

We Honor Veterans Newsletter



January 2025

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Celebration 2025

Gilchrist's 7th annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration is on Sunday, March 30, 2025, at Martin's West. The celebration begins at 12:00 noon.

The Keynote Speaker will be Captain Charlie Plumb.

Captain Charlie Plumb served as a Navy Fighter Pilot and was a Vietnam War POW. He is also an author and a top motivational speaker. During his nearly six years of captivity, Captain Charlie Plumb distinguished himself among his fellow prisoners as a professional in underground communications and served for two of those years as the Chaplain in his camp. Since his return home, more than 4,000 audiences in nearly every industry have been spellbound as Captain Plumb draws parallels between his P.O.W. experience and the challenges of everyday life.

Here is a brief video of Charlie Plumb talking about his parachute. This will give you a great reason to attend this event and see him in person:

[Capt. Charlie Plumb's Parachute Packer Story \(youtube.com\)](#)

Here are comments from those who have attended this welcome home celebration in the past:

“It's a wonderful service that Gilchrist offers ...and everything you do is professional and caring.”

“Every volunteer, staff person and participant were knowledgeable, warm, and dedicated to the Vietnam veteran.”

“It is a good event for me to open-up about my experiences. I have found that those who didn't go to Vietnam don't typically understand.”

We need your help! Please spread the word about this event. We would like to reach as many Vietnam veterans as possible.

Registration will begin in early February. Check the following page for the “Registration” link in February. Then register! We hope to see you there!

[Welcome Home Celebration for Vietnam Veterans | Gilchrist](#)

This **free event** is supported 100% by community donations. If you know of someone who would like to become a sponsor or if you would like to donate, please visit the Gilchrist website link above and click on the link that reads: Donate to the 2025 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration.

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans.

Proud Marine Jim Sandoz

Jim Sandoz was born in Baltimore, Maryland on February 9th, 1947. After graduating from high school, Jim attended Mount St. Mary's College. In 1966, while still in college, Jim enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. When asked why he enlisted, Jim responded saying it was a sense of patriotism and duty.

Following boot camp at Parris Island, Jim was trained in communications.

Jim was then assigned to an Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company and they shipped out for Vietnam. Jim was responsible for directing naval gunfire. Jim directed most of the naval gunfire from the backseat of an O-1 Bird Dog observation plane. The Cessna OE-1/O-1 Bird Dog's combat service began in the Korean War, where it served in a scouting role for Army and Marine units, followed by active utilization in the Vietnam War as a forward air control aircraft.

Jim Sandoz was interviewed as part of the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration. To hear Jim describe his time in Vietnam in detail, click on the link below.

[Oral History Details | Oral History | Vietnam War Commemoration](#)

Jim was discharged in 1969 and went back to Mount St. Mary's College. Jim was introduced to his future wife, Shirley, in 1969, and they married in 1971. Jim and Shirley were married for 50 years and had four loving children. Jim spent a long career in the biology department at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC).

After Jim retired, he became a veteran volunteer with Gilchrist supporting their We Honor Veterans (WHV) program. There are a number of veteran-related activities carried out by the Gilchrist veteran volunteers. The one in which Jim was the most involved was the Salute to Service Tributes. Gilchrist veteran volunteers conduct several hundred tributes each year to honor veterans under hospice care. Jim was a member of many tribute teams for a number of years. Jim was always available to recognize the military service of fellow veterans.

Jim was recently honored with his own Salute to Service Tribute. With over 40 family and friends present, the team of Gilchrist staff and veteran volunteers thanked Jim for his service to our country. When the veterans presented Jim with an honor salute, Jim proudly returned a salute so sharp it would make a Marine Corps drill instructor proud.

Semper Fi Jim.

Marine Jim Sandoz



Jim Sandoz with the Gilchrist Team

Army & Air Force Veteran Cephus Prioleau, Sr.

Cephus Prioleau entered the Army in 1946. Three years later in March of 1949, Private First Class Cephus Prioleau was honorably discharged from the Air Force. Note that in 1941 the Army Air Corps became a part of the new U.S. Army Air Forces. On September 18, 1947, the United States Air Force became a separate military service. This makes Cephus unique in terms of serving in two branches of the military on one enlistment.

