



In Service to America

**Serving Veterans  
and the  
Community**

**November, 2016**

**Volume 25  
Issue Number 11**



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**Meeting Location**

VFW Post 4256  
12901 Gulf Boulevard  
Madeira Beach  
Florida 33708

[www.vva522.org](http://www.vva522.org)



**Vietnam Veterans of America  
Pinellas County Chapter 522  
"Five Double Deuce"**

*"Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."*



**Exercise Your Right  
On November 8th**



**VOTE AMERICA**  
EVERY VOTE COUNTS



## THE BACK NINE

**I FIRST STARTED READING THIS EMAIL & WAS READING FAST, UNTIL I REACHED THE THIRD SENTENCE. I STOPPED AND STARTED OVER, READING SLOWER AND THINKING ABOUT EVERY WORD. THIS EMAIL IS VERY THOUGHT PROVOKING. MAKES YOU STOP AND THINK. READ IT SLOWLY!**

**AND THEN IT IS WINTER....**

You know ... time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams.

But, here it is... the back nine of my life and it catches me by surprise. How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that I was only on the first hole and the back nine was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like.

But, here it is...my friends are retired and getting gray...they move slower and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than me...but, I see the great change...Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant...but, like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd become.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore... it's mandatory! Cause if I don't on my own free will... I just fall asleep where I sit!

And so...now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did!! But, at least I know, that though I'm on the back nine, and I'm not sure how long it will last...this I know, that when it's over on this earth...it's over. A new adventure will begin! Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done...things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime.

So, if you're not on the back nine yet...let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly! Don't put things off too long!! Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether your on the back nine or not!

You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember...and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!!

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one. LIVE IT WELL! ENJOY TODAY! DO SOMETHING FUN! BE HAPPY ! HAVE A GREAT DAY.

Remember "It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver." LIVE HAPPY IN 2016 and beyond!

**LASTLY, CONSIDER THESE TIDBITS:**

- Your kids are becoming you.....but your grandchildren are perfect!
- Going out is good.. Coming home is better!
- You forget names.... But it's OK because some people forgot they even knew you!
- You realize you're never going to be really good at anything like golf.
- The things you used to care to do, you aren't as interested in anymore, but you really do care that you aren't as interested.
- You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV 'ON' than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep".
- You tend to use more 3 and 4 letter words ... "what?"..."when?"... why? ... who?
- You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless."
- What used to be freckles are now liver spots.
- Everybody whispers.
- You have 3 sizes of clothes in your closet.... 2 of which you will never wear.
- Old is good in some things: old songs, old movies, and best of all, *OLD FRIENDS!*

Stay well, "OLD FRIEND!" Send this on to other "Old Friends!" and let them laugh in AGREEMENT! It's Not What You Gather, But What You Scatter That Tells What Kind Of Life You Have Lived.

TODAY IS THE OLDEST YOU'VE EVER BEEN; YET THE YOUNGEST YOU'LL EVER BE, SO ENJOY THIS DAY WHILE IT LASTS.

**Do Not Regret Growing Older.**

**It is a Privilege Denied to Many.**

**God Bless You, My Friend.**

**Important Dates**

**November Monthly Meeting  
Monday, November 7th, 1900 hours  
12901 Gulf Boulevard, Madeira Beach, FL 33708**

**Grouper Tuesday  
Sponsored by Chapter 522 and VFW  
Tuesday, November 8th, 1200 hours VFW  
12901 Gulf Boulevard, Madeira Beach, FL 33708**



Department of  
Veterans Affairs

## America's Wars

Office of Public Affairs  
Washington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600

May 2016

### American Revolution (1775-1783)

Total U.S. Servicemembers <sup>1</sup>	217,000
Battle Deaths	4,435
Non-mortal Woundings	6,188

### War of 1812 (1812-1815)

Total U.S. Servicemembers	286,730
Battle Deaths	2,260
Non-mortal Woundings	4,505

### Indian Wars (approx. 1817-1898)

Total U.S. Servicemembers (VA estimate)	106,000
Battle Deaths (VA estimate)	1,000

### Mexican War (1846-1848)

Total U.S. Servicemembers	78,718
Battle Deaths	1,733
Other Deaths (In Theater)	11,550
Non-mortal Woundings	4,152

