



**From the Executive Director**

By Tammany McDaniel

The summer sun may have lured some of us to the beach or reminded others that a nifty invention—air conditioning—makes indoors the best retreat. Whichever is your refuge, we have crossed the middle point of the summer and are moving toward



Tammany McDaniel  
Executive Director

the start of school in many areas. I've been traveling throughout, speaking with groups and making connections. As I discussed travel plans with volunteer members in California, I shared that I'd be heading to Needles, CA, in late August, where summer temperatures regularly reach 115 degrees or more. My visits have a purpose—I'd like to know our members. As I travel to areas, I often ask, 'What is your WHY?' and I have been amazed at the answers. More than eight months have elapsed since I accepted this leadership position and the time has both flown and had moments of stillness. It can be easy to forget how little I knew when I started, and it's humbling how much I have yet to learn. With your careful guidance and nudges, I'm finding the right path forward—many thanks!

Our National Quilt Block Drive 2020 is being planned by Suzanne DiCarlo and will be announced in an upcoming newsletter. Since January 1, 2019, we have received 10,230 blocks for 2019! This is wonderful. We've been directing the blocks to areas with few

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**HERO AWARDED QOV REMEMBERS THE FALLEN**

By Les Wallace and Marianne Elliott,  
Patriots Triangle QOV,  
Virginia Co-Coordinator

Memorial Day is a time to remember the fallen, but Memorial Day 2019 was to be different for Brigadier General John "Jack" Nicholson.

During this year's commemorative activities in Williamsburg, VA, students from Veritas Preparatory Academy assisted the Patriots Triangle QOV group in awarding BG Nicholson his QOV. With 33 years of Army service, BG Nicholson spent 30 months with infantry units in Vietnam. He is the recipient of the Silver Star Medal for valor in combat during the Vietnam war.

Before his QOV award, BG Nicholson spoke to the audience of Vietnam veterans, local residents, and the academy students, not of himself, but shared personal accounts of a true hero of the Vietnam war and remembered the fallen—Army Captain Humbert Roque 'Rocky' Versace.

A 1959 West Point graduate, CPT Versace served two tours in Vietnam. Unfortunately with less than two weeks remaining in his second tour, CPT Versace was captured during a dangerous mission and spent the next two years as a POW. The Viet Cong executed him on September 26, 1965.

BG Nicholson shared details from his personal knowledge, experience, and interactions with Rocky, including his

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Veritas Preparatory Academy students Nathan Howerton and Samantha Leftwich awarded the QOV to BG John Nicholson, US Army, Ret. Patriots Triangle QOV co-coordinator Les Wallace conducted the ceremony.

volunteers, little access to fabric, or a high backlog. In order to stimulate creativity, watch for an upcoming announcement from QOVF Membership Director Jackie Dudek. She will be putting out a block design challenge that focuses on designs that do not feature red, white, or blue. Yes, it's true! A QOV does not have to be the national colors.

Our summer Mystery Quilt and people's choice have kicked off. The winner and other photos will appear in a future issue of this newsletter, as well as on our website gallery. We want to ensure that State Coordinators know how much QOVF depends upon their leadership. To that end, we'll be working with them on the formation of an advising group. This group will bring us more grassroots information and better allow us to align QOVF initiatives with member needs.

A funny thing happened when we issued the flyer for the "Cruise and Quilt." We received e-mails with questions regarding whether it was legitimate. Yes, it is. Watch for announcements regarding the teachers and patterns chosen for each of the cruises to come soon.

If you receive the Keepsake Quilting Catalogue, please look in their next issue where they'll be featuring QOV, highlighting a pattern with a corresponding kit.

Getting back to my travel. It will take at least two years to visit the contiguous 48 states. Of course, Ginger Fondren, Assistant Executive Director has volunteered to visit Hawaii, though I've noted to her that the distance and expense will likely preclude a visit this year.

And finally, I'm seeking to create a unifying statement or description of the QOV Quilter. I'd like to develop a motto, avoiding phrases prominently used by other organizations. "Proud To Serve" comes to mind. I'm trying to find our essence and I welcome your feedback. What unifying statement could we turn into a motto? My electronic door is always open, so email me with your ideas. Thank you for your dedication, passion, and creativity. Thank you for your service.



BG John Nicholson, US Army, Ret. with his QOV created by Tammy Wallace, Patriots Triangle QOV co-coordinator.

three attempts to rescue CPT Versace from his captors. CPT Versace demonstrated exceptional leadership and resolute adherence to the tenets of the Code of Conduct from the time he entered POW status. Despite being locked in an isolation box, he led his fellow prisoners, raising their morale by singing and by leaving inspiring messages at the latrine. He was last heard by fellow prisoners belting out "God Bless America" at the top of his lungs.

