

# **EAST TENNESSEE MILITARY AFFAIRS COUNCIL**

## **August 6, 2015 MEETING SUMMARY**

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

- AUG 11 Vietnam Veterans of America's Monthly Meeting
- AUG 12 Military Order of the World Wars' Monthly Meeting
- AUG 15 Saw Works Band Saw 2015 Brewery Event for Project Healing Waters
- AUG 15 American Legion's Charles "Ken" Gray Memorial Ride
- AUG 15 Women Veterans of America's Monthly Meeting
- AUG 16 Spirit of '45 WWII Nationwide Commemoration Event
- AUG 16 Co D, 4th Combat Engineer Battalion's Family Day
- AUG 23 Project Healing Waters' Smoky Mountain Sporting Clays Tournament
- AUG 27 Dignity Memorial's Veterans Burial Benefits Assistance Event
- AUG 29 2nd Annual Hope Gala Fundraising Event for Veteran Homelessness
- AUG 30 TN Smokies Baseball Event for Smoky Mountain Service Dogs
- SEPT 7 American Legion's Monthly Meeting
- SEPT 19-20 4th Annual Pull for Our Veterans Skeet and Trap Shoot
- SEPT 25-27 WWII MOH recipient Lt. Alexander Bonnyman Jr. Burial and Services
- SEPT 26 Marine Mud Run
- SEPT 26 Homeless Veterans Stand Down Event at Knoxville National Guard Armory
- OCT 2 UT Army ROTC Alumni Council Golf Tournament
- OCT 7 Honor Air Flight #19
- OCT 12 Air Force Association Annual Memorial Golf Tournament Fundraiser
- NOV 11 ETMAC's Annual Veterans Day Luncheon
- NOV 11 Knoxville's 90th Veteran's Day Parade

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## ETMAC BUSINESS SESSION

- **Welcome and Call to Order:** The meeting of the East Tennessee Military Affairs Council was held on Thursday, August 6, 2015 at the Knoxville Chamber. President Owen Ragland presided over the meeting. A total of 68 members and guests were present.
- **Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by Owen Ragland
- **Introduction of New Attendees:**
  - MSgt Eddie Knoebel (Ret)., Marine Corps League
  - Hilary Bogus, Project Healing Waters
  - Bill Frazier, American Legion/Rolling Thunder/VFW
  - Brock Evans, Director of MBA Recruiting at Bethel University
  - Jada Fegley, Tennessee Members 1st Federal Credit Union
  - Janet Guess, Berry Funeral Home
  - Bradley Harrison, TN Valley Coalition for the Homeless
  - Debbie Dotson, Volunteers of America/Supportive Services for Veteran Families
- **Minutes of Previous Meeting:** The July 2015 meeting minutes were approved as written. ETMAC has also begun posting previous meeting minutes to the website at <http://etmac.org/>.
- **Treasurer's Report (Steve Dillenburg):** Last month's ending balance was \$13,529. ETMAC wrote checks for \$193 and made deposits of \$126 from membership dues. ETMAC's ending month balance is \$13,462. Annual membership is \$25 per individual, and \$100 for corporations/units/organizations. Annual 2015 dues can be paid to any ETMAC officer or on the ETMAC website.
- **Webmaster's Report (Barry Allen):** Had 1,150 visitors visit the ETMAC website last month. 36% viewed the site in English, 2% used Portuguese, 0.2% Italian, 0.2% Russian, and 1 Chinese visitor and 1 Australian visitor. 54% were male viewers and 46% female. 77% used Chrome browsers, 8% used Safari, and 8% Internet Explorer. 86% viewed from a desktop, 12% from their mobiles, and 1% from tablets. Please send anything to be added to the ETMAC calendar to webmaster Barry Allen at [barry.allen@yourvaadvocate.com](mailto:barry.allen@yourvaadvocate.com)
- **Guest Reports:**
  - **Chattanooga Memorial Services (Jim Mungenast):** Jim said there was an ETMAC presence at the funeral of the servicemen who were laid to rest in Chattanooga. Two families chose the Chattanooga National Cemetery as their loved ones' resting place. Several from the Knoxville area attended the funeral services for Marine SSgt. David A. Wyatt and Navy PO2 Randall Smith. Jim said they and several Gold Star mothers were able to meet with the families. From the 8-12 miles route that stretched from the service to the cemetery, about 10,000 people lined the streets in respect for the servicemen and their families. Chattanooga does not have an ETMAC-like organization. Jim talked with Tim White in pursuit of creating one.
  - **Spirit of '45 WWII Nationwide Commemoration (Jeff Berry):** Sunday, Aug. 16th, in an effort to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the End of WWII, Knoxville Dignity Memorial Funeral and cemetery providers are sponsoring the Spirit of '45 WWII Nationwide Commemoration at the East TN Veterans Memorial at World's Fair Park. Activities start at 3 p.m. and the formal ceremony at 4 p.m. Charlie Brakebill from the University of TN will be the guest speaker. Jeff Berry, ETVMA board member and general mgr. of Berry Funeral Home, said there will be '40s dance music, swing dancing, reenactors and demonstrations held. They're also looking for any WWII veterans who served in the military whom they can honor at the event. To learn more about the National Spirit of '45 Initiative Day, visit: <http://www.spiritof45.org/home0.aspx>.  
After Aug. 16th, Berry Funeral Home is looking to start the Dignity Memorial Homeless Veterans Burial program. They will be coordinating another homeless veteran's burial. 3 will be honored - one from the Navy, Army, and Marines. All are welcomed to attend. Further details will be sent out after Aug. 16th.

