

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

If you know any veterans in need or if you have a suggestion for how we can better serve our mission, let us know! You can reach us at ellie@veteransbreakfastclub.com, 412-623-9029, or at veteransbreakfastclub.org



VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB

CONNECTING, EDUCATING, HEALING, AND INSPIRING

FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 11, ISSUE 3



A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR

We moved our veterans storytelling programs online in late March and will continue to deliver our live programs virtually on Zoom, YouTube, and Facebook until at least the end of this unforgettable year. Our virtual events may be poor substitutes for our face-to-face breakfasts, but at least they're easier to get to! They also have the virtue of bringing together people from all over our region, nation, and beyond. We regularly enjoy the company, for example, of Roland Glenn, a WWII veteran from Maine, Jeff Witherel, retired Army veteran from Virginia, and Nick Devaux, a WWII enthusiast and his-

torian from St. Lucia. And the stories are just as riveting, whether they're about serving in the Coast Guard in the Arctic Circle, training for Airborne at Ft. Benning, or flying fighter jets for the Air Force. Join us for our Monday night Happy Hour, Wednesday morning breakfast, or Sunday afternoon conversation with WWII veterans. And watch or listen to our new recorded show, The Scuttlebutt, where we'll dig into news and topics surrounding veterans and the military community. I look forward to seeing you online this fall!

Todd DePastino
Executive Director

TUNE IN TO OUR FOUR WEEKLY VBC LIVE PROGRAMS!



EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 9AM ET ON ZOOM ONLY! Just like our usual storytelling breakfasts, but online! BYOB(reakfast). Veterans stories and conversation.

EVERY MONDAY NIGHT AT 7PM ET ON ZOOM, FACEBOOK, AND YOUTUBE! BYOB(verage). Veterans stories, conversations, special topics, and guests.

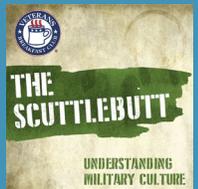


HAPPY HOUR!



EVERY SUNDAY AFTERNOON AT 4PM ET ON ZOOM, FACEBOOK, AND YOUTUBE! A different WWII veteran every week with questions, comments, and conversation from the audience.

RELEASED EVERY MONDAY! Hosted by the VBC's Shaun Hall, The Scuttlebutt brings together special guests, veterans and non-veterans, for an informed conversation about the military experience, past and present. Each episode ranges from the topical to the historical and from the big picture to the everyday. Watch and listen on veteransbreakfastclub.org.



PROGRAM SCHEDULE INSIDE! P. 2

QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW TO CONNECT?

Contact Ellie at 412-623-9029 or ellie@veteransbreakfastclub.com.

Every Veteran Has A Story. Join us online!
www.veteransbreakfastclub.org

Contact us at 412-623-9029 or ellie@veteransbreakfastclub.com • 200 Magnolia Place Pittsburgh, PA 15228
veteransbreakfastclub.org The Veterans Breakfast Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

UPCOMING VBC EVENTS

We hold three live events a week plus a pre-recorded show. You can find links to all of our programs at veteransbreakfastclub.org. You can also follow our Zoom link, like and share our Facebook Livestreams, or subscribe to our YouTube channel. Here's the fall line-up! Programs and topics subject to change.

OUR PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE



VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE!



EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 9AM ET ON ZOOM ONLY! BYOB(reakfast). Veterans stories and conversation.



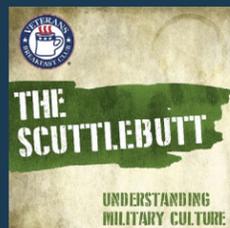
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All programs can be accessed from our website, emails, or the following Zoom link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6402618738>
Meeting ID: 640 261 8738

Dial-in: +1-301-715-8592 Meeting ID: 6402618738#

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 9, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, SEPT. 13, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, SEPT. 14, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
United States Air Force Birthday and Open Conversation

TUESDAY, SEPT. 15, 7:00PM
SPECIAL VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Special event with the Pritzker Military Museum & Library on Bill Mauldin with special guest Tom Brokaw!

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 16, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, SEPT. 20, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, SEPT. 21, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Gold Star Families and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 23, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, SEPT. 27, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, SEPT. 28, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 30, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SATURDAY, OCT. 3, 7:00PM
SPECIAL EVENT!
Veterans Comedy Night
Humor 4 Healing
See Event Details on pg. 3

SUNDAY, OCT 4, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, OCT. 5, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Afghanistan War Anniversary and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, OCT 7, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, OCT 11, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, OCT. 12, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Navy Birthday and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, OCT 14, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, OCT 18, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, OCT. 19, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
October Missile Crisis and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, OCT 21, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, OCT 25, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, OCT. 26 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, OCT 28, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, NOV. 1, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, NOV. 2, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Submarine Vets and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 4, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, NOV. 8, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, NOV. 9, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Fall of Berlin Wall and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 11, 9:00AM
SPECIAL EVENT!
Virtual Veterans Day
Event details on pg. 3

SUNDAY, NOV. 15, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, NOV. 16, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Donut Dollies and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 18, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, NOV. 22, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, NOV. 23, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Thanksgiving in the Military and Open Conversation



Tuesday, September 15 at 7:00PM

VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR with the Pritzker Military Museum and Tom Brokaw!

The VBC's Todd DePastino in partnership with the Pritzker Military Museum and Library in Chicago will be leading a special program on WWII cartoonist Bill Mauldin. Joining Todd will be special guest Tom Brokaw. The event is to celebrate the launch of Drawing Fire: The Editorial Cartoons of Bill Mauldin. Todd served as editor, and Tom Brokaw is a contributor. Just go to <http://www.pritzkermilitary.org> to join the event!

