Notes From the Field: December 2018

2018 has ended and what a tremendous year it was for WWIA and our Purple Heart heroes. We had our outstanding events during the month of December closing out the year on a high note. As we reflected over the successes and impacts we have made this past year in the lives of our heroes, none of it would have been possible without the incredible support and remarkable efforts from so many of you. We want to sincerely THANK ALL OF YOU for helping us bring honor, connection, and healing to our veterans. We hope this new year will bring joy and blessings to you and those you love. We look forward to another fantastic year as we proudly serve our nation's combat-wounded veterans.

Founder’s Feature: 2018 Summary

The WWIA’s 11th year of serving our Purple Heart Heroes is officially in the books and I wanted to share a few of the highlights from another exceptional year. WWIA served 205 Purple heart recipients and 17 new spouses on 33 events across North America in 2018. We broke new ground in introducing our culinary arts program and made many new friends across our great nation. As we reflect on the accomplishments of this past year, we know that none of it would be possible without your incredible support and dedication. Our world-class events are second to none, and that is only because of the exceptional work, dedication, and commitment that so many of you put into them behind the scenes and throughout the year. We are humbled and grateful by your willingness to share your time, money, talents, and resources to aid in the healing and realization of our heroes. We are truly honored to call you our partners and friends.

As we enter 2019, together we will continue changing lives and improving the quality of life for so many of our heroes and their families. I want to personally thank all our heroes, families, members, donors, board members, staff, dedicated volunteers, and donors for your incredible efforts in serving our heroes throughout 2018 and I wish all of you much health and happiness this new year.

LT. Col. (Ret.) John J. McDaniel

Events and Fundraisers

You Still Have Time to Make Your CFC Pledge!

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES & RETIREES
LAST CHANCE!
OUR HEROES NEED YOUR HELP!

CFC SEASON ENDS ON FEBRUARY 8TH, 2019
DON’T FORGET TO MAKE YOUR PLEDGE TO WWIA
ATTENTION! The 2019 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) giving period has officially been extended until February 8th, 2019 due to the current Federal Government shutdown. This means if you haven’t made a pledge to help support WWVA and our Purple Heart Heroes, you still have time. The CFC allows federal employees and retirees to make charitable contributions to several eligible charities they personally select by directing a portion of their income or annuitant payments to those non-profits. CFC is the world’s largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign. Your pledges and contributions received help WWVA continue our work assisting in the healing and reintegration of our members. All to view to realize your CFC charity goals this season, we would appreciate you considering making a pledge to WWVA and making a direct difference in the lives of our Purple Heart Heroes. Click here to be taken to the CFC Donor Pledge Site. We thank you in advance for your consideration and for your faithful support as you partner with us.

4th Annual Newfield Deer Hunt

November 20th - December 3rd

Three of our Purple Heart Heroes were welcomed to Newfield, NY for the 4th Annual Newfield Deer Hunt. Our heroes quickly got settled into their cabins at wilderness resort, and then enjoyed a nice dinner at the Creek Line Star and Grill as they got to know one another. They also received some thoughtful gifts from the local community and event sponsors, such as personalized plaques, hunting gear, as well as beautiful hand-crafted huntingrones courtesy of LTC (retired) Larry Myles. The next morning our heroes rose early to start their hunt for prized whitetail deer. The cold weather and snow made the hunting and opportunities for deer challenging, but there was plenty of time to share stories, make connections, and form new friendships for our heroes between their time in the field and around the dinner table. We would like to recognize and thank Carol and Bernie Cook and the entire Cook family for graciously hosting our heroes and for their continued efforts and support. Additional thanks to WWVA Guide Dean Van Sumeren for his valuable assistance throughout the five-day event.

“This was my first WWVA event, it was great. The guides and the cooks were wonderful hosts and great people. The deer hunting was good as a lot of fun. I am thankful for all the work they put in for us. The whole family did an excellent job of feeding the group and the deer, because we were a generation and a world apart. WWVA does a wonderful job organizing these events. I am looking forward to another so it is possible.”

