



FLORIDA DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION



Rotor and Scalpel

SPRING NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2012

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Another year has gone by. I wish everybody a productive and Happy New Year. April's reunion is right around the corner and I am looking forward to seeing my fellow Dustoff Members and fellow veterans.

I want to personally thank Bob and Bert for all of their efforts in their support of Dustoff this past year. Regretfully my job has kept me away from meetings and reunions. I have been kept updated with everything concerning Dustoff and the State Coalition.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Bob as he was elected as the President of the State Coalition, Doc Williams remains as the 2nd Vice President and Bert was elected as the Secretary.

I would like for everybody to continue to make a big push for membership for this Year. I wish everybody Good health and prosperity in this New Year.

Thank You

Brett D. Brookins

President of Florida Dustoff 2012

From the Editor

Another year has passed and once again...I can't believe it is Reunion time once again – I believe this will be my 20th. Not only that, I can't believe that this is my 10th year of being editor of the Newsletter and Treasurer for the organization.

I am e-mailing as many newsletters as possible to keep our printing and postage costs down, so if you received this by snail mail and have an e-mail address please e-mail it to me at Hdwizrd8@aol.com and PLEASE indicate Dustoff in the subject line. I know you have asked for more than one newsletter each year, however, working a full time job, helping care for my granddaughter and being involved with numerous other organizations, I simply cannot find the time to accomplish this. ***If some else would like to do a mid-year***

newsletter, please let me know and I will forward to you the format that I am using.

We would like to encourage all members to attend the reunion in May 2012. We will have a general membership meeting on Saturday. **If you plan on attending the reunion this year, please contact me at (386) 424-1989 or by e-mail. I will need to know if you need a campsite and how many people will be attending with you.** At this point in time, I believe there are only dry sites left - people requiring wet sites I am aware of are Patches, Art and Hoss, Harry and Adele, and Doc Custer. As Doc O will be staying at a hotel this year, we have rented his space to The NVHS. If I am mistaken, please advise me ASAP so I will be able to let others know if a wet camp site is available. It is quite difficult to plan meals without having an idea of a head count, so please try to give us a heads up if you will be attending and what date you will be arriving. The reunion dates are April 26th-29th at Wickham Park. The VVB already has most of the reunion info posted at www.vietnamandallveteransofbrevard.com.

If you can also attend the week prior, you may also wish participate in the Vietnam And All Veterans Reunion Memorial Walls Motorcycle Escort on Sunday April 22nd, 2012 at Brevard Community College 1519 Clearlake Road, Cocoa, FL. If staying overnight they normally arrange for discounted room rates, which at this time have not been announced/posted yet. Bob and I had the honor and privilege of leading the escort from BCC to the park last year and if Bob is able to ride, since having hand surgery this past November, we have been asked to lead the escort again.

Line-up for the escort is at 9:00 am and we will leave 10:00 am. Arrival at Wickham Park is about 11:00 am. The Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard will host a COVERED DISH PICNIC, for those who want to help set up the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall Other Memorials and Displays. It is well worth the experience if you are able to do so (Bert and I look forward to seeing Doc Custer there.)

Please take a look at the reunion website page at VVOF.ORG and there is a link to the reunion home page, or go right to the source at the VVB website.

I have been given the tentative schedule of events for the reunion already and have attached a copy for all of you. FYI – Pocket Change will be coming back to perform again and they will be playing

back to back on Friday and Saturday with VIVA Rock. **Should be awesome !!!**

I look forward to seeing all at the Reunion!!!

Roberta Neitzel

FROM THE VP

I hope all have been well and I am looking forward to seeing all at the Reunion. Preparations are already in motion and I am hoping this will be a great year for Florida Dustoff Association.

I would like to take a moment to congratulate this past year's recipients of awards in our organization: Member of the Year, Ron "Doc" Custer; Certificate of Appreciation for Service to Dustoff – Al Snow, State Representative Dorothy Hukill and the USA River Rats; Doctor Dustoff Award to Carolyn Zsoldos, Linn Vercheski and Ron "Doc" Smith.

Bert and I attended the Special Forces National Reunion this past June in Orlando and represented Dustoff and the State Coalition, as well as the USA River Rats. We handed out our new Trifold and applications in hopes of enlisting new members. Unfortunately, from our experience the past year, it is not the type of event for us to attend and try to recruit new members, however, it was great to run into our very own Dount Dollie Sue there.