Cephus entered the military at Fort Jackson, South Carolina and then was stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He completed his basic training at Lackland Base in Texas, then went to Denver, Colorado. Next, Cephus was sent to Spokane, Washington, and was discharged from March Air Force Base in California. While in the service, he had an opportunity to meet General Benjamin O. Davis, the first African American Brigadier General of the USAF. Cephus worked in the Orderly Room and was once awarded \$75.00 and a trip home for being the best-groomed enlisted man on base.

Cephus was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute conducted by a team of Gilchrist military veteran volunteers. Many of his eight children and grandchildren were present to participate in this important event. The tribute included an opening prayer, singing of the National Anthem, and the Pledge of Allegiance. Cephus was presented with a certificate from Gilchrist, a We Honor Veterans pin from the Veterans Administration, and a patriotic lap blanket handmade by a Gilchrist volunteer. With a Gilchrist music therapist present, everyone sang several patriotic songs, including the Air Force song. The military veterans presented Cephus with an honor salute followed by a closing prayer and the singing of God Bless America.



Cephus Prioleau with the Gilchrist Team

Cephus Prioleau, Sr. was born on September 22, 1927, and hails from Alvin, South Carolina, located north of Charleston. He grew up in Alvin, where he met and married the love of his life Sarah Bryant. Cephus and Sarah moved their family to Baltimore, Maryland in the early 1950's. They were married almost 74 years and had nine children: Marva, Maxine, Wendy, Adrena, Cephus Jr. (CJ), Gregory, Theodore (Teddy), Janie Shierelle, and Thelanious (Laney). Cephus has a total of 58 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Cephus excelled in school and was a basketball whiz on the high school courts. He later went to masonry school and attended Bible School at an extension of Morris College in Baltimore, Maryland.

Cephus worked at Bethlehem Steel, "The Point" for 39 years and was a foreman for several years before retiring. Cephus and his family were faithful members of

Mt. Sinai Baptist for at least 25 years, until he became a devoted member and Deacon of Fountain Baptist Church in 1987. Rev. Marcus Jones is the current pastor. Cephus has received various awards for his service in the church, the United Missionary Baptist Convention, and the Deacons' Conference of Baltimore.

Cephus' experiences and hobbies have included praying and serving communion to the sick, reading and teaching the Bible, singing as part of the Bright Stars, a quartet group; planting his vegetable garden, fishing, cooking "fried" bread, taking family trips, transporting neighborhood children to activities, working on the Selective Service Board, volunteering at a food pantry for needy families, and listening to gospel, hymns, Big Band, and jazz. Cephus believes he will always be a US soldier at heart. Attenhut!



Cephus Prioleau returning the Honor Salute

Army Veteran Bob Little

Curtland “Bob” Little was born in Baltimore, Maryland on July 19, 1945. When asked if his middle name was Robert so that his nick name was Bob, he smiles and shares an interesting story.

At the time when Bob was born, his older brother was in the Army serving in Europe during WWII. His brother wrote a letter to his mother saying his best friend Bob had been killed in combat and could she name her baby after him. Unfortunately, the letter arrived after Curtland was born. However, his family started calling him Bob and the name has been with him for 79 years.

Bob graduated from Baltimore City College High School in 1963 and immediately enlisted in the Army. Bob was sent to Fort Jackson in South Carolina for boot camp and advanced training. Later that year he was deployed to Germany where he worked as a personnel specialist. Bob was discharged in 1966.

Returning to civilian life, Bob worked for Smith, Kline and French Laboratories in Baltimore. Later he went to work for the Social Security Administration in Baltimore.

Bob married Minnie Pearson in June of 1983. Bob likes to point out that Minnie’s birthday is November 11th – Veterans Day. Bob and Minnie loved their day trips as well as their periodic trips to Las Vegas.

