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Dolphin Pride

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Monroe County School District

Saying Prayers and Saving Lives

By: Alexis Bourcier



Al continues to carry his military issue Bible to this day.

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Al Murphy now a resident of Marathon, Florida grew up in New Jersey. He was drafted into the Army during the Korean War. Al said boot camp took place at Ft. Hood, Texas. He said it was miserable and hotter than hell.

After boot camp he trained to be an Army Engineer. They got to build stuff for their unit and blow up enemy installations. Al made corporal while he served in the Korean War. He laughed because he made sev-

enty dollars per month. Even though he was an engineer they did see combat. Al did lose friends in Korea but did not want to talk about it.

During his tour of duty Al was awarded two Battle Stars for his bravery. Al's favorite story involves him rescuing a pilot. While in country they watched a U.S plane go down and they followed it. Al was able to pull the pilot out to safety.

Al wrote numerous letters to his family and friends. These letters helped keep him sane and in touch with what he was missing at home.

He still carries the bible that he used in Korea. Al feels this was his good luck charm so he has kept it ever since. Al spends much time at the VFW in Marathon. He enjoys spending time with other veterans because he feels they share a bond that no one else can understand.



This is the actual plane that Al Murphy watched crash and rescued the pilot to safety.

World War II: “Red” Manges Navy Pilot/Navigator By: Steven Nelson



Milton “Red” Manges

In honor of Veterans Day I interviewed veteran Milton Manges at an EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) meeting at Marathon Airport. Mr. Manges, also known as “Red” among his fellow EAA friends, was born on November 08, 1926, and lived in Gainesville, Georgia before he enlisted. He enlisted in the Navy in 1943, and served during WWII in the Navy Air Corps as Combat Air Crewman Second Class. When I asked why he had joined the Navy Air Corps, he simply said, “The war was on, and like all the other young people back then you didn’t want to be left behind.” When I asked him why he picked the service branch he joined, he said, “I had experience with the Army, and I went to a military academy, so I knew that I wanted to be in the Navy.” He vaguely remembers his

first days in service, which was about 60 some years ago. Although he doesn’t remember his instructors, he said that “Boot camp was easy,” since he went through a lot of training in military school.

After his basic training Mr. Manges flew all over the Pacific, including to the Solomon Islands, Marianas, Okinawa, Iwo Jima, and China. During his 18-month tour of duty, his main job was as radio navigator in planes like the Martin PBM-3 Mariner Sea-plane, which had eight .50 caliber machineguns and 907 kg of bombs. His jobs while on duty involved some rescue missions and bombing missions over parts of the Philippines. He experienced combat with his unit in Okinawa, Iwo Jima, Saipan, and Tenyam. He also spent six months in China, where he and

his squadron went into two groups to locate where the planes were, since it was hard to find them back then. One memorable and humorous experience during his time in service was when they had to pick up a “deathly ill seaman,” and bring him back to a hospital in Okinawa. He said, “They located the convoy, the seas weren’t too bad, even though the seas were about 3 to 4 feet tall and a little landing craft comes from one of the boats, and after much signaling, yelling and screaming, the landing craft came close that a young fella came to the railing of the boat and hopped on. They asked ‘Where’s this guy that’s supposed to be ill?’ and the guy answered ‘It’s

me,’ and it turns out that the guy only had stomach worms.” Mr. Manges also remembered how the Chinese would float behind a log up to the planes to try to blow them up, so they never let a log come toward the planes.

To keep in touch with his family during duty on the ships, he used v-mail, which was a thin half page of paper that was brought back to the states. The food that the cooks made on the ships was apparently really good quality food, and he said “If you had good cooks, you got good food.” When Mr. Manges wasn’t on the ship, he was flying 10-12 hour patrols, which sometimes

became pretty stressful. To keep the stress from getting to him, he entertained himself with card playing of the gambling and non-gambling type, and games like poker or shooting dice. One game that he played for almost two years was pinochle, he says that “he lost about a quarter of a million dollars playing that game.” Some of the other pastimes were movies every now and then, and “sleeping whenever we could.”

