



Photo credit to WWIA Guide Grady Rakestraw for this amazing landscape shot from the 7th Annual BC Black Bear Hunt

### **Notes From the Field: May 2018**

May was another exciting month at WWIA as we saw our Heroes take part in four outstanding events across the United States and Canada. The diversity of locations and events that we provide for our Heroes is a testimony to our amazing Hosts, donors, and volunteers. As we enter the second half of the year, we want to express our sincere appreciation to everyone who has graciously supported WWIA. Serving our Purple Heart Heroes is truly a team effort consisting of hundreds of dedicated and patriotic partners who give of their time, finances, resources, expertise, and most importantly, a selfless and generous heart. Thank you for standing with us to honor and bring healing to our Heroes.



## Events and Fundraisers

### 6th Annual KS Cast & Blast

*May 2nd - 7th*



Four of our Purple Heart Heroes were welcomed to Cawker City, Kansas for the 6th Annual KS Cast & Blast Event. On the evening of arrival, once settled, everyone went on a scouting mission to familiarize themselves with the hunting grounds and then had a nice dinner while they got acquainted. We are pleased to say that every Hero was able to harvest a bird during the event, with a total of six birds taken in all. The conversations and camaraderie between our Heroes was outstanding as there were plenty of stories shared about life, service-time, and hunting. The food, hospitality, and turkey hunting were equally amazing, and our Heroes could not have been more grateful for the kindness they were shown throughout their stay in Kansas. Our sincere appreciation to Host Carl Suter and friends for taking such good care of our Heroes and for continuing to raise the bar on this event. Additional thanks to all of the guides, volunteers, and supporters that helped make this event possible, including Ted, Herman, Cole, Austin, Nate, and Paula Jones. High praise and gratitude to WWIA Guide John Keeney and WWIA Lead Associate Matt Phillips for their tremendous attention and care throughout the five-day event.

*" I can't express how grateful I am. The hosts were the true heroes this weekend. I have been on a roller coaster with life over the past 18 months. It sure was nice to slow down for a long weekend. Thank you to everyone that had a hand in this event. "*

### 4th Annual W PA Turkey & Fishing Event

*May 17th - 20th*



The 4th Annual Western PA Turkey and Fishing Event was another great success! Three of our Warriors gathered in scenic Rural Valley, PA for some well-deserved downtime with their fellow Purple Heart brothers. The bonds formed between these Heroes were impressive and immediate, as there were many laughs and shared stories between them. Although the turkey hunting was challenging on this outing, the fishing proved to be on point as our Heroes were pulling in bass "like crazy," thoroughly enjoying their time on the water. Our Heroes expressed that this trip was exactly what they needed to help them regroup and reconnect. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Hosts Dan and Susan Bevevino for putting on another world-class event for our Heroes. Additional gratitude goes out to local Guides Steve and Jason Thacker for their knowledge and expertise, to Frank Condino for his assistance throughout the event, and to Stephanie Davis for her delicious home-cooking. We also want to recognize and thank WWIA Guide Jeremy Smith for his attentiveness and care during these four days.

*"I would like to thank everyone involved in the WWIA Foundation. The hunt I was invited to attend was amazing. I had all but given up on society, thinking that no one really cares about veterans anymore or if they ever really did. My mind has been changed. I now know that there are at least some people that give up their time, money, and homes to help us feel normal (if only for just a few days). It was good to be around other veterans, people who would laugh at a joke I told instead of looking at me like I have two heads. The woods have always been a safe place for me. A way to get away from my stresses. The time I spent in Western Pennsylvania felt like a miracle. Since my time in the Army I have never felt more at home (other than being home). The only time in years I haven't felt out of place or a burden. It was good for the soul to connect with people who I felt like truly cared for me. I cannot thank you all enough"*

### **Inaugural Ohio Masons Lake Erie Walleye Fishing**

***May 18th - 21st***



WWIA was pleased to introduce the Inaugural Ohio Masons Lake Erie Walleye Event to the spring lineup. Six of our Heroes traveled to Huron, Ohio for four days of camaraderie, great cooking, and world-class Walleye fishing! Our Heroes were welcomed warmly with an incredible shrimp boil upon their arrival on the shores of Lake Erie. The next day was spent fishing and all Heroes had good catches, then returned for a Walleye fish fry prepared by a grateful community and local fishermen. The next day our Heroes found out why Lake Erie is one of the premiere Walleye locations in the world as each Hero reached their limit of 5 trophy Walleye! This would not have been possible without the selfless dedication and expertise of the volunteer fishing guides that accompanied our Warriors. The last evening of the event was quite memorable as the Heroes reflected upon their time in Ohio and WWIA Guide Mark Broda presented WWIA challenge coins to the Heroes, volunteers, cooks, and guides that provided such great care and hospitality throughout the event. Our Purple Heart Heroes left the event with tremendous gratitude and coolers filled with Walleye as evidence of an amazing time spent with amazing people. We extend our appreciation to Host Virgil Tent and the Ohio Masons for conducting such a wonderful first-time event in honor of our Heroes. This event was truly a community effort and we thank each and every volunteer and supporter who participated. Additional praise and recognition to WWIA Guide Mark Broda and WWIA Lead Associate Dan Berryman for their exceptional coordination and teamwork throughout the event.