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 25, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, NOV. 29, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, NOV. 30, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Battle of Fallujah and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 2, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SATURDAY, DEC. 5, 7:00PM, SPECIAL EVENT!
VBC Year-End Party: Humor in Uniform (Good Riddance, 2020!)
See event details at right.

SUNDAY, DEC. 6, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, DEC. 7, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Pearl Harbor and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 9, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, DEC. 13, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, DEC. 14, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
National Guard Day and Open Conversation

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 16, 9:00AM
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE

SUNDAY, DEC. 20, 4:00PM
GREATEST GENERATION LIVE

MONDAY, DEC. 21, 7:00PM
VBC LIVE HAPPY HOUR
Christmas Stories and Open Conversation

Life gets better.®

It's all about fellowship, fun and family.



We understand. So do our residents. We offer a full range of lifestyle options on a vibrant campus. Our residents enjoy chef-prepared meals, social hours, outings and fitness classes all week and life every day. Plus we're family owned and operated for over 30 years.

Stop by any day of the week to meet our wonderful residents and co-workers.

CountryMeadows.com



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Independent Living | Personal Care | Memory Care | Restorative Care

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



VETERANS COMEDY NIGHT - HUMOR 4 HEALING SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 7PM

In partnership with Resurrecting Lives Foundation (www.resurrectinglives.org) and The Warrior Workout Network (www.warriorworkoutnetwork.org), the VBC is hosting a special Veterans Comedy Hour on Saturday, October 3, 7:00pm. Program will feature three Army veterans: Robb Will, Sean Rooker, and Andrew Young. You can join us on Zoom, Facebook Live, and YouTube Live. The event is free of charge and donations will be collected for Resurrecting Lives and The Warrior Workout Network. We'll be taking registrations for this event through our website, www.veteransbreakfastclub.org and our EventBrite page, <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/veterans-breakfast-club-10742829064>

VIRTUAL VETERANS DAY WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 9-11AM

In place of our traditional Veterans Day breakfast at Duquesne University, the Veterans Breakfast Club, along with Duquesne University and the Veterans Leadership Program, will hold a virtual Veterans Day on Wednesday, November 11 from 9:00am-11:00am. You can view details about the virtual event at virtualveteransdayppgh.org or on our website, veteransbreakfastclub.org.



VBC YEAR-END PARTY: HUMOR IN UNIFORM SATURDAY, DEC. 5, 7:00PM

We can't hold our annual Veteran Voices Fundraising Gala this year, so instead we're throwing a virtual Year-End Party (Good Riddance to 2020!) on Saturday, December 5 at 7:00pm. The event will be free to attend with dinner delivery, raffles, auctions, and (of course) donation opportunities. We'll be featuring "Humor in Uniform"—veterans sharing funny stories from their time in the service. Sponsorships, program ads, and honor lines available. See details on pg. 9 and at veteransbreakfastclub.org.

JOINING OUR PROGRAMS IS EASY! YOU CAN JOIN IN 3 WAYS:



Follow this link:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6402618738>

Or, open your Zoom app, click "Join," and enter this Meeting ID#: **640 261 8738**

No computer? Phone in! Call 1-929-436-2866. You'll be greeted with a message that says "Welcome to Zoom. Enter your Meeting ID, followed by #. Enter Meeting ID 6402618738#. It will ask you to press # again as a participant, and you'll be in the meeting's waiting room."



Our Sunday and Monday programs are streamed to Facebook Live!

Head to

facebook.com/veteransbreakfastclub
Give our page a "like" and "follow," and you'll be notified when we go live!

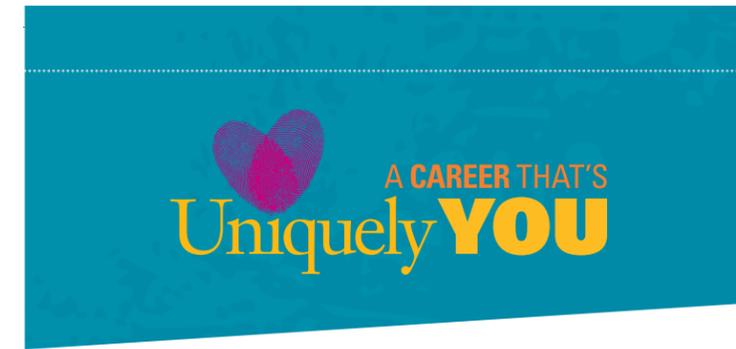


Our Sunday and Monday programs are streamed to YouTube Live!

Head to

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRWUeRU670VYK1skn4Azz5A>.
Or search for "Veterans Breakfast Club" in the search bar. Hit "Subscribe" so you'll be notified when we go live!

I'M IN THE ZOOM WAITING ROOM AND I HAVEN'T BEEN ADMITTED TO THE MEETING. WHAT SHOULD I DO? If you haven't been admitted, it's because we don't recognize you. To protect against Zoombombers and unrecognized guests, we ask that you call or text 412-376-5109. Let us know who you are!



WE'RE HIRING! RNs, LPNs, CNAs, Personal Care Assistants, Dining Services, Housekeeping, Maintenance and more!

JOIN OUR TEAM, APPLY TODAY AT:
CareersAtSrCare.org



Honoring all who served.

Our wish is to respect yours...

We salute the Veterans Breakfast Club as they capture the history of the men and women who served our country.



4201 Brownsville Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15227

412.881.4100
johnfslater.com

VBC HEALTHCARE EDUCATIONAL SERIES

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HUMANA

Todd will host a monthly information hour with our VBC partner Humana on what you need to know to prepare to enroll in Medicare and three special programs on enrolling in Tricare (military healthcare).

