



THE POW ★ MIA MISSION NEWSLETTER

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DECEMBER 2020



Japan stationed six of its Imperial Navy's aircraft carriers, which carried 414 planes in total, at a pre-chosen location 230 miles north of Oahu. The ships maintained radio silence to keep their movements a secret. On December 7, 1941, at 6 a.m., the first wave of Japanese planes took to the air, and just before 8 a.m., they began an all-out assault on the Hawaiian base, with bombs and torpedoes.

A second wave arrived around 8:50 a.m., but this one didn't include any torpedo planes and it inflicted less damage. Still, by the time Japan's second wave pilots returned to their carriers at 9:55 a.m., the U.S. had lost 188 airplanes while 159 more sustained damages. Some 21 American ships were sunk or damaged - and 2,403 Americans died in the attack, and an estimated 1,178 others were injured.

Nearly all of the American vessels that were damaged during the attack were later repaired, but the USS Arizona was not so lucky. The 608-foot Pennsylvania-class battleship sank after an ammunition magazine exploded. Some 1,177 marines and sailors perished aboard the Arizona that day. Altogether, there were 38 sets of brothers, representing a total of 79 men, on the battleship at the time.



President
"JJ" Justice



Vice President
Cindy Flowers

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**POW * MIA
NEVER
FORGET**

*Rolling Thunder®, Inc. Florida Chapter 1 is a not-for-profit 501 (c) (4) organization,
and everyone donates his or her time because they believe in the POW/MIA Issue.*

On May 21, 1944, which was often referred to as the "Second Pearl Harbor," the West Loch area in Pearl Harbor, saw six large landing ships explode, burn, and sink after their cargoes of ammunition and fuel caught fire. The LSTs (Landing Ships - Tank), were moored in a large formation of 34 ships preparing to take part in the invasion of Saipan in the Marianas Islands. The LSTs were designed to deliver 10 fully combat ready tanks onto beaches during amphibious landings and could carry hundreds of tons of supplies.

Soldiers were unloading mortar shells from LCT-963 onto trucks onboard LST-353 when a fireball suddenly erupted from LST-353.



An LST unloading supplies

The Navy was never able to identify a definitive cause, but an accident with a cigarette or a mortar round going off and igniting the gasoline fumes have been advanced as probable.

Regardless of how the first fire started, its progress through LST-353 was fierce, and the rising heat triggered a second, larger

explosion that filled nearby ships with hot shrapnel and spread flaming debris through the docking area.

The other ships, also filled with fuel, ammunition, and other supplies, began trying to get clear while rescue vehicles rushed in to try to save sailors, Marines, and soldiers and put out the flames. In total, 163 service members were killed and 396 wounded by the fires and explosions that raged for most of the day. The Navy rallied after the incident, finding new ships and men to take over the mission. The LST fleet for the invasion of Saipan launched only one day late and made it to the Marianas quickly enough to invade on schedule on June 15, 1944.

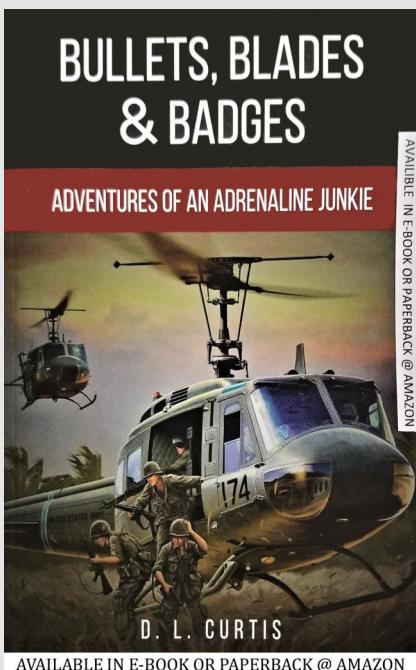
A media blackout kept most of America from hearing about this incident until it was declassified in 1960. Even today, it remains relatively unknown.

