

JUNE #2 list of veteran, military and patriotic events in Central FL

*Send me your events – people cannot attend an event if they don't know about it! *Please share this information and events with your friends and interested others and attend. Post where appropriate.

*Event information is concentrated mostly on the Central Florida counties served by the new VA Hospital at Lake Nona – Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Brevard, Lake and Volusia. Other events elsewhere are considered based upon uniqueness and groups best served.

*Every effort is made to put a space into email addresses and websites – firewalls and spam filters don't like direct links, website and email addresses. If you use 'Copy and Paste' to make contact or get additional information, please keep this in mind.

*If you wish to be removed from the email list, just let me know.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars State Convention – Thurs. June 22 – Sun. June 25 – The Florida Department holds its annual event at the Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld, 6677 Sea Harbor Drive, Orlando. Vendors of patriotic items will be available.

Home At Last dedication – Sat. June 24 – A special disability-friendly, mortgage-free home – the seventh one - will be dedicated for the Windfield family in Oakland. Marine Corps Sgt. Seann Windfield was badly injured from a mortar attack in Iraq in 2004. The house keys will be handed over in a ceremony at Oakland Avenue Charter School cafeteria at 10am, 456 E. Oakland Ave. HAL is a special program that builds homes for combat-wounded permanently disabled veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan war. Info: Dan at danster36@centurylink.net or Gary at 321-356-0401 cpu65@hotmail.com

Liberty Weekend Celebration – Sat. June 24 – Free concert in the atrium of the Hyatt Airport hotel at Orlando Int'l Airport featuring the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra. Theme: "From Sea to Shining Sea." 7:45 pm with free airport garage parking **IF** you take a paper ticket- DO NOT use your electronic transponder (SunPass/EPass) but you must take the paper ticket and you will be given a paper voucher at the event. Prior to the concert, the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA) will honor Navy Admiral Al Harms (ret.) with the Col. Joe Kittinger award in recognition for outstanding service and contributions to aviation. Info: Carolyn at 407.825.2055

Then stay and welcome senior veterans home from an Honor Flight! (see next item)

Greeters needed! Honor Flights - Come Welcome them Home! – Orlando Int'l Airport –After a day spent in Washington DC, veterans of WWII, Korean War and Vietnam veterans return home thru Orlando Int'l Airport. The nation-wide organization has three local hubs that take veterans on a single day trip to our nation's capital where they visit the WWII, Korea, and Vietnam War Memorials, Marine Corps Iwo Jima and the Air Force Monuments, and witness the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery. Come welcome these former warriors home! "Welcome Home" receptions at the airports make a difference! Bring your flags, banners and signs! – This months' dates are:

· **Sat. June 24 SW#2305 from BWI 25 vets at 8:20pm (This Mission contains 10**

**WW2 and 15 Korean War veterans; 21 men and 4 women (3 of them from WW2).
The group's ages range from 82 to the senior veteran with 97 yrs!**

· **Sat. Aug 19** – Info pending.

The groups enter the Hotel end of the Airport terminal area and we greet them in front of the Starbucks - **Terminal A, Airside 2** – oftentimes led from the Tram by a bagpiper. Before leaving home to attend the homecoming, it is suggested that you check online to see if the flight is on time because there may be delays due to weather, mechanical or medical issues. Free parking has been arranged at an off airport property – FastPark and Relax (7870 N Frontage Rd, Orlando, 32812) who has been very generous to Honor Flights with free parking and shuttles to/from the airport (Tips welcomed by drivers!) Just tell the attendant upon entering that site that you are there for the veterans/Honor Flight – they try to park us together.

New: Parking Vouchers WILL be available for airport garage parking from a GOAA rep. in the terminal for this event – maximum of 3 hours – **BUT you have to take a PAPER ticket upon entering the airport garage.** The vouchers will **NOT** work if you use the SunPass/EPass transponders – we cannot credit the charge back. Seek the GOAA rep. (or ‘Miss Liberty’) early before the veterans arrive.