MEDICARE 101 :
Healthcare planning presented by Humana. We will discuss Medicare eligibility, what Medicare is, your Medicare options, important dates, costs and more.

TRICARE 101 :
What is TRICARE, who is eligible, what are your options, what resources exist for you as well additional information and assistance to manage your benefits anywhere in the world.

Thursday, September 10, 1:00pm:
Humana Medicare 101

Thursday, September 24, 1:00pm:
Humana Tricare 101

Thursday, October 8, 1:00pm:
Humana Medicare 101

Thursday, October 22, 1:00pm:
Humana Medicare 101

Thursday, November 5, 1:00pm:
Humana Tricare 101

Thursday, November 19, 1:00pm:
Humana Medicare 101

Thursday, December 3, 1:00pm:
Humana Medicare 101

Thursday, December 17, 1:00pm:
Humana Tricare 101

Visit www.veteransbreakfastclub.org for the Zoom links to join these educational sessions!



STORIES FROM OUR VETS

Aiming High: How I Became a Naval Aviator H. Lamont Gourdine

When I was young, people expected me to fail. I was shy, sucked my thumb, and stuttered when I spoke. I was lucky to have wonderful parents, Lula and Henry, who never made excuses for me and didn't allow me to make excuses for myself. My sisters, Marcella and Shonda, showed me how to deal with the world and beat the heck out of me (with love, of course) while doing so. When Marcella joined the Army when I was still in elementary school, I saw the transformation in her. I marveled at her composure when she came home in uniform. She talked about traveling overseas. I, too, wanted to see the world. But how?

One day, several buddies and I saw the movie Top Gun. The cool flight suits, designer glasses, rough leather jackets with the awesome patches.

"Wow," I thought, "I want to do that."

In the movie, there was one African-American character, "Sundown." He wasn't on screen long, but it was long enough to make an impression on me.

"Wow," I thought, "I CAN do that!"

Several weeks later, the Blue Angels flight demonstration team came to my hometown of Charleston, South Carolina. This was the day that changed my life. Out of the #4 slot aircraft emerged the great Donnie Cochran, the first African-American aviator selected to the Blue Angels (he would later assume command of the team). He got out of the cockpit and walked directly over to me and my friends. He spoke to us for about two minutes. I was hooked. I had met a Navy flyer who looked like me. I WOULD do this! But how?

I shot high and applied to the Naval Academy. The first person who interviewed me told me without hesitation: "You will never get in." He said no one from my inner city high school (Burke High) had ever attended any service academy. He was defining me. But I was determined to define myself.

The interviewer was partially right. I didn't get in to the Academy on my first try. So, I went to the Naval Academy Preparatory School in Newport, Rhode Island. I knew what I wanted and was willing to sacrifice to get it. After that year in Newport, one of the best in my life, I got accepted and was prepared for the challenges it threw at me.

My twenty-eight years serving in the United States Navy were filled with great moments, from Naval Academy graduation and receiving my "Wings of Gold" (Navy-speak for flight wings) to traveling the world and working with partner nations. Through it all, I was surrounded and supported by extremely dedicated fellow servicemen and servicewomen.

Of course, there were hard times also. Deployments were rough. They call it "going on cruise," but there's little glamorous about it. You're on a cramped gray ship surrounded by nothing but water for months at a time.

The biggest sacrifices come from family life. I missed a lot of plays, football games, and dance recitals of my children, London, Sasha, and son Gabriel. Returning from deployment is an adjustment. The high operating tempo of the warship doesn't work in a household! Transitioning takes patience and understanding for all involved.

My wife Carmela sacrificed more than anyone. She was "on scene leader" for years. For that, I will be forever indebted.

I retired from the Navy a little over a year ago, and I'm excited to join the Veterans Breakfast Club as part of my transition to civilian life. The VBC offers the opportunity for those of us who served in uniform to gain understanding of where we've been, where we would like to go, and how we can go there together. I can't wait to share some "sea stories" with all of you, and more importantly, to listen to your testimonies of service. I stand ready to embrace the challenges that will make us all stronger, TOGETHER! GO NAVY!



The VBC is excited to welcome Commander H. Lamont Gourdine, USN (ret.) to our Board of Directors! Commander Gourdine is a truly spirited learner and leader with a passion for people and obtaining results. VBC is grateful for his willingness to serve alongside us in support of our mission.

Letters Home from a Donut Dolly Peggy Lynd Kelly

Peggy Lynd Kelly from New York joined our virtual event in July and told her story of service in Vietnam as a Donut Dolly with the Red Cross. For Veterans Day 2019, she spoke at the Vietnam Women's Memorial and shared excerpts from her letters home.

Back in 1969, I was a 22-year-old recent college graduate who volunteered with the American Red Cross for a one-year tour in Vietnam. I was one of 627 young women in the Red Cross's supplemental recreational activity program. I am grateful for my parents for this opportunity. They saved all my letters from that year, and I will share some of them with you today.

Nov 18, 1969

Well, here I am in the Republic of Vietnam. I look back at the last few weeks and I can't believe I'm finally here! After our two-week training in Washington, DC, we said goodbye to the group of 7 who went to Korea, and 10 of us boarded a MACV flight bound for Saigon. It was a chartered flight. Very no frills. The 21-hour flight was not only long but also boring. No movies, with just basic food and no alcohol. It seemed like all we did was sleep, eat, read, and look out the window at the endless Pacific ocean. Most of the passengers were GIs, along with our group of 10 Red Cross girls. The anticipation on the plane was veiled with a sober atmosphere. The unknown consumed most of us.