Best wishes to the following members who have birthday's this month:

Nick Kuhfeld	12/02
Red Dhaeze	12/06
Dan Moore	12/08
John George, Jr	12/12
Shannon Pearson	12/15
Joan Sheline	12/15
Lance Armstrong	12/17
Dee Wittfeldt	12/17
Kay Dhaeze	12/20
Billy VanDoren	12/21
Grace Bowers	12/22
Ralph Gross	12/25
Charlie Marshall	12/25
Jim Wheatley	12/27
Rick Vincent	12/30
John Juliano	12/31

THE MAJOR FUNCTION OF ROLLING THUNDER ® INC. IS TO PUBLICIZE THE POW/MIA ISSUE: TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC THAT MANY AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR WERE LEFT BEHIND AFTER ALL PREVIOUS WARS, AND TO HELP CORRECT THE PAST AND TO PROTECT FUTURE VETERANS FROM BEING LEFT BEHIND SHOULD THEY BECOME PRISONERS OF WAR MISSING IN ACTION. WE ARE ALSO COMMITTED TO HELPING AMERICAN VETERANS FROM ALL WARS.

Notice: Views and opinions expressed in The Mission Newsletter are those of the editor, and do not necessarily reflect those of Rolling Thunder® Inc. or Florida Chapter 1. If you have any concerns about any material presented in this newsletter, please contact the editor at TheMissionEditor@cfl.rr.com.

*JJ promotes the Chapter**Lance Armstrong presents Chiropractic therapy*

Despite the reported number of positive Coronavirus cases increasing, the Chapter was able to safely participate in and sponsor a few activities last month. Beginning with the first weekend in November, The President, Vice President, and Chairman of the board attended the Annual Rolling Thunder® conference in Washington, D.C. They were later joined by Gary McClain, and Lance Armstrong, who also addressed the attendees about the VA and chiropractic therapy.

On Veterans Day, the Chapter hosted an event at Joe's Club - an Adult Day Care center funded by Brevard Alzheimer's Foundation. We played patriotic music and recognized several veterans at the Club with certificates of appreciation. We sincerely thank Board of Directors member Barbara Morris for organizing the event, and to her husband member Larry Morris playing the music.

Later on in the month we conducted a POW/MIA flag raising at Rockledge Regional Hospital. Member Amanda Herrnkind, also the Community Engagement Coordinator for St. Francis Reflections, organized the event, and provided American Flag pins for veteran staff who work at the hospital. Amanda also arranged for two other flag raisings, but were cancelled due to inclement weather.

*Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie, addresses attendees at the annual Rolling Thunder® conference**Early birds Cindy and JJ*



Raffle Bike inside the Hyatt (L)
VP Cindy Flowers presents veteran with
certificate (Above)



A few photos from our event at Joe's Club in Melbourne, and our flag raising at the Rockledge Regional Hospital, where Amanda Herrnkind presented pins to veteran staff members.

If you have a need, please seek the advice or service of those who support and sponsor this newsletter.



USAF Reserve Col (Ret) Patricia Blassie presents the story of her brother, 1st Lt Michael Blassie, and his journey from missing-in-action to being identified after interment in the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington

Unknown from the Vietnam War during a ceremony at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. As with the Unknowns from previous conflicts, the casket first lay in state at the Capitol Rotunda and was transported via caisson to Arlington. On Memorial Day, May 28, 1984, President Reagan presided over the interment ceremony and presented the Vietnam Unknown with the Medal of Honor. In his eulogy, Reagan assured the audience that the government would continue looking for the war's missing in action.

For almost fourteen years, the Vietnam Unknown laid in rest in the Tomb, while Department of Defense scientists and family members of the war's remaining unknowns worked to identify him. The remains were exhumed on May 14, 1998 to undergo mitochondrial DNA testing. Scientists then identified the remains as those of Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie, who was flying his A-37B Dragonfly when he was shot down and killed near An Loc, Vietnam on May 11, 1972. Blassie had been assigned to the 8th Special Operations Squadron at the time of his death. According to the wishes of his family, Blassie was reinterred at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri.

The crypt designated for the Vietnam Unknown remained vacant until September 17, 1999 — National POW/MIA Recognition Day — when it was rededicated to honor all missing U.S. service members from the Vietnam War. The empty crypt is now inscribed with the words, "Honoring and Keeping Faith with America's Missing Servicemen, 1958-1975."

"We can not dedicate -- we can not consecrate -- we can not hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have hallowed it far above our poor power to add or detract."

