



# AARON A. WEAVER CHAPTER 776



**Chapter Purpose - To preserve the proud legacy of the Purple Heart**

## 2020-21 Officers

**Cdr: Richard Hunt**  
**Sr. Vice Cdr: Rob Coughlin**  
**Jr. Vice Cdr: Andy Viola**  
**Finance Off: Joe McClister**  
**Judge Adv: Bill Merryman**  
**Sgt-at-Arms: Richard "Bud" Allen**  
**Trustee 2-yrs: Leo Stockmaster**  
**Trustee 1-yr: Zig Laska**  
**Adjutant: Curt Ebitz**  
**Service Off: Joe McClister**  
**Welfare Off: Richard "Bud" Allen**  
**Historian: Curt Ebitz**  
**Chaplain: Fred Daniels**  
**Americanism Off: William Korber**

## Chapter Activities

### Completed

**May 25.** Chapter 776 Cdr. Richard Hunt participated in a Memorial Day remembrance tribute at the Old Homosassa Veterans Memorial in Homosassa without public attendance due to coronavirus virus precautions. The ceremony, which was videoed and posted on Youtube, can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/PU0TUrngVek>

*See Chapter Activities page 2*

**Next Meeting**  
**July 21 meeting is**  
**CANCELLED.**

**Next tentatively scheduled**  
**meeting is**  
**Tuesday, Sept. 15, 1 p.m.**  
**Citrus County Building Alliance**  
**1196 S Lecanto Hwy.**  
**Lecanto, FL 34461**

## Bimonthly Meeting

The chapter's bimonthly meetings are held the third Tuesday of September, November, January, March, May and July. The meeting location is at the Citrus County Building Alliance, 1196 S. Lecanto Highway (C.R. 491), Lecanto, which is located on the west side of S. Lecanto Highway approximately 1/2 mile south of S.R. 44. Any member desiring to place an item on the agenda should e-mail Adjutant Ebitz at [info@citruspurpleheart.org](mailto:info@citruspurpleheart.org) or call 382-3847.

## Member News

Heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to all **Chapter 776 Patriots, Associate Members, and Proud Supporters** for your dedicated support throughout the past year, which earned Chapter 776 the proud distinction of being named the Department of Florida Chapter of the Year for the third consecutive year.

A very appreciative "thank you" to Proud Supporter **Gary Marriage** of Nature Coast Financial Advisors for his generous support as the CCBA annual fishing tournament's \$1,500 Purple Heart Sponsor for the sixth consecutive year. If you are thinking about getting an annuity, please consider Gary at 352-794-6044.

The Chapter extends its thanks to boat captain **Suzie Martin** who hosted Chapter 776 Patriots **Bud Allen, Bob Gibson, and Joe McClister** for a day of fishing during the Citrus County Building Alliance (CCBA) 25th Annual Family Fishing Tournament.

A crisp "Patriot Salute" to Chapter 776 Cdr. **Richard Hunt** for his unsung work as the Chapter 776 liaison on the CCBA 25th Annual Family Fishing Tournament Committee. Thanks to the committee's efforts, the Silver Anniversary tournament was highly successful with 117 registered boat captains, despite the challenges of the coronavirus.

Congratulations to Associate Member **Vikki Pietras** on her well deserved selection as the Department of Florida Associate Member of the Year and

*See Member page 2*

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

**Chapter 776 bimonthly meeting scheduled for July 21 is CANCELLED due to coronavirus precautions.**

**Purple Heart Proclamation presentation by Board of County Commissioners scheduled for July 28 is CANCELLED due to coronavirus precautions.**

**Annual Purple Heart Anniversary Breakfast hosted by West Citrus Elks, Homosassa, scheduled for Saturday, August 8 is CANCELLED due to coronavirus precautions.**

**We encourage each Patriot and Associate to ask their respective Congressional Representative to sign on as a co-sponsor to the Purple Heart Flag Act H.R. 5237. It would allow for the designation of a flag modeled on the insignia of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, which would be flown on national holidays at federal memorials, cemeteries and buildings.**

**Member News continued**

to **Sandy Cross** on earning selection as the Department of Florida Jonas Jacobsen Volunteer of the Year.