My first assignment was at Tuy Hoa Air Force base, home of the 31st Tactical Fighter Wing. I expect to have two more assignments before my one-year tour ends in November. I left Saigon and flew on a C-130, a very noisy plane with jump seats and no windows. This makes the MACV flight seem like first class. It's funny how your experiences make you lower your expectations very quickly. The first few days here in Tuy Hoa have gone so quickly. We share trailers with two girls per trailer. We work at a Red Cross Center, which is a ten-minute walk from our compound. One gal works in the morning, one in the afternoon, and two at night. Hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Don't worry, I hear we'll be visiting two army mess halls, so I'll have plenty of turkey.

Dec 18, 1969

I know it is cold back home in Rochester but I even feel cold here. It is the monsoon season, so it has been raining for two days straight, and the dampness makes it feel much cooler than the 70 degree temperature. Sharon from Oklahoma and I have accompanied the Red Cross field director Monty, who dressed as Santa on a Chinook flight to visit a MACV team. The Chinook is a very large helicopter with two big motor blades. I'm not sure how long we were in the air, but when we returned to Tuy Hoa, someone told us that our chopper had been fired on while in the air. It was so noisy, I thought it was just the regular sounds of a chopper.

I'm working on my first program that will be used on trips to the field. It is on the '60s, with questions and other activities to include the servicemen in participation of this recreation program. We have a Mama-San, a Vietnamese woman who does our laundry. She washes our clothes by hand, and hangs them on the bushes and lines near our trailers to dry. All my clothes have a big number 6 written in black permanent marker on the back, just below the neckline. Luckily, that's mostly on my uniforms, not my civilian clothes. Thanks for the toy dolls you sent, the guys enjoyed the blindfold diapering contest we held at the center last night.

When we closed the center, at 10 o'clock, we walked over to check for mail and to see a movie, usually a western or an adventure. The best part of going to the movies is the first few minutes when we all stand for the Star Spangled Banner and watch the scenes of the U.S. on screen-- the waving wheat, the statue of liberty, the oceans, the mountains. I have so many impressions of this place, but the ones I will always remember is the sight of the Air Force pilots playing volleyball in the sand. Every time they hear or see an F-100 flying overhead, the players pause from the game and look up, following the plane for a few minutes. It seems they do it out of respect and hope for their comrades to come back safely to Tuy Hoa.

Cu Chi, February 1970

There are ten Red Cross girls at this location, along with four special service girls. We live in a long Quonset hut, affectionately called the dollhouse. We're known as Donut Dollies, from the Red Cross's World War II days. I have yet to even see a donut here. Our day starts at 6am on a chopper pad. We usually visit two fire bases a day, presenting four programs and hopefully getting back to Cu Chi at 6 o'clock. Usually, it is before the water trucks have filled our water tanks outside our hut. So just picture ten hot, dusty, dirty, sweaty girls, all waiting to use the shower. You keep wiping your neck, and the red clay comes off on your hands. Some days you are wading through mud up to your ankles when you are out on these fire bases.

Last week, I had a surprise visitor at the dollhouse. It was Patrick Graham! I guess you must have told his folks that I was at Cu Chi. All I could think of was the same Pat Graham as a little boy, shooting baskets in our backyard. Or as an altar boy at St. Monica's. We both agreed that Cu Chi was a long way from the 19th Ward in Rochester. It was only after seeing Pat, who was a few years younger than me, that I realized that every GI had been a small boy at one time. Some still look young, but they have aged inside from being here.

May 1970

It's been a sad time here at Cu Chi. Last night, some of the girls went over to the FAC shack for a drink. One guy there from North Carolina was excited, talking about meeting his wife in Hawaii on R&R. He had a letter for her, and he asked us to mail it for him, since he had a mission early the next day. A day or two later, we found out that his plane had been shot down and that he was missing. Another pilot who had walked me back to the dollhouse that first night was also missing in action. A few days later, there was a memorial at base chapel for them. How life is so fleeting, it is hitting home for me now.

Most of the 25th Infantry Division are now in Cambodia, so we have been sent for temporary duty for a week or two. Now I am in Cam Ranh Bay for a week, working at a Red Cross recreation center, which is very different from other places I've been. It's a very large, major point of entry for arrivals and departures. We get the short timers, faded fatigues, boonie hats, lifer tans, ready to get back on a freedom bird to the world. In contrast, the newbies, in their fresh-starved fatigues and issued OD baseball caps, are ready and eager to get the job done. Looking forward to getting back to the 25th and Cu Chi.

October 1970

For the past year, I've been handing in short timer calendars to others, and now I am one myself. I realize I'll have to switch to a civilian language soon. No more number one, number 10, say again. I'll have time to practice on the way home in November. It'll feel weird having my hair cut in a regular beauty shop after a year of getting it cut by a GI on a fire base who in civilian life had been a barber. I think when I'm back home I'll think of the incredible sacrifices made by those who served here in Vietnam and all the other military who supported them in other parts of the world. I have around 500 slides showing everyday life at fire bases, on choppers, and at base camps. They'll help me remember. As though I could ever forget. The visits to the orphanages, the request radio show I did at Tuy Hoa with the fictitious ski reports from Vung Tho Mountain, the goodness of mankind seen even in a war. The love, the duty to our country, and the sacrifices made. So, get some cauliflower ready, heat up the house, and as the short timer letters say, "the kid is coming home!"



Credit: Peggy Lynd Kelly

STORIES FROM OUR VETS

THE HAWK and THE DOVE

Making Peace, 1945
Roland Glenn

Roland Glenn, age 96, lives in Maine and regularly attends our VBC virtual events on Zoom. He's shared his story with us. You can find a video interview with Roland on our website. Below is an excerpt from his wonderful book, *The Hawk and the Dove: World War II at Okinawa and Korea*. Roland was a 2nd Lieutenant and was posted to the 17th Infantry Regiment, 7th Division in the Battle of Okinawa. He then served occupation duty in Korea. Roland has generously donated copies of his book to the VBC to give away (suggested donation \$20. Contact: todd@veteransbreakfastclub.com).

