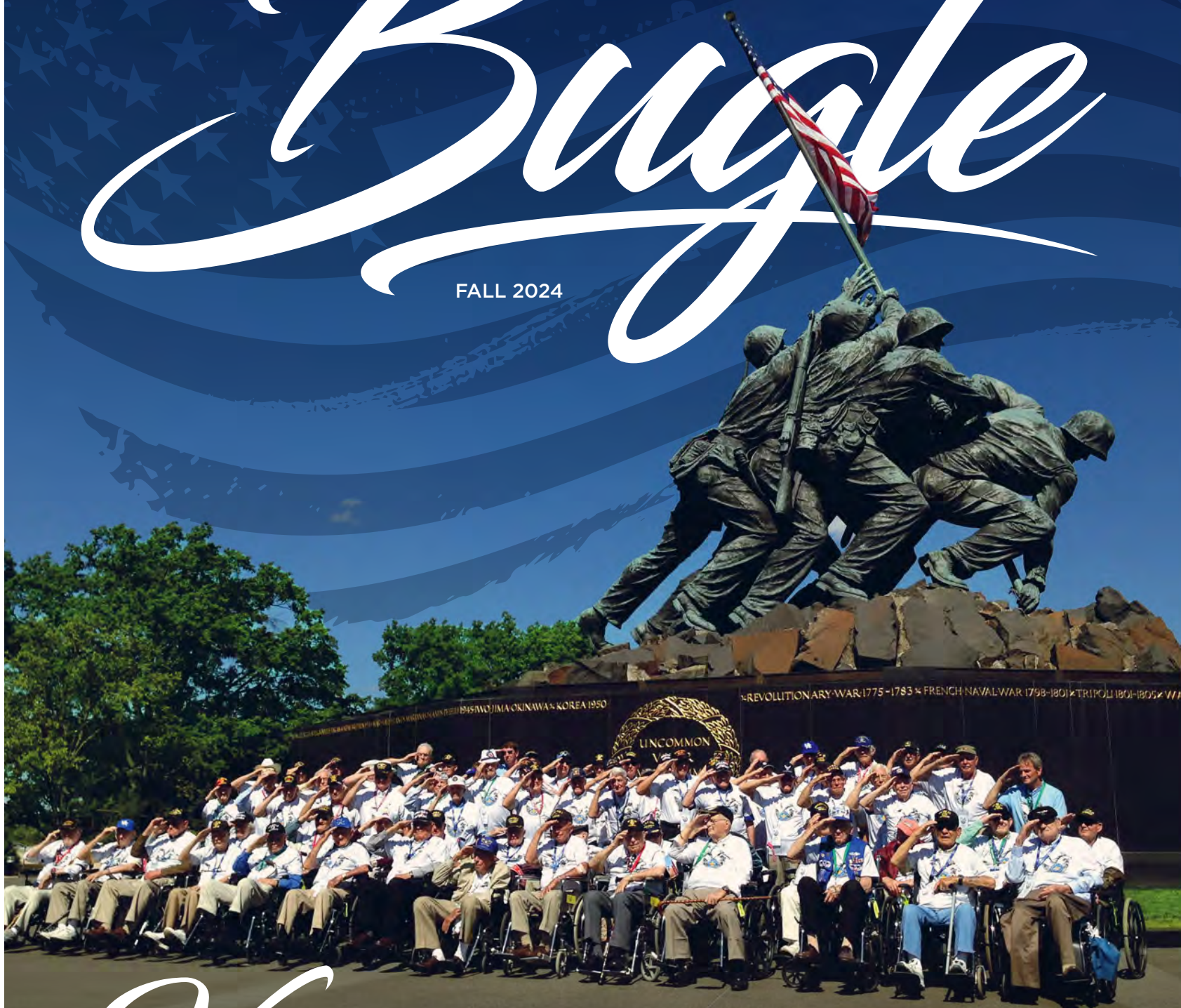


Bugle

FALL 2024



Veterans
OF THE HONORABLE ORDER



A PUBLICATION OF
The Honorable Order of
**Kentucky
Colonels®**



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For more than 80 years, Ft. Knox has held a special place with the Honorable Order. The world-famous military base is a deep vein in the history of the Kentucky Colonels.

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Since beginning as a community grassroots partnership more than 20 years ago, USA Cares has become a national organization providing service and aid to active military personnel, veterans, and their families.

ON THE COVER:

A group of veterans enjoying a Kentucky Colonels-sponsored Honor Flight.



The Ralston Building
943 South First Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40203
502-266-6114
KyColonels.org

From the Commanding General

Thank You, Veterans.

As we, as a country and as individuals, prepare for Veterans Day, we remember and honor the heroes who deserve our gratitude and respect for the sacrifices they made to make our world a better place.

In this issue of *Bugle*, we tell the story of Kentucky Colonels who are military veterans — from World War II, Vietnam, and Korea, and the Coast Guard, Navy, Army, and Marines.

HOKC has a long history of supporting the military. In the early 1940s, Kentucky Colonels adopted Fort Knox as a wartime project, and that support continues today. USA Cares, which provides military veterans, service members, and their families with financial assistance and post-service skills training, has been the recipient of Good Works Program grants.

In his commemoration speech on the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, President George Bush said, “You have shielded your fellow citizens from danger. You have defended the beliefs of your country and advanced the rights of the downtrodden. You have been the face of hope and mercy in dark places and a force for good in the world.”

