



AARON A. WEAVER CHAPTER 776



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

2025-26 Officers

Cdr: Richard Hunt
Sr. Vice Cdr: Gary Bain
Jr. Vice Cdr: Jerry Frease
Finance Off: Joe McClister
Judge Adv: Mike Krebs
Sgt-at-Arms: Robert Gibson
Trustee 2-yrs: Nate Love
Trustee 1-yr: Bill Merryman
Adjutant: Curt Ebitz
Service Off: Joe McClister
Welfare Off: Mickey Hunt
Historian: Curt Ebitz
Chaplain: Troy Allen
Americanism Off: Will Korber

Chapter Activities

Completed

May 12. Cdr. Richard Hunt and Patriot Bill Merryman represented the Chapter at the Brooksville Post Office dedication naming the facility in honor of Fallen Hero Army Specialist Four Justin Dean Coleman who was killed in action in 2009 while serving with the 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan.

May 17. Chapter 776 set a new attendance record with 78 Chapter members and guests attending its annual Armed Forces Day picnic.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, July 15, 2025, 1 p.m.

Citrus County Chamber of Commerce, Crystal River.

Bimonthly Meeting

The Chapter's bimonthly general membership meetings are held the third Tuesday of September, November, January, March, May and July. **The NEW meeting location is the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce, 915 N. Suncoast Blvd. (U.S. 19), Crystal River, which is located on the east side of the highway approximately 1/4 mile north of the Crystal River Airport. Any member desiring to place an item on the agenda should e-mail Adjutant Ebitz at info@citruspurpleheart.org or call 352-382-3847.**

Completed

May 20. Patriot Claude Gregoire, with Cdr. Hunt in attendance, was honored with a high school diploma during commencement exercises at Citrus High School.

May 21. Jr. Vice Cdr. Jerry Frease, with Cdr. Hunt in attendance, was honored with a high school diploma during commencement exercises at Crystal River High School.

May 22. Patriot Bill Merryman, with Cdr.

Chapter Activities Continued page 2

Member News

It is sad to report that Chapter 776 Patriot **Carl Marlo** passed in March while under the care of HPH Citrus Hospice House in Lecanto.

Heartfelt condolences to **Rob & Linda Coughlin** on the loss of their daughter-in-law who died at the early age of 45. Also, best wishes to **Linda** who is recovering from breast cancer surgery.

Linda Golfieri, wife of Patriot Al Golfieri, has been placed in memory care. Please keep both in your prayers as they navigate this difficult time.

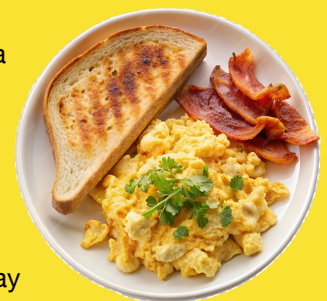
Congratulations to Chapter 776 Patriots **Jerry Frease**, **Claude Gregoire**, and **Bill Merryman** who made local school district history with each receiving their high school diplomas during the district's commencement exercises. Patriot Frease received his diploma at Crystal River High School, Patriot Gregoire at Citrus High School, and Patriot Merryman at Lecanto High School. Kudos to Cdr. **Richard Hunt** and Honorary Member **Darrick Buettner** who arranged the commencement presentations.

A crisp salute to Chapter 776 Sergeant of Arms **Bob Gibson** for donating and preparing the delicious ribs that he served to Chapter members and guests

Member News Continued page 2

2025 Annual Purple Heart Anniversary Breakfast

The Inverness Elks Lodge No. 2522, located at 3575 E. Lake Place, Hernando, will host a breakfast on Saturday, August 9 at 9:00 a.m. to commemorate the 243rd anniversary of the Purple Heart. The free breakfast and short program honor our nation's Purple Heart recipients and fallen heroes. All Purple Heart recipients, Gold Star family members, Associate members, Purple Heart entities and Chapter 776 Proud Supporters and their guests are cordially invited to attend. Attendees are requested to **register for the free breakfast by contacting Jerry Frease (Cell: 239-229-0111; Email: Frease@aol.com)**. Please indicate the number in your party and their names. Seating is limited, so don't delay registering.



Completed continued

Hunt in attendance, was honored with a high school diploma during commencement exercises at Lecanto High School.