3rd Annual Arkansas Bucks & Ducks

December 5th - 8th

Four of our Heroes traveled to Marmora, AR for the 3rd Annual Arkansas Bucks & Ducks Event. Our Heroes enjoyed six exciting days of deer, duck, and hog hunting as well as plenty of time for shared experiences around the fire pit, amazing home-cooked meals, and bonding between fellow Purple Heart brothers. This area of Arkansas has some outstanding hunting, and an abundance of wildlife, and our heroes found that out first-hand as they converted some nice bucks, and ducks as well as a hog during their stay. This event provided our Heroes with a world-class experience they will cherish for many years to come. Special thanks to William French and friends for graciously hosting this event and to everyone from the local community that came together to honor, support, and welcome our Heroes. Additional recognition and thanks to WWVA Guide Jeremy Smith for his service and
6th Annual Great Creek Deer Hunt

December 6th - 8th

Host Andy Wilson and the Great Creek Hunt Club were pleased to welcome four of our Heroes to Abingdon, VA for the 6th Annual Great Creek Deer Hunt. This event was not limited to deer hunting, but also included the opportunity to hunt for pheasants. This four-day event allowed for exceptional hunting opportunities from stands, blinds, and with dogs. Our Heroes commented that they were amazed at all the skill and effort involved in hunting with dogs and how intelligent the deer were in the field even with the scentshage. In addition to suffering hunting, the event had lots of great stories and laughs, incredible food and camaraderie, and new friendships formed between our Heroes and the members of the Great Creek Hunt Club. We would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to Andy Wilson and the Great Creek Hunt Club for hosting our Purple Heart Heroes and for their first-class hospitality. Special thanks to WWHA Sales Nick Fox for his leadership and support throughout this event.

“Fishing and fishing has been the most satisfying and enjoyable experience ever.” Best hunting for all the great times with Teammate顺利, my experiences and their accomplishments given us so much and we never stop their time. From the novice to the master of the art (PCIV) to the right strike. From the first to the last with such fine equipment on such a beautiful day of the weekend. Fish and the Great Creek. Their success is measured, not only in the experience we had, but also in the success of our Purple Heart Heroes. Fish and the Great Creek are measured, not only in the experience we had, but also in the success of our Purple Heart Heroes. Fish and the Great Creek are measured, not only in the experience we had, but also in the success of our Purple Heart Heroes.

3rd Annual Oregon Bobcat Hunt

December 6th - 8th

This 3rd Annual Oregon Bobcat Hunt proudly welcomed our Purple Heart Heroes to hunt for the second and challenging game. This event brought three of our Heroes together over five days allowing for great stories, food, camaraderie, and some much-needed time in the great outdoors. Although the weather conditions were cold and challenging, all three of our Heroes successfully harvested bobcats. Our Heroes were also the guests of honor at a wonderful banquet courtesy of the Fern Ridge Tree Hunt Club. This dinner allowed local community and Hunt Club members to honor and thank our Heroes for their service and sacrifice to our country. Several of the Hunt Club members were also recognized for their outstanding support of the event and were presented with W500s challenge coins by WWHA.

“Thank you for taking care of our Purple Heart Heroes. We had a lot of fun and I’m happy we got a great experience. This is something I’ll never forget.”

Middle TN ENA WWHA Holiday Fundraiser
The Inaugural WWIA 5K is Coming!

WWIA 5K
Run. Walk. Stroll.
29 June 2019 - Al Lopez Park
Benefiting Purple Heart Recipients

LET’S HIT THE ROAD IN SUPPORT OF OUR PURPLE HEART HEROES

The WWIA 5K has been awarded! That means you still have time to get yourself, your friends, your family, and your co-workers registered. Join us on Saturday, June 29, 2019. The timed 5K offers you the chance to run, walk, or stroll through beautiful Al Lopez Park. Our course is professionally timed, and the Overall Top Male and Female finishers will receive prizes. Top Male and Top Female finishers in each age category will also be acknowledged. Stay for our after-party for ice-cubes, awards, and more! Discounted registration is available for Veterans who show their Military ID at Check-In.