After the surrender of the Japanese, I spent time in Korea, as part of a mission to repatriate a large portion of the Japanese army to their homeland. They had occupied Korea for many years including the war period. One uppermost objective during the months ahead would be to lessen the conflict between these two peoples who would look very similar to us. Part of our mission happened in Taejon, a city of about 50,000 Koreans and 20,000 Japanese. A formal meeting at the Taejon Airport brought us face-to-face with men from the Japanese military, who had been our enemy just a short time ago, and who we sensed hated our guts.

At first, we American G.I.s were all uncertain about how to behave at this meeting. This didn't last for long. Our plan to act in a very formal manner quickly came and went. Within an hour, all the men were joking around and everyone wore a Japanese flight jacket of the softest leather, fringed with rabbit hair. It became increasingly difficult to distinguish a Japanese soldier from an American G.I. One Japanese man, Lieutenant Masayuki, mentioned that game birds were plentiful in the rice fields surrounding the airport we had been touring.

"Would you like to go pheasant hunting with me?"

"I certainly would. When can we go?"

As the other men took off to continue with assignments, Lieutenant Ioto Masayuki and I proceeded across the fields with our rifles at the ready. At one point I felt an uncomfortable awareness that the Japanese man walking directly behind me carried a loaded rifle. A metallic click intuitively caused me to swing around ready to kill him on the spot. In an instant I recalled the moment on Okinawa when John Garcia shot the enemy soldier who rose from a bush behind me and aimed his rifle at the back of my skull. Masayuki dropped to the ground. I quickly put down my rifle and went over to him, feeling suddenly embarrassed and foolish.

"I guess I am still in shock from being in battle so recently. That click scared me. What were you going to shoot? Let me help you up. Let's begin again. I beg your pardon"

"Lieutenant Glenn, that's the closest I've ever come to getting killed. Let's go for the birds."

I spotted a cock pheasant some distance ahead across a rice paddy, raised my carbine rifle, and fired. The bird dropped in its tracks.

"Banzai," shouted Ioto. We ran along the edge of the paddy and when we reached the bird we both looked, incredulous. The bullet pierced the bird's eye, killing it instantly. Not a feather disturbed! Ioto drew in several deep breaths.

"I have never seen such a shot as this. No wonder the Americans won the war!"

My mind took me back to hunting with my uncle and cousin, Corky, who would have been proud of that shot.

Lieutenant Masayuki and I broke up laughing while we walked over to a rise in the land and sat down. It felt like we'd known one another for much longer than just a few hours. I didn't understand my own behavior toward this man. Why did I feel so friendly towards this member of the enemy forces who I came so close to shooting moments earlier? Appropriate or not, I

couldn't deny feeling friendly toward this Japanese soldier. We were both enjoying ourselves sitting together wearing identical Japanese leather flight jackets.

Ioto became very curious about my little rifle that brought down the bird. He didn't know that U.S. carbines were the most inaccurate weapon in the U.S. arsenal. It was a lucky shot if ever there was one. I pushed the carbine towards him. He jumped and almost fell over backwards until he understood my attempt at presenting him with a gift.

"Forgive me. It's sometimes so hard to trust anyone. We have been taught to suspect everyone."

After he calmed down, he seemed very pleased and, in turn, presented me with his pistol. We sat there by the rice paddy, talking. Lieutenant Masayuki reached into one of his pockets and took out a wallet extracting several pictures.

"This is my family. Here is my mother and father. They are very old now. This picture is of my little sister. She probably won't remember me when I get home. I never thought that I'd live to see them again. I am a Kamikaze and the schedule called for me to make my sacrificial flight just before the Japanese surrender. I was scared even though my death would have honored our Emperor. I wish that we were the winners instead of you, but I am very glad the war is over. Now I can go home and get married. Here is a picture of the woman I will marry. And here is one of my grandparents. My grandfather died some years ago. I hope my grandmother is still alive in Nagasaki, but I don't know if she survived the atom bomb. Why did your side drop that terrible bomb?"

The key question, posed in a rice paddy field by a Japanese soldier about my own age, reminded me that Colonel Packler had alerted me to expect this possibility.

"I might not be here either if it hadn't been dropped," I responded. "Perhaps your family would have died also. We were being trained for the attack on Tokyo and feared that all of us would die in that battle. Like you, I became very scared of being killed after having survived combat during the Okinawa battle. We were told that many thousands of people on both sides would be killed were it not for the dropping of those bombs. But if you really want to know what I think, it is this. We dropped the bomb because our side developed it first. Once we made the decision to develop the atom bomb, it became a foregone conclusion that it would be used. Our new President is Harry Truman. He made the decision. I believe he felt that it would save many lives on both sides. Your military leaders would probably have done the same thing."

We sat there together silently, two young lieutenants raised in different cultures, sent to war, trained to kill, and miraculously escaping death; both admitting that we were scared of dying. What a way of maintaining face before the enemy! The dead pheasant rested on the ground at our feet. I looked over at Ioto and thought about how my government had brainwashed me to think of Japanese as subhuman creatures. Only a month earlier, before our departure from Okinawa, I had shot and killed young men just like him with almost the same abandon as shooting this bird through the eye.