For the AM Early Birds - you can wave these veterans off in the morning no later than 5am. They process thru Security early and quickly In Terminal A, Airside 2. Information for more Flights will be forthcoming. Contact Cathy Haynes for those details 407-239-8468 chaynes11629 @yahoo .com

“How to do Business with Orange County Public Schools” – Thurs. June 29 - Info training workshop to expand your business in procurement. Find out about the district's minority/woman-owned and small business and veteran owned business programs. Walk thru the new Vendor Registration process. 9am to 11am at OCPS Facilities Services, Building 101F, 6501 Magic Way, Orlando, 32809. Info: nestaly.morales@ ocps .net 407-317-3700 Ext. 2025021 or aaron.smith2@ ocps .net 407- 317-3700 Ext. 2025566
FYI - If you wish to do business with the school system, you need to register with the school system. It has a separate procurement system than the county procurement system. Each department may have separate requirements. FAVOB (Florida Association of Veteran Owned Business) offers some guidance on these challenges.

Hiring event – Fri. June 30 – The Orlando VA Medical Center at Lake Nona is hosting a Hiring event with numerous employers. 10am to 2pm, 13800 Veterans Way, 4th Floor, Orlando, 32803. Come in business attire with your resume's. Hiring employers include: Allied Barton Security Services, Miller Electrical, Walt Disney, City of Orlando, Hilton, Orlando Airport and more! Info: Annie Artis, (Veteran Community Employment Coordinator) VHAORLHVCEs@ va .gov ellamay.artis@ va .gov 407-646-5500 x27246 or 407-750-0350.

The American Legion, Department of Florida – Fri. June 30 – July 2 - 99th Annual Department Convention at the World Center Marriott, Orlando, FL. Approximately 3,000 veterans will be in attendance to include spouses and family members. Vendors of patriotic items will be available.

Home At Last dedication – Sat. July 1 – A special disability-friendly, mortgage-free home – the eighth one - will be dedicated for Army Capt. Elmer Rivera and his family in Oakland. He was badly injured from a mortar attack in Iraq in 2004. The house keys will be handed over in a ceremony at Oakland Avenue Charter School cafeteria at 10am, 456 E. Oakland Ave. HAL is a special program that builds homes for combat-wounded permanently disabled veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan war. Info: Dan at danster36@centurylink .net or Gary at 321- 356-0401 cpu65@ hotmail .com

Leu Gardens – Mon. July 3 - Free admission to the amazing 50-acre botanical oasis minutes from Downtown Orlando. Part of their 'Free First Mondays' promotion. 1920 North Forest Avenue, Orlando, 32803 407.246.2620

Tuskegee Airmen exhibit – Mon. July 3 – The Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center will be hosting an exhibit about The Tuskegee Airmen and their importance both in WWII and in the fight for civil rights beginning July 3 thru Sept 8. Admission is free. Located at 851 N. Maitland Ave., Maitland, 32751. Info: 407-628-0555 ext. 227.

Suggestion: If you or a surviving local veteran served in a group that liberated some of the work camps or death camps in Europe, leave a note with your contact information. There may be future exhibits or educational events about the liberators and the opportunity to share. thunter@ holocaust.edu .org

Independence Day – July 4 Information about events is lacking..... Fly your flags at home!

Navy Seal Team VI Memorial unveiling – Tues. July 4 – Never Forgotten Memorial hosts this event that commemorates the 30 members of that unit who were killed in a helicopter crash in 2011. Beginning at 12noon, The Girl Scout Citrus Council will sing "God Bless America" to our flag that will be escorted from The Lake Nona VA from local rider organizations. Ceremony will include the playing of Taps and a benediction from a Navy Chaplain at the front entrance of Rock and Brews Orlando at 6897 S. Semoran Blvd., Orlando, 32882. Socializing after the ceremony inside the restaurant with discounts on food! Info: Dave Matthews at rememberthefallen@ davemattthewsnfm .org 407-535-1728

Fireworks at the Fountain – Tues. July 4 – The City of Orlando celebrates our nation's freedom at Lake Eola Park with festivities beginning at 4pm. Activities for children, live music, and food and beverages available for purchase. The Orlando Concert Band will perform in the amphitheater. The evening will conclude with the 40th annual fireworks display at 9:10pm. The fireworks finale will be broadcast live on WKMG News 6.