As Kentucky Colonels, many of you are veterans, and many of you are following the example of our veterans. You are a force for good in the world — a face of hope. As we honor our veterans and enter this season of Thanksgiving, the HOKC board of trustees and staff are grateful for you and your good works. Together, we are making Kentucky a better place.

Cordially,

Gary W Boschert

Gary Boschert
Commanding General
HOKC 



Golden Ties of **FORT KNOX AND KENTUCKY COLONELS**

Written by Colonel
Sherry Crose,
Executive Director

With the outbreak of World War II in Europe, the United States Army prepared with the October 1940 creation of the Armored Force School and Armored Force Replacement Center, headquartered at Fort Knox and established to train soldiers in armor tactics, tank gunnery communications, and maintenance. Selective Service had been implemented, and thousands of citizen soldiers were ordered to Fort Knox. From 1941 to 1942, the base purchased additional land in Hardin, Meade, and Bullitt counties and constructed additional facilities needed for wartime expansion to support the influx of soldiers.

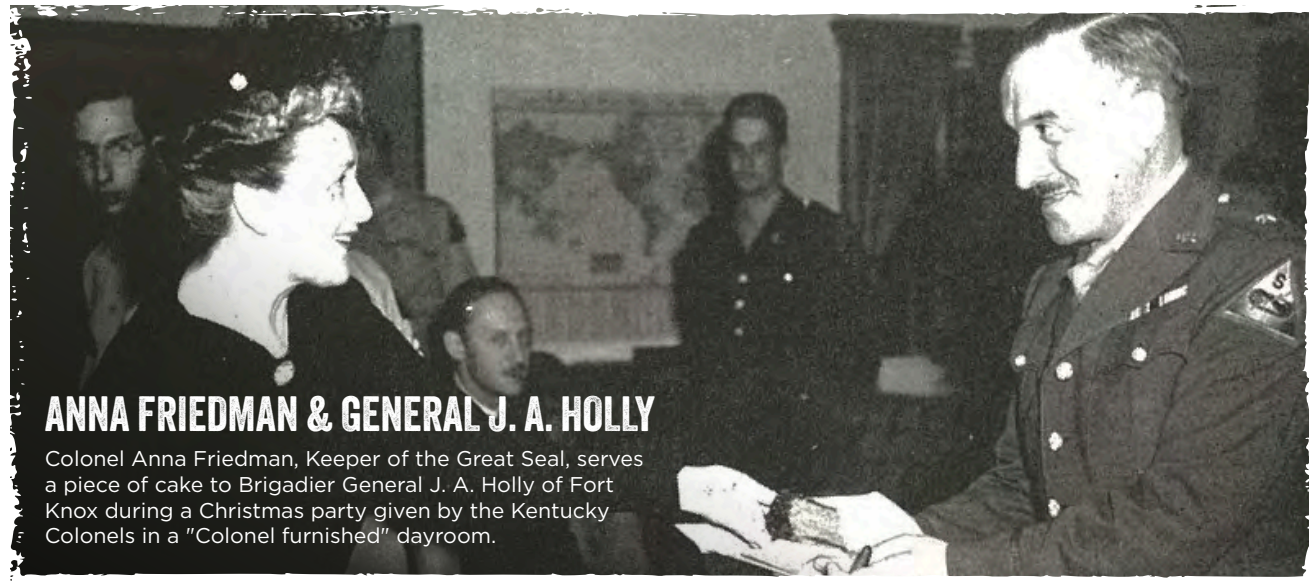
The United States was thrown into World War II on December 7, 1941, and, the next day, the Armored Force experienced its first battle fatality, PFC Robert H. Brooks, a Kentucky native and African American serving in the 192nd Tank Battalion.

On the morning of December 27, 1941, twenty days after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, a U.S. Army truck guarded by troops of the 13th Armored Division and Secret Service agents arrived at the U.S. Mint's gold bullion depository at Fort Knox. The truck carried padlocked containers, which were carried to an underground vault housed beneath a steel and concrete structure built to be invulnerable to bombing attacks.

The cargo was a collection of historical documents, some original,

including the Lincoln Cathedral copy of Magna Carta from 1215; the U.S. Library of Congress' Saint Blasius-Saint Paul copy of the Gutenberg Bible, circa 1455; engrossed originals of the Declaration of Independence, 1776, and the U.S. Constitution, 1787; the original Articles of Confederation, 1777; the first and second autographed drafts of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, 1863; and the autographed copy of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, 1865. The documents were safely stored at Fort Knox until the autumn of 1944.

In the spring and summer of 1942, an all-wood mock-up of the well deck of a Landing Ship Tank (LST) was duplicated to allow naval architects to track airflow and test ventilation systems capable of removing poisonous gases created



ANNA FRIEDMAN & GENERAL J. A. HOLLY

Colonel Anna Friedman, Keeper of the Great Seal, serves a piece of cake to Brigadier General J. A. Holly of Fort Knox during a Christmas party given by the Kentucky Colonels in a "Colonel furnished" dayroom.





by running tanks and vehicles enclosed in the well deck. After a solution was identified, contractors constructed over 1,000 actual LSTs.

