box 12641 Jacksonville NC 28546-2641. Also bricks for the walkway can be purchased at the website. The Website is: www.fmfcmf.org

The Maquette was picked up by Abbe Godwin and has started work on the memorial. Completion is hopefully sometime next year.



Note: We have reached our goal and the sculptress has started on the project, it should be up in about a year with a target date of Veterans Day 2018.

Law of Result – When you try to prove to someone that a machine won't work, IT WILL!!!

Law of theater and Hockey arena – At any event, the people whose seats are farthest from the aisle, always arrive last. They are the ones who will leave their seats several times to go for food, beer, or to the toilet and who leave early before the end of the performance or game. The folks in the aisle seats come early, never move once, have long and gangly legs or big bellies and stay to the bitter end. The aisle people also are very surly folk.