When he was on leave he said that “mostly what they did was party, just like you do today.” During his time off, he visited northern China, sometimes flying and climbing over the Great Wall, and other sightsee-



PBM-3 Mariner Sea Plane

ing exhibitions. After his service ended and he was about to be discharged, he and his crew members went in the wrong direction due to their young navigator and ended up headed towards Mexico. After being discharged after the war, he sold radios for Vims Electronics. After this, he went to work with his father-in-law in a war plant. Mr. Manges and his wife later started a metal manufacturing business, and retired in 1971. He hasn’t flown a plane for about 35 years. Mr. Manges is pro-military and says that he “doesn’t regret going into the military. The service and experiences stay with you unconsciously-it’s not a conscious

thing.” From when he was 13 in military school until he was discharged after the war, he had lots of interesting experiences. He had close relationships with his crewmembers and stayed in contact with 3 really close friends, mostly until they passed away. Although he wasn’t awarded any individual medals, his squadron was awarded a unit commendation.

When Mr. Manges wasn’t on the ship, he was flying 10-12 hour patrols, which sometimes became pretty stressful.



Al Murphy gave us this photo of a military payment certificate that could be used to purchase items when stationed overseas.

Dogs of War by: Patrick Ryan

Being in the military takes a lot of skill and bravery, and people think that the military is just for humans. There are many things about the military that people don't know. An interesting fact is that dogs serve in the military. Believe it or not dogs are a very big part of the military.

They are companions at home, but they are a soldier's companion at war. Families even donate their dogs to the Military Working Dog Foundation, which still exists today. It sounds crazy but some dogs are better at dealing with war than most soldiers. There are different duties in which dogs serve. There are Sentry Dogs, which work on a short leash and are

taught to give a warning if there is an intruder on base by growling, alerting or barking. Scout or Patrol Dogs, which are trained to work in silence in order to aid in the detection of snipers, ambushes and other enemy forces. There are messenger dogs, which basically travel silently and they are trained to take advantage of their natural cover. Lastly there are Mine Dogs, or "M-Dogs". M-Dogs are probably the most interesting dogs and most well trained. These dogs are trained to find trip wires, booby traps, metallic and non-metallic mines.

Dogs are not only the friendly pets that you have at home to lay around with, but

they play a major role in the war effort, without dogs of war, casualties would be much greater in all branches of the military.

War dogs prevented over 10,000 casualties in Vietnam alone. Unfortunately these heroes were left behind to lord knows what fate. They were finally honored on February 21, 1999 and they were given a memorial quoted America's Forgotten Heroes. Honor them by sharing this story with others and researching them on the internet. Go to www.war-dogs.com



War Dogs Memorial





John Smith ready for action



C-130 Hercules transports the soldiers to and from Iraq

An Ordinary Name for an American Hero

By: Amanda Cohen

Another experience was when they went on Aerosol Missions. They would get in helicopters and raid towns.

John Smith may sound like an ordinary person but he is nothing of the sort. He joined the Army in 2001 after the 9/11 incident. He served in Iraq and was able to share lots of good information in his interview. He is presently out of the army and is attending college under the G.I. Bill.

When John enlisted he was living in Brewton, Alabama. He chose the army because his great-grandfather and his great uncle were both infantry in the Army. He went to boot camp for four months and it was physically and mentally tough. He explained that his first days in the service were confusing. Everything seemed so surreal. During his time at boot camp, John had many instructors but one that he still remembers. His name was Jackson and John explained that he was very motivational. Although boot camp was very tough he sucked it up and kept pushing himself.

John first arrived in Iraq on a C-130 and they got off at night and had to carry their gear over two miles. He said it was a horrible, weird, but an exciting experience. His assignment was to be a rifleman and he did see combat. Besides going to Iraq he went to Hawaii, Quan, and NTC, California.

A couple of his most

memorable experiences were when they were hit with an IED on October 10, 2006 during the middle of the night. One of his friends got messed up really bad. Another experience was when they went on Aerosol Missions. They would get in helicopters and raid towns. John got many metals but he claimed nothing that was too important. One metal he got was Combat Infantry and he got it for seeing combat.