*" First of all, I would like to say many thanks to everyone who made this weekend possible. I am extremely humbled by the generosity of the people who donated their time, funding and resources. Walleye fishing is something I've wanted to experience for a long time and you guys made that happen. But more importantly the opportunity for fellowship and many laughs. My face and my diaphragm are sore from laughing so much, something I haven't done in a long time. This weekend came at the perfect time as I have been struggling with many things. Now I feel as though I am somehow more equipped with a better mindset to handle the many things that need my attention and more importantly, begin to heal and strengthen relationships with those closest to me. This foundation has further solidified my belief that there is no parallel to the healing in the outdoors I've found with other veterans and outdoorsman. Thank you again. "*



Two of our Heroes had the opportunity to travel to breathtaking Tatlayoko Lake, BC to participate in the 7th Annual BC Black Bear Hunt. This location boasts of scenic views and trophy bear hunting that even the most seasoned hunter would appreciate. This trip provided our Heroes with the perfect setting not only for world-class bear hunting but also for relaxing and building new friendships. The terrain was challenging but beautiful and many miles were covered in pursuit of trophy bears. Those long hikes were well worth it as both of our Heroes were able to harvest bears, with William tagging a nice black bear and Grady a beautiful brown bear. After hunting in the Canadian wilderness each day, our Heroes returned to Skinner Creek Ranch to enjoy some amazing home-cooked meals and easy conversation while gazing at incredible snow-capped vistas. Our heartfelt thanks to Doug and Julie McMann and family for your continued and faithful support of WWIA and our Heroes. We cannot thank you enough for your generosity throughout the years. A perfect example of their generosity is reflected in the fact that they make it a point to regularly donate harvested meat from their hunts to the Salvation Army as a way to give to those in need. We applaud them on their practice of sustainable harvesting and paying it forward! We would also like to recognize and thank WWIA Guide Grady Rakestraw for his assistance throughout this memorable excursion.

*"WWIA Thank you for an amazing hunting trip. Skinner Creek Outfitters is by far second to none. Thank you."*

### **SCI Southwest Ohio Chapter Annual Fundraiser**

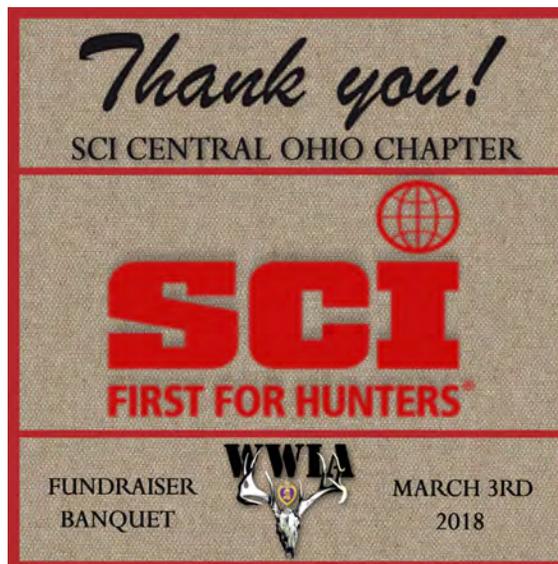
**March 3**



We would like to recognize and humbly thank the SCI Southwest Ohio Chapter for their outstanding efforts in hosting the 2018 Fundraiser Banquet in support of WWIA Events in Southwest Ohio. Our gratitude and thanks to WWIA Hosts Dan Doll and Dave Studenka for their continued coordination and leadership throughout the years. We appreciate the incredible dedication of this group to honor and support our Purple Heart Heroes! To learn more about the SCI Southwest Ohio Chapter, click [here](#).

### SCI Central Ohio Chapter Annual Fundraiser

*March 3*



It is with tremendous gratitude and appreciation that we recognize and thank the Central Ohio SCI Chapter for their incredibly generous donation of \$10,000 to WWIA as a result of

their 2018 Fundraiser Banquet. We applaud your dedication and support of our Purple Heart Heroes! Additional thanks to SCI Central Ohio Chapter President Mark Wehinger for his unwavering leadership and support. To learn more about the SCI Central Ohio Chapter, click [here](#).