May 22. Chapter members attending the Patriot fellowship breakfast at the Central Café & Bakery in Inverness were Curt Ebitz, Jerry Frease, Cdr. Richard Hunt, Chuck Kanehl, Will Korber, Mike Krebs, Nate Love, and Joe McClister. Also attending was Colby Dawson, Congressional Aide to U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis.

May 24. Cdr. Richard Hunt and Patriot Bill Merryman attended a Memorial Day service at the Crystal Memorial Gardens Cemetery during which time they presented the Friends of the Crystal Memorial Gardens Cemetery a Chapter 776 Distinguished Community Service Award for their cemetery restoration and marker identification efforts.

May 25. Attending the Memorial Day evening tribute to America's fallen at the Fallen Heroes Monument in Bicentennial Park, Crystal River were Chapter members Cdr. Richard & Mickey Hunt, Curt & Mari-Elain Eitz, Jerry & Kim Frease, Chuck & Micki Kanehl, Will Korber, Joe McClister & Ann Fair, and honorary member Barb Mills.

May 26. Cdr. Richard Hunt officiated as the Master of Ceremonies at the Old Homosassa Veterans Memorial's Memorial Day ceremony. Other Chapter

Completed continued

members in attendance were Curt & Mari-Elain Ebitz, Jerry & Kim Frease, Mickey Hunt, Will Korber, Mike Krebs, Joe McClister & Annie Fair, and Art & Penny Tharp.

May 26. Chapter 776 Associate Fred Daniels was the organizer and Master of Ceremonies for the annual Floral City Memorial Day ceremony hosted by American Legion Post 225.

May 26. Cdr. Richard Hunt organized and conducted a Veterans Day program at Grand Living at Citrus Hill for its residents and guests. Chapter 776 Patriots J.B. Haskins and Earl McMillan also attended.

June 20. Enjoying camaraderie at the Chapter's Patriot breakfast at Kim's Café in Homosassa were Cdr. Richard Hunt, Curt Ebitz, Jerry Frease, Al Golfieri, Mike Krebs, Joe McClister, Bill Merryman, and Colby Dawson, Legislative Aide to U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis.

June 25. Attending the Associate ladies June lunch gathering were Carol Allen, Kimberly Allen, Mari-Elain Ebitz, Annie Fair, Kim Frease, Mickey Hunt, Nancy Krebs, and Shirley Platt.

June 29. Curt & Mari-Elain Ebitz, Jerry & Kim Frease, and Joe McClister & Annie Fair attended the Spirit of America Concert performed by the Purple Heart Entity and award winning Nature Coast Community Band.

From the Commander

Patriots, Associates, Supporters Aaron A. Weaver Chapter 776 continues to be strong with many accomplishments both collectively and individually. For the third consecutive year, Chapter 776 had a clean sweep of Department of Florida awards earning Dept. of Florida Chapter, Patriot, Associate and Volunteer of the Year honors.

The annual Armed Forces picnic set a new record with 78 Patriots, Associates, Supporters and guests in attendance. A very appreciative thank you to Patriot Bob Gibson whose grill master talents and generosity provided attendees with his specialty ribs.

Also, many thanks to our distinguished guests who honored us with their attendance: Nancy Weaver, County Commissioner Rebecca Bays, Supt. Of Schools Dr. Scott Hebert, Sheriff David Vincent, Property Appraiser Cregg Dalton, School Board Member Ken Frink, Crystal River City Council Cindi Frink and Inverness City Council Crystal Lizanich.

I want to call your attention to the Chapter's new meeting location. Due to the merger of the Citrus County Building Alliance (CCBA) with the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce, Chapter 776 bimonthly meetings, henceforth, will be held at the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce building in Crystal River.

Commander Continued, page 4

Member News continued

at the annual Armed Forces Day picnic. Bob's love of grilling is clearly evident in his tasty ribs.

Another job well done to **Darrick Buettner**, Coordinator of Special Academic Programs Citrus Schools and Chapter 776 Honorary Member, for organizing and coordinating the Memorial Day ceremony at the Old Homosassa Veterans Memorial. Thanks to his personal efforts, the ceremony has grown in stature.