To keep in touch with family he was allowed to use the phone or internet but that wasn't often. The food was horrible, he explained, they had to eat MRE's. They had plenty of supplies. John said that he always felt under pressure and stress. He was constantly in a war zone and it gets to you. He got no sleep, barely could eat, and was constantly paranoid. You get numb and every day there just drags on.

They entertained themselves by reading, playing cards, rolling dice, playing dominoes, and working out. There wasn't much to do on his base and he said it was pretty crappy. Whenever he went on leave he would go home and it only would last about two weeks. He did travel while he was in the army. Iraq is unusual and strange; you see a lot of stupid, weird stuff. There wasn't a

lot of pranks while he was there... Unless someone got hold of a taser and they would shock people!

There was much respect for everyone in his base. "It doesn't matter who they are, whether you like them or hate them. Once the uniform goes on you have to protect each other and have great respect." John explained. He was in Hawaii the day his services ended. After he got home he could barely sleep. It was weird being home he said. A year later, he went to college and his education is supported by the G.I. Bill. He is currently a full time college student.

John made many close friendships while in Iraq and has kept most of them. He still keeps in touch regularly. The whole experience of being in the army has influenced how he thinks of the military and war. The service and experiences affected his life greatly. It changed it a lot. John is still trying to put everything together. Nothing is the same.



Smith was awarded the Combat Infantry Medal

Interview with US Navy Veteran William D. Castillo

By Micaela Maeder

Everybody has a story to be told; but, not all have an audience. This Veterans Day it was my assignment to listen to a veteran tell his story. I chose to interview my Grandfather, William Castillo, a former US Naval petty officer 3rd class. Born on October 20, 1941, he enlisted to serve his country immediately after high school.

While at boot camp in the Great Lakes, MI, Castillo suffered from a case of homesickness. This was the first time that he was away, for an extended period of time, from his home in Philadelphia, PA. During my Grandfather's four years of service, he was stationed in several locations. After boot camp, he was ordered to attend communications technician's school in Vero Beach, FL where he learned Morse code. After completion of his technical training, he was then required to attend Naval Intelligence School in Washington, D.C. for six months. While there, he received a concentrated, intensive course in the Russian language: how to speak, read, and write it. The training was so complete and comprehensive that even today he can converse in fluent Russian. To finalize his specialized training, he was assigned to an Air Force base where to learn voice intercept. After completion of his training, he was deployed to a US Air Force Base in Southern Turkey with a



specialized Navy detachment.

During this time, my Grandfather and his Naval team had a specific mission. Their assignment was to monitor U2 aircraft, on their top secret flights. Later, he was re-deployed, with the same assignment, onboard an aircraft carrier in the US 6th Fleet, the USS Saratoga. My Grandfather was later transferred to another aircraft carrier, the USS Franklin D. Roosevelt. While deployed, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. This period of time was one of uncertainty and suspicion; and, it was critical period during his deployment. His team was informed that President Kennedy's

assassination may have been a Russian conspiracy, serving as a prelude to an attack on the United States. On June 13, 1964, William Castillo was discharged from the Navy in Brooklyn, NY.

While carefully listening to my Grandfather's account of his four years of service, I wanted to know more: what were his instructors like; how was the food; was it difficult to keep in touch with loved ones? Well, the answers to these questions were quite interesting. He informed me that his instructor was a 1st class Bosons Mate, who was actually very patient and good to him and his shipmates. He explained to me his instructor would call out "The smoking lamp is lit" which meant, if you would care to smoke, you would be permitted to do so. Well, my Grandfather didn't smoke at first; but, after the first day, he bought a pack of cigarettes so he could smoke with his buddies in their "berthing area". This was their daily social event.

As for the food, he did not eat in the Turkish restaurants very often because of sanitary concerns regarding food preparation; however, there was a non-commissioned officers club in Istanbul that he and his buddies would attend to have a taste of home in the form of a hamburger or hot dog. A hamburger, however, could only fill his stomach; but, not his need to communicate with his family back home. He wrote letters and made phone calls to his family; however, making an international phone call in the 1960's was not as simple as it is today. It was a difficult procedure that required connecting with several operators until the connection could be made.