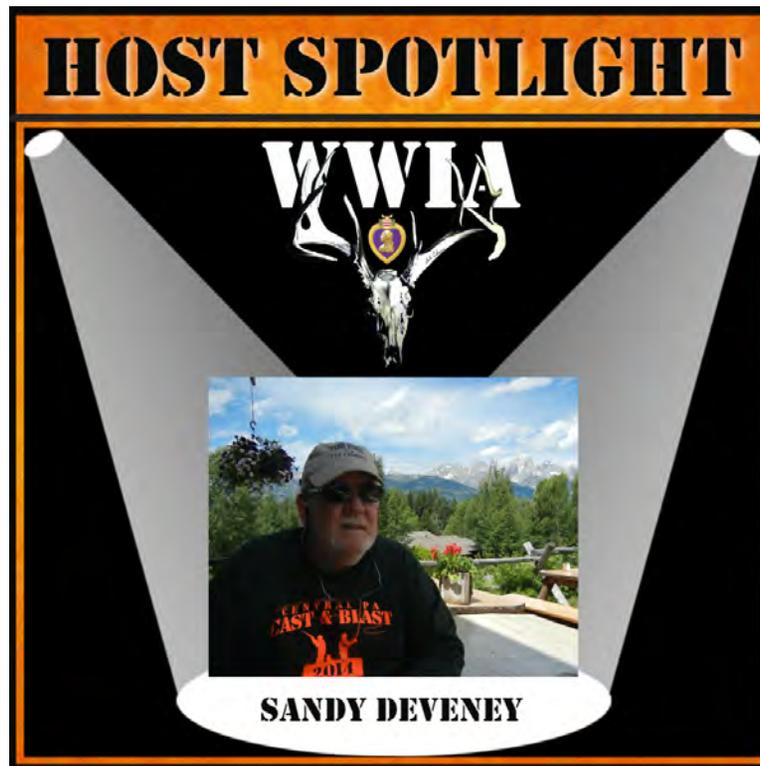
## 2nd Annual Gary Galliford Memorial Open Pool Tournament Fundraiser

April 27-29



The 2018 Gary Galliford Memorial Open pool tournament was a smashing success! This annual fundraiser honoring the memory of Gary Galliford was proudly hosted at the [Top Hat Tavern](#) by owners Darrell Fredrickson and Jeff Schelin. There was a strong demand for this event as it garnered a packed tournament field of 96 pool players with almost a dozen players on the waiting list. The competition between the entrants was outstanding and a good time was had by all. The memorial fundraiser also featured some amazing raffle prizes and a great assortment of food. Our sincere thanks to the family of Gary Galliford for their generosity in asking that the \$2,000 raised from this tournament be directed to WWIA to benefit the local Bayfield Cast & Blast Event held in the fall. We would like to also recognize Chris and Brenda Dising for their continued efforts and support of WWIA, and also to James and Debra Tischler for their generous donation. We also applaud these amazing sponsors for generously supporting this event: McDermott Pool Cues for their beautiful custom pool cues, Scott Vee at Vee's Marketing, Greg Brisky at Dwight Swanstrom Insurance, Chris Warren at Manions Foods, Courtney Griffin at Road Trip Limousine, Andrew Perfetti at Perfetti Photograph, Jack Peterson at Eagle Amusements (Elena Eagle Darts), John Stich at Midwest Poolplayers Association, Dean Kevin Baillie at Kro Bar, Andrew Collins at Superior Beverages.

## WWIA May Spotlight



For our May Spotlight, we are proud to introduce you to WWIA Central PA Cast & Blast Host Sandy Deveney. Sandy was born and raised in the Philadelphia area and graduated from Penn State University with a degree in Law Enforcement and Corrections. Sandy worked with a variety of agencies, including being a; US Customs Sky Marshall, Security Investigator for a major electric utility company, and was even tasked with establishing three canine drug detection teams for use in two nuclear power plants as well as other non-nuclear facilities. His dogs were recognized by multiple agencies for their exceptional detection work. Following an early retirement, Sandy founded a private detective business to continue working with drug detection dogs. His clients included law enforcement, drug rehab facilities, over 50 school districts, and several correctional facilities. He officially retired in 2007 and he and his wife now reside near Penn State. They enjoy Penn State football, tailgating, flyfishing, and many other activities. They frequently travel to flyfish in different locations having been to Alaska four times, and Wyoming twice.

