



FLORIDA DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION



Rotor and Scalpel

WINTER/SPRING NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2015

FROM THE PRESIDENT

First and foremost, I am hoping this newsletter finds all my brothers and sisters doing well. It certainly has been a rough couple of years for many of us.

Dustoff hosted The Vietnam and All Veterans State Coalition Meeting and Annual Banquet again this past January and will most probably be hosting the meeting again next year. Dustoff was presented with a plaque (hosting a meeting in 2014) and a Certificate (participation) and I am proud to announce that Florida Dustoff was bestowed the honor of being awarded the Coalition's Organization of the Year for 2014. Tom Burton was named the Veteran of the Year, Bill Sauerwine the Member of the Year and LaPlaya Resort the Business of the Year!! There were many members of Dustoff present and we all accepted the award as a group – Roberta and I, Doc Custer, Chris Hamrick, Van Carter, Chris Bischoff and Tony Cartledge.

For those of you that did not go to the State Coalition Meeting, it was very productive and quite informative. We had a great time and I would like to congratulate Roberta and all her helpers from the VVB and USA River Rats on a job well done. They helped set up meeting room and hospitality suite and helped pack up everything afterwards. A **BIG** and special thanks goes out to Jacque Earrusso, Rose Fantaccione, Michelle Wakefield, Van Carter, Bill and Hjordis Sauerwine (I hope I did not forget anyone) Roberta could not have done it on her own as it is a large undertaking. Roberta moved from one function to another – Set-up and preparing food for the Friday night and then cleaning up – skipping breakfast to pick up food for Saturday lunch and preparing the hospitality room for lunch, setting up the meeting room. Breaking down the meeting room and immediately preparing for the banquet, breaking down the banquet and then returning to the hospitality room Saturday night, began breaking it down and then everyone packed Sunday. She was constantly on the go, of course with help along the way. The banquet was awesome, and the food was great. All in all the meeting was a wonderful success and a lot of information was disseminated.

Sadly, this past year, we lost another member of Dustoff, Jerry "Doc O" Anderson. Jerry loved attending the Reunion. He was always up front counselling those with PTSD and was normally on the campsite for 10 days or so. Being that he lived in Georgia, he would travel to Andersonville and Americus when The Wall traveled there. He was a

former Dustoff Member of the Year and his gentle manner will be missed by us all.

The Veteran Community also lost a wonderful brother and friend this past year, Michael J Martin. Michael spent 12 months in Vietnam, mostly as a Pointman, with the 11th Infantry/Americal Division '68-'69. His citations include: Silver and Bronze Stars, Purple Heart, and Combat Infantryman's Badge. Michael was a mainstay at the Reunion for countless years, performing and entertaining us all.

In the early eighties, Martin teamed with Tim "Doc" Holiday, a decorated, three-tour Navy Corpsman in Vietnam, and the duo performed all across the country. Several songs from their albums, "Johnny Comes Marchin' Home" and "Time To Lay It Down" became anthems that have helped galvanize the veteran movement. Their musical skills and inspiring leadership made them prominent figures in the cause. Above and beyond the call of music, Martin and Holiday founded THE LAST PATROL and began marching across America to call attention to vet issues. In 1985, they walked 300 miles from Dallas to The Alamo. "Remember The Alamo! And quit telling us to forget about Vietnam!" was the message. The march was so successful, that in 1987 they did a 1600 mile trek from The Alamo to The Wall in DC! There were over 40 other marches, including 900 miles from FL to DC in 1997, when THE LAST PATROL was reinforced by a new generation of vets including many members of Florida Dustoff !! As a matter of fact, Dustoff was kind of there home base during the Reunion just before they left for the march.

Michael passed away December 2, 2014 and it is our understanding that there will be a memorial tribute to Michael in the Reunion Area on Saturday – check the schedule of events for information. We salute you Michael and you surely will be missed !!

Preparations have already been in motion for the Reunion. I am hoping that as many members of Dustoff will be attending as the turnout was good last year. Remember, the By-Laws have been amended so if in the future you would like to run for President or Vice-President, we must have a **copy of your CERTIFIED DD-214** on file **prior to the election** (Make sure it is a copy as it will be retained in our files in case there may be any questions down the road.) Those eligible must have been attached to an Aero-Medical **or** Medical Unit during their service (this includes support) and must have been honorable discharged. In addition, it was voted on last year that **ALL MEMBERS OF DUSTOFF**

who served must provide their **CERTIFIED DD-214**. As of now, Roberta has received only a small handful.

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, etc.) We also made donations this past year to Wreaths Across America and Honor-Release-Return, The Ride Home. This donation helped sponsor a former POW to participate at the POW Recognition Ceremonies in Georgia at Andersonville.