Hats off salute to Associate **Fred Daniels** who organized and conducted the Floral City Memorial Day ceremony for the 21st consecutive year and Honorary Member **Barb Mills** who organized the Memorial Day Eve ceremony at Fallen Heroes Monument.

Chuck & Micki Kanehl are rightfully proud of their grandson who is a 1st Lieutenant in the Air Force and a member of a highly trained ICBM missile combat crew. He is interning as a Captain with promotion to Captain on the horizon for next July.



Chapter 776 Vietnam veterans were presented a Congressional Certificate of Special Recognition for their Vietnam service by Congressional Aide Colby Dawson on behalf of U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis at the Chapter's bimonthly meeting. Left: Dawson, Patriots Gary Bain, Joe McClister, Rob Coughlin, and Ernie Tucker.



2025 ARMED FORCES DAY PICNIC



Superintendent of Citrus Schools Dr. Scott Hebert presented graduation stoles to Chapter Patriots for their high school graduation ceremonies. Left: Dr. Scott Hebert; Patriot Claude Gregoire, Citrus HS; Patriot Jerry Frease, Crystal River HS; Patriot Bill Merryman, Lecanto HS. Darrick Buettner, Coordinator of Special Academic Programs Citrus Schools.



Chapter 776 grill master, Bob Gibson, who made the most delicious ribs for the attendees at the annual Armed Forces Day Picnic.



Chapter 776 Vietnam veterans were presented a Congressional Certificate of Special Recognition for their Vietnam service by Congressional Aide Colby Dawson on behalf of Congressman Gus Bilirakis. Left: 1st row: Rob Pietras, Claude Gregoire, Earl McMillan, Leo Stockmaster, Frank Hayes, Art Tharp. 2nd row: Ralph McClure, Paul St. Martin, Jerry Frease, Bob Gibson, J.B. Haskins, Richard Hunt, Mike Krebs, Chuck Kanehl, Curt Ebitz. Kneeling: Colby Dawson



Chapter 776 awardees beam with pride. Left: Cdr. Richard Hunt, Dept. of Florida Chapter of the Year; Nancy Weaver, Dept. of Florida & Chapter 776 Associate of the Year; Vikki Pietras, Dept. of Florida & Chapter 776 Volunteer of the Year; Jr. Vice Cdr. Jerry Frease, who presented the Dept. of Florida awards on behalf of Dept. Cdr. Lou Barnes.



Cdr. Hunt presented Chapter 776's Sgt. Dennis J. Flanagan Memorial Scholarship to Crystal River High School senior Eli Langston.



Nancy Weaver, widow of Fallen Hero Aaron Weaver, presented Chapter 776's Aaron A. Weaver Endowed Scholarship to Lecanto High School senior Logan Lewis.



Cdr. Hunt presented the Chapter's Proud Supporter Award to Beth Thomas.



Cdr. Hunt presented the Chapter's Proud Supporter Award to Boat Captain Suzie.



Departed Patriot Carl Marlo

Patriot Carl Marlo of Hernando passed away March 19 at the age of 77. Patriot Marlo served in the U.S. Army from October 1966 to July 1968. Seeing combat duty in Vietnam as an infantryman, he valiantly earned the Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB) and received the Purple Heart for wounds received in action during the height of the Tet Offensive in February 1968.

Patriot Marlo was a dedicated family man who loved spending time with his family, particularly his grandchildren. He also enjoyed fishing and gardening. Patriot Marlo is survived by his wife of 50 years, Barbara, as well as two sons, two brothers, and five grandchildren.

Commander Continued

Chapter 776's longstanding relationship with the CCBA remains the same with Chapter 776 now enjoying the benefits of being a member of the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce.

Lastly, please mark your calendars to attend the Chapter's annual Purple Heart breakfast on August 9 hosted by the Inverness Elks. The Inverness Elks provide a delicious breakfast that comes with a million dollar lake view.

Yours in Patriotism,
Richard Hunt, Commander

Chapter Activities, Future

July 15, 1:00 p.m. Chapter 776 bimonthly meeting, Citrus County Chamber of Commerce, Crystal River.

July 29, 1:00 p.m. Purple Heart Proclamation, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners, County Courthouse, Inverness.

July 30, 1:00 p.m. Purple Heart Proclamation, Hernando County Board of County Commissioners, County Courthouse, Brooksville.