Janet Guess, who works with the **Dignity Memorial Homeless Veterans Burial program**, said on **Aug. 27th they'll be holding a presentation** at Weaver Funeral Home for veterans and their families to educate and assist them on veteran burial benefits. All are welcomed to attend. Call Weaver Funeral Home at (865) 588-3868 for more information.

- **President's Statement (Owen Ragland):** Charlie Brakebill, who will be guest speaker at the Spirit of '45 WWII Nationwide Commemoration, served in the First Class of the Air Force ROTC at the University of Tennessee.
- **Knoxville Habitat for Humanity - Veteran Homeownership (Sara Miller):** Started a new pilot program for veterans needing a home and are looking for applicants. Knoxville Habitat for Humanity are offering rehabilitated homes to veterans for long-term housing solutions. Normal mortgage payments are \$450-500/mo. and 0% interest on the mortgage. Availability are 2, 3, and 4 bedroom homes with 2 baths. Send veteran referrals to Sara or Anna, the family services coordinator. Call the Habitat for Humanity office for more information at (865) 523-3539.
- **The Sanctuary Retreat Center (Dr. Tom Heemstra):** Announced the opening of The Sanctuary Retreat Center, at 322 Sunset View, Sharps Chapel, TN which is a not-for-profit organization designed to specifically help heal wounded soldiers and their families including those affected by PTSD and returning from Iraq/Afghanistan, weary pastors, missionaries, their families and those who serve in ministry. The Retreat Center can hold up to 3 families. Contact The Sanctuary at (865) 278-1022 to request an application or for more information on availability.
- **Brief Announcements (Patrice Collins):** Lt. Col. Dent Young with Civil Air Patrol wanted to pass on his thanks to Col. Jessica Meyeraan with I.G. Brown Training and Education Center, and her staff for the outstanding support that CAP received while their 3 schools were in session at the TEC.

Patrice also sold all 4 of her Hope Gala table tickets but there are still tickets for sale which you can purchase online. To buy tickets online, visit <https://tvchomeless.org/hope/> The **2nd Annual Hope Gala for Veteran Homelessness** is Saturday, August 29th, at 6 p.m., at the Jackson Terminal, 205 W. Jackson Ave., the Tennessee Valley Coalition to End Homelessness will be hosting the 2nd Annual Hope Gala in an effort to raise funds to move homeless veterans and families into permanent housing and to unmask veteran homelessness in our community. Special guest speaker will be retired U.S. Air Force Captain Bill Robinson, who is identified as being held as a POW longer than any other enlisted man in U.S. history. The Gala will have musical entertainment, a gourmet meal, a flaming donut finale, and a silent auction. Hope Gala tickets are \$50 each. Donations are also welcomed.