Numerous advancements were made in the development of tanks, equipment, and training procedures at Fort Knox. Soldiers were instructed in various arms, big tank guns, tank driving and maintenance, and chemical warfare. These soldiers trained on "Misery," "Agony," and "Heartbreak" hills

before graduating and being sent to divisions, additional schooling, or straight into the various theaters of war. The Army Medical Research Laboratory had also been established, in part, to study the physical and mental stresses placed upon soldiers in the performance of military tasks.

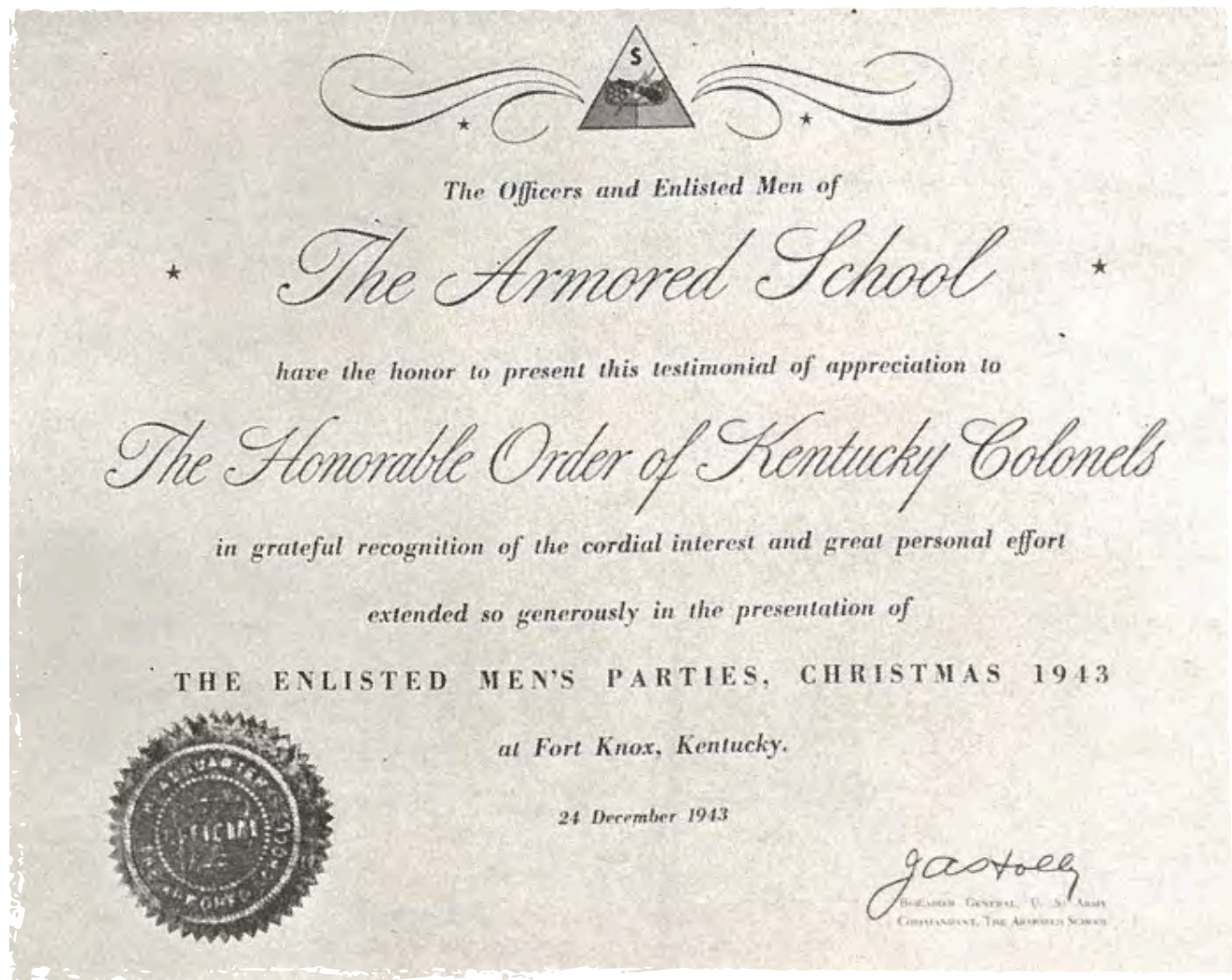
Fort Knox was also home to some of the Tuskegee Airmen. The men of the 477th Bombardment Group moved to Godman Army Airfield at

Fort Knox from Selfridge Airfield near Detroit, where they had experienced racial discrimination. They became the last training class of Tuskegee Airmen to learn how to fly the B-25 Mitchell bomber.

As the country prepared for war in the early 1940s, Colonel Anna Friedman, known as the Keeper of the Great Seal, used funds donated by "honorary Kentuckians" to support the soldiers at Fort Knox. Especially during the years between 1942 and 1945, the Kentucky Colonels "adopted" Fort Knox as a wartime project, spending over \$100,000 and setting up 35 recreation halls. One Kentucky Colonel at the time was Fort Knox's own General Jacob L. Devers, one of the leaders of the invasion in southern France and later deputy commander of the US forces in Europe.

Although the Kentucky Colonels "adopted" Fort Knox as a wartime project, the end of the war did not end the Colonels' interest in it. After the end of the war, J. Fred Miles, Commanding General of HOKC, and Colonel Anna persuaded the Colonels to continue their project. They held parties and provided entertainment and gifts at Christmas, Easter, and other times throughout the year as a morale





booster for the service members at Fort Knox.