Florida United Numismatists (F.U.N.) – Thurs – Sat. July 6-8 – The summer F.U.N. (money) show – over 200 dealer booths of coins and paper money often include military collectibles, artifacts, political ephemera (old campaign buttons) along with jewelry and watches. Many veterans choose hobbies amongst these items. Numismatic-related exhibits, educational programs, Scout Programs, the Heritage Auction, and much more.

Great history items. **Kids can learn during their summer vacation!** Admission is FREE but there is convention center parking fee. Orange County Convention Center, 9800 International Drive, Hall WA4, West Concourse. (NOTE: The BIG national F.U.N. show with 1500+ dealers and 15,000+ collectors will NOT be held in Orlando in Jan. 2018. Due to contract 'challenges' it will be in Tampa.)

Clash on the Green – Army vs. Navy Golf Tournament – Fri. July 14 - Central Florida Navy League, a large active group composed of civilians and veterans supporting all sea services. (USN, USMC, USCG, and Merchant Marines.) and the Sunshine Chapter of Association of United States Army (AUSA). Lots of fun and good smack! Timacuan Golf & Country Club, 550 Timacuan Boulevard, Lake Mary, 32746. 8am Shotgun start. \$85 pp/ \$340/team. Corporate sponsors welcomed. Register and Info: www.armynavygolf.org

National Association of Blind Veterans (NABV) Convention – Mon. - Sat. July 10-15 - Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando. Sight impairment may be caused by injury or disease but it doesn't stop us! Veterans Celebration on Tues. July 13 at 9am with ALL veterans welcomed on stage. Info: www.nabv.org or president@nabv.org

MISCELLANEOUS:

Help preserve Orlando Naval History! Keep important keepsakes, rudders (graduation yearbooks), guides, memorabilia and other items of general interest of Orlando Navy History from going to the landfill. 600,000+ lives were changed at the Orlando "Boot Camp." Each year hundreds of pieces of history are lost forever because they are thrown away. Contact Brian Warner at brian.warner@fla-intl.com if you have items to donate.

Wearing of Military Awards with Civilian Clothes - per Military.com - It is permissible for veterans and retirees to wear military awards on civilian clothes for gatherings of a military theme. Retired personnel and former members of the military may wear all categories of medals on appropriate civilian clothing. This includes clothes designed for veteran and patriotic organizations. The medals may be worn on: Veteran's Day, Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day, formal occasions of ceremony, social functions of a military nature. (Thank you for sharing, Ed Burford of the Seminole County Veterans Service Office!)

Hand salutes – The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, which took effect Jan. 28, 2008, and with other recent revisions, authorize optional hand-salutes by veterans and out-of-uniform military personnel during events involving the national flag (ie: The raising, lowering or passing of the flag, during the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance.) All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.

Military Exchange Shopping - Shopping online at the "Exchange" (formerly called the PX) online is being opened up to all who have served. The Army, Air Force and Navy

exchange will start allowing all honorably discharged veterans to shop online, (think Amazon, but only cheaper with no taxes.) The target start date is Veterans Day, November 11, 2017 - but you must register first. Registration begins June 1, 2017. You must call 1-844-868-8672, after June 1 to register. SEND THIS TO ALL OF YOUR VETERAN FRIENDS AND RELATIVES. (Thank you for sharing, Ed Burford of the Seminole County Veterans Service Office!) (FYI - Shopping in the “bricks and mortar” stores still has the restricted rules. The change ONLY involves ONLINE shopping.)

United Way Offers Assistance to Veterans and Families – per Military.com | Week of June 12, 2017, United Way's Mission United program assists military veterans and their families in acclimating back to civilian life. Veterans can face challenges transitioning from active duty, and too many find themselves homeless, jobless, or unable to access treatment for substance abuse, brain injury, or other physical and mental health issues. Mission United is a free program that coordinates community services for veterans and their families, connecting them to affordable housing, job training, health care and other resources. *In Central Florida call 211 for Mission United assistance.* (Thank you for sharing, Ed Burford of the Seminole County Veterans Service Office!)

