



Handmade items created by our Heroes from the 5th Annual Wisconsin Woodturning Event

Notes From the Field: February 2018

Another exceptional month as February brought with it two very unique WWIA events. Spring is just around the corner, and we are gearing up for a busy season full of exciting world-class events and tremendous opportunities for our Heroes. Be sure to check out our "February Spotlight" for a wonderful interview from some of our outstanding WWIA Supporters. Please continue sharing the mission of WWIA to help us reach new Purple Heart Heroes and to educate others about what we do and how they can get involved. We appreciate your dedication and support!



Events and Fundraisers

5th Annual WI Woodturning Event

February 4th - 9th



The 5th Annual Wisconsin Wood Lathe Turning Event was another outstanding success. This unique event brought four of our Heroes together to learn a unique and valuable skillset. Our Heroes fashioned beautiful handcrafted wooden items including a pencil holder, a deep hollowed vessel with top, inlaid plates, platters, bowls, natural edge bowls, mallets, spinning tops, mushrooms, round wooden boxes, pepper mills, Christmas ornaments, wands, duck calls, deer calls, bottle stoppers, and bud vases. They also incorporated WWIA pins into their projects. The number of items crafted by the Heroes was impressive and the quality was exceptional. The camaraderie among the whole group was fantastic, and the ability to share experiences and stories throughout the event only added to the bonds formed among these brothers. Our sincere thanks and gratitude to instructors Joe Varga, Jim Anderson, Tony Kopchinski, and Bob Stavran for sharing their time, knowledge and skills with our Heroes. Additional thanks and praise to Tony Kopchinski for graciously hosting our Heroes and for his incredible hospitality throughout this event.

" I have returned to turn wood with three of my fellow veterans, three teachers, and Tony. You are the most generous people I know. The relaxation this hobby provides is priceless. I also gain solace in the fact that I am able to now provide plaques to WWIA to help other vets. Thank you to all for your help with the depression. I now have purpose. Thank you, Tony! "

Inaugural Southern Vermont Chapter Tampa Bay Fishing Excursion

February 2nd - 4th



We want to recognize and express our sincere appreciation to Henry and Wendy Sausville and to Mike and Debi Davenport from the [WWIAF Southern Vermont Chapter](#). Henry and Wendy were our honored guests at our Inaugural Apollo Beach Fishing Excursion held February 2nd through 4th and were accompanied by VT Chapter President Mike Davenport and VT Chapter Treasurer Debi Davenport for a weekend full of sun and fun.

This exciting all-expense paid trip was offered as a raffle prize last year during the 5th Annual Southern Vermont Chapter Fundraising Dinner where their community raised an incredible total of \$44,698.30! This weekend excursion included a meet and greet with the WWIA staff at our headquarters, lodging, a full day of fishing, and fresh southern and seafood dinners throughout their stay. The fishing was simply outstanding as Henry was able to capture the elusive grand slam, taking in 3 prized fish in one afternoon, consisting of a snook, a redfish, and a sea trout, courtesy [Snooky Bear Charters](#).

While Henry and Mike fished with WWIA Founder John McDaniel, Wendy and Debi visited the [Manatee Viewing Center](#) in Apollo Beach with John's wife Lisa McDaniel and their two children. Here, they were able to watch and learn about these gentle creatures, as hundreds of manatees gather locally due to the warm waters. It was an amazing weekend spent with some wonderful and faithful WWIA supporters. We would also like to honor and give special thanks to the entire WWIAF Southern Vermont Chapter for their tremendous support and fundraising efforts throughout the years. The Southern Vermont Chapter recently achieved Silver Star Award status for having raised in excess of \$100,000.00 throughout their faithful years of support. We are humbled by your dedication and patriotism, and proud to serve our Purple Heart Heroes with you!

WWIA February Spotlight

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT



Our February Spotlight features a family that has been outstanding WWIA Supporters and who clearly show that when you are dedicated and passionate about a cause, there are no limitations to the impact and contribution you can make. Kellie and Chris DeMik have garnered the support of local individuals and businesses throughout the past 10 years in support of WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes, and their incredible community of patrons have raised over \$110,000 in that short time. Kellie and Chris have been married for 23 years and have two children. Their oldest son Kyle is 20 years old and currently serving as a Specialist in the U.S. Army. Their youngest son Caden is 13 years old. By his own admission, Chris loves cars and has been in the automotive repair business for 33 years. He also loves to shoot and hunt with his sons. Kellie serves as a teacher's aid for children with special needs and also maintains a sales position in the evenings. Both Chris and Kellie have family members that have either previously served or are currently serving, so helping our country's veterans is a close and personal passion for them. They are proud members of their local American Legion Post 1977 in New Lenox, IL. Chris is a former SAL Commander and Kellie is also a former Ladies Aux officer. Caden is a member of the SAL and Kyle is a dual member of the American Legion and SAL. Chris was kind enough to answer some questions about their WWIA experience throughout the past 10 years.