On behalf of Dustoff, several packages were sent to our troops for the Holidays. The packages consisted of Holiday candies and treats, holiday decorations, personal hygiene items (body wash, shaving cream, razors, wet wipes, hand sanitizer), and Bert baked 36 dozen cookies once again. The dollar amount of the packages including shipping was kept within our budget as Bert and I donated the cookies. We would also like to mention that Francesca and Skip Abers from the USA River Rats made a candy donation for the troops again this year. The packages were received before Christmas and were enjoyed by all.

We also represented Dustoff and the Vietnam and All Veterans State Coalition at the Wreaths Across America Program at the local cemetery in Edgewater again this year. The ceremony was a fitting tribute and took place at the same time that other similar events took place all over the country. Wreaths presented at the main ceremony represented every branch of the service, including Coast Guard and Merchant Marines. Bert and I had the honor of presenting the POW/MIA wreath at this year's ceremony. After the main ceremony, everyone in attendance walked through the cemetery and laid a fresh cut wreath on a soldier's grave. However, I guess due to hard economic times, donations to this program were down and instead of having approx. 160 wreaths to place at the gravesites like last year, there were only about 60 to place. ***A thought would be if possible, Florida Dustoff Association make a small donation, possible \$50.00 to this program this year.*** For more information, the web address is <http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org> – this year's ceremony takes place December 9, 2012. Also, if you would like to attend one of these ceremonies that take place throughout the country, you can access the list of cemeteries' that participate.

Dustoff will hopefully be hosting the Vietnam and All Veterans State Coalition Meeting an Annual Banquet again this coming January. When the location and dates are scheduled, we will let you know. This year, held at LaPlaya Resort and Hotel in Daytona Beach was a wonderful weekend. A lot of information was received and reviewed in the meeting and the Banquet was received well by all – the chef out did himself this year and I believe everyone had a great time during the auction. Art and Hoss accepted the Plaque presented to Dustoff for hosting the Annual meeting the year before. I suggest if given the opportunity to attend the meetings, especially the Annual, one should do so. The next scheduled meeting is a one day meeting to be held at the VFW post 4228 in Titusville on March 31st and is being hosted by the USA River Rats.

On behalf of Dustoff, I would like to thank the following individuals/organizations for their assistance at the meeting: The US

River Rats Honor Guard (presentation the Colors), Jacque Earrusso, Doc Williams and Al Diaz for contributing to the food that was provided at the hospitality suite, Rose Fantaccione, Michelle Ollice and Bobbi Jo Dino for helping out with the clean-up, and Rose, Michelle, Bobbi Jo, Al Diaz and Ken Wakefield for helping us pack up on Sunday. Roberta and I would like to thank Art, Hoss, Sue and Jared for attending and supporting our efforts.

The mid-year reunion was held Veterans Day weekend in conjunction with the Annual Muster at the UDT Seal Museum and The Chief's Beer Bash at Little Jims Bridge. It was great seeing Doc O as he had been recovering from his surgery during the reunion last April. I believe all had a great time. While we are on this topic, I would like to know what everyone would think about having the mid-year reunion in September and possibly having it in the Daytona Beach Area. I realize that Veterans Day weekend can be a tough time for people to meet and this way, if our reunion is another time, you can still attend the Muster and Beer Bash. If this will work, I am sure that we can make arrangements at LaPlaya Resort – it is on the beach, there is a tiki bar and lots of restaurants in the area that are in walking distance and they also have a comedy show Saturday night for a nominal fee. I am sure we can arrange to have a hospitality suite for everyone to gather in if we want. It could make for a very relaxing and enjoyable weekend.

To remind all everyone should contribute and bring two 12 packs (beer, soda, water, etc.) to donate to the coolers at reunion. It has worked out great for the past few years and I for one did not hear any complaints.

Now for the part of our newsletter nobody likes to read. It takes money to run an organization and I know things are rather tough for a lot of people these days. However, if you are an annual member, **PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES.** *As you must be a member in good standing to vote, please make sure that the dues are paid prior to the start of our annual meeting.* If you would like to pay them now, please forward your payment in the amount of \$20.00 payable to Florida Dustoff Association to 2304 Woodland Drive, Edgewater, FL 32141. **Please note – there are only two types of memberships:** Annual (associate) and Lifetime – that is it. If you join us for the meeting and are not one of these membership types **or** have not paid your dues, you are not eligible to vote.