### Civil War (1861-1865)

Total U.S. Servicemembers (Union)	2,213,363
Battle Deaths (Union)	140,414
Other Deaths (In Theater) (Union)	224,097
Non-mortal Woundings (Union)	281,881
Total Servicemembers (Conf.) <sup>2</sup>	1,050,000
Battle Deaths (Confederate) <sup>3</sup>	74,524
Other Deaths (In Theater) (Confederate) <sup>3,4</sup>	59,297
Non-mortal Woundings (Confederate)	Unknown

### Spanish-American War (1898-1902)

Total U.S. Servicemembers (Worldwide)	306,760
Battle Deaths	385
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater)	2,061
Non-mortal Woundings	1,662

### World War I (1917-1918)

Total U.S. Servicemembers (Worldwide)	4,734,991
Battle Deaths	53,402
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater)	63,114
Non-mortal Woundings	204,002

### World War II (1941 -1945)

Total U.S. Servicemembers (Worldwide)	16,112,566
Battle Deaths	291,557
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater)	113,842
Non-mortal Woundings	670,846
Living Veterans <sup>5</sup>	1,711,000

#### NOTES:

- Exact number is unknown. Posted figure is the median of estimated range from 184,000 – 250,000.
- Exact number is unknown. Posted figure is median of estimated range from 600,000 – 1,500,000.
- Death figures are based on incomplete returns.
- Does not include 26,000 to 31,000 who died in Union prisons.
- Estimate based upon new population projection methodology.

### Korean War (1950-1953)

Total U.S. Servicemembers (Worldwide)	5,720,000
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Total Serving (In Theater)	1,789,000
Battle Deaths	33,739
Other Deaths (In Theater)	2,835
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater)	17,672
Non-mortal Woundings	103,284
Living Veterans	2,275,000

### Vietnam War (1964-1975)

Total U.S. Servicemembers (Worldwide) <sup>6</sup>	8,744,000
Deployed to Southeast Asia <sup>7</sup>	3,403,000
Battle Deaths <sup>8</sup>	47,434
Other Deaths (In Theater) <sup>8</sup>	10,786
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater) <sup>8</sup>	32,000
Non-mortal Woundings <sup>9</sup>	153,303
Living Veterans <sup>5,10</sup>	7,391,000

### Desert Shield/Desert Storm (1990-1991)

Total U.S. Servicemembers (Worldwide)	2,322,000
Deployed to Gulf	694,550
Battle Deaths	148
Other Deaths (In Theater)	235
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater)	1,565
Non-mortal Woundings	467
Living Veterans <sup>5,10</sup>	2,244,583

### America's Wars Total (1775 -1991)

U.S. Military Service during Wartime	41,892,128
Battle Deaths	651,031
Other Deaths (In Theater)	308,800
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater)	230,254
Non-mortal Woundings	1,430,290
Living War Veterans <sup>11</sup>	16,962,000
Living Veterans (Periods of War & Peace)	23,234,000

### Global War on Terror (Oct 2001 - )

The Global War on Terror (GWOT), including Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), are ongoing conflicts. For the most current GWOT statistics visit the following Department of Defense Website:

<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/casualties.xhtml>

6. Covers the period 8/5/64 - 1/27/73 (date of cease fire)

7. Department of Defense estimate

8. Covers period 11/1/55 - 5/15/75

9. Excludes 150,341 not requiring hospital care

10. Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) estimate, as of 4/09, does not include those still on active duty and may include veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

11. Total will be more than sum of conflicts due to no "end date" established for Persian Gulf War.

Source: Department of Defense (DOD), except living veterans, which are VA estimates as of Sep 2010.