- **TN Smokies Baseball (Patrice Collins):** Sunday, Aug. 30th, TN Smokies Baseball is supporting the Smoky Mountain Service Dogs. Game starts at 5:05 p.m. First pitch of the game will be thrown by 2 disabled veterans from the Smoky Mt. Service Dogs and their dogs will accompany them. The TN Smokies baseball players will be wearing specially designed jerseys to be auctioned off with all proceeds benefiting the Smoky Mt. Service Dogs organization. The event is sponsored by Vanquish Worldwide and WATE-TV Channel 6. Buy your tickets now.
- **4th Annual Pull For Our Veterans Skeet and Trap Shoot (Patrice Collins):** On Sept. 19th-20th, Pull For Our Veterans is sponsoring the 4th Annual Fun Shoot to raise funds for the Wounded Warrior Project. You don't have to be an experienced skeet or trap shooter to participate. The event will be held at the Oak Ridge Sportsmen's Association, 2625 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Oak Ridge, TN. Registration forms are available at <http://orsaonline.org/wwevent.asp>. Visit the site for the schedule of events. \$100 entry fee. Sal Gonzales, who works for Wounded Warrior Project and a wounded warrior himself, will be guest speaker. He starred on *America's Got Talent* as he shared how music helped him through the pain. Registration will be accepted through Sept. 18th or until the event is sold out.
- **President's Statement (Owen Ragland):** The annual **ETMAC Veterans Day Luncheon** is Nov. 11th. This is the year of the Army. They're currently working with Army Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster on being guest speaker. He is Director of the Army Capabilities Integration Center,

and Deputy Commanding General at the Futures Center of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. Luncheon will be take place same location as last year's at the Knoxville Marriott downtown. More details to follow.

### **MILITARY UNITS UPDATES**

- **119<sup>th</sup> Command and Control Squadron (CMSgt Raymond Browning):** Still pursuing their cyber operations mission, offensive and defensive. Continuing operations training and getting everyone through school.
- **1-230 Air Cavalry Squadron (LTC Mel Clawson):** Converting from air cavalry to assault battalion. Are the proud owners of 10 slightly used UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from the 12th Cavalry. The helicopters are currently in Middle TN going through maintenance. They'll receive 2 training aircraft around Aug. 18th. Have ordered all their color changes and will be doing their casing and uncasing of the colors ceremony once those come in after Oct. In mid-October they will be having their Family and Employer Support Day in all 3 locations, where families can come out and view the new helicopters and employers can come see what the new mission is.
- **134<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing (Lt Col Jason Brock):** Continue to have airmen and aircraft deployed in support of CENTCOM operations. Preparing for the upcoming Smoky Mountain Air Show in April 2016. Received authorization to build a small air park. Procured an F-104 Starfighter at a closed Air Force base in Illinois, where their air museum just recently closed. The F-104 aircraft are currently being restored.
- **489<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion (CAPT Adam Stickley):** First time in several years they will have all of their unit back stateside. They will be conducting annual training. Will be attending the Spirit of '45 WWII Commemoration event.
- **844<sup>th</sup> Engineering Battalion (MAJ Andrew Wyman):** Major Wyman is the new S3 Operations Officer. They're wrapping up their training; still have 2 units in Ft. McCoy, WI. Said it was great to see all the support at ETMAC.
- **Air Force Recruiting Command (MSgt Chris Robson):** Had Change of Command ceremony on July 22nd inside The Hermitage in Nashville. WKRN-TV Channel 2 in Nashville filmed a small excerpt on the Change of Command ceremony. You can view this on the news station's website. One of the AF recruiters in Chattanooga was awarded an Achievement Medal for his actions in securing the safety of the civilians at the recruiting center that day. The Recruiting Command is also currently looking for recruiting opportunities to visit high schools during automotive or electronics classes. Send them any suggestions/referrals you may know.
- **Co D, 4th Combat Engineer Battalion (CAPT Kevin Druffel-Rodriguez):** Had their training in Ft. Knox, KY. Their upcoming Family Day is on Aug. 16th, in which both the Red Cross and ESGR will be assisting. At the end of August and September, they'll be doing another training in Camp Shelby, MS. Thank you to the ETMAC community for all the help and reception in the aftermath of the Chattanooga shootings.
- **I.G. Brown Training and Education Center (Lt Col David Michaud):** Graduating airman leadership school this week and NCO school next week. Currently all the students are testing. TEC is also hosting a Safety Summit this week. It's end of their fiscal year and they are busy planning for next year.
- **Navy Operational Support Center (LCDR Jeremy Farmer):** Tim White sends his thanks to all the support ETMAC has shown after the Chattanooga incident. Lt. Cmdr. Farmer said that 8 of their Chattanooga staff members were at the Knoxville NOSC that day. Sends thanks and prayers. Aug 15th there is a memorial in Chattanooga. Will send further details as soon as he receives.
- **USCG Auxiliary Division 12 (CDR Dave Roberts):** The Coast Guard just celebrated its 225th birthday on Tuesday. The U.S. Postal Service has issued a commemorative anniversary stamp in honor of the Coast Guard. Has had a very busy summer - 30% of time spent in office hours and inspections. More people have been on the water; it has been fairly safe, only a few incidents. They're in operational planning for the last Boomsday event in Knoxville. Vol Navy won't be there since the Tennessee Volunteers are playing in Nashville that weekend. There will be power boat races at Volunteer Landing that weekend. Bring your boats.