In July 2002, President George W. Bush posthumously awarded CPT Versace the Medal of Honor, the first time the nation's highest honor was bestowed on a POW for courage in the face of captivity.

For a video on CPT Rocky Versace's life, his devotion to service for others, and the complete Medal of Honor citation, click [here](#).

## HOW NU-BLU GOT WRAPPED UP IN QOV

By Daniel Routh

We had a vision for Nu-Blu from the very first day we formed the band in 2003. We wanted to be a part of something that was bigger than ourselves. But really, more than just wanting to be a part, we wanted to be involved and make a real difference. As we grew from regional, to national, then international touring artists, we were always on the search for an entity or charity to connect with. We knew when it was right we would recognize it.

Fast forward to a music festival in Victorville, CA. It was hot, 115-degrees-in-the-shade hot. We had already performed

our first set of the day, and were looking forward to our evening set and cooler temps. We kept noticing a group displaying a quilt and the promoter had mentioned some type of presentation. Well, to be honest, our first thought was, "quilts in this heat, they must be nuts!" The emcee of the event began sharing details of what the presentation would be about. The group was Quilts of Valor. A World War II veteran, a Vietnam veteran, and an Afghanistan veteran would be honored that day. Each veteran was awarded a quilt, and given thanks for service and sacrifice.

Having multiple family members that were in combat in WWII, and

Hailing from Siler City, NC, husband-and-wife duo, Daniel and Carolyn Routh, are two of the four members of the bluegrass group Nu-Blu.



holding strongly to the belief that veterans are the REAL heroes and role models in our nation, we sat down. The presentation had only just begun and we knew, THIS WAS IT! This was the organization that we had been looking for. The QOVF presentation stole the show that day. It carried more impact than any music from any of the bands. We were scheduled to perform our song “Family Quilt” in our evening set, and it couldn’t have been more perfect. After

hearing it, several of the QOVF members approached us and shared more about QOV and how that song fit in so well with the quilting culture. That was our confirmation—we had the song and the connections to make something big happen.

So it’s official! Nu-Blu is so happy to announce that QOVF is our official partner. We are thrilled. In addition to providing recorded music for fundraisers, we have also organized East Coast

(Charleston, SC) and West Coast (Long Beach, CA) quilting cruises ([www.bluegrassandbluewatercruise.com](http://www.bluegrassandbluewatercruise.com)), and we are working hand in hand with your Executive Director to bring the message of what QOVF is all about to a much broader audience. We look forward to everything that we will do in the future to help with fundraising and wrapping QOVs around as many veterans as possible. Thank you so much for stitching Nu-Blu into your family quilt.

*Nu-Blu travels full-time across the USA each year. We would love to work with each of the QOV state groups as much as we can, so please let us know if you are interested in having Nu-Blu perform in your state or for your quilting group! More info can be found at [nu-blu.com](http://nu-blu.com).*

## QOVF PARTNERS WITH THE EYES OF FREEDOM

By Sharon Ledbetter

We are proud to announce the partnership between The Eyes of Freedom: Lima Company Traveling Memorial (EoF) and QOVF. The partnership brings awareness to our interwoven missions of honoring, remembering, and comforting those touched by war and those struggling with the invisible wounds of post-traumatic stress and survivor grief.

Similar to our own founder, Catherine Roberts, artist Anita Miller awoke in the middle of the night with a vision of the Lima Company memorial. Completed in 2008, the life-size portraits of the fallen Marines and Navy Corpsman are accurate likenesses of 23 men of Lima Company killed in action in Iraq—their eyes reflect the thousands of men and women who have given their lives and served our nation; their boots rest at the base of their portraits.

In addition to the oil paintings, Anita sculpted a life-size bronze entitled “Silent Battle” that was added to the traveling memorial. This powerful and emotional work depicts a grieving veteran holding the dog tags of his fallen friends. “Silent Battle” honors those lost to post-traumatic stress (PTS) and promotes veteran suicide awareness. Anita worked with Brian Zimmermann,



Mike Strahle, EoF Executive Director, and Anita Miller, artist and sculptor, unveil “Silent Battle” as part of the EoF Traveling Memorial.

the Army combat veteran who is the inspiration behind the bronze. He knows well the pain of PTS and has lost many comrades-in-arm to suicide. Anita envisioned “Silent Battle” wrapped in the likeness of a QOV.