Kentucky Colonels filled kits with candy, toiletry articles, and Raleigh cigarettes donated by Brown Williamson Tobacco company. They overflowed the ping pong and pool tables in the large recreation rooms where the Kentucky Colonels were giving Christmas parties. Colonel Harry Weisbaum, the manufacturer of Beau Brummell ties, donated thousands of dollars worth of prizes

such as scarves, playing cards, cosmetics, and books for the parties where bingo was a popular game. For several years, Colonels provided trees, shrubbery, and flowers for the spring planting program, including a row of dogwoods that still exists today near the former location of the Armored School.

The Colonels were especially attentive to the Armored School Women's Air Corp Detachment, completely furnishing their day

room from linoleum to wallpaper and curtains. Each year, the Colonels hosted a lawn party and barbecue at The Forest, Colonel Anna's home in Anchorage, Kentucky, the national headquarters of the Order.

The Kentucky Colonels have continued their support of Fort Knox with their most recent grant for the General George Patton Museum of Leadership. 🇺🇸

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them."

— John F. Kennedy



Thank You for Your Service.

*On the ground, in the air, and on the seas,
Kentucky Colonels have proudly served our
country for decades. In the following pages, we
introduce and highlight just a few of these heroes.
To these and to all veterans, we salute you!*

Written by Colonel Leslie Watkins,
Director of Major Gifts



COLONEL MARJ GRAVES ARMY COMBAT NURSE VIETNAM

Marj Graves joined the Army Nurse Corps in 1967 during her final year of nursing school. Commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, she dedicated herself fully to the care and support of wounded soldiers. She attended basic training in San Antonio, Texas, for doctors and nurses entering active duty, then served as a head nurse on male orthopedic wards at Darnall Army Hospital, Fort Hood, Texas, and at Ireland Army Hospital, Fort Knox, Kentucky. While assigned to work with orthopedic patients, Marj witnessed the effects of war firsthand, treating those returning from Vietnam with extensive injuries.

Following her promotion to Captain, Marj volunteered for Vietnam in 1971 with full knowledge of the challenges and hardships she would endure. Although her family was surprised and shocked by her decision, she envisioned herself as a Florence Nightingale figure, thinking she could make a difference in the war. In Vietnam, she continued to serve as a head orthopedic nurse with the 24th Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh, where she worked twelve-hour days with only a half-day off each week. Marj appreciated the sense of camaraderie cultivated between the doctors and nurses, forming a close bond with those with whom she worked. Her unrelenting efforts were recognized with her selection as the nurse for a two-person medical team to accompany both the



Bob Hope Christmas Tour in 1971 and the Sammy Davis, Jr. USO Show in 1972.

Marj had a difficult time processing the violence and destruction around her. One experience in particular, on May 10, 1972, remains etched in her mind. Two weeks before she was scheduled to return to the United States, a Chinook helicopter carrying soldiers to an in-country “R & R” crashed outside her hospital. There were no survivors. As a head nurse, she was part of the team assigned to identify the remains of the 34 on board, most under the age of 25, who had lost their lives. She remembers, “I was part of the team that had to sift through charred, dismembered body parts to try to find wedding rings, dog tags, anything we could do to try to identify who these soldiers were.”

After a return assignment in the United States at Madigan General Hospital in Tacoma, Washington, she resigned her commission to marry her husband, Bob. They have been married for almost 52 years, have two married daughters, and have five grandchildren. They reside in Louisville, Kentucky.

When Marj returned home, she did as many weary soldiers did, buried her traumatic experiences. Although trained as a hospital nurse, she would never again work in a hospital.

Instead, Marj continued her nursing career in occupational health. She would never talk of the memory of the Chinook crash, not even with her husband, a fellow Vietnam veteran.

The stigma of being a Vietnam veteran and the American public opinion shifting away from support of the nation’s involvement made her even more reluctant to reveal the memories of that day that continued to haunt her. Then, in the late 1990s, a project at work triggered flashbacks to that horrific scene. Marj spiraled into a deep depression.

Marj said she began to contemplate ways she could end her life but hid it well, never telling her husband or anyone about the depth of her inner turmoil. A few days later, she took eighteen sleeping pills while on the top floor of the parking garage of what was then Suburban Hospital in Louisville. She then realized she wanted to live and quickly ran into the hospital for help. Marj went through counseling at a center run by the Department of Veterans Affairs with a two-tour Vietnam veteran as her counselor and said being able to talk to someone who could relate to her experiences made all the difference in her recovery. Using the same tenacity that helped her survive Vietnam, Marj fought and successfully won the battle with her haunting memories. She now shares

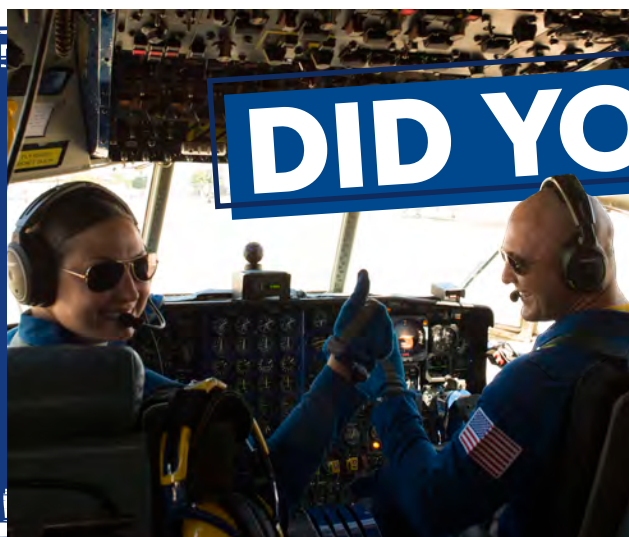
her experiences and is an advocate for soldiers and veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and speaks regularly to groups about her time in Vietnam and the effects of PTSD. “Once I started speaking and I opened up, my life has never been the same.”