- **415th Engineer Detachment (MSG Josh Richardson):** 6 of their Army Reserve soldiers from East TN are currently deployed for 9 months.
- **UT Air Force ROTC (Major Mike Wilson):** Major Wilson just returned from Camp Shelby, MS where he was the commandant for the cadets' field training. More than 700 cadets just graduated. UT had 15 cadets that graduated. Have 50 cadets entering for their freshman class starting this semester. They also partnered with the University of TN to create a living, learning community for the first time for their freshman cadets, which provides dormitories where they can live around other cadets.

### VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS UPDATES

- **Air Force Association (Steve Dillenburg):** With school back in session, they have started the CyberPatriot competition again, which is the national competition for cyber security. Nationally, they have expanded it beyond high school to middle school, and are even starting some elementary programs. If anyone is associated with the high schools and middle schools, you are encouraged to mention the Patriot competition, or have a teacher contact the AFA at <http://www.afa.org/home>. Oct. 9th will be the final date to sign up for the CyberPatriot competition.

#### [EVENT]:

- October 12th: The Air Force Association will be holding their annual Brig. Gen. Bud Bacon Memorial Golf Tournament, which is a major fundraiser for the AFA. The funds go toward their local schools for teacher recognition and grants.

- **American Legion (Rod Meyers):** Are looking for a new permanent home, as the building they were originally in was built in the 1930s and is no longer inhabitable. Any donations are welcomed toward the effort.

#### [EVENTS]:

- Aug. 15th: American Legion Post 2 is sponsoring the Charles "Ken" Gray Memorial Ride named "Ride the Rhino to the Island." The event is a fundraiser for the American Legion. \$20 per motorcycle or automobile. The 138 mile ride starts by departing at Tennessee Smokies Stadium at 10 a.m. to arrive at The Island, 131 Island Dr., Pigeon Forge. For more information, visit their Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/Post2Knoxville?rf=264731066963958>
- Sept. 7th: Next monthly meeting at Red Cross Bldg., 6921 Middlebrook Pike, Knoxville. Meetings are held the first Monday of each month.
- Nov. 11th: Knoxville's Annual Veterans Day Parade. Parade begins at 10:40 a.m. Visit <http://legionknox.com/> for more information.