Please remember, our general membership meeting will be held 1 hour after the close of opening ceremonies at the campsite on the 28th and we will have our auction at that time. The auction is extremely important to our bottom line as the reunion is really our only source of fundraising and in order to keep this organization afloat, we need to have as many members present for this event and bidding on the items.

I look forward to seeing you all at the reunion.

DUSTOFF FOREVER
Bob (Doc) Neitzel

MORE REUNION INFO

The menus for the reunion had already been determined and I am **pleased** to let you all know that our new members, Harry and Adele, will be preparing **ALL** of the meals. The menus and prices are as follows: Thursday dinner is Brats, Hot Dogs and Burgers with Macaroni Salad and Cole Slaw for a cost of \$5.00, Friday will be Baked Ham, Potato Salad and Baked Beans at a cost of \$5.00 and Saturday night's dinner will be Steak, Baked potato, green beans and salad will be at a cost of \$8.00. Breakfast will be available Friday, Saturday (eggs, sausage, ham, etc) and Sunday (Biscuits and Gravy) for a minimum donation of \$4.00. Lunches will be "on your own".

We will be presenting colors at the opening ceremonies again and if anyone is interested in participating, please contact Bob Neitzel at hdwizr7@aol.com or by phone to let him know in advance. As the flight suits we have are rather "slim" in nature, we would like at least one or two to present in the flight suits and all others to be in BDU's, and would like all to be in boots.

We will be having our raffle and auction as well as a 50/50 and if anyone would like to donate any items please see Doc Neitzel, Bert, Elizabeth or Brett at the campsite.

Important Information to Pass On

We try to forward as much information as possible throughout the year that we received which we deem important. Some though, do not have a computer, therefore are not receiving a lot of information. I would like to note here several items that I felt were worth sharing again: They are:

We were provided with a website that lists discounts provided to active military personnel and veterans: It is <http://www.militaryconnection.com/deals.asp>. These are businesses that offer discounts on products and services and these discounts vary from 10% to 40%. If you don't have a home computer, but have access to one at a public library or at a friend's home, please access this site and print out a list.

Two important caveats. First, some stores offer discounts only at the owner's discretion and other discounts vary by state. Second, many stores that give a military discount don't advertise it. It is always worth asking a store whether they have one or not and to have your military ID on you. We have done this recently at several local restaurants and surprisingly, they gave us a 10% discount. I suggest you take a look at this website and take advantage of the discounts offered.

CONTINUED SUPPORT NEEDED TO H. RES 111

In representing the POW/MIA issue by wearing the POW/MIA patch brings a responsibility to do something about it. We want them returned from captivity; we want the government authorized to seriously negotiate and get them back.

House Resolution 111 (H. Res. 111) is the way to do that. This investigative committee will open POW/MIA documents previously hidden and make the recommendations to congress for a law to do what is necessary for their return.

You and I have to get congressmen/women to cosponsor H. Res. 111 now so that we can meet the objective of getting this Congressional Resolution to the House Floor for a vote to get the committee formed, functioning to accomplish. We have to start by getting the cosponsors. Let's get started on this right away.

If you haven't called call this next week, if they haven't signed on as a cosponsor call next week. That is what it takes to get them to take you seriously. You are the leaders in the POW/MIA issue in having the unreturned represented when others passively wait or expect government to do its job; we have to authorize them to get it done. The Defense POW/MIA Office and others only have to do what they have been doing because there is no law requiring them to seek out and bring back our POW/MIAs.

If you congressman/woman hasn't signed on yet call their office and tell them to do so. Here it the current list of cosponsors:

Florida – Rivera (R), Illinois – Manzulo(R), Kentucky – Guthrie (R), Kansas – Jenkins(D), Massachusetts - Keating, Neal (D), Maryland (D), Minnesota – Bachman (R), Cravaak (R), Paulsen (R), Peterson (D), North Carolina – Foux(R), New Jersey – Holt(D), Rothman (D), Payne (D), Lance (R), New York – Towns (D), Pennsylvania – Altmire (D), Tennessee Roe, Black (R)

VA to distribute personalized benefits handbooks

The Department of Veterans Affairs healthcare system said it has begun to send enrollees in the VA healthcare system personalized booklets explaining their benefits.