Visit https://wwia.org/heroes/ and complete all three steps at the top of the page. Proceeds benefit the WWIA. You also have limited sponsored spots available. Please email us at info@wwia.org for more information. Thank you.

WWIA December Spotlight

HERO SPOTLIGHT

JON FRENCH

It is with great pleasure that we introduce you to our December Spotlight Feature, WWIA Hero, Jon French. Jon is a highly decorated veteran who has been a great asset to our community. In addition to his military service, Jon is also an accomplished hunter and fisherman.

Jon, can you give us a brief introduction and tell us a little about yourself and your family?

A retired Air Force veteran since 2001, Jon is married to his wife, Lisa, and they have two children. They enjoy spending time together fishing and hunting. Jon is a long-time member of the WWIA and has been an active participant in many of our events.

Tell us about your experience with WWIA.

WWIA has always been a great resource for me. They have provided me with opportunities to share my experiences with other veterans and to connect with other hunters and fishers.

What are some of your favorite memories from your time in the military?

One of my favorite memories is from my time in Afghanistan. We were able to catch a large number of local species, and the experience was incredibly rewarding.

What do you hope to accomplish with your role as a WWIA Hero?

I hope to use my experiences to inspire others to get involved in hunting and fishing. I believe that these activities can bring people together and help to strengthen our communities.

Thank you for sharing your story with us, Jon. We are grateful for your service and for your commitment to improving the lives of those around you.
wife Margaret, I began to reconnect and strengthen our love. I figured out who I wanted to be again and developed goals to achieve. Today, Margaret and I raise our two young sons, Andrew and Iver, with the same passion for the outdoors and hunting/melting metal that we were blessed with. The Foundation broadened and enriched the notion that although I can no longer take care of my fellow soldiers, I can be on the battlefield or in training, I can help watch out for them when they need help. This ability to serve them and others, my love for my country and raising my family is my driving force.

How did you first get involved with WVMIA?

I was introduced to the WVMIA Foundation through a fellow soldier (WVMIA Guide, Derek Vedel), who interviewed both deployed and rejoin together. He found the Foundation online at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and signed up. After he went on an event, he insisted that I try it. I even went as far as signing him up. I love it all to Derek Vedel, Wisconsin Guide.

Why do you choose to be a WVMIA Guide on our events?

I enjoy helping other experience the changing hunting and fishing events. Nearly all WVMIA events present the Veteran with an experience that most, including myself, wouldn’t have been able to experience had it not been for the Foundation. Being able to help facilitate these extraordinary experiences, help them regain a passion in their lives and provide something they can build off of and motivate them again; that is why I choose to be a WVMIA Guide.

What has been the biggest benefit for you since becoming involved with WVMIA?

I believe the biggest benefit is the ability to connect with other wounded warriors. You share stories, have that common bond with them and learn from them as much as they learn from you. Wounded Warriors are typically a humble community that usually aren’t as far away. When wounded warriors get together, they want to hear what you’re going through and they share experiences and advice. It’s incredible, how despite the turmoil, fear or pain, the warriors regain that camaraderie and create a connection with one another.

What is something you would like others to know about WVMIA and your own experience with the Foundation?

WVMIA truly changes the lives of the Warriors, (Folds, Guides, and volunteers) that are involved with the Foundation. For the Veterans and Guides, it fills the much-needed void of camaraderie, as well as providing a purpose and direction. It provides that support and confirmation of others being there, instead of understanding and belonging. For the Folds and volunteers, it creates a connection with our Nation’s heroes that few outside the military will ever experience or appreciate. It provides an additional purpose, knowledge, and validates the healing powers of the outdoors.

What would you say to others who are considering getting involved with WVMIA as a Hero or in another capacity?