Marj was commissioned a Kentucky Colonel in 1989 by Governor Wallace G. Wilkinson. She has also been featured in Diane Aprile’s book, *The Things We Don’t Forget*, in Heather Marie Stur’s book, *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam Era*, and in the KET documentary, *Kentucky Veterans of the Vietnam War: In Their Own Words*. She was selected as Kentucky’s Vietnam Veteran for *USA Today*’s 2012 Veterans Day issue, has been featured in numerous articles in *The Courier-Journal*, and is a recipient of the Daughters of the American Revolution Distinguished Citizen Medal. She has also been inducted into both the Kentucky Veterans Hall of Fame and the Fern Creek High School Hall of Fame, is a Life Member of the Vietnam Veterans of America, and was the first female veteran to serve as Grand Marshal of Louisville’s 2023 Veterans Day Parade.

Marj is a retired occupational health manager from UPS and is devoted to the healing of unseen battle wounds. 🇺🇸



DID YOU KNOW?



KATIE HIGGINS COOK MARINES NAVY BLUE ANGELS PILOT OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

At age 26, Kentucky Colonel Katie Higgins Cook, in her first action against the Taliban, piloted a KC-130, firing missiles that eliminated an enemy position, saving the lives of a group of Marines. Cook became the first female United States Navy Blue Angels pilot in 2015 at age 28.

COLONEL BILL SCHAFFRICK

ARMY INFANTRY WWII GERMANY

Under cripplingly cold winter conditions, through December of 1944 and the early months of 1945, American troops proved their mettle. The 69th Infantry Division, known as the "Fighting 69th," landed at the French port of Le Havre and quickly advanced into Belgium. In February, it pushed into Germany. One of the soldiers in the Fighting 69th was Kentucky Colonel Bill Schaffrick. "I was patriotic, but I wanted to see if I could measure up in a tough situation," Schaffrick said of his military service.

Schaffrick recalls liberating a German Army warehouse, where each soldier took two army blankets, cutting holes in them to make ponchos and trying to stay warm in the bitter temperatures. His unit found shelter in homes or other buildings that had been abandoned, many of which had basements the Nazis had reinforced with corrugated metal creating bunkers.

By late March, Schaffrick and his fellow soldiers had crossed the Rhine River and begun their drive eastward.

Their first actual combat experience was as they captured the village of Ippenhausen, Germany. Eventually, they reached Leipzig, the largest battle for Schaffrick's squad. Schaffrick said, "We slept in a cemetery the night before we captured Leipzig." His squad was the first to reach the Napoleon Monument, the last stronghold in the city to surrender, where 300 soldiers were holding out.

After the Germans surrendered in May, Schaffrick joined an ordinance corps in Kassel, Germany, collecting equipment to drive to Mannheim. During the occupation, knowing he had a tremendous opportunity to see the world, he traveled to Paris, Brussels, and Switzerland.

The 69th Infantry Division has been recognized as a liberating unit by the US Army's Center of Military History and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Describing his parents as hard workers, Schaffrick, who grew up in Plainville, Connecticut, did not realize the country was in a depression. As a ten-year-old boy, he built a box to use in shining shoes outside a local tavern, saving money to buy a paper route, which he kept until he was fifteen years old and entered Bordertown Military Institute on a track scholarship.

Having listened to President Roosevelt on the radio the night of December 7, 1941, Schaffrick wanted to serve his country. He said, "I couldn't believe the Japanese had the audacity to bomb Pearl Harbor." He graduated two years later, at age seventeen,

and enlisted in the Army in July of 1943, needing the approval of his parents because of his age. With an enlistment "for the duration plus six months," he was sent to Camp Devon, Massachusetts, and then to Fort Benning, Georgia, for basic training. There, he was recommended for the Army Specialized Training Program and sent to Syracuse, New York. After ten weeks, the United States needed more troops in action, so the program was closed, and Schaffrick went into the infantry. During his time in Europe, he served as an anti-tank gunner.

When he returned to the United States after his discharge, Schaffrick attended college on the GI Bill and then went to work for Stanley Works, a hardware company, and then for the E. Ingraham Company, maker of watches and clocks, as a product designer. After transferring to Ingraham's plant in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, Schaffrick started his own business, EMB Corporation, making motor start relays, eventually selling the company to the employees, many of whom were from multi-generations who had worked at EMB. He continues to serve on the board and consults with EMB. He later owned a tool and die machine shop, a grave and burial vault business, a warehouse business, and a golf course.

Having always enjoyed horseracing, Schaffrick began to buy and train horses. In 1997, Celtic Warrior, a horse



he owned, ran in the Kentucky Derby after finishing second in the Bluegrass Stakes. Celtic Warrior finished seventh in the Kentucky Derby.

The seventeen-year-old boy, determined to serve his country, proved his mettle, returned to build a career employing many Kentuckians,

and volunteered in conservation efforts in his community. Schaffrick is now 99 years old and lives in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. 🇺🇸



DID YOU KNOW?