Bob Little was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute conducted by a team of Gilchrist military veteran volunteers. The tribute was held outside on a beautiful day with lots of family and friends in attendance. Following an opening prayer, everyone joined in to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Bob was presented with a certificate from Gilchrist, A We Honor Veterans pin from the Veterans

Administration, a Vietnam Era pin also from the Veterans Administration, and a handmade thank you card made by a school student. Bob also was given a handmade patriotic blanket made by a Gilchrist volunteer. Minnie was presented with a “Proud Wife of a Veteran” pin and a patriotic scarf. The veteran team presented Bob with a formal salute, which he proudly returned. The tribute concluded with a closing prayer.



Bob Little (4th from left) with the Gilchrist Team

Samuel Waters - Proud Army Veteran

Samuel “Sam” Waters was born in Cambridge, Maryland in 1946. Sam enlisted in the Army in 1966 and was sent to Fort Benning for his basic training.

Sam served in combat in Vietnam and when asked tells you that when he first arrived in Vietnam, he was assigned to be a tunnel rat. Later he was assigned to be a sniper. Sam was honorably discharged from the Army in 1968.

After leaving the military, Sam attended Delaware State University on a full football scholarship. He graduated with a degree in social work and worked for many years as a Social Worker with the Baltimore City Department of Social Services. Sam later moved up to an administrative position in Procurement with the Department of General Services, State of Maryland. He retired after 30 plus years of service. Sam Waters was known as someone who loved helping people less fortunate than himself.

Sam met Marilyn in 1980, and they were married in October of 1987. While dating, Sam would show his love and affection for Marilyn by sending her red roses, giving her jewelry, or just simply saying that he loved her. Sam and Marilyn have two sons: Marco and Jeremy. Sam also has two godsons, Curtis and Tyrone and a goddaughter Fefe. He also had another goddaughter, Alexis. Sam was very close to his six siblings.

From kindergarten through middle school years, Sam would coach his sons in soccer, basketball, baseball, and football. Sam took his job seriously as a father and godfather. He was very active in their lives, spending time with them. Parents in the neighborhood were always coming to Sam for guidance and advice regarding raising their sons. A lot of Marco and Jeremy's friends looked up to Sam as a father figure. He loved watching football, baseball, basketball, and watching John Wayne cowboy movies. Due to his love of helping others, when Hurricane Katrina hit, Sam was asked by the Maryland Governor's Office to travel to New Orleans to help with the rescue and relief efforts. Sam of course headed for New Orleans. According to his godson Curtis, that is the kind of man that Sam is.... a devoted husband, father, godfather, and a man who believes in helping others.

Sam Waters was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute by a team of Gilchrist military veteran volunteers. Following an opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance, Sam was presented with a certificate from Gilchrist, We Honor Veterans and Vietnam Veterans pins from the Veterans Administration, and a handmade blanket made by a Gilchrist volunteer. Marilyn was presented with a Proud Wife of a Veteran pin and a patriotic scarf. At the conclusion of the tribute, the team saluted Sam. Sam proudly stood and returned a sharp salute that would have made his bootcamp drill instructor proud.



Sam Waters with the Gilchrist Team

Air Force Veteran John Freund

John Freund was born on June 13, 1946, in Baltimore, Maryland. John was delivered by his grandmother who was a nurse midwife. John grew up in Baltimore and graduated from St. Stephen School in 1964.

In 1965 John entered the Air Force where he was trained as a jet aircraft and engine mechanic. John spent his entire enlistment working on aircraft at MacDill AFB in Florida. John was discharged from the military in 1969.

While John was in high school, he learned car mechanics from his father. After the Air Force he worked as a car mechanic and worked with his uncle working on houses. In 1972 John joined the Baltimore City Police Department. John worked in the Western District as a foot patrolman. John befriended owners of the small businesses on his "beat" with some of those friendships still in place. John retired from the Baltimore City Police Department in 1999.

When John was 15 years old, he met Nancy Holden. Nancy was an older woman of 16. They stayed together and were married on July 23, 1966. John and Nancy had three children: Nancy, Sherri, and John Jr. John and Nancy have seven grandchildren: Sam, Jake, Josh, Gabby, Felicia, Patrick, and Ryan. They also have three great grandchildren: Jesse, Jace, and Jossiah.

John was an avid bass fisherman and was a member of the Baltimore Bass Busters. He enjoyed teaching his kids and grandkids how to fish. According to his family, John knew how to fix and build anything. John was the kind of person who would do anything for anyone.