- **American Red Cross (Jess Hernandez):** Still have Nurse Assistant Training Program Scholarships available. \$1,100 scholarships. Evening classes are also offered. Applicants can be active duty, military, guard/reserve, veteran, and their immediate family members are also eligible. Deadline to apply is September 1st. Let Red Cross know of any nominations and RC will contact them. For more information on the program, visit <http://www.redcross.org/tn/knoxville/local-programs/nursing-and-health-education> See Jess for an application packet or contact the Red Cross office at (865) 584-2999.
- **Ben Atchley State Veterans Home (Doug Ottinger):** The veterans' home currently has 2 open beds if anyone knows of a veteran who is in the hospital or on a waiting list. Also the veteran's home has opportunities for guest speakers to come out and talk to the groups. Contact Doug for scheduling opportunities.
- **East Tennessee Veterans Treatment Courts (Freddie Owens):** Knoxville Regional Veterans Mental Health Council received calls after the Chattanooga incident from concerned families and spouses. You can refer any individuals to <http://tnvhc.org/> for more information on contacting the support group. In Monroe County, TNVHC held an in-service day where 1100 patrolmen and 13 road officers were trained last week in how to deal with mental health affected veterans. Currently have 3 justice-involved veterans (JIVs) from outside counties in the Veterans Treatment Court. Contact Freddie if know of any veteran referrals for the Veterans Treatment Court system.

- **Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (Jack D'Araujo):** Still have about 21,000 guardsman and reservists mobilized on federal active duty. Is glad to support the Marines Reserves Family Day. On Aug. 19th-20th, ESGR will be supporting the Food City Race Nights in Knoxville and Bristol. Also offered ESGR support to LTC Clawson for the 1-230 Air Cavalry's Family Day event.
- **Knox County Veterans Services Office (Tom Humphries):** The president signed into law H.R. 91, the Veterans Identification Card Act 2015, which creates a veteran's ID card with picture, name, and an ID number. Veterans will have to pay for the card. Card will be produced by the VA. Also, for those Marines and sailors that were at Camp Lejeune from the 1950s to 1987, VA is now looking at 3 presumptive disabilities associated with the water contamination. For more information, visit the VA website at: <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/includes/viewPDF.cfm?id=2720> For questions or assistance on veteran benefits, contact Tom Humphries at the Knox County Veterans Service Office at (865) 215-5645.
- **Marine Corps League (Eddie Knoebel):** Next Safety break is in September, from 4-7 p.m., which will be set up at the rest area off the I-40 and I-81 split. They set up coffee and lemonade for travelers. For more information on the Knoxville Marine Corps League, visit <http://mclknox.org/>

**[EVENTS]:**

- Aug. 22nd: MCL hosting 20th Anniversary at Rothchild Catering and Conference Center.
- Sept. 26th: Marine Mud Run. Registration is open. For more information, visit <http://www.knoxmud.org/>
- Sept. 27th: WWII MOH Marine recipient Lt. Alexander "Sandy" Bonnyman Jr. will be laid to rest after 71 years. Sept. 27th is the tentative date the family will bury him at the Knoxville family plot. Marine Corps League is assisting in organizing the shuttles to the services to the cemetery due to limited parking.
  - Sept. 25-27th: Patrice reports the arrival of Bonnyman Jr. will be a 3 day event. Sept. 25th his remains will arrive at the air base. There will be a processional for him lying in state on Sept. 26th at a Knoxville venue where the community can come to pay their respects. Sept. 27th will be the burial and service, and afterwards a possible community reception. More details to follow.
- **Military Order of the World Wars (Nolan Sharbel):** MOWW meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Rothchild Catering and Conference Center. 11 a.m. for lunch and social hour. 12-1 p.m. for regular meeting and guest speaker. Membership is open to all uniformed services to include the Coast Guard, the National Health Service, and the National Meteorological departments such as the National Weather Service. Looking for members right now, especially young members. A November date is being set for their Massing of the Colors ceremony.
- **Project Healing Waters (Wayne Nobles):** PHW met with VA officials at HUDVASH (a VA program that provides permanent housing to homeless veterans) in which they procured 12 volunteers for the PHW cause.