- Abraham Lincoln

The United States' involvement in the Vietnam War deeply divided the nation. The government anguished over how to commemorate the conflict. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter dedicated a plaque at Memorial Amphitheater which commemorated those missing in action from the Vietnam War. However, President Ronald Reagan and much of the American public wanted to honor Vietnam veterans by interring an unknown soldier at Arlington and pushed for a selection to be made.

On May 17, 1984, U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Allan Jay Kellogg, Jr., a Medal of Honor recipient, chose an



Members of the Air Force Honor Guard prepare to fold the flag during funeral services honoring U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Blassie on July 11, 1998, at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, south of St. Louis, Mo

December 1, 1941 - The American Civil Air Patrol (CAP), a U.S. Air Force auxiliary, was founded. Director of Civilian Defense, former New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, signed the formal order. The CAP currently provides aerospace education, a CAP cadet program, and emergency services such as locating missing aircraft.

December 2, 1823 - President James Monroe introduced his "Monroe Doctrine" during his annual message to the Congress, prohibiting any further colonization of the American continents by European powers, stating, "we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety..."

December 2, 1982 - The first permanent artificial heart was implanted in 61-year-old Barney C. Clark by Dr. William De Vries at the University of Utah Medical Center in Salt Lake City. Clark, who was near death at the time of the operation, survived 112 days after the implantation.

December 6, 1877 - At his laboratory in West Orange, New Jersey, Thomas Edison spoke the children's verse "Mary had a Little Lamb..." while demonstrating his newly invented phonograph which utilized a revolving cylinder wrapped in tinfoil to record sounds.

December 7, 1787 - Delaware became the first state to adopt the new constitution of the United States of America.

December 12, 1998 - The House Judiciary Committee approved a fourth and final article of impeachment against President Bill Clinton, charging him with making false statements in his answers to written questions from Congress.

December 14, 1799 - George Washington died at Mount Vernon.

December 14, 1962 - The Mariner II space probe sent back information from the planet Venus; the first information ever received from another planet. The Mariner program was a 10-mission program conducted by NASA which launched a series of robotic interplanetary probes.

December 15, 1791 - The Bill of Rights (first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution) became effective following ratification by Virginia.

December 16, 1773 - The Boston Tea Party occurred as colonial activists disguised as Mohawk Indians boarded British ships anchored in Boston Harbor and dumped 342 containers of expensive tea into the water.

December 19, 1732 - Benjamin Franklin first published Poor Richard's Almanac containing weather predictions, humor, proverbs and epigrams, eventually selling nearly 10,000 copies per year.

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We thank all our sponsors of this publication. Your generosity makes it possible for us to continue our mission of "educating the public" about our prisoners-of-war, and missing-in-action, while at the same time, promoting your cause or business.

Major James Capers Jr.**USMC Force Recon**

MAJOR CAPERS

THE LEGEND OF TEAM BROADMINDED

Major Capers is a legend, not only in the Marine Corps but in the Special Operations community as well. His biography reads like a Hollywood script and what is even more incredible is that it probably is understated.

Capers fought many of our nation's enemies during the course of his storied and amazing career. He also fought against racism and prejudice in our own country, where some NCOs and Officers refused to believe that he was worthy of being counted among the best in Special Operations.

Capers was born in Bishopville, South Carolina, in the Jim Crowe south, just three generations removed from slavery. His father moved to Baltimore and it was awhile before the rest of the family could move up with him and be reunited. Capers graduated high school in 1956. He remembers the military recruiters coming to the school looking for recruits. "You had to register for the draft, back then," he said.

"You had the obligation to serve your country and it started with registering for the draft. I liked what the Marine recruiter had to say and the opportunities that the Corps had available, so I joined up." Capers was in the infantry and after his first hitch would be up, he would have to face the possibility of getting out with little hope of finding a job on the outside at that time.

But, he found a home in the Marine Corps: it was a good fit for him and vice versa. Capers asked his girlfriend, Dottie, to move out to California, where they would marry and start a new life together. Capers reenlisted to go to the Marine Corps' Force Recon, the Marines' Special Operations component. He would spend the next three years with Force Recon at Camp Pendleton.

He would go to jump school and scuba school; yet, still, some old prejudices remained. "Black people can't swim was all I heard," Capers remembered. "And I conducted three combat dives

and a combat swim in Vietnam and people still persisted with the 'Blacks can't swim' narrative around me." Capers was the first African-American to get a battlefield commission in the Marine Corps Force Recon. He went from Staff Sergeant to 2nd Lieutenant and took over the unit. "It was an adjustment for some, having never seen a black officer before... I wasn't an African American back then, I was a Negro, and for some people, they couldn't accept a Black officer doing the job."