John was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute conducted by Gilchrist volunteers. The tribute opened with a prayer, the singing of the National Anthem, and the Pledge of Allegiance. John was presented with a We Honor Veterans pin from the Veterans Administration, a Vietnam Era Veteran pin from the Veterans Administration, a certificate from Gilchrist, and a handmade patriotic blanket. A Gilchrist music therapist played patriotic music, and everyone sang along when the Air Force song was played. The tribute concluded with a formal salute, a closing prayer, and the singing of God Bless America.



John Freund in Uniform



John and Nancy Freund with the Gilchrist Team

Breathe Easier: COPD Awareness for Veterans

Imagine feeling winded after taking just a few steps. For many Veterans with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), this is an everyday reality. COPD affects millions of Americans.

Veterans can face unique risks for the disease due to military exposures to dust, fumes and chemicals during service. Currently, [COPD is one of more than two dozen presumed conditions](#) related to the PACT Act.

It's important to remember that COPD isn't just about difficulty breathing. It's about managing your health before symptoms worsen.

Early detection and why it matters

It might be easy to dismiss symptoms like shortness of breath after going up the stairs, a lingering cough that just doesn't go away, or wheezing after simple activities as part of aging or related to general fatigue. But what may seem like minor inconveniences could be your body's way of signaling an underlying condition and could be early warning signs of COPD.

Chronic bronchitis and emphysema ([two common types of COPD](#)) can make you work harder to breathe especially when you are active and need to breathe faster. With chronic bronchitis, cells in airways produce more mucus than normal and this buildup can cause inflammation, impacting air travel in and out of your lungs.

For those with emphysema, damaged or weakened airways affect oxygen travel throughout your body making it harder to breathe.

Catching and addressing symptoms early can make all the difference. Detecting and treating a disease early can help slow progression and greatly improve your quality of life. When you seek medical attention for issues that can be easy to dismiss, you pave the way for better health, more energy and greater well-being.

VA resources and support for Veterans with COPD

Cutting-edge screenings, treatments and pulmonary care specifically tailored for Veterans are available through VA health care. [Telehealth services](#) make it even easier to access care from home, and new innovations in [TelePulmonology and TeleSpirometry care](#) have started making lung function testing easier to access as well.

With lifestyle adjustments, exercise programs and breathing techniques, in-person and virtual resources are here to help you stay active and reclaim control over your breathing if you have COPD.

For more information:

[Inside Veterans Health - VA News](#)

December 10, 2024

Hans Petersen

VHA News Editor and Air Force Veteran

Uniform Smiles

“Halt!” shouted our drill instructor. He had noticed that, for the umpteenth time, a recruit kept going to his right on a left command. Our instructor approached the directionally challenged Marine and stomped on his left foot. “Now,” he said, “when I say ‘left,’ it’s the one that hurts.” —Wayne Schroeder, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Please Share

If you enjoyed reading this edition, please forward a copy to other veterans that you know so that they can also enjoy the newsletter. If you are reading a shared copy and would like to receive your own copy of future editions, please send an email with your request to kmcdonnell@gilchristcares.org.

Looking For a Few Good Volunteers

Would you like to be a Gilchrist volunteer? We are always looking for volunteers – especially those who have military experience. Our military veteran volunteers are involved in Salute to Service Tributes for veterans under hospice care, visiting public schools to talk about military service, meeting with veterans to talk about their military service, supporting our annual Welcome Home event for Vietnam Veterans, and many other activities.

If you would like to learn how to become a volunteer, contact Gilchrist at kmcdonnell@gilchristcares.org.

Gilchrist Cares

You may know Gilchrist best for the care we provide people near the end of life. But we offer so much more than hospice. Today’s Gilchrist extends services to individuals with serious illness who need our care and support well in advance of hospice care. We also provide counseling and support before and after the loss of a loved one. Please visit the Gilchrist website to learn more.

[Gilchrist providing care at every stage of serious illness \(gilchristcares.org\)](http://gilchristcares.org)

We Want Your Input

If you have suggestions for content you would like to see in future issues of the Gilchrist We Honor Veterans Newsletter, please contact us at kmcdonnell@gilchristcares.org.



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