After my initial questions were answered, others were raised. I was interested to learn of the friendships forged while he was in the Navy. "Being around the same people [nearly] 24/7, of course, you're going to create friendships with those people. Though, it's very difficult to maintain these relationships once you all go off in different directions." My Grandfather told me of one friend, a former sea mate and Russian linguist, who he still keeps in touch with - Bill Johnson. Johnson eventually settled in Germany; and, he became a teacher. My Grandfather met him while they were both radio DJs at the radio station on the Naval base in Turkey. During their initial introduction, Bill asked my Grandfather

'if he had any sisters'. It was a strange and probing question. When my Grandfather replied 'yes', he then asked what they wanted for Christmas when they were younger. My Grandfather replied "...they wanted a doll and a..." "a coach!" Right then, a friendship was made. At that point, Bill realized that my Grandfather was from Philly because he said 'coach', not stroller or buggy. They would always recount that story of how they first met.

After the Navy, my Grandfather was contacted by the CIA requesting that he interview with them in downtown Philadelphia location. He took the meeting and was offered a position; however, because he would be required to serve at an undisclosed overseas location for two more years,



he declined the offer because he committed to marry his girlfriend of five years, my Nana. On September 11, 1965, they were married.

After working for two years at Honeywell, he moved on to work for Pan American (Pan AM) Airlines in reservations and sales. At that time, Pan Am was the largest international airline. In 1991, Pan Am ended its business operations ending my Grandfather's 17 years of employment. He went on to work for various other airlines, eventually retiring in 2006.

Now, my Grandfather is a member of the American Legion Honor Guard where he was recently elected as the finance officer of his Post. As a member of the American Legion Honor Guard, he attends a number of patriotic activities and events.

At the conclusion of the interview, I asked if being in the military changed the way he thought. "It didn't change the way I think; but, the military gave me a clear understanding of how and why things happen. My experience gave me an insight that civilians can't always appreciate or understand." Throughout this interview, I saw my Grandfather as someone other than just my Grandfather. I

saw a boy who entered his service not knowing what to expect or what was expected of him; however, he left the Navy as a man with skills, discipline and a satisfaction of having served his country



Navy Intelligence Rating Badge



Wounded Warrior Project

By: Steven O'Toole

The Wounded Warrior Project is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to "Honor and empower wounded warriors". The Wounded Warrior Project was founded in 2002 in Roanoke, Virginia by John Melia; John Melia himself was wounded in a helicopter crash in Somalia in 1992. Besides John, the original founders of the WWP include Jim Melia (John's brother), John F. Melia (John's father), Al Giordano and Steven Nardizzi.

Before March 1, 2005 the WWP was a subsidiary of the United Spinal Association of New York. While working as a subsidiary the WWP started to deliver backpacks full of supplies to the bedsides of wounded Soldiers. In July 2006 the headquarters of the WWP was moved to Jacksonville FL. With the headquarters move and the ever growing WWP the members list increased The Board of directors including Dawn Halfaker as President. Anthony J. Principi as Vice President. Anthony Odierno as Secretary. Charles Abell is a member. Charles Battaglia, is a member. Roger C.

Campbell is Member as well as many others.

Not only did the Board of directors grow but the Executive Staff also grew in size with Steven Nardizzi, Esq., Executive Director. Albion Giordano, Deputy Executive Director. Ronald W. Burgess, Chief Financial Officer. Jeremy Chwat, Chief Program Officer. Adam Silva, Chief Development Officer. John Hamre, Executive Vice President, Direct Response. Ayla Hay, Executive Vice President, Communications. Christine Hill, Executive Vice President, Government Affairs. John Molino, Executive Vice President, Economic Empowerment. Bruce G. Nitsche, Executive Vice President, Special Projects. Ryan Pavlu, Executive Vice President, Warrior Engagement. John Roberts, Executive Vice President, Mental Health and Warrior Engagement. Richard Stieglitz, Executive Vice President, Physical Health & Wellness. Jonathan Sullivan, Executive Vice President, Development.