Roberta has signed up Florida Dustoff as a fundraiser for Wreaths Across America. This year's Nation Wide Remembrance Ceremony will take place on **December 12, 2015**. Our Group ID number is: **FL0179**, Location ID is **FLENSE** and of course our group name is Florida Dustoff Association. Anyone can go online to www.wreathscrossamerica.org and locate the sponsorship form to make a donation. You must enter our Group ID and Location ID on the form in order for us to obtain credit for the donation. We are not receiving monies for this, we selected the option for every two wreaths that are purchased under Florida Dustoff's ID, a third wreath will be donated.

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. Many people attending continually make monetary and food donations to keep the organization going. 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 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 25th 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. We also will have our T-Shirts, key chains and other items for sale. I believe Roberta has come up with some nice items that will appeal to everyone!!!

I look forward to seeing you all at the reunion.

DUSTOFF FOREVER
Bob (Doc) Neitzel

FROM THE EDITOR

As for most I am sure it has been a very busy year, and now the reunion is just around the corner. 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 really need people to update their information with me. I recently sent out an e-mail and approximately 15 bounced back to me – bad e-mail addresses.

We will have a quick general membership meeting on Saturday approximately an hour after the end of the massing of the colors. If you plan on attending the reunion this year, please contact Bob Neitzel at (386) 424-1989 or by e-mail (Hdwizrd7@aol.com). This is the e-mail that I sent out recently and I truly was hoping to get people to respond – I had only two!! We have several people, non-members of Dustoff, asking if we have any spare campsites available and as much as I would like to rent empty sites so we do not lose money, I do not wish to give one away only to have a member of dustoff show up expecting a site and we have none available. 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 know of one wet site and four dry sites that have been reserved. It is quite difficult to plan a dinner (as usual, Friday and Saturday nights) without having an idea of a head count. The reunion dates are April 23-26 at Wickham Park. The VVB already has most of the reunion info posted at www.vietnamdallveteransofbrevard.com.

Remember the parks department are enforcing some rules – no more than one motorhome/trailer or tent per site and no more than four adults and two children per site (**remember this if a ranger should come up**

and ask !!!!) This does not mean that people cannot come and go as they please into the site, but this is the maximum amount of people "camping" per site!!

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 19th at Eastern State College Cocoa Campus, Clearlake Road at 10 am (formerly Brevard Community College). Line-up is at 9:00 am and they will leave 10:00 am. Arrive at Wickham Park, Melbourne, About 11:00 am. 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, ask Doc Custer, he has done it for the past few years.

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 (if you received this by e-mail). I look forwarding to seeing all at the Reunion!!!

Roberta Neitzel

Meals for the Reunion: We are keeping the cost the same \$5.00 for Friday Dinner and \$6.00 for Saturday Dinner. I have spoken with Nancy Church and she has offered to help with the meals at the campsite. As it stands now, Friday will be salad, ziti and either garlic bread or rolls and Saturday will be ham, parsley potatoes and a vegetable. As I had done last year, I will make some pasta salad and a macaroni salad and will leave them in the coolers so anyone can help themselves to it as a side for their lunch.

CAMPSITE FEES FOR 2015-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

This may be the last year of these prices as we did have a price increase from Wickham Park for the sites.

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.

We will be presenting colors at the opening ceremonies again and if anyone is interested in participating, please contact Bob Neitzel at hdwizrd7@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, Doc Custer or Bert at the campsite.

Last year at the Reunion we discussed making a memorial for our members that we have lost and I requested you send me photos we I could put it together – I have received none. So I will ask again to please e-mail them to me, or bring them with you to the Reunion. Please, if you bring them to the Reunion make sure it is a copy as I will not be returning it !!

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:

The VA is trying to decrease the amount of time in which they process a claim – they are now using a form called a DBQ form – this is a questionnaire that is to be completed based on the symptoms you are

having. They have changed the process of submitting claims – not been triaging claims in the past, except for recently. They are now looking at the amount of issues of a claim and sorting them to determine which may process quicker and start to research the claim. For example we have presumptives due to agent orange – instead of 18 – 24 months for a claim to be approved it should now take 3-6 months due to the new process and the DBQ form that must be completed. This form may be located at http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/dbq_listbysymptom.asp and then locate your symptoms and follow the instructions, or contact your service officer.