Here I sat talking to another human being my own age, looking at his family pictures while wondering if the bomb had killed his grandmother in Nagasaki. I thought of my own Grandmother Egner working in her garden with a bonnet on her head. Lieutenant Masayuki's family looked just like my own. His parents were the same age as Mom and Dad Glenn. His little sister reminded me of my own little Sunny Girl who probably wouldn't remember what I looked like either. I looked over at him wondering how it could be that we had hated his comrades so intensely who now lay buried somewhere in the Okinawa soil. How did I bring myself to do it? Would I be able to put to rest that part of my life's experience? Neither of us knew what to say next. He looked through his pictures one more time before returning them to his wallet. I felt that I wanted to talk with him longer and try to sort out the feelings that were suddenly coming to the surface. I almost reached over to touch him, but this wasn't yet the time for a handshake. We walked silently back to the buildings of the Taejon airport.

The Veterans Breakfast Club's
ANNUAL GALA

VBC YEAR-END PARTY:
Humor in Uniform!
Good Riddance to 2020!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 7PM

We can't hold our annual Veteran Voices Fundraising Gala this year, so instead we're throwing a **FREE** virtual Year-End Party (Good Riddance to 2020!) on Zoom on Saturday, December 5 at 7:00pm. The event will be free to attend with dinner delivery, raffles, auctions, and (of course) donation opportunities. We'll be featuring "Humor in Uniform"—veterans sharing funny stories from their time in the service.

Tickets can be reserved for **FREE** on our EventBrite page, <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/veterans-breakfast-club-10742829064>

Sponsorships, program ads, and honor lines available. See details at veteransbreakfastclub.org or contact Lauren DelRicci at lauren@veteransbreakfastclub.com or 412-623-9029.

We can't do this...



...so we're doing this!



 Tune in to the VBC's newest show,

THE SCUTTLEBUTT

UNDERSTANDING MILITARY CULTURE

RELEASED EVERY MONDAY! Hosted by the VBC's Shaun Hall, The Scuttlebutt brings together special guests, veterans and non-veterans, for an informed conversation about the military experience, past and present. Each episode ranges from the topical to the historical and from the big picture to the everyday.

Head to www.veteransbreakfastclub.org to watch the Scuttlebutt every Monday, or tune into the audio podcast version wherever you listen to podcasts.

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VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Last year, the Veterans Breakfast Club expanded its community of veterans and non-veterans beyond anything we could have imagined when we started back in 2008. We held more events at more locations with more people and heard more stories from more veterans than ever before. Veterans of all eras and ages, from WWII to the present, shared their stories with us, and we, in turn, have been sharing these remarkable testimonies of service with the world on social media. This Annual Report for 2019 captures some of the numbers that measure our impact. But the subjective experience of VBC programs is impossible to quantify. How do you measure the poignancy of a 95-year-old Marine recounting his time on Iwo Jima or a Blue Star Mother talking about sending her daughter to war in Iraq? How do you calculate the insight harvested from listening to our veterans' voices describing the work they did, the bonds they forged, and the perspectives they gained serving our country? Our veterans stand at the center of the VBC's mission. But without the families, friends, neighbors, volunteers, sponsors, funders, and donors who participate in our programs, the VBC would not have been able to carry our community of listening into this new world of 2020 we inhabit. What the VBC does to connect, heal, educate, and inspire is needed now more than ever.

VBC SURVEY RESULTS

Last year, we surveyed our program participants about the value provided by our storytelling events. Here's a sample of what they said:

"I've gained **connection and better understanding** of the different generations of veterans prior to my entry to service."
-Veteran

"I will never hear enough. I am **indebted to these breakfasts** and what they do for all of us."
-Non-Veteran

"I love the stories—it feels very good being with **fellows brothers and sisters.**"
- Veteran

"Hearing some of the veterans' stories has **opened my eyes to understand how brave these men had to be** to experience what they've been through. They are such an inspiration."
-Non-Veteran

"A **great impact, beyond measure.** Their stories are different and universal!" - Non-Veteran

"I had put aside my Vietnam War experience for 48 years. **Now, being a veteran is the focus of my life.**" - Veteran

"Your tag line **"Every Veteran Has A Story"** couldn't be more true. VBC has opened my eyes to "everyone has a story." My capacity for empathy has grown!"
- Non-Veteran

"I feel part of a **process of healing and fellowship of vets** who had a unique experience of service and camaraderie that suddenly went away when they returned home."
-Veteran

VBC 2019 AT A GLANCE **75** events **39** event locations **7,524** event attendees
500+ live stories shared **211** digital stories produced and released **111.6K** reached by digital story productions

68 companies and organizations sponsored our storytelling events, **21** companies and organizations advertised in our newsletters, **31** companies, organizations, and individuals supported our annual Gala, and **567** people donated to the VBC.

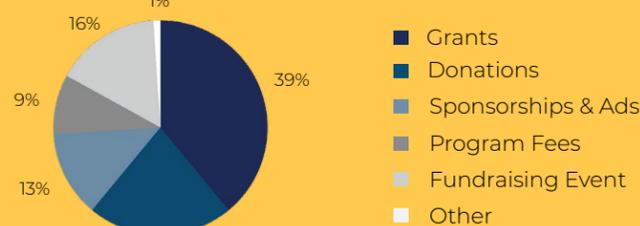


TOTAL VBC OPERATING BUDGET 2019

REVENUE (UNAUDITED)

Grants	39%
Donations	22%
Sponsorships & Ads	13%
Program Fees	9%
Fundraising Event	16%
Other	1%

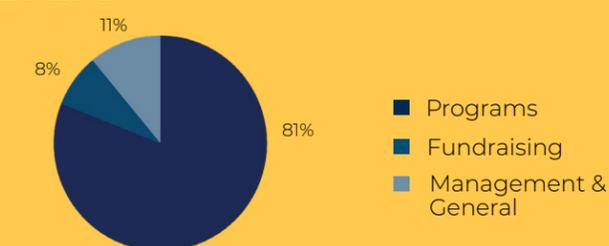
REVENUE



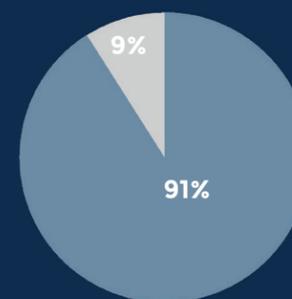
EXPENSES (UNAUDITED)