VINCE PATTON COAST GUARD MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OPERATION SUPPORT DEMOCRACY

Prior to selection as Master Chief Petty Officer Coast Guard, Kentucky Colonel Vince Patton served as the Command Master Chief for the Coast

Guard Atlantic Area and was the senior enlisted advisor to Joint Task Force-160 during Operation Support Democracy. MPOCG is one of the highest ranks available to enlisted members of the United States Coast Guard, with fewer than one percent of the USCG personnel achieving the rank of Master Chief.

COLONEL MARK DRAKE NAVY PILOT

Calling his childhood “idyllic,” Kentucky Colonel Mark Drake recalls that most of the fathers in his neighborhood, including his own who had been badly injured in the invasion of Sicily, had served in World War II. He can remember the theaters of war in which most of them served. They were his heroes.

Drake was an avid reader of the Sunday comics, especially enjoying Steve Canyon and Buzz Sawyer. He said, “America’s involvement in the Vietnam War was accelerating, and the daily comics reflected that reality. Steve Canyon was an Air Force pilot. Buzz Sawyer was a Navy pilot. They both flew fighters. Suddenly, I knew; that’s what I wanted to do.”

As a senior at Finneytown High School in Ohio, Drake raised his right hand and swore to protect and



defend the Constitution of the United States. He had been accepted into the University of South Carolina’s Naval ROTC unit, where he experienced four transformative midshipmen training Summer Cruises.

Drake began his career at the Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, followed by training at W Naval Air Stations in San Diego, El Centro, and Alameda, California; NAS Fallon in Nevada; and NAS Whidbey Island in Washington.

At NAS Whidbey, he trained to fly electronic attack jets, whose mission was to protect friendly attack jets and aircraft from enemy missiles and gun systems radar guidance.

In February of 1980, Drake was assigned to his first operational Electronic Warfare squadron VAQ-136, based aboard the aircraft carrier USS MIDWAY, which was home ported in Yokosuka, Japan. The MIDWAY returned three times in the next three years to the Indian





Ocean to relieve other aircraft carriers and remain on station, flying missions in support of operations off the shores of Iran. While flying Prowlers, Drake had flown alongside and supported many F-14 Tomcats from other carriers and knew he wanted to fly in fighters. He was, in what was a rare move, one of the few EA-6B Prowler Electronic Counter Measures Officers permitted to transition to the F-14, in which the Naval Flight Officer in the back operated the aircraft detection radar. He was sent back to Pensacola, Florida, to train as a Navy Fighter Radar Intercept Officer or RIO. Drake says that, while there, two momentous events occurred: he became a Navy Fighter RIO and met his future wife, Teri.

After graduation from the training squadron in Pensacola in June of 1983, Drake was sent to Virginia Beach, Virginia, and assigned to the fighter training squadron VF-101 at NAS Oceana. His squadron was a Replacement Air Group ("RAG"), which meant any pilot or RIO, upon graduation, could be assigned to any squadron that needed them. Fewer than two weeks later, an F-14 squadron in the Mediterranean onboard USS John F. Kennedy lost two fighters in two days. Even though he and Teri had their wedding planned for that August, Drake received orders to leave in three days for Souda

Bay, Crete, to join VF-31 aboard the USS John F. Kennedy (and he and Teri quickly married with the help of a Navy dentist and his children, a local minister and his wife, and Navy lab technicians who completed the required blood test in two hours).

After three years, Drake was transferred to the United States Naval Reserve and Fighter Squadron 202, which had just transitioned to the F-14 Tomcat. He says he was fortunate to remain "in the cockpit" actively flying for almost eighteen years. He kept his qualifications up to date to fly in ejection seat tactical aircraft for the next nine years off of four more aircraft carriers, his last flight being in an F/A-18F Super Hornet at NAS Lemoore, California, on July 3, 2004.

After VF-202, Drake had different Navy reserve staff assignments with SECOND Fleet at Norfolk Naval Base/aboard the USS CORONADO and SEVENTH Fleet that took him to headquarters ashore in Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, which served as homeport for the USS BLUE RIDGE, their at-sea location. He served as Chief Staff Officer for US Forces Japan at Yokota Air Force Base, Japan, and as Commanding Officer of a Mobile Operations Control Center at NAS Brunswick, Maine. He also had duty assignments in South Korea, Thailand, Poland, and Spain.

Drake served twice as commanding officer, once as a Navy commander and once as a Navy captain. He said that one duty has remained in his brain and heart. He said, "I was honored to be selected to serve as Human Remains Escort for a squadron mate who died in a crash at sea in the Mediterranean while we were in Fighter Squadron 31. He was my pilot for

a time in that squadron. However, we had swapped out Pilot/RIO crew pairing a month before our next planned six-month deployment. We had just completed entering the Mediterranean Sea when he crashed and was killed. The pilot was buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors and a flyover of F-14s who performed the "Missing Man" formation maneuver. Drake said, "I gently handed to the widow the United States flag that covered her husband's casket, offering the words 'on behalf of a grateful nation' and a slow, measured salute. At this point in my life, I reflect on those guys more with each passing year."