The new Health Benefits Handbooks provide customized listings of health benefits based on each vet's own eligibility. The handbooks also contain contact information for vets' local VA medical facilities, as well as information for scheduling appointments and communicating with clinicians, VA said. The booklets contain co-pay information when applicable.

The department said that it began to distribute the handbooks this month. All 8.5 million vets enrolled the system will receive handbooks by 2013, VA said.

"VA is committed to providing our nation's veterans with consistent, clear information about the services available to them," Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki said in a statement.

Vietnam Education Center Needs Photos

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is still seeking photos of all 58,272 men and women whose names are inscribed on The Wall in Washington, D.C. The collection will be used to highlight their service and sacrifice inside the new VFW-supported Vietnam Memorial Education Center, which is scheduled to break ground by Veterans Day 2012. More than 30,000 photos have already been submitted by families and fellow comrades-in-arms, but more are still needed. Please submit photos to Jan Scruggs, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, 2600 Virginia Ave., NW, Suite 104, Washington, DC 20037. Include the deceased's name and location, unit and approximate month/year the photo was taken. Digitized photos can be e-mailed directly to jscruggs@vvmf.org. (Sidenote: Bob and I submitted a photo of his Crew Chief, Willie Green and was able to post a remembrance to this site as well.)

Wounded Warrior Headed to Paralympic Games

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (Jan. 18, 2012) -- Showcasing courage, determination and inspiration, USA Shooting has announced the nomination of Sgt. 1st Class Josh Olson of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit to the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team contingent on the approval of the U.S. Olympic Committee.

Olson is the first active-duty Soldier to be nominated for the Paralympic Games and first active-duty service member to ever be nominated to compete in shooting sports at the games.

Olson qualified for the team based on the International Paralympic Committee's two-part qualification system for the London 2012 Paralympic Games. On Jan. 15, the IPC announced that the U.S. earned a second participation slot per the minimum qualifying score allocations.

At the 2011 IPC World Cup in Sydney, Australia, Olson finished sixth in R3 (Mixed 10-meter Air Rifle Prone). Earlier that year, he finished seventh in R6 (Mixed 50m Rifle Prone) at the IPC World Cup Alicante and eighth in R6 at the IPC World Cup USA held on Fort Benning, Ga.

Deployed to Iraq in 2003 with 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Olson was struck with a rocket-propelled grenade while on patrol, resulting in the loss of his right leg from the hip down. After spending 18 months at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Olson received his assignment to the USAMU.

During his time at the USAMU, Olson has become a pioneer and advocate for Wounded Warriors. He has led the effort to establish a Paralympic team at the unit, enabling wounded warriors deemed able to continue to serve on active duty to showcase the Army in support of recruiting and accessions while enhancing its overall combat readiness through the unit's robust marksmanship training program.

"Sergeant First Class Olson is a trailblazer for our Army," said Lt. Col. Dan Hodne, commander, USAMU. "His unique Army story speaks volumes of the notion of 'ability' rather than 'disability,' and exemplifies professional Soldiers who all must be 'Army Strong.'"

Olson is also heavily involved with "Operation Proper Exit," where he aids other veterans recovering from injuries sustained during combat by visiting their place of injury in Iraq. In honor of his service and dedication to the country, Olson was awarded the Purple Heart from former President George W. Bush.

This is Olson's first Paralympic Games nomination -- he just missed the threshold in 2008, but has been a member of the National Paralympic Team for five years.

"I want to thank my family and friends for all the support, understanding and sacrifice; my coaches for the instruction and world-class mentorship; and finally, the U.S. Army for providing the opportunity to continue to serve and represent the USA on the world stage," said Olson.

Consideration for the expansion of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit for Wounded Warriors deemed able to continue to serve on active duty as marksmanship instructors and Paralympic shooter/instructors is currently ongoing as part of the Army's "Total Army Analysis."