Traveling the country with the EoF memorial is Mike Strahle, a Marine and Purple Heart recipient, who served with the fallen of Lima Company. Mike was badly injured in the explosion that also took the live of six fellow squad members.

The EoF Traveling Memorial brings communities together in a common dialogue helping heal the invisible wounds of war. Similarly, the presence of QOVF can enhance an EoF event offering another opportunity to increase awareness and bring communities together to comfort and heal service members and veterans.

*Questions about the EoF partnership with QOVF may be directed to Sharon Ledbetter, [lcqov.sharon@gmail.com](mailto:lcqov.sharon@gmail.com)*

## WWII VETERANS RECEIVE QOV IN NORMANDY

By Marsha Wilmot

A relative newcomer to QOVF, I completed my very first top in 2018. I knew I would be attending the 75th Anniversary D-day Commemoration in Normandy, France, in 2019. I asked QOV group coordinator Joan Wobbleton whether she thought a QOV award presentation at the event would be a good idea. Of course, she said, "Yes!"

I researched WWII veterans for many months and found Diane Hight, founder of Forever Young Senior Veterans, who was bringing fourteen veterans to France via a Beyond Band of Brothers Tour. We communicated numerous times and I remained hopeful she would find a veteran who had not yet received a quilt. Lo and behold, she found two in her group.

On June 5, 2019, at the Hotel Ibis Caen Centre in Caen, France, we awarded QOVs to Harold McMurrin and Harold Jalowsky.

Harold McMurrin was drafted into the 69th Infantry in May, 1943. After basic training he was sent to England to train for the D-Day invasion. Mr. McMurrin landed on Utah Beach on June 6, 1944, in the second wave of the invasion. After taking Utah Beach, his unit was assigned to General Patton's Third Army and they fought in the Battle of the Bulge. Mr. McMurrin was training for the invasion of Japan when the atomic bombs were dropped, ending the war. He can often be heard saying that he doesn't consider himself lucky to have survived. He considers himself "blessed that the good Lord kept him safe in his hands."

Following the war, Mr. McMurrin was discharged, later joining the Air Force Reserves where he served as an aircraft mechanic from 1949 to 1958. Today, Mr. McMurrin still works a 40-hour week as an airplane mechanic at Moontown Airport in Alabama.

Harold Jalowsky was born in New York City and grew up in northern New



*Mr. Harold Jalowsky, a WWII veteran in Caen, France, for 75th Anniversary D-Day events, was accompanied for his QOV award by his grandchildren, Sophie and Oliver Jalowsky of Denver, CO.*

Jersey. He was a PFC with the 9th Infantry Division, 47th regiment, and was a rifleman. He landed on Utah Beach on June 10, 1944 and was severely wounded in the Battle of St. Lo, spending two-and-a-half years in hospitals recovering from his wounds. He was awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. After the war, Mr. Jalowsky became a clinical psychologist. Later on, Harold and his wife started a business college. Harold has three children, four grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. He has been singing to Alzheimer's patients for 25 years as a volunteer.

It was a wonderful honor to present these quilts to two very special WWII heroes. It's an experience and privilege I will always treasure.

*WWII veteran Harold McMurrin was awarded his QOV in Caen, France, during events surrounding the 75th Anniversary of D-Day.*



### DID YOU KNOW?

QOVF partners with National Grange. Check out this [link](#) to see how quiltmaking content is shared with the Junior Grange.

## QOVF Certified Quilt Business Program

By Myra Coddens

Welcome aboard to our newest members of the Certified Quilt Business Program. The following businesses completed certification since the last newsletter:

The Stitchin' Post	Hattiesburg, MS
Creative Notions	West Point, NE
The Quilt Basket	York, NE
The Quilted Nest	Collingswood, NJ
Country Quilts	Holdenville, OK
Connie's Collectibles & Quilt Shop	Duncansville, PS

## Quilts Reported

**2012:** 6,169  
**2013:** 12,314  
**2014:** 17,373  
**2015:** 18,772  
**2016:** 19,051  
**2017:** 24,123  
**2018:** 30,745  
**2019:** 16,423

**Total: 225,533**

(from date of first recorded award through 31 July 2019)

*The mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor.*

### QOVF Core Values

Treating people with respect • Promoting excellence • Valuing service over self • Being accountable



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For more information about QOVF, see [www.QOVF.org](http://www.QOVF.org)

For more information about the BOD, the QOVF staff, and how to contact your State Coordinator (SC) go to [www.qovf.org/meet-us/](http://www.qovf.org/meet-us/)

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