**[EVENTS]:**

- Aug. 15th: Saw Works Brewing Co. has joined to help raise funds for Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing by holding Saw Works Band Saw 2015 Brewery Event on Saturday, August 15th, from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. Proceeds will be donated to Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing. Saw Works will be having its 5th year anniversary and is celebrating with Band Saw 2015, a lineup of 5 live music bands, local food trucks, and new beers brewed - a special beer Saw Works named No Easy Day IPA, they will be selling the packaged product and rolling it out for the first time at the event. \$2 of every case sold will be donated to Project Healing Waters. Their goal is to raise \$30,000 for Project Healing Waters on August 15th. General admission tickets are \$25 each. Anyone who comes in military uniform gets in free. Visit their website for more information on Band Saw 2015: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1587078>

- Aug. 23rd: They will be holding their Smoky Mountain Sporting Clays Tournament at the new Blackberry Farm Smoky Mountain Sports Club in Louisville, TN, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sept. 18th: PHW's video "Teach a Man to Fish" will be screening as part of the Knoxville Film Festival during the 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. block. Tickets can be purchased at the Knoxville Film Fest's website <http://www.knoxvillefilmfestival.com/>

Project Healing Waters is an organization registered with the **Kroger Community Rewards Program**; 3 cents per dollar spent go to the local Knoxville Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing program. Log on to <https://www.kroger.com/communityrewards> to participate. For more information on Project Healings Waters, visit: <http://www.projecthealingwaters.org/>

- **Vietnam Veterans of America (Phil Claxton)**: Meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Red Cross Building, 6921 Middlebrook Pike, Knoxville. Knox Co. veterans service officer Thomas Humphries will be the guest speaker at VVA's next meeting. Fall 2015 is the tentative date for the Welcome Home Gulf War veterans event. More details and exact date to come. For more information on VVA or their upcoming events, contact Don Smith by email [Donandmarysmith@aol.com](mailto:Donandmarysmith@aol.com) or by phone at (931) 335-0477.
- **Volunteers of America (Debbie Dotson)**: Knoxville Area Homeless Veterans Stand Down event is Sept. 26th, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Knoxville National Guard Armory. The Stand Down event bring homeless veterans together who are provided access to community resources needed to begin addressing their problems and rebuilding their lives. For more information on the event, visit <http://www.kavsd.org/>
- **Women Veterans of America - Chapter 44 (Jessica King)**: Working on their Sharp's Ridge Memorial Park project. Are looking for people experienced in construction and landscaping that can assist in those aspects of the project. Anyone in the community can help. They started up a GoFundMe website where donations are welcomed. Next project meeting is August 6th at 6:30 p.m., at the Golden Corral on Clinton Highway. WVA's monthly meetings are held at the Ben Atchley State Veteran's Home on the 3rd Saturday of every month. For more information, visit their website at <http://wvachapter44.org/>
- **East Tennessee Veterans Memorial Association (Joleen Dewald)**: In joint venture with the American Legion, ETVMA is currently raising funds for the Woody Williams project, where a Gold Star Families Monument would be placed in all 50 states. WWII Marine and Medal of Honor recipient Woody Williams made a surprise appearance and announcement at today's meeting to speak about the progress being made. A memorial honoring Gold Star families in Knoxville could soon become a reality. He said they hope to break ground in Knoxville in September. To support the project with the Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation or to donate, visit <http://hwwmohfoundation.org/>

- ❖ To become an ETMAC member, go to <https://www.etmac.org/> or see any ETMAC officer after the meeting. You do not have to be military/veteran to join, need only a desire to support ETMAC's mission.
- ❖ Parking validations are available for those who park in Market Square Garage during the monthly meetings. See Patrice to have your parking validated.

**Next Meeting: Thursday, September 3rd at the Knoxville Chamber – 8:30 a.m.**