Capers said he learned about himself as well during that time. Having never been inside an officer's club, he went there to see what it was "all about." He ordered a drink at the bar when he saw "a rather large Marine officer come in... remove his cover (hat), and make a beeline for me."

Capers said his first thoughts were that he was going to get in trouble for getting into a scrap with a field grade (Major) officer whom, he thought, was obviously going to attempt to remove him from the club.

But it wasn't why the Major was coming toward him. "This officer knew who I was and wanted to congratulate me on being promoted to 2LT," Capers remembers. "So, I learned some things about myself, I had prejudged this guy, sometimes we prejudge people like people had prejudged me. I thought he didn't want me there, and I learned from that."



Maj James Capers

Accurate and timely intelligence about the enemy's strength, intentions, actions, and location was one of the most vexing problems confronting U.S. military commanders in the Vietnam War. In South Vietnam, how could a commander obtain intelligence, particularly tactical intelligence, about the enemy he faced if the enemy held no ground except that which he was transiting, was an expert in camouflage, and would only fight if cornered or had local superiority? To answer that question, the Marine Corps high command turned to the special

group of men who were trained to operate in four- to eight-man teams deep behind enemy lines, the Marine Force Reconnaissance companies.

Force Recon companies were active throughout the Vietnam War. By the time the last unit left Vietnam, they had recorded a remarkable record that distinguished them as an elite group within a branch of the military that regards itself as an elite service.

But such an achievement did not happen overnight. Initially, most senior commanders were philosophically ill-equipped for the guerrilla warfare reality that confronted them in Vietnam, and how to best use such assets as Force Recon. It's almost inevitable that contact with the enemy will be made, and when contact is made, you need all available weapons, grenades, and firepower to your advantage. Force Recon teams soon adapted themselves to this reality.

At first, the Korean War-era M3A1 "grease gun" was standard issue. But the M3A1 proved unreliable in the heat and humidity of Southeast Asia. As new weapons became available, they were promptly put to use. Ultimately it was not unusual for a Force Recon team to go into action carrying an assortment of weapons, depending on the mission, that included M-14, M-16, and CAR-15 automatic rifles, an M-79 grenade launcher, an M-60 machine gun, a shotgun, and pistols, as well as Claymore mines.

In 1966, Capers' team, which called themselves "Team Broadminded" conducted more than 50 classified missions in Vietnam. One of them, was a Top-Secret recovery operation. Its purpose was to recover the contents and pilot remains from a USAF B-57 Bomber that had crashed in enemy territory. The plane is rumored to have highly sensitive materials that included a nuclear bomb. The five-day mission was successful and the Top-Secret materials were recovered.

Ed note: On August 4, 1964, the Joint Chiefs of Staff began a buildup of U.S. airpower in South Vietnam and 36 B-57B Canberras of the 8th and 13th Bombardment Squadrons at Clark Air Base were ordered to Bien Hoa. As the B-57s approached Bien Hoa on the evening of August 5th, one crashed on approach and two skidded on the rain-soaked runway colliding with each other and blocking the runway forcing the rest of the flight to divert to Tan Son Nhut Air Base, near Saigon. One of the B-57Bs was hit by

Ground fire and dived into the ground during approach at Tan Son Nhut and was destroyed, killing both crew members. Ground rescue parties were unable to reach the plane due to strong Viet Cong fire. It is possible that this is that mission..



B-57B, 8th Bomber Squadron 1967

Another mission was "Operation Doubletalk." Capers and a 12-man team was tasked to go deep into Viet Cong territory and rescue four Americans, two Australians, and 26 South Vietnamese allies that were being held prisoner in a jungle POW camp. The CIA provided intelligence and the mission was personally approved by President Johnson.

But what transpired was much like what would happen to U.S. Green Berets in Son Tay about 10 miles outside of Hanoi four years later. The captors had moved the prisoners before the raid. "Our intelligence was bad back in those days," Capers said sadly.

"I thought we had a good shot at it," Capers added. "We had a pretty good battle at the camp, we had to fight our way out. We destroyed the prison, killed all the guards, and they were pursued by popular forces all the way to the LZ."