Drake, whose sons have shared their father's experience through the Navy and Naval ROTC program, adds, "I don't want you to be left with the impression of all military service for veterans as doom and gloom. It certainly was not. If anything, it was 30 years of hard work laced with 30 years of enormously colorful characters, 30 years of unanticipated adventures galore, and a life full of memories to savor upon reflection. How lucky we were to live in that time, do what we did, and experience the United States military when it was at its finest. I will leave you with this final thought that most veterans share: "It was an honor to serve."

Although he is not a native Kentuckian, Drake and his family have a long history of service to the Commonwealth and nation. He was commissioned as a Kentucky Colonel in 2001 when he was promoted to Captain in the United States Navy. His father, who established a jobs training program in northern Kentucky for visually and mentally handicapped, and his brother were also commissioned as Kentucky Colonels. He explained that supporting the Good Works Program gives him a connection to the Commonwealth, providing a way to help a Kentucky neighbor from far away. 🇺🇸



"This country has not seen and probably will never know the true level of sacrifice of our veterans."

— Thomas M. Smith



COLONEL JOSEPH TAYLOR NAVY MUNITIONS DEPOT WWII

Kentucky Colonel Joseph Taylor grew up the son of sharecroppers and lived on the farm in Enville, Tennessee, until he was about sixteen years old. Without a car, he, his parents, and his five brothers traveled by wagon or mules or walked. Taylor attended a one room school with one teacher for all eight grades until he finished eighth grade and left school to help on the farm.

Drafted when he was eighteen years old, Taylor chose the Navy. Taylor said, "Due to our lack of radio, I really didn't know much about Japan and the war in Europe except for word of mouth. I had no idea what was going to take place." Taylor was sent to boot camp at Camp Peary in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Marksmanship testing showed he had good skills, so he was sent to gunnery school in Great Lakes, Illinois, learning to operate all machinery guns.

Taylor was eventually stationed on land at the US Naval Ammunition Depot in Hawthorne, Nevada. By the 1940s, Hawthorne had become known as the "World's Largest Ammunition Depot," providing munitions for most of the allies' Pacific operations during World

War II. In addition to being remote, the site had the advantage of being out of reach to Japanese bombers.

While Taylor never saw combat, he had advanced training and assembled mines that were put into the ocean to sink ships. His military assignment also included working on ammunition-filled bunkers. Almost thirty-three hundred cement bunkers were built across over 147,000 acres in the desert, with over 400 miles of underground railroads connecting them.

While at Hawthorne, Taylor and his fellow soldiers occasionally saw movies and rode the train to Chicago, Racine, and Milwaukee, when on liberty and saw Tommy Dorsey and Glen Miller in USO shows.

Taylor said he did not have much free time, but he did try to write home when he could. Even though his letters were censored, he never tried to tell his family what he was doing. Never having been away



from home before, he was homesick and worried about how his parents and younger brother were surviving working on the farm while he was stationed in Nevada and his four other brothers were overseas.

While Taylor was stationed at Hawthorne, he did make one trip home on leave in 1945 and was able to see his brother, Robert, whom he had not seen since 1941. Robert had been drafted into the Army and lost a lung when a sniper shot him in the back while he was serving in Okinawa, Japan. He did not see





his other brothers for many years. Two of his brothers came home in 1946, but the others did not come home until later. His mother lived to see her sons return home but died shortly thereafter.

At the time of his service, Taylor wanted to be assigned aboard ship but said he realizes, in hindsight, the importance of the work he did at Hawthorne and knows many of those in gunnery school with him did go on ship and did not return home.

In 1946, Seaman 2nd class (S2/C) Taylor was sent to the Naval Station in Millington, Tennessee, for discharge.

Taylor returned to Enville and worked at Brown Shoe Factory for three years before moving to Memphis and working at International Harvester for 31 years. He has spent the rest of his life in Memphis with his wife and two daughters.

Living in a home with no electricity during his early years, Taylor's family enjoyed playing music for entertainment. Taylor learned to play music by ear, listening to his parents play guitars. When Taylor moved to Memphis, he began playing bluegrass music and played on his own and with bands such as The Dixie Bluegrass Boys and

The Tennessee Gentlemen, playing at bluegrass festivals, Veterans Administration hospitals, nursing homes, and prisons. He co-founded The Lucy Opry, which ran from 1968-1995. He also recorded at the famous "Sun Studio" in Memphis when he was 96 years old.

Taylor was commissioned as a Kentucky Colonel in 2012 in recognition of his military service and his sharing his musical talent in service to others. He has supported the Good Works Program annually since his commission. 🇺🇸



DID YOU KNOW?

COLONEL BRAD HALLING ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND TASK FORCE RANGER - SOMALIA

Kentucky Colonel Brad Halling, Sergeant Major, U.S. Army, Retired, was the first above-knee amputee to remain on active duty through full Army retirement. He served in the U.S. Army Special Operations Command and was deployed to Somalia as part of Task Force Ranger and fought in the Battle of Mogadishu. Serving in the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, his deployments included Poland and Berlin during the Cold War and Somalia as part of Task Force Ranger.

COLONEL JAMES HAYDEN

ARMY INFANTRY WWII GERMANY KOREAN WAR POW

Kentucky Colonel James R. Hayden was born in 1925 in Fancy Farm, Kentucky. He entered the Army in 1944, serving with the A Company, 254th Infantry Regiment in Germany. In March of 1945, while searching a tunnel where he suspected German soldiers were hiding, he came upon the enemy, who threw a hand grenade at him, destroying his rifle. Retrieving another rifle, he re-entered the tunnel and single-handedly killed two, wounded four, and captured twelve prisoners.