How did you first get involved with WWIA?

10 years ago a friend of mine, who was a Vietnam Vet and I were sitting around the kitchen table talking. We had just built a cooker and he said that we should cook for vets. I went online and searched over 700 websites until I found WWIA. We were hunters and all our friends were also. The WWIA stated that it gave the most back to the Purple Heart veterans. My sister-in-law Kim, our friends Gil and Kathy who lived in Florida, and Paul and his wife Linda went down and personally spoke with John McDaniel. Following that meeting, Paul called me and said, this is our guy.

You recently held and celebrated the 10th Annual New Lenox WWIA Luncheon Fundraiser. What were the early roots of how this fundraiser began?

We initially held a couple of fundraisers in which we cooked wild game and fish that we had caught. We raised \$500 for a couple of years at another location. Then, we met another group of hunters and they brought their friends, and we merged into a big group that wanted to help Vets at our Post. We all had family in the service or that had previously served, and we are all members of the Sons of the American Legion or American Legion so then it really started to take off. My old partner Paul retired four years ago, and I took it to a new level with my experience from my job. In the last 4 years, we were able to raise \$84,000. Collectively, we have raised over \$110,000 in 10 years for WWIA.

The community and businesses of New Lenox have truly embraced and supported WWIA like their own through their incredible support, generosity, and giving. How have you been able to galvanize the local community around the message and mission of WWIA?

We have been truly blessed with our Tri-City area. There are many other organizations also asking for donations to support their cause, but many of the veteran organizations we work with now wait for our annual fundraiser. We have a strong list of people who support us. We have a good inside sales team consisting of Laura, Juney, and my wife Kellie and I. I write the letters and stuff the envelopes with Kellie, ensure all of the post-tax forms are ready and start hitting the streets. Laura makes an average of 220 phone calls and Juney also calls on people she knows. It is an incredibly strong and motivated team. You have to believe in the product you are selling, and we believe in the mission we are promoting! We invite others to come out and see for themselves. Many do and are greatly moved by the event, then they want to contribute and be a part of it.

What has been the biggest benefit of being an integral part of the WWIA family?

I fight with this. Sometimes it gets tough and you are getting zero help and everyone these days seems to have an opinion. But, inevitably, you have that one person that is truly moved by what we are doing, and they inspire you. Then, I see these videos and I realize that it DOES matter. I have helped someone. John is also very good at helping me with this. I am a self-driven person. If I see something, I go for it. I have spoken with WWIA Guides Josh and Mark and have listened to their stories of survival and sacrifice. Most people do not realize that the way of life we are afforded is because of veterans. My son joined the Army in part because of how he was raised and what he has seen with these WWIA events.

What would you say to others who are considering getting involved with WWIA as a Supporter, Host, or perhaps in some other capacity?

Do it. You'll feel good inside. Everyone can do something. Everyone can help someone in any capacity. Your freedom, your way of life is because of our veterans. It isn't political. It does not matter what your political view or stance is, you have the freedom to express them in this great country because of our veterans. Please help. It is a great family that you will feel proud to help and serve.



Sponsors and Friends

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the following individuals and businesses for their outstanding contributions and support of WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes:

Brian Grant \$1,000

Appraisal Associates (Dan Pudlo) \$500
Toward the Eagle River Muskie Chal-Lunge

Club 13 Restaurant & Lounge \$1000
Toward 11th Annual Camp Hackett Events

Help WWIA when you file your taxes at a special discounted rate!



It's that time of year again! Tax season is upon us. If you need someone to assist you in preparing and filing your taxes, Hallmark CPA Group is offering a \$50 discount for tax preparation fees to all friends and supporters of WWIA and will donate 10% of those preparation fees to the Foundation. Please contact Andrew Hall at Hallmark CPA Group (888) 675-4268 for more information or visit them online at www.hcpagrp.com. This offer is

good nationwide as all information and signatures can be sent remotely through an encrypted portal. Please mention code WWIA50 when contacting them.

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 DONATE



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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** to all of our **Purple Heart Patriots!** We sincerely appreciate your support and generosity. ◆



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