### **How did you first get involved with WWIA?**

In 2012, I proposed to our hunting club that we should host a wounded warrior bird hunt. The only group I had knowledge of was Wounded Warrior Project, but we did not feel they were supportive as they only provided contact info and we had to do everything else. One of the attendees from that initial event informed me of WWIA as he had previously been to a WWIA event. After looking into WWIA, we began working with them in 2013 and now we are entering our sixth year!

### **Why do you choose to Host a WWIA event?**

I spent over 35 years working in the Criminal Justice field as I had missed out on the Vietnam War due to having a high draft lottery number. In late 1970 following the hijacking and blowing up of three Boeing 747's, I was hired by US Customs and spent the next 18 months working all over the world in one of the first anti-terrorism programs. Assigned to Pan AM out of JFK and later with Northwest out of SeaTac, I went to many different places, some you can't travel to today and others you wouldn't go if the opportunity presented itself. I had several friends shot in the line of duty, an FBI buddy that was killed, and I also lost a swim team friend to the Vietnam War. My father was in the Navy during WWII and continued his service with the reserves. Most of our close family friends were from his Navy years, including an "uncle" that was a test pilot and lost his life in a jet crash. So throughout both my work and family life, the military has played an important and integral part. I was there when our soldiers came back from Vietnam and many were treated poorly, so I believe it is important and necessary to show these American Heroes the respect and honor they truly deserve.

### **What has been the biggest benefit of hosting WWIA Events?**

One of the most amazing benefits of WWIA events is the camaraderie these Heroes get to experience with other Purple Heart recipients as well as with our host team that supports the event. Everyone shows up as strangers but leave with new friends. Long after WWIA events are over, many of the Heroes that attended them still stay in touch with myself and other event Hosts. We had a five-year reunion last year, bringing together attendees from the four previous events. That was an amazing experience that I wish all other annual events would consider doing!

### **What have been some of the positive affects you have seen in the lives of Heroes that have attended your events?**

One of the primary benefits that take place is that the Heroes are able to get away from everyday life and make new friends who have lived similar lives and have typically shared common experiences through their military journey. Another important benefit is that Heroes are able to discuss some of the obstacles or challenges they are facing, including treatment options, VA benefits, but also things that are helping them as well. We find that these events are often a catalyst for change to occur.

### **What would you say to others who are considering getting involved with WWIA as a Host or in another capacity?**

JUST DO IT! My mom always told me, "you'll get your reward in Heaven!" Why wait? Besides, there are no guarantees on getting through those gates! It requires teamwork, lots of outreach, and organization. After the first couple of events, however, the routines become more familiar and then it just requires consistent follow-through.

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## Sponsors and Friends

**Thank you for your support of WWIA  
and our Purple Heart Heroes!**



We would like to extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to Craig Newmark of Craig Newmark Philanthropies in recognition of his generous support of WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes. Craig is a Web pioneer, philanthropist, and a leading advocate on behalf of trustworthy journalism, veterans and military families, and other civic and social justice causes. Craig is passionate about educating and reminding Americans that we owe a tremendous debt of respect and gratitude to our veterans and their families for their selfless service and sacrifice. Craig, we are honored and humbled by your commitment to our Heroes and thank you for partnering with WWIA.

**We would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following supporters for their gracious contributions and dedication to WWIA and our Heroes.**

**THANK YOU!**

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**Help Support WWIA Through Vehicle Donation!**

*did you know?*

**You can also help support WWIA  
by donating any of the following:  
cars, trucks, motorcycles, RV's,  
boats, airplanes, heavy equipment,  
farm machinery, etc. (running or not)**

*v-Dac*   
**Vehicle Donation to Any Charity**

**WWIA** 

There are lots of ways to give and help support WWIA. For more information about how you can donate a variety of unused vehicles, click [here](#).

**PLEASE SHARE your WWIA experience!**



Thank you for helping us become a top-rated nonprofit in 2017! If you haven't shared your own WWIA experience, would you consider leaving us a review to help us continue this honor for 2018? We appreciate your support of WWIA & our Purple Heart Heroes. Click on the following link to share your WWIA story and to read what others have had to say!

<https://greatnonprofits.org/org/wounded-warriors-in-action-foundation-inc>

### **Want to learn more about WWIA, visit us on online!**

Our website is full of information about who we are, how we serve our Purple Heart Heroes, and how you can get involved! Visit us today! [Click Here!](#)

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[CLICK HERE TO VIEW UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

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### Purple Heart Patriots

Become a Purple Heart Patriot by donating monthly to WWIA and the Heroes we serve! Monthly contributors receive an introductory gift and mention in next month's newsletter.

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◆ **THANK YOU, Roy Gideon** for becoming our newest **Purple Heart Patriot!** We sincerely appreciate your support and generosity. ◆



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