"It was a difficult time for us," he said. "Psychologically, we worked so hard to prepare for the mission and we had a Chieu Hoi, (a South Vietnamese VC) who came over to the South Vietnamese government and personally knew where the camp was and led us there."

The problem for the team was getting back to the LZ. Capers held off the enemy while his men were

boarding the choppers and finally, he too was picked up. "It wasn't about heroism," he pointed out. "It was just doing your job and making sure we didn't leave anybody behind." "I was the last man on the chopper and got my first Purple Heart and my first Bronze Star on that mission. I was being lifted up by the hoist, about 70 feet off the ground, and I got hit just before they were able to pull me into the chopper."

Capers' team, was soon assigned another mission supporting Company M, 3rd Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment, during a search and destroy mission against a suspected regimental-sized enemy force. It was April 1967, and after three days of patrolling behind enemy lines in search of a reported North Vietnamese encampment near the village of Phu Loc just north of Hue city, when Capers' nine-man team found itself in the crosshairs of an entire NVA regiment.

The fighting was as intense as any he had seen in nearly a year spent in Vietnam conducting dozens of commando raids in northern South Vietnam. With one broken leg and peppered with shrapnel from the blast of a Claymore mine, Capers battled a mental haze brought on by massive blood loss and a shot of morphine as he fought to free his men from the assault.



Force Recon 3 - Lt Capers (kneeling, right)

With his entire team wounded and their loyal service dog, King, killed in action, Capers ordered his Marines to evacuate on a small H-34 chopper. He continued the fight — calling in strikes on "danger close" enemy positions as he fended off the attackers with his M-16. But the extraction helicopter was overloaded, and his men needed critical medical

attention. Capers made the impossible decision — let the chopper take his men and King's body away from danger while he stayed behind to face certain death. "I figured it's better to lose one man than to lose the whole team" Capers recalled, "any commander worth his salt would care for his men before his self."



Sikorsky H-34 on pad at Chu Lai 1965

Capers said the bravery and esprit of his team members stood out that day. He told the medic to treat the most severely wounded first and only treat those he thought he could save because everyone was wounded. The M-79 gunner was hit and being treated by the corpsman, who then moved on to another wounded Marine.

The gunner thought that it meant that he was deemed too injured to save. He squeezed Capers' hand and said, "Lieutenant, hand me a rifle, I can still fight..." that was his signal to Capers that he was going to survive. "Those are the personal things in battle that I never forgot," Capers said. His gunner was still firing and fighting although missing a leg. It is seared into Capers' memory as both a source of pride in his unit and a reminder of the horror of war.

But the men would not leave their leader behind. The crew chief pulled Capers back on the chopper, yelling in his ear, that they'd make it out. Again the chopper couldn't take off. Capers once again attempted to sacrifice himself for his men and the crew chief once again yanked him back onto the helicopter.

The third time, the overloaded helicopter shimmied, shivered, and finally was able to get airborne. The chopper crash-landed at the hospital, but everyone on board survived. His gunner had lost

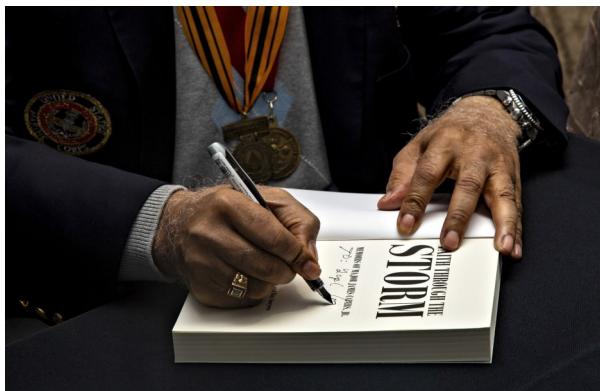
a leg, another would lose a kidney in the hospital, but everyone, other than the dog, was still alive.

Capers was nominated for the Medal of Honor for his actions on this mission, but it was downgraded to a Silver Star.

While recovering from his wounds at the Naval Hospital, Capers was approached by the Secretary of the Navy who wondered why the Marines and Navy had so few African American officers.

This question set in motion a national recruiting campaign called "Ask a Marine." with then Lt. Capers as the face of it. Those posters were everywhere in the United States and spurred a big recruiting drive for the Corps.