BITS AND PIECES

We wish the best to, and keep in our prayers the following members of Dustoff who have been ill and are still recovering: Rick Moore and Doc Smith. Also, for those who may not be aware, Michael J Martin is still very ill and we are hoping the best for him, as it is believed his recovery will be a long one. As he will not be attending this year due to his health, I think it would be appropriate to let him know how much he is missed and loved -- I believe a card from all at Dustoff would be nice!!!

Please take a look at the Vietnam and All Veterans of Florida State Coalition Website (VVOF.ORG). There is a tremendous amount of information and links to other sites.

If you need to express yourself, or have something worth sharing, please e-mail Roberta at Hdwizr8@aol.com, or call me at 386-424-1989.

CAMPSITE FEES FOR 2012-prices remain the same

WET SITES: \$40.00 per night per motor home, camper or tent

DRY SITES: \$30.00 per night per motor home, camper or tent

RECAP OF MEAL PRICES

Breakfast Friday, Saturday and Sunday – minimum donation \$4.00

Thursday Dinner \$5.00 per person

Friday Dinner \$5.00 per person

Saturday Dinner \$8.00 per person

THE DUSTOFF PRAYER

Penned by Chaplin Connie Walker

Kind and Merciful Heavenly Father, thank You for "calling" and "sending" DUSTOFF Teams on missions of mercy, under the most hostile conditions, in a deeply Dedicated and Unhesitating Service To Our Fighting Forces of all ages and ranks. Lord, history has us standing on the shoulders of the faithful and courageous DUSTOFF Teams who have gone before.

Bless them forever. We follow their stalwart leadership steps. Lord, may each of us hear afresh Your Summons, "Follow Me." Heroic cries like "When

I have your wounded..." captivate and ring in our ears, hearts and prayers, even today as we fly on missions of mercy to Life for Life and Hope.

Heavenly Father, we trust in Your saving and sustaining Grace, now and forever. In the Name of our Great God, Redeemer and Holy Spirit. Amen!

ELECTED OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Brett Brookins	President	Bbrookinsretired@gmail.com
Robert (Doc) Neitzel	Vice-President	Hdwizrd7@aol.com
Roberta Voisey-Neitzel	Treasurer	Hdwizrd8@aol.com
Elizabeth Brookins	Secretary	Ebrookins@gmail.com
Roberta Voisey-Neitzel	Newsletter Editor	Hdwizrd8@aol.com
Rick Moore	Membership	Teufelhunden69@aol.com
John Combs	Chaplin	Jodoco@centurylink.com
Ron (Doc) Custer	Chairman of the Board	Custer_ron@yahoo.com
Ron (Doc) Smith	Board Member	Bigdocs@aol.com
Ed (Gunny) Ryan	Board Member	GunnyRyan@aol.com

MAILING ADDRESS

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All inquiries, questions or comments may be directed to the President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer. All articles printed in our newsletters are strictly the opinion of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Dustoff Organization.
Updated September 17, 2006

FLORIDA DUSTOFF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NEW _____ RENEWAL _____ LIFETIME _____ ANNUAL _____
NAME: _____ DOB: _____ AGE: _____
SPOUSE: _____ DOB: _____ AGE: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
PHONE: () _____ E-mail: _____
CELL: () _____
BRANCH OF SERVICE _____ RANK _____ DATE OF ASSIGNMENT (FROM/TO) _____
ATTACHMENTS: _____

If Dustoff and/or Medevac what capacity did you serve? Pilot ___ Crew Chief ___ Medic ___ Maintenance ___
Supply ___ Door Gunner ___ Flight Ops ___ Clerk ___ Commo ___ Cook ___ (check one or more)

If this is a renewal is this a change of address/information ? _____

_____ I know a former Dustoff/Medic/Corpsman/Pilot/Nurse or other potential member and have listed their name, address and telephone number below.

Enclosed is \$20.00, my membership dues for one year () initial

Enclosed is my Lifetime membership dues as follows Age 55 and Below \$100.00 () Age 56-75 \$75.00 () Age 76 and above \$50.00 ()

Mail application and payment to: Florida Dustoff Association
c/o Roberta Neitzel
2304 Woodland Drive
Edgewater, FL 32141

For Information Call Robert or Roberta Neitzel (386) 424-1989

***Checks should be made payable to Florida Dustoff Association
Please make sure to include a copy of your DD-214***