America's Wars Fact Sheet, May 2016

<p><b>American Revolution</b>                  Last Veteran, Daniel F. Bakeman,                  died 4/5/1869, age 109                  Last Widow, Catherine S. Damon,                  died 11/11/1906, age 92                  Last Dependent, Phoebe M. Palmeter,                  died 4/25/1911, age 90</p>	<p><b>Mexican War</b>                  Last Veteran, Owen Thomas Edgar,                  died 9/3/1929, age 98                  Last Widow, Lena James Theobald,                  died 6/20/1963, age 89                  Last Dependent, Jesse G. Bivens,                  died 11/1/1962, age 94</p>
<p><b>War of 1812</b>                  Last Veteran, Hiram Cronk,                  died 5/13/1905, age 105                  Last Widow, Carolina King,                  died 6/28/1936, age unknown                  Last Dependent, Esther A.H. Morgan,                  died 3/12/1946, age 89</p>	<p><b>Civil War</b>                  Last Union verified Veteran, Albert Woolson,                  died 8/2/1956, age 109                  Last Confederate verified Veteran, Pleasant Crump,                  died 12/21/1951, age 104                  Last Union Widow, Gertrude Janeway,                  died 1/17/2003, age 93                  Last Confederate Widow, Maudie Hopkins                  died 8/1/2008, age 93</p>
<p><b>Indian Wars</b>                  Last Veteran, Fredrak Fraske,                  died 6/18/1973, age 101</p>	<p><b>Spanish-American War</b>                  Last veteran, Nathan E. Cook,                  died 9/10/1992, age 106</p>
<p><b>World War I</b>                  Last Veteran, Frank Buckles,                  died 2/27/2011, age 110</p>	

VA estimates the number of living World War II U.S. veterans will be:\*

9/30/19.....356,000	9/30/20.....282,000	9/30/21.....224,000	9/30/22.....178,000
9/30/23.....141,000	9/30/24.....113,000	9/30/25.....90,000	9/30/26.....72,000
9/30/27.....58,000	9/30/28.....46,000	9/30/29.....37,000	9/30/30.....28,000
9/30/31.....24,000	9/30/32.....19,000	9/30/33.....16,000	9/30/34.....13,000

\* Estimates have changed based on new population projections.

**U.S. Veterans and Dependents on  
 Benefits Rolls as of  
 May 2016**

	VETERANS	CHILDREN	PARENTS	SURVIVING SPOUSES
Civil War	-	1	-	-
Spanish-American War	-	46	-	42
Mexican Border	-	3	-	6
World War I	-	1,590	-	1,236
World War II	144,938	9,360	10	178,251
Philippines	1,776	155	3	2,598
Korean Conflict	181,893	2,207	25	74,041
Vietnam Era	1,525,400	4,570	1,198	251,543
Gulf War <sup>1</sup>	1,990,094	4,488	1,788	26,799
Peacetime	710,773	1,382	713	36,048
Non service-connected <sup>2</sup>	292,297	10,175	-	193,442
Service-connected <sup>2</sup>	4,262,577	13,627	3,737	377,122

1. For compensation and pension purposes, the Persian Gulf War period has not yet been terminated and includes Veterans of Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring, and New Dawn.

2. This total includes peacetime veterans receiving benefits

## Will you give this to my Daddy?

**As a Company, Southwest Airlines is going to support 'Red Fridays.'**

**Last week I was in Atlanta , Georgia attending a conference. While I was in the airport returning home, I heard several people behind me beginning to clap and cheer. I immediately turned around and witnessed one of the greatest acts of patriotism I have ever seen.**

**Moving through the terminal was a group of soldiers in their camos. As they began heading to their gate, everyone (well almost everyone) was abruptly to their feet with their hands waving and cheering.**

**When I saw the soldiers, probably 30-40 of them, being applauded and cheered for, it hit me. I'm not alone. I'm not the only red-blooded American who still loves this country and supports our troops and their families.**

**Of course, I immediately stopped and began clapping for these young unsung heroes who are putting their lives on the line everyday for us so we can go to school, work and home without fear or reprisal.**

**Just when I thought I could not be more proud of my country or of our service men and women, a young girl, not more than 6 or 7 years old, ran up to one of the male soldiers. He kneeled down and said 'hi.'**

**The little girl then asked him if he would give something to her daddy for her.**

**The young soldier, who didn't look any older than maybe 22 himself, said he would try and what did she want to give to her Daddy. Then suddenly the little girl grabbed the neck of this soldier, gave him the biggest hug she could muster and then kissed him on the cheek.**