Following Vietnam, Capers participated in many Cold War covert operations as a field agent in Eastern Europe and Africa. Details of these operations remain classified today. But all of those war missions have taken a toll physically and mentally on Major Capers. He explained all of it in his memoirs which is titled "Faith Through the Storm: Memoirs of James Capers, Jr." and it should be a required reading for all Special Operators.



Maj Capers autographs a copy of his book, "Faith Through the Strom: Memoirs of James Capers, Jr."

His wife Dottie and son Gary passed away in 2003 from cancer, and are buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Capers celebrated his 50th wedding anniversary with Dottie one week before her passing. He now lives alone, but young Marines continue to visit him and assist him wherever and whenever they can. He's still a legend within this generation of Marines.

But he finally got the recognition that was due by the Special Operations Command (SOCOM). In 2010, Major James Capers Jr. was one of only 14 members inducted into the inaugural class of U.S. Special Operations Command's Commando Hall of Honor at a ceremony in front of USSOCOM headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base.

Major Capers Jr. is now recognized as a pioneer in Recon training tactics, which are still used by Special Operations Forces. And there is still a movement to upgrade his Silver Star to the Medal of Honor.

He and the surviving members of Team Broadminded meet annually to celebrate and honor those who have passed. Of his team, all but three are now gone, "God has called them home. But I have those memories, there were so many missions, I saw so much bravery there, that I was proud to lead those guys."

Capers currently resides in North Caroline and continues to be part of the special operations community.

Capers commendations offer an inspiring view of his heroism and self-sacrifice. He has been awarded the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars and Combat V, three Purple Hearts, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, a Joint Service Commendation Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, three Good Conduct Ribbons, Battle Stars, Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Achievement Medal, CG Certificate of Merit, multiple letters of Merit, Appreciation, and Commendation.



*Major James Capers, Jr.
82 years old (at time of photo)*

TRICARE and FEDVIP Open Season/ TRICARE Select Payment Plan

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) wants beneficiaries to know that TRICARE Open Season is underway. Beneficiaries can make changes to their healthcare coverage, as well as dental and vision coverage, with the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) before Open Season ends on Dec. 14, 2020. Each Fall, TRICARE Open Season allows beneficiaries to enroll in or change their TRICARE Prime option, including US Family Health Plan or TRICARE Select plan, for the upcoming year. Beneficiaries can also learn the differences between TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Select by [going online](#). Beneficiaries do NOT have to re-enroll if they want to stay in their current health plan. Beneficiaries will continue in their current health plan through 2021 or as long as they are eligible.

Most Group A retirees (TRICARE Select beneficiaries whose initial enlistment occurred before Jan. 1, 2018) must set up payment for a new monthly fee to keep their TRICARE Select coverage. According to DHA officials, only 14 percent of households currently using TRICARE Select have set up a process for paying their program fees. Payment can be made by military allotment, electronic funds transfer, debit or credit card. TRICARE Select beneficiaries wanting to set up their monthly payment fee should go online. The fees go into effect on Jan. 1, 2021.

Also taking place now through December 14 is the Federal Benefits Open Season. If a beneficiary is eligible for dental or vision coverage (FEDVIP), they can enroll in a plan. Most TRICARE-For-Life, TRICARE Prime, and TRICARE Select beneficiaries are eligible for FEDVIP. If they are already enrolled in a FEDVIP dental or vision plan and they do NOT want to make any changes, their enrollment will automatically continue in 2021. To compare FEDVIP plans and costs, you can [go online](#).

NDAA Conference Committee Appointed

The House and Senate have appointed a conference committee to resolve the differences between the House and Senate version of the FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R.639, S.4049), which is expected to fund more than \$740 billion in spending on programs for the Department of Defense (DoD). Issues and concerns:

[Adding diseases to list of diseases caused by exposure to Agent Orange herbicide;](#)

[Stopping scheduled cuts to military medical staff during the pandemic;](#)

[Waiving TRICARE Mail order co-pays during pandemic;](#)

[Stopping plan to exclude retirees and dependents from MTFs;](#) and

[Supporting repeal of 180-day delay for retirees applying for DoD GS-13 and below.](#)

Once the final bill is agreed to by the conference committee, it will be sent to both chambers and if approved by the House and Senate it will be sent to President Trump to be signed into law or be vetoed. This can happen very quickly once there is an agreement. So now is the time to use the links above to weigh in on these critical issues.