Support Florida's Veterans and Our Mission by Supporting the Walk of Honor

The Florida Veterans Foundation's main mission is to provide [emergency assistance](#) to Florida veterans and their families who are having financial difficulties which cannot be resolved by the veteran or other veteran service organizations. Most of these situations will develop into a catastrophic situation such as homelessness, if the situation is not solved promptly. Many cases that the Foundation handles involves Service Connected Disabled Veterans. Read more about our emergency assistance program go to <http://www.floridaveteransfoundation.org>. After receiving a bona-fide [application for assistance](#) from a veteran, the Foundation responds to the emergency within 24 to 48 hours with a solution as warranted by the facts of the situation. Last year, the Foundation expended well over \$200,000.00 helping Florida's veterans and their families, and assisted over 700 Florida Veterans by providing financial support to those who fit Foundation guidelines, or by providing information on veteran resources such as; available benefits for disability claims, benefits to widows, education resources, housing, etc. Because of the vast amount of services we provide, the Foundation needs your help. You can help support our efforts to Serve, Support and Advocate for our Florida Veterans by [donating](#), [volunteering](#) or by [purchasing a brick](#) to honor a loved one. Please help us make a difference in our Florida heroes' lives.

The Florida Veterans Walk of Honor will accommodate 25,000 engraved bricks. There are presently 1.5 million veterans residing in the State of Florida. Your engraved brick will be placed on a first come, first serve basis. Therefore, the first 25,000 engraved bricks will be the ones placed in the Florida Veterans Walk of Honor at our State Capitol. *On November 12, 2014*, Governor Scott placed the first memorialized engraved brick into the Florida Veterans Walk of Honor. The Veterans Walk of Honor measures 12 feet wide by 500 feet long, and connects both the old and new Capitol buildings, the House and Senate Buildings and the Florida Veterans Memorial. The heart of the Veterans Walk of Honor will consist of engraved bricks which are being offered to veterans, families and friends of veterans. The proceeds from the sale of the engraved bricks will go to the Florida Veterans Foundation, the Direct Support organization to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs to help further the Foundation's mission to Serve, Support and Advocate for our Florida Veterans. To order your brick to go <http://www.floridaveteransfoundation.org>.

The Florida Veterans Foundation is composed of all volunteers, with the exception of one (1) Executive Assistant to the volunteer Chairman. The majority of the Foundation Directors are retired military disabled veterans who volunteer their time to provide aid and assistance to our Florida Veterans who are less fortunate than themselves. Most of our Directors work more than 48 hours per week on the Foundation's mission.

We urge you to help the Foundation get the word out to all of our brave Veterans and military personnel who have, and still are, putting their lives on the line each and every day to protect our citizens. These brave men and women signed a blank check, up to and including their lives. Many Florida veterans that we assist have debilitating injuries, have PTSD or other service related injuries, with some who are having difficulties re-integrating back into society. It is the Foundation's mission

to ensure that none of our Florida Veterans are left behind or forgotten. We need your help.

If our office can answer any questions on the Walk of Honor program, please call (850) 488-4181 or email ridleyr@fdva.state.fl.us

BITS AND PIECES

Chris completed his first deployment in Afghanistan and returned back to Ft Wainright at the end of September. We were fortunate to have him home for 3 weeks at Christmastime and he a Ruari has a wonderful time together. She of course, was all smiles and absolutely thrilled that Daddy was home. We are planning to take her this summer to visit with him in Alaska.

Neal Capersens' son is in the Army as well – aviation as well !! From what we understand, he has been in 8 years, was a Blackhawk crew chief did 2 tours in Korea. He took the fast test got accepted to flight school and did 2 tours in Afghanistan as Apache pilot He recently received orders that his company will be headed to Ft Wainright in October.

Congrats to Elizabeth Brookins! She left her job with the Broward County School System and opened a restaurant at South Comm (if this is the correct way to spell it.) We were hoping Elizabeth and Brett would be able to make the trip to Melbourne this year, but with the new restaurant, I would think the chances of this would be slim.

Congrats to Chris Hamrick and his family as well. Several months ago, he and his family were presented a home from the City of Palm Bay and the Space Coast Paratroopers Association.

Bob, Ruari and I participated in the Veterans Day Parade with the Vietnam Brotherhood representing Dustoff and the Coalition and were amazed at the turnout, not only the participants, but the crowd lining the streets. Ruari handed our candy to the kids along the route with two other girls, and she about ran the entire length of the parade route. When it was done, she asked Chris Bischoff if she could do the parade again – she is looking forward participating in 2015 !!

If you need to express yourself, or have something worth sharing, please e-mail Roberta at Hdwizrd8@aol.com, or call me at 386-424-1989.

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

Robert (Doc) Neitzel	President	Hdwizrd7@aol.com
Ron (Doc) Custer	Vice-President	Custer_ron@yahoo.com
Roberta Voisey-Neitzel	Secretary/Treasurer	Hdwizrd8@aol.com
Roberta Voisey-Neitzel	Newsletter Editor	Hdwizrd8@aol.com
Chris Hamrick	Membership	sgthamrick@hotmail.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

Florida Dustoff Association, Inc.
2304 Woodland Drive
Edgewater, FL 32141

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***