The WWP being a non-

profit organization as it is had a Rough start. It's expenses for 2008 totaled the mind boggling amount of \$16,441,204 dollars. Public Awareness And Education alone cost the WWP \$5,058,727 dollars. The TRACK program (Training Rehabilitation and Advocacy Center) and Policy & Government Affairs Program also cost the WWP a large sum of \$3,652,425 dollars.

The WWP is a great organization that helps injured veterans all over the country with hospital expenses and gets them off their feet. Every member of the WWP deserves to be congratulated for their help and time that they donate for no monetary gain whatsoever. The citizens of Marathon are especially lucky to have a WWP center in the American Legion to help out all of the local veterans all around the Florida Keys and cherish their great contribution to the community and the country.

'Bulldozer Oser' Takes On Vietnam

By: Patrick Ryan

Vietnam seems like ages ago but for Mr. Oser it's like it happened yesterday. What good can be said for the war is that the G.I. Bill paid for his college degree. More importantly it gave Dave Oser a greater respect for life. He appreciates living in a free nation and never takes it for granted. So let's go back in time to see the whole picture.....

Dave was drafted into the Army and he remembers his miserable boot camp in Ft. Knox, Kentucky. It was January 7, 1969 and it was 28 degrees and wet. He had to get used to all the orders but it was easier just to do what you were told. Defiance came back at you as a swift kick in the butt. Dave Oser was apart of the Vietnam war in Quang Tre, Vietnam, which was south of the Demilitarized Zone. While arriving to Quang Tre, Oser flew from

Japan and all he remembers seeing was jungle and bomb craters. The site wasn't very pretty all Oser can recall. He was assigned and sent to guard supply division. Which his division really didn't see much combat but he had some big jobs he had to do. "Letters were the only way to stay in touch with family" Oser said, "sometimes you wouldn't even get the letters, you were lucky to be able to keep in touch". One of the worst things about the war to Oser was the food. Oser said "the roast-beef tasted like water buffalo, instant mashed potatoes, and Kool-Aid dissolved gelatin that was terrible". Overall the war for Dave Oser was boring even on his off time. There was nothing to entertain the troops. The day that Oser left was what he de-

scribed as the best day of his life. It was November 1971, the day he got out he was bribed to re-enlist but Oser turned the bribe down. After the war Oser went back to school and got his Associates Degree in Computer Science under the G.I. Bill. Today Dave Oser works at Marathon High School and is appreciated for the service spent in Vietnam.



Oser loves a hot cup of tea.

Hunter Rogers, Korean War Veteran

By: Steven O'Toole

Hunter Rogers is a retired veteran of the Korean War who was in service during the "brown shoe days". He was a specialist third class which is on par with a corporal. During his time in the army he received training as a communications expert in New Jersey. He also Volunteer drafted so he would only have to serve two years.

Before joining the army Hunter was living in Miami. At the time he was attending college and wanted to "get this draft thing over with" so he enlisted. His most memorable experience when he first joined was the fact that they cut his hair. He remembers boot camp as being very difficult, his boot camp was led by the one-hundred and first airborne division in Hells Hole South Carolina. The drill sergeant he remembers the best was a man by the name of Killberry who was so tough that no matter what you did it was always wrong. He recalls the only way to get through it was to just follow orders.

Hunter remembers being on board the USS Marine Phoenix which he boarded in San Francisco. Hunter and the other passengers were on the ship for thirty-five days, during the majority of which you could walk on the walls of the ship

because of the massive storm rocking the boat. Because of the rocking many of the passengers not including himself got sick and the upper deck was completely covered in vomit.

Upon reaching Korea, Hunter became a teletype operator. Some of his most memorable experiences included only being able to see a fourth of some buildings because the snow was so high as well as the tons of bomb holes all over the place. He kept in touch with his family through letters but had the opportunity to use the phone twice which he was grateful for. The food at his camp was good in comparison to other camps as he was stationed in an officer camp.