I hope all of you had a Blessed Thanksgiving.

At Sundown December 10th begins the seven-day eight-night celebration of Chanukkah, which celebrates two things: a miracle in which one day's worth of oil burned in lamps for eight days, and the victory of the Jewish freedom fighters over the Syrian-Greek forces that tried to wipe out Judaism. In a larger sense, then, Chanukkah celebrates a reaffirmation of freedom and a recommitment to the spiritual quest.

December 25th, is the Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. The current celebration as we know it began under the Roman Emperor Constantine (his Mother was a Christian). Through her he had accepted the one true God, and Jesus Christ as his Savior. The population of Rome was not converting easily. Constantine met with Christian leaders together they agreed to change the celebration of the winter solstice to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Thus, began Christmas, as we now know

Matthew 2:11

"After coming into the house, they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh."

What you have just read is my traditional December message. This year I would like to add that 2020 reminds me of 1968, when I was in Vietnam. By December My unit (3/26 Marines) was all but destroyed. The unit received orders to transfer to the Philippine's to rebuild and retrain, but marines with less than six months remaining in country were not allowed to remain with our unit. We were shuffled off to other units across Vietnam. I was given 10 days to report to my new unit. I hitched a ride on a convoy that was headed to the 1st Division Headquarters. When we stopped for the night, I noticed we were in front of a Navy Seabee Camp. I found the Headquarters tent, and spoke to the Master Chief about accommodations for the night. He not only welcomed me, he had the cook make me a steak, let me take a hot shower and gave me a bed with a mattress and pillow with sheets. By the next afternoon I was at First Marine Division Headquarters and reported in. After stowing my gear, the Staff Sargent drove us to Danang, where I was treated to a USO Bob Hope Christmas show. Just 2 men showed me kindness in a very terrible time in my life, and theirs. They gave me hope. IF we show some kindness to someone in these uncertain times of disease, anger, and frustration, maybe, just maybe, we could begin the healing process for our great country

Colossians 3:13 "Forgive as the Lord forgave you."

HAPPY CHANUKKAH AMD MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAVE A BLESSED MONTH.

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Chaplain Chip Hanson



OR text to 838255

People can experience an emotional or mental health crisis due to a wide range of situations. For some, it might be the end of a personal relationship. For others, it might be the loss of a job. For Veterans, these crises can be heightened by their experiences during military service.

When emotional issues reach a crisis point, Veterans and their loved ones should contact the Veterans Crisis Line.

The game of Sudoku is an individual and self-rewarding game. It is a chance to put your skills and mental capacity to the test, without external interference. The benefits of Sudoku are the reason behind the popularity of this game. In essence, it is a simple puzzle, with a simple design and easy and straightforward rules without hidden pitfalls.

Playing this game Improves concentration; Helps to reduce anxiety and stress; Promotes a healthy mindset; Improves thinking skills; Improves memory; Improves logical thinking; and gives a sense of accomplishment.

The puzzle is 9x9, equaling 81 cells. There are 9 blocks of 9 cells each. The shaded cells are clues.

EASY SUDOKU PUZZLE

	7			1	5			
5	8	4	7	3		2	1	9
6				4	9		8	7
7						6	4	
	9		4	2	8		3	
	3	8	5	6				2
3	5		9	8				6
9	4		6	5	2	8	7	
	6		3	7	4		5	

To play the game, simply fill in the blank cells using all of numbers, 1 - 9 just once. And to make it more challenging, each 3x3 block must also contain the numbers 1 - 9 used only once.

TIP: Use a pencil

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

DECEMBER 2020

I hope everyone is staying safe and wearing a mask and following the safe distance guidelines.

I want to thank everyone who came to our Chapter meeting on the 22 November. A lot of good information was brought up and future plans coming to light. Looks like a busy 2021 year is looking good.

I hope everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving - no matter what we are family. If you need me, call me day or night.

JJ



CHAPTER CONTACT INFORMATION

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Do you have something you'd like to share with our world-wide readers? If so, just send a note to the editor along with a picture or two, and we'll be happy to include it in an upcoming issue.

Ed: TheMissionEditor@cfl.rr.com

Let us know what you think of this newsletter. You can also download a copy from our website.

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