**The mother of the little girl, who said her daughter's name was Courtney, told the young soldier that her husband was a Marine and had been in Iraq for 11 months now. As the mom was explaining how much her daughter Courtney missed her father, the young soldier began to tear up.**

**When this temporarily single mom was done explaining her situation, all of the soldiers huddled together for a brief second. Then one of the other servicemen pulled out a military-looking walkie-talkie. They started playing with the device and talking back and forth on it.**

**After about 10-15 seconds of this, the young soldier walked back over to Courtney, bent down and said this to her, 'I spoke to your daddy and he told me to give this to you.' He then hugged this little girl that he had just met and gave her a kiss on the cheek. He finished by saying 'your daddy told me to tell you that he loves you more than anything and he is coming home very soon.'**

**The mom at this point was crying almost uncontrollably and as the young soldier stood to his feet, he saluted Courtney and her mom. I was standing no more than 6 feet away from this entire event.**

**As the soldiers began to leave, heading towards their gate, people resumed their applause. As I stood there applauding and looked around, there were very few dry eyes, including my own. That young soldier in one last act of selflessness, turned around and blew a kiss to Courtney with a tear rolling down his cheek.**

**We need to remember everyday all of our soldiers and their families and thank God for them and their sacrifices. At the end of the day, it's good to be an American.**

**RED FRIDAYS -----** Very soon, you will see a great many people wearing Red every Friday. The reason? Americans who support our troops used to be called the 'silent majority'. We are no longer silent, and are voicing our love for God, country and home in record breaking numbers.

We are not organized, boisterous or over-bearing. We get no liberal media coverage on TV, to reflect our message or our opinions. Many American, like you, me and all our friends, simply want to recognize that the vast majority of Americans supports our troops.

Our idea of showing solidarity and support for our troops with dignity and respect starts this Friday -and continues each and every Friday until the troops all come home, sending a deafening message that every red-blooded American who supports our men and women afar will wear something red.

By word of mouth, press, TV -- let's make the United States on every Friday a sea of red much like a homecoming football game in the bleachers.

If every one of us who loves this country will share this with acquaintances, co-workers, friends, and family. It will not be long before the USA is covered in RED and it will let our troops know the once 'silent' majority is on their side more than ever; certainly more than the media lets on.

The first thing a soldier says when asked 'What can we do to make things better for you?' is...We need your support and your prayers.

Let's get the word out and lead with class and dignity, by example; and wear something red every Friday.

**WE LIVE IN THE LAND OF THE FREE, ONLY BECAUSE OF THE BRAVE. THEIR BLOOD RUNS RED --- SO WEAR RED! --- MAY GOD HELP AMERICA TO ONCE AGAIN BECOME ONE NATION, UNDER GOD.**



**Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is,  
there is Liberty**

**2 Corinthians 3:17**

**People wait all week for Friday, all year for summer,  
all life for happiness.**

## The BEST Is Yet To Come.....

There was a young man who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. So as he was getting his things 'in order,' he contacted his Priest and had him come to his house to discuss certain aspects of his final wishes. He told him which songs he wanted sung at the service, what scriptures he would like read, and what outfit he wanted to be buried in. Everything was in order and the Priest was preparing to leave when the young man suddenly remembered something very important to him. 'There's one more thing,' he said excitedly. 'What's that?' came the Priest's reply.



'This is very important,' the young man continued. 'I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand.' The Priest stood looking at the young man, not knowing quite what to say. That surprises you, doesn't it?' the young man asked. 'Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request,' said the Priest.

The young man explained. 'My grandmother once told me this story, and from that time on I have always tried to pass along its message to those I love and those who are in need of encouragement. In all my years of attending socials and dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, 'Keep your fork.'

'It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming .... like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie. Something wonderful, and with substance!' So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder 'What's with the fork?' Then I want you to tell them:

'Keep your fork ... the best is yet to come.'

The Priest's eyes welled up with tears of joy as he hugged the young man good-bye. He knew this would be one of the last times he would see him before his death. But he also knew that the young man had a better grasp of heaven than he did. He had a better grasp of what heaven would be like than many people twice his age, with twice as much experience and knowledge. He KNEW that something better was coming. At the funeral people were walking by the young man's casket and they saw the suit he was wearing and the fork placed in his right hand. Over and over, the Priest heard the question, 'What's with the fork?' And over and over he smiled.