**Chapter activities continued**

**May 25.** Chapter 776 Associate Member Fred Daniels organized and participated in the Floral City Memorial Day ceremony.

**June 18.** Chapter 776 Cdr. Richard Hunt and former Chapter 776 Cdr. Bud Allen participated in the memorial service honoring the memory and celebrating the life of Departed Patriot Harold Layman at the First United Methodist Church in Homosassa. Other Chapter members in attendance were Rick Allen, JoAnn Allen, Mickey Hunt, Joe McClister & Annie Fair, Gail Nemesh, Ray & Pat Michael, Chaplain Emeritus Ernie Tucker, and Andy Viola.

**June 27.** Cdr. Richard Hunt worked the CCBA 25th Annual Family Fishing Tournament and Patriots Bud Allen, Bob Gibson, and Joe McClister participated in the fishing tournament and received tournament silver anniversary pins. Also, their boat, captained by Suzie Martin, earned the 2<sup>nd</sup> Place prize of \$200 for reeling in the most Redfish.

**Future**

**September 15, 1:00 p.m.** Chapter 776 bimonthly meeting (Tentative).



**Chapter 776 & Dept. of Florida Jonas Jacobsen Volunteer of the Year awardee Sandy Cross (left). Chapter 776 & Dept. of Florida Associate Member of the Year Vikki Pietras (right).**

**From the Commander**

Patriots and Family of Aaron A Weaver Chapter 776,

I hope this newsletter finds all of you healthy, if not totally happy.

Strange and trying times we are living in. COVID-19.... Who would have thought or forecasted the radical changes in our lives this virus would cause.

As of this writing, there still seems to be no clear answers or "Safe" ending date. Citrus County has had a major upswing in reported cases. Not good. We seem to be going backwards. Enough of that.

We need to stay connected, support each other, provide aid and comfort as we are able and get through this. Together we are much stronger than as individuals. We can and will get through this one more challenge in our lives.

Our Chapter is one of the strongest in the Nation. We are blessed with wonderful members and supportive families. We support each other, as we should.

Please do not hesitate in asking for help. Pick up your phone and call someone. Sometimes a simple conversation can do wonders for the morale and well-being of our family.

No general meetings are currently scheduled for safety reasons. As soon as that can be changed, you will be notified.

In the interim, please be safe.

Yours in Patriotism,  
Richard Hunt, Commander  
Cell: 407-579-6190

**Chapter 776 earns top Department of Florida honors**

Aaron A. Weaver Chapter 776 Military Order of The Purple Heart (MOPH) was selected from among 19 MOPH Chapters statewide as the best MOPH Chapter in Florida by the MOPH Department of Florida for the third consecutive year.

Chapter 776 earned the distinctive recognition for its exemplary support of the Department of Florida, as well as its charitable support of veterans and their surviving spouses, scholarship programs, and community involvement.

The MOPH Department of Florida also selected Chapter 776 members Vikki Pietras and Sandy Cross as the Department of Florida Associate Member of the Year and as the Department of Florida Jonas Jacobsen Volunteer of the Year, respectively.

Pietras was recognized for her dedicated leadership and selfless contributions to assuring the viability, success, and positive public image of Chapter 776, its Unit 776 Auxiliary and the Department of Florida, as exemplified by her devoted volunteer community service with the Citrus County Government Nature Coast Volunteer Center, which has earned her The President's Volunteer Service Award for compiling 4,284 hours within four years.

Cross was recognized for being the inspiration for Chapter 776's support of veterans and their families temporarily residing in the Fisher House at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, Tampa; initiating a print and social media campaign that raised over \$7,000 to purchase close to 500 wreaths in support of the National Wreaths Across America Program; and her longstanding community involvement with Take Stock in Children, Floral City Heritage Council, Friendship Quilters Guild and the Daughters of the American Revolution Fort Cooper Chapter.