Programs	81%
Fundraising	8%
Management & General	11%

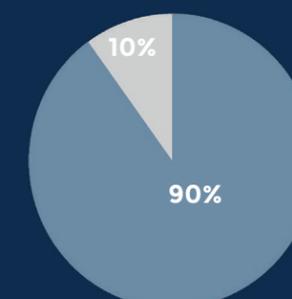
EXPENSES



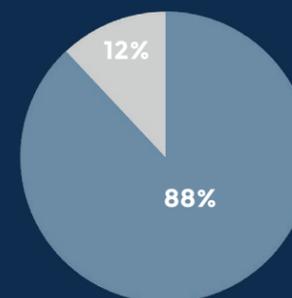
SURVEY RESPONSES



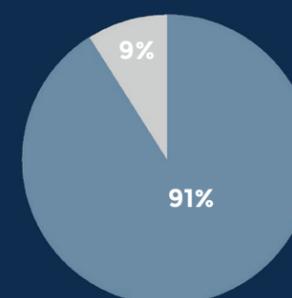
NON-VETERANS:
"I have a better understanding of what a veteran is." **91% EXTREMELY/VERY MUCH AGREE**



VETERANS:
"I believe there is a healing benefit for the veterans who share their stories." **90% EXTREMELY/VERY MUCH AGREE**



NON-VETERANS:
"I am MORE willing to talk with a veteran about his/her experiences." **88% EXTREMELY/VERY MUCH AGREE**



VETERANS:
"I think these events help non-veterans gain a better understanding of military service." **91% EXTREMELY/VERY MUCH AGREE**

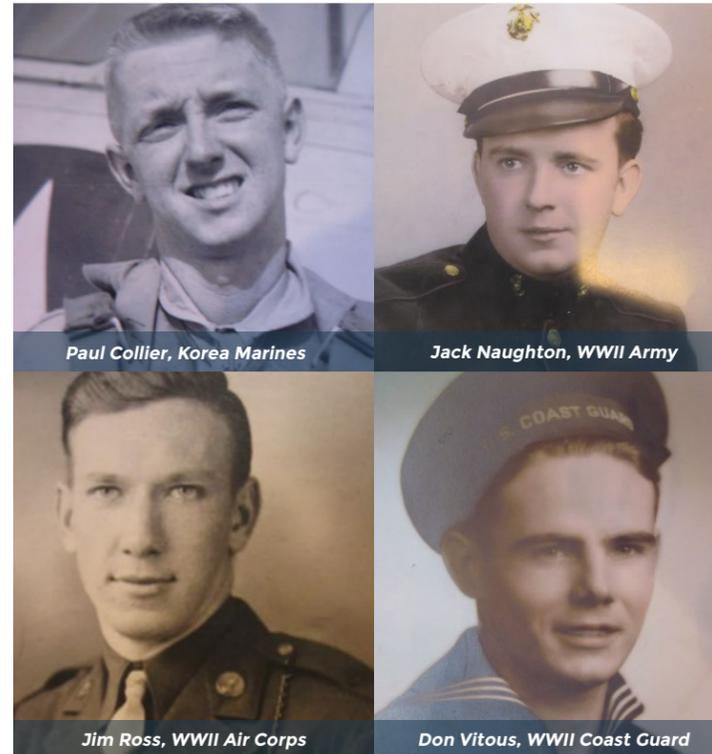


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Bob Buckler
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Don Campbell
Lou Caracciolo
William Chaney
Mike Cherock
Betty Christopher - In memory of WWII civilian POW Carmen Leffler
Kathy Colbert
Ila Cole
All DeFazio & Valerie Vacula
Lt. Col. (RET) Gerald DePastino - In memory of Sgt Allan DePastino, PA National Guard, 1957-1965, Ordnance Supply Specialist, 405th Ordnance Co (GAS), HQ 167th QM BN (DS).
Susan & Victor DiBattista - In memory of WWII veteran Norman Rosfeld
Jennifer Dillon-Michaels
Pat Doherty
Rick & Donna Erisman
Catherine Ferrick
Howard Fisher
Jane Frankel - In honor of Mr. Joseph Zimbicki--kudos for long life and healthy years--102 last week and in Honor of Ms. Julie Senchack for good news--one-year post surgery!
Mike Gasparetto
Don & Carolyn Gaus
Angie & Angelo Gemeloin memory of WWII veteran Norman Rosfeld
Jennifer Gerhard - In memory of Nathaniel Nyren and in honor of Becky Nyren
Chris Gibson
Jo Ann Glad
Andy & Marjorie Glaid
Gold Star Mothers
Laura Goossen
Dale & Idamae Gower
Rosemary Gregg
Fred Gregorich - In memory of Chella Palaio
Haberberger Family - In memory of Todd's dog, Mallie!
Bob Harbula
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Fred Harke
Harvest Holdings Financial Ministries
Judi Held
Mary Alice & Mike Hennessey - In memory of WWII veteran Norman Rosfeld
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Francis Hynds
Sara Innamorato
Jacob Ferree Chapter, DAR
Jim Jamieson
Lynne Johnson
Burt & Marsha Kennedy
Joseph Kenney
Catherine Kiefer - In memory of WWII veteran Norm Rosfeld
Dave Kirsch
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Greg & Lauretta Kobasa
Ed Koneski