A week later, he was wounded, ending his World War II service. He had earned the Bronze Star, Silver Star, and Purple Heart. The war ended soon after, and Hayden returned to Fort Lewis in Tacoma, Washington. While serving at Fort Lewis, he met his wife, Dorothy, in 1947. He also reenlisted because he discovered he liked military life.

When the Korean War broke out, Hayden was back on the frontlines and found himself surrounded by Chinese forces along with about 150 fellow soldiers. "Different units had somehow got there," Hayden, a sergeant first class at the time, told the audience when he received

the Prisoner of War Medal and a Korean War Service Medal nearly 60 years later. He said, "We fought all night. The next day, when it came daylight, they started picking us off one at a time." They knew they were surrounded and surrendered.

In captivity, Hayden survived on the meager portions of food his Chinese captors gave him and sub-zero temperatures without proper winter clothing. As his fellow POWs died, he buried them.

Hayden remained in captivity until Sept. 5, 1953, when a cease-fire ended the active hostilities in Korea. He was finally freed from captivity. He had lost 65 pounds, and his bones had been ravaged by malnutrition, but he was alive. He credited his survival to his strong faith. Upon his return to the United States, he was commissioned as a Kentucky Colonel.

After spending months in a hospital recovering, Hayden still did not consider leaving the military. He



became a medical specialist and remained in the Army. Because of health complications from his time as a POW, he took a medical retirement in 1962. Hayden lived in Lakewood, Washington, for most of the rest of his life. He was active in his church and was a business owner.

On Sept. 3, 2014, Hayden was surprised to receive awards he had earned years earlier but had not received. Maj. Gen. Terry Ferrell, commander of the 7th Infantry Division in Washington, presented Hayden with the Prisoner of War Medal and the Korean War Service Medal from the Republic of Korea. 🇺🇸

"Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world, but the Marines don't have that problem."

— Ronald Reagan



USA CARES

Veteran & Family Support System



Written by Colonel
Eric Patterson, Grants
Administrator and
Communications

In March of 2003, the United States entered a large-scale military operation overseas in response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11. In this action, called Operation Iraqi Freedom, numerous military members suffered a wide range of physical and emotional injuries, and their families faced new challenges. They needed emergency assistance to keep a roof over their heads, the lights on, and food on the table. Although the United States Department of Veterans Affairs covered medical expenses, it did not

cover lost wages, and families needed help with essential bills so that service members could access necessary health care to move toward recovery. In Radcliff, Kentucky, near Fort Knox, a group of like-minded citizens gathered, along with WAVE-3 TV in Louisville, Kentucky; the Mid-South Division of Kroger Food Stores; and the Association of the United States Army Fort Knox Chapter, and created a grassroots partnership, originally called Kentuckiana Cares, with a goal to raise funds to help military families in financial crises through the sale of "Support Our Troops" yard signs. They raised \$121,000 and, in October of 2003, in response to the increasing number of requests for assistance,

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USA Cares, Inc. was created with a toll-free call center in Radcliff to process requests for assistance. In 2017, USA Cares relocated its headquarters to Louisville. In late 2021, USA Cares launched the Chapters Program to carry out its mission throughout the United States.

The mission of USA Cares is to provide post-9/11 military veterans, service members, and their families with financial assistance and post-service skills training to create a foundation for long-term stability, with services that improve the quality of life for veterans and their families and reduce potential factors that can contribute to veteran suicide.

The Military Assistance Response Program assists veterans, service members, and their families facing temporary financial hardships because of a military service-related incident or medical hardship. This program includes a food card distribution program, which the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels has supported.

USA Cares also offers a Career Transition Program, which provides individuals with tools and resources to better prepare them for the hiring process and refers qualified

candidates to corporate organizations with job openings fitting that candidate's skill set. Additionally, this program may also pay an individual's essential expenses while they train for a new job or career. The Career Skills Corporate fellowship program assists service members in successfully transitioning to civilian careers by providing them with the necessary skills development training, resources, and support. Through this program, individuals will have the opportunity to participate in a fellowship at a local organization within the region.

Helping both pre- and post-9/11 veterans achieve meaningful employment is the goal of the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, which provides job training, case management, and placement services to connect homeless veterans with local employers in 65 Kentucky counties. USA Cares works with public and private partners at all levels to provide supportive services and access to housing.

As a part of the financial assistance application process, USA Cares requires clients to complete an online Financial Education & Empowerment Course, which emphasizes practical

strategies for budgeting, saving, and managing debt.

USA Cares offers a nationally certified course designed to provide loan officers, realtors, and housing professionals with a clear understanding of how to work with military borrowers, whether they are using a VA loan or other type of financing. This course helps housing professionals make sense of the military language, rank, and pay system and includes advice regarding foreclosure prevention, with tips that loan officers and realtors can give their clients to help them avoid mortgage delinquencies in the future.

The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels has granted \$103,000 to USA Cares for its food card distribution program and a vehicle. Whitney Hobbs, Vice President of Outreach and Development, said, "USA Cares is deeply grateful to the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels for their continued support. With HOKC's generosity, USA Cares has been able to provide critical assistance to veterans across the commonwealth, ensuring they receive the support they deserve in their times of need." 🇺🇸





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2024
\$2.5 Million
325 Grants



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