During his message, the Priest told the people of the conversation he had with the young man shortly before he died. He also told them about the fork and about what it symbolized to him. He told the people how he could not stop thinking about the fork and told them that they probably would not be able to stop thinking about it either. He was right. So the next time you reach down for your fork let it remind you, ever so gently, that the best is yet to come.

Friends are a very rare jewel, indeed. They make you smile and encourage you to succeed. Cherish the time you have, and the memories you share. Being friends with someone is not an opportunity, but a sweet responsibility. Send this to everyone you consider a FRIEND... and I'll bet this will be an Email they do remember, every time they pick up a fork!

And just remember ... **keep your fork! The BEST is yet to come!**

**God Bless You**

## Bay Pines VA Awards \$8.9 Million Contract for New Cancer Center

September 29, 2016

The Bay Pines VA Healthcare System (VAHCS) announces the award of a \$8.9 million contract to Maxon Groupe, LLC to build a new 17,375 square foot chemotherapy/cancer infusion center at the C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center.

The new state-of-the-art facility will augment the medical center's existing radiation oncology clinic on the northeast side of the campus. Features of the new building will include eight additional treatment stations, which equates to a 50 percent increase to available chemotherapy treatment stations at the medical center. The building will also have a standalone pharmacy for patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment. This unique feature will give Veterans the opportunity to receive the majority of their cancer care and medications in one location versus traveling to various locations across campus.

"The new cancer infusion center is a great example of how we are transforming the delivery of high quality health care services for the men and women we serve across southwest Florida," said Suzanne M. Klinker, Director, Bay Pines VAHCS.

"As an addition to our existing radiation oncology clinic, this new facility will enable our health care providers to treat more Veterans diagnosed with various types of cancer in an environment that is accessible and patient-centered," she said.

Construction of the new cancer infusion/chemotherapy center is expected to be complete in 2018. Doors will open to Veterans shortly thereafter.

When open, the new center will become part of the Bay Pines VAHCS's growing cancer program which includes surgery, radiation oncology, chemotherapy, cancer support groups, cancer survivorship clinics, and cancer care navigation. Annually, about 4,000 Veterans receive one or more services through the program. Click here to read a recent feature article about a Veteran's success through the cancer program.

The Bay Pines VAHCS's cancer program is currently the only VA-operated cancer program in the state of Florida with an active accreditation from American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (CoC) and has been since 1995.

Because it is a CoC-accredited cancer center, Bay Pines takes a multidisciplinary approach to treating cancer as a complex group of diseases that requires consultation among surgeons, medical and radiation oncologists, diagnostic radiologists, pathologists, and other cancer specialists. This partnership results in improved patient care.

There are currently more than 1,500 CoC-accredited cancer programs in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, representing 30 percent of all hospitals. These facilities diagnose and/or treat more than 70 percent of all newly diagnosed cancer patients. When cancer patients choose to seek care locally at a CoC-accredited cancer center, they are gaining access to comprehensive, state-of-the-art cancer care close to home.

For more information, please visit [www.baypines.va.gov](http://www.baypines.va.gov) and subscribe to receive email updates or follow the Bay Pines VAHCS on Facebook and Twitter.

### **About the Bay Pines VA Healthcare System**

The Bay Pines VAHCS is one of the nation's leading VA healthcare systems, employing more than 4,000 medical professionals and support staff dedicated to providing the very best care to Veterans residing in southwest Florida. The organization is the fourth busiest VA health care system in the country in terms of patients served and is accredited by The Joint Commission, Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, and several other nationally recognized accrediting organizations. The Bay Pines VAHCS operates nine facilities to include the main medical center located in Bay Pines and outpatient clinics located in Bradenton, Cape Coral, Naples, Palm Harbor, Port Charlotte, Sarasota, St. Petersburg, and Sebring. To learn more, please visit [www.baypines.va.gov](http://www.baypines.va.gov), like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/vabaypines](http://www.facebook.com/vabaypines) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/vabaypines](http://www.twitter.com/vabaypines).

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### Disclosure Statements

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**For additional information, please visit our website at [www.vva522.org](http://www.vva522.org).**