Roxy Korchynsky - In memory of John W. Abbott, US Navy veteran
Doug Krall
Tom Kulikowski
Carol Kunzler
Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians 23
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John Malack
Virginia McIntyre
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Rosalie Morgan
Ceri Morgan & Julie Senchak
Morningside VFW Post 3945
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Becky Nyren
Steve O'Connor
Beverly Ochs-Pobicki
Connie Orient
Sharon and Steve Paskoff - In honor of Ray Amelio, our dear friend and a great person in all regards.
Steve Paulovitch
Mayor Bill Peduto
William Peebles
Peters Township Public Library Foundation
Michael Peuler
Carole Popchock
Fran Popyack
Rev Julius Porcher, Jr.
Bob & Jeannie Priganc
Queen Aliquippa Chapter, DAR
Beth Reuschel
Dick & Thelma Richardson
Dawn Rigney
Chad Rittle
Dave & Sharon Rojohn
Bill Rooney
Chuck Ross in memory of our uncle, James C. Ross, WWII Army Air Corps veteran
Rachelle Roth
Ed Rowan
William & Janet Rushmore
Joe & Nancy Santilli
Rich Scholl
Charles Schultheis
Jordan Schulz - In honor of Steve Schulz on Father's Day!
Kathy Silvia
Daniel Slain in memory of WWII veteran Joe Slain
Daniel Spinazzola
Ed & Pat Stavovy - In Memory of Dr. Alexander Victor Fakadej
LTC Charles Sullivan In memory of LTC Raymond Hass, USAF, Vietnam
Ch.. LTC Andrew Tibus (RET) - In memory, USS New Jersey & USS South Dakota
Natalie Tissot
John & Rana Crossman Tonti
Guy Tressler III - In memory of WWII veteran Guy Tressler
Trinity School for Ministry
Dennis & Charlotte Vasil
Dan & Cheryl Vaughn
Vietnam Veterans, Inc.
Karl Voigt
Jack Watson
Gretchen Wentz
Whitehall Community Lions Club
Norm Wien
Marian Wild
Joe Wisniewski
Larry Woods
Ron Worstell
Andy & Georgia Zeedick
Donna & Joe Zizza - In memory of WWII veteran Norm Rosfeld

TO THOSE WHO RECENTLY PASSED, WE SALUTE YOU.



Paul Collier, Korea Marines

Jack Naughton, WWII Army

Jim Ross, WWII Air Corps

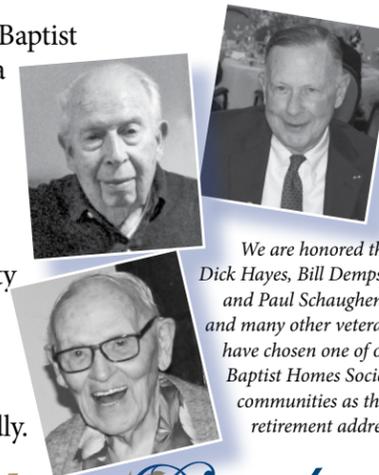
Don Vitous, WWII Coast Guard

Paul Collier, Korea Marines
Jim Enos, Vietnam Marines
Ralph Fisher, WWII Army
Robert Hassinger, WWII Air Corps
Michael Hornick, Vietnam Navy/Marines
Joseph Kenney, WWII Navy
Carmen Leffler, WWII Civilian POW
John McFeely, WWII Army
Harry Mistrik, WWII Army
Conrad Mitchell, WWII Army
Jack Naughton, WWII Marines
Leo Plunkett, WWII Army
Terry Rannigan, Vietnam Navy
Jim Ross, WWII Air Corps
Joe Slain, WWII Navy
Nick Steri, WWII Navy
Don Vitous, WWII Coast Guard
Phil Ward, Korea Navy
John Zebroski, WWII Army
Sterling Ziegler, WWII Air Corps

We salute our veterans.

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We thank our residents and all seniors who have served our country proudly.



We are honored that Dick Hayes, Bill Dempsey and Paul Schaughency and many other veterans have chosen one of our Baptist Homes Society communities as their retirement address.

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We'd like to welcome our new Director of Programming, Shaun Hall, to the VBC! Shaun is not a veteran but his passion for veteran stories is what made him return to VBC again and again. Shaun has spent the last 10 years in the non-profit sector and we are excited to have him host our new program, The Scuttlebutt, where we will be attempting to understand the American military from a civilian perspective.

The VBC is excited to welcome Captain Mak Kelly, USMC to our Board of Directors! We are grateful, after months of having Mak join us for virtual events, that he has accepted an official seat at the table. VBC recognizes his array of unique abilities and rigorous spirit as an asset to the team and appreciates his passion for our mission.



VBC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Mike Cherock, President
- Amber Spells, Treasurer
- Ray Amelio
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- Laura Goossen
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- Shaun Hall, Director of Programming
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Contact Ellie DePastino at
 412-623-9029 or
ellie@veteransbreakfastclub.com
 to be added to our list!

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EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 9AM ET ON ZOOM ONLY! BYOB(reakfast). Veterans stories and conversation.



LIVE

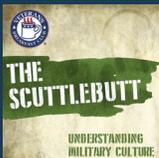
VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB LIVE HAPPY HOUR!
EVERY MONDAY NIGHT AT 7PM ET ON ZOOM, SIMULCASTED ON FACEBOOK LIVE AND YOUTUBE! BYOB(verage). Veterans stories, conversations, special topics, and guests.



LIVE

HAPPY HOUR!

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THE SCUTTLEBUTT
Hosted by the VBC's Shaun Hall, The Scuttlebutt brings together special guests, veterans and non-veterans, for an informed conversation about the military experience, past and present. Details inside!



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Our LIVE virtual veterans storytelling programs bring together people from all over our region, nation, and beyond.



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