Veterans Business Initiative (VBI) - VBI is a no cost program for all Military Veterans and spouses who are seeking for employment, entrepreneurial and continuing education. The VBI classes are held beginning at 8:30am at the CFDC located at the National Entrepreneur Center, Orlando Fashion Square, 3201 E Colonial Dr A20, Orlando, 32803. Info: Rogue Gallart rogue@nationalec.org 407-420-4875.

Business Incubation Program for Entrepreneurs – Univ. of Central FL offers assistance with the many aspects of starting or advancing businesses, including veteran owned businesses. Expert advice, mentoring, and classes available – See incubator.ucf.edu/ for more information and enrollment. A wide variety of class topics are offered on various dates and locations - held in Apopka, Winter Springs and Kissimmee. This is a must if you want to start or grow a business. Info: michael.weiss@ucf.edu

It's Hurricane Season and we are overdue.... Whether you are on the Special Needs Registry or not, your county may offer helpful services, such as access to a special needs shelter or transportation from your home to a shelter. Ask your county's Emergency Management Division representative for details. Are there seniors - especially veterans - in your neighborhood? Please assist them with preparedness for any disaster – natural or man-made. Info: www.floridadisaster.org

Tennis is an excellent way to stay physically fit and mentally sharp. Disabled Veterans and wounded, ill and injured service members are invited to participate in a 8-week program designed to help Veterans and Service Men and Women reconnect with everyday activities. All veterans are welcome at no cost – as in FREE! Please bring valid military ID, VA ID or DD 214 on the first day of program. Mondays thru July 31, 6pm – 7pm. 10000 USTA Blvd., Orlando, 32827. Info: 844- 872-8667

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED – Wall of Faces - This is a project to collect photographs of all the persons whose names are engraved on the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington DC. There are currently **24** heroes from Central Florida area (265 in all of Florida) who have no photographs. Help us locate one/some so that picture can accompany a name in the future Wall of Faces in the Vietnam Wall museum. They are:

* Eugene Brown of Apopka; * Gerald K. Brown of Maitland; * Cary Craddock of Orlando; * Joe A. Crutcher of Winter Park; * William J. Deuerling of New Smyrna Beach; * Michael G. Dinkins of Titusville; * Randolph Eubanks of Cocoa; * Tennis C. Ferrell of Orlando; * Charlie Fields of Winter Garden; * Robert L. Harter of Palm Bay; * Sam Holmes Jr. of Sanford; * Elijah Ingram of Cocoa; * Eugene H. McKay III of Orlando; * Charles Miller of Daytona; * Daniel R. Partin of Christmas; * Nathan E. Peacock Jr of Winter Garden; * Paul M. Roberts of Melbourne Beach; * Robert E. Thornton of Brevard; * Malcolm R. True Jr of Cocoa; * David Welch of Oakland; * Maurice T. Williams of Ocala; * Robert C. Williams of Orlando; * Joseph Woodard of Winter Park; and * Roger L. Young of Cocoa.

Help us locate their families and friends!

Veterans in crisis – For you or someone you know. **Suicide** is a medical emergency. If you are experiencing thoughts of suicide, know that you are not alone and care should be sought immediately by calling 911. Free, confidential resources are instantly available through the Military Crisis Line to aid you if you are in crisis.

Call 800-273-8255 and press 1,

OR chat online now for 24/7 access to trained counselors who understand what service members and military families are coping with. Website at [veteranscrisisline](http://veteranscrisisline.org)

OR: text 838255 for 24/7 confidential assistance.

They are there because they care....

Camaraderie Foundation in Central Florida provides resources for private and confidential Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) counseling for Post 9/11 veterans/warriors and their families. They also have connections in other areas, other states. It works. **It HAS saved lives, saved marriages and saved families.** camaraderiefoundation.org Contact 407-841-0071

Caring and sharing,

Cathy Haynes

Member/supporter of numerous veteran and military organizations in Central FL

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