In Korea the entertainment was rather peculiar. While some soldiers did play cards many went to an NCO club where they could request music to be played by the locals. The first time he heard Elvis Presley was on a tiny radio at the base. His main trips were to places in Japan such as Tokyo and other small cities. Some of the funnier things that happened were that the soldiers would throw a few firecrackers in local businesses and then be greeted by angry shop owners. Some of the pranks that occurred were the putting of raw eggs in each other's shoes and

pouring a bottle of ammonia in the showers.

Hunter's officers were just like any group of people some were great and passionate about what they did while others were just there because they had to be.

Although he regretfully did not keep a journal he did take many pictures during his service. The last day he served was a bitter sweet moment because he was allowed to go home but he also had to leave a lot of friends behind. Upon returning home Hunter went back to finish his college career at Florida State University for his remaining two years, his education was unfortunately not supported by the G.I Bill. Though he did make many close relationships he did not physically see many members of his service because of the fact that south Florida is out of the way.

After being back and out of service for a while Hunter became a firefighter. His service also made him strongly support the military and the amount of money spent on it as the training was extremely helpful. A few values he found that he took away from the army were good order following and leadership skills. He strongly recommends army service for everyone.



Hunter Rogers and friend



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Army Communications Specialist Rating Badge



USS Marine Phoenix Transport Ship

The Martin PBM-3 Mariner By: Steven Nelson

There are many weapons of war that were used during World War II. One aircraft used quite often were the Martin PBM-3 Mariners, which were flying boats used to transport injured soldiers and do particular bombing runs, especially over the pacific. Mass production started in 1942 with the PBM-3 model after additions from the earlier models, PBM-1's and 2's. The difference between the PBM-1 and 2 was that it had better range, protective armament, more striking power and new fixed floats,

instead of the retractable ones in the PBM-1. Also it had a lengthened engine nacelle (which is a cover housing that holds engines, fuel, or equipment) that was added to allow for a greater external ordnance load to be carried.

This boat/plane had two 1700hp Wright R-2600-12 Cyclones and was made to for long range operations or patrols. A crew of 7 to 9 men could be accommodated and the plane was used by both the American and the British forces. It had a maximum

speed of 314km/h at sea level and 319km/h at 3960m, and it could climb to 3000m in 22.2 minutes. To make things more interesting its armament had eight .50 machineguns (which are extremely powerful), and 907 kg of bombs. This plane/boat was one of the key elements to helping with casualties and bombing runs throughout WWII. Today they are still being used recreationally by various people throughout the world.



PBM Mariner 1



PBM Mariner 2



PBM Mariner 3

10 Reasons to Join the Army

By: Ryan Wohlers

10 Pro's for Joining the Army

- 1, Job Security. When you join the Army you are put in a certain job. If you tested well you are put into the job you wanted according to availability. Following basic training you continue on to Advanced Individual Training (AIT). Upon completion of these two courses you become qualified for that job you were given. The job will be yours, there will be no lay-offs.
- 2, Income annually adjusted for inflation. Based on inflation we get a pay raise every year.
3. Dependable Retirement Benefits. It's not a question mark. but you must serve 20 years to get a pension.
- 4, Learn and train in new skills. The Army prides on the constant and consistent learning of its soldiers. The Army encour-

- ages soldiers to always keep learning.
- 5, Stay in shape and stay healthy... and get paid doing it! It's funny in the army, but a reality also, that they get paid for doing something we would do habitually even if we weren't in the Army.
6. Gain lasting friendship bonds. The Army is its own community and as a community it has its own experiences. It's a great thing to know when you can count on a buddy with your life.
- 7, Learn more about yourself. With the extreme training environments the Army puts you through. You tend to learn a lot more about yourself than you would working at your local movie store or internship etc. The Army places its soldiers through extreme training so that the soldier will be ready for anything and thus more likely to come

- home unscathed.
8. Skip out on the Routine Life. Army Life is definitely different. Training is constantly changing, something different always needs to be done or learned. It's great for people who don't like to stand idle.
9. Personal Benefits. As a soldier you get full medical benefits which is so costly today in the private sector. The Army also offers SGLI which is the best life insurance policy on the planet. You can also receive extremely low interest home and auto loans.
10. Educational benefits. The Army provides the GI Bill that pays for your college while you are serving or when you get out.