For other wounded warriors thinking about signing up and going on an event, it’s life changing. I think, you never will provide support and friendship like it is. The hardest part is taking the first step outside of your comfort zone. Once you take that first step, your quickly find or initiate that passion which will carry over into your personal and professional lives. Connecting with the outdoors helps reset your soul to live a happier life.

For the heroes and volunteers, words cannot express the impact that your kindness and generosity have on our nation’s heroes. You are changing lives by just sharing yours with them. Thank you, we can’t say it enough.

Sponsors and Friends

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

THANK YOU!

Donations:
Leigh Ann Wrona - $2,000
Towers Watson Delaware Inc. - $2,000 (corporate match of Leigh Ann Wrona’s contribution)
Arthur Kandarian - $1,000
MS Cast & Blast Fundraiser - $900
The DeForest Family Charitable Fund - $500
Paige Winebarger - $500

Donations toward 9th Annual MO-KAN Ducks, Bucks, & Trapping Event:
Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, Steve and Mary Hunt Foundation - $2,500

Donations toward Inaugural Shell Beach Fishing:
Lake Eugenic Land and Development, Inc. - $1,254

Donations toward 8th Annual SW Ohio Duck Hunt:
Boxley Contracting Services II, LLC - $1,000
Timothy and Christi Bilinski - $500

Sponsors and Friends
WWIA 5K Sponsor:

Coast to Coast Moving and Storage Inc. - $500

Thank You, Highland Corporation Charitable Fund!

WWIA Double Creek Lodge, TN thanks Denise Reynolds (mobile) accepting a generous donation from Highland Corporation Charitable Fund.

Thank you to the Highland Corporation of Roanoke, TN for your generous donation again this year of $1,000. These funds go directly to the travel costs of the Purple Heart Heroes that come to TN to participate in WWIA hunting events. Community support is essential to serving and honoring our heroes and we genuinely appreciate your generosity.

WWIA Founder and CEO John McDaniel Featured Guest on MOA Podcast!

WWIA Founder and CEO John McDaniel was honored to have recently been a guest on the Men of Abundance Podcast with Dale Cernobyl. Be sure to listen to this outstanding conversation between John and Dale as they discuss the foundation and mission of WWIA, selflessly serving others, overcoming adversity, and creating a life of abundance through daily actions and intentionality. Make sure you share this podcast with others!

Thank You Rapid River Knifeworks!
WWIA would like to recognize and thank Rapid River Knitters, the official launderer of
WWIA for their outstanding and faithful support. WWIA Founder and CEO John Hagedorn
discovered Rapid River Knitters while traveling through Northern Michigan during the early
years of the foundation. He stopped in, bought a few knitteds and was immediately impressed
with the quality, flatteringness, and uniqueness of their products. Mutual respect and
friendship have been born and Rapid River has been graciously supplying WWIA with
beautiful and functional knitteds for our mentors and friends ever since. If you’re looking for a
top-quality item to keep the wind off in the field or on the water or to give as a special gift,
check out Rapid River’s impressive collection of custom-made products here. Our sincere
thanks to Rapid River Knitters’ Founder and CEO Kris Treadway, and General Manager
Matthew Swerengt, and to all of their talented and patriotic staff for their support and
generosity throughout the years.

Help Support WWIA Through Vehicle Donation!

You can help support WWIA and our Heroes by donating your car, truck, van, SUV, boat, motorcycle, ATV, RV, trailer or airplane. Y-Car recently joined the CARS team to help continue providing opportunities to support non-profits through vehicle donations. You will still
work with the same outstanding representatives that you have come to trust with your
donation needs. Simply click here to start the donation process or call CARS toll-free at 866-
566-9400 (566-566-7473) to have a donation staff specialist help guide you through the
donation process. If you would like to learn more about how the CARS vehicle donation
program works, please click here. We thank you in advance for your support.

Want to learn more about WWIA, visit us 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.

CLICK HERE TO VIEW UPCOMING EVENTS

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