Notes From the Field: November 2018

November was another exciting month at WWIA as we hosted seven outstanding events that included buck, deer, and hog hunting, rappelling, fishing, and even hosting snapping turtles. We got an outstanding turnout this season with over 300 of our Purple Heart Heroes in this month’s Spotlight Feature and we are proud to share with you the details of our newest WWIA documentary, ‘We’re Coming In’ on the end of the year but there are still plenty of great events and opportunities ahead! As always, thank you to everyone for your faithful support of WWIA and our amazing heroes.

Events and Fundraisers

CFC Season is Here! Help Support WWIA with a Pledge!

Will you join us in supporting our Purple Heart Heroes? Please consider a pledge to WWIA.


Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) season is coming to an end! Please consider a pledge to WWIA before the January 15th deadline. 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 the WWIA continue our work, assisting in the healing and restoration of our veterans. As you look to make your CFC charitable designations this season, we would appreciate you considering making a pledge to WWIA 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.

5th Annual Kuneytown FLX Ducks & Bucks Hunt

November 7th - 11th
Five of our Heroes were welcomed to Seneca Falls, New York for the 8th Annual Caneytown Elk & Bucks Hunt. Our Heroes were treated, with an escorted into town courtesy of local law enforcement and the Washington American Legion Riders. Once settled in, they enjoyed target shooting classes and were presented with generous gifts from the local Guides Unleashed Seneca Falls Chapter and Ducks Unlimited. The next morning our Heroes had a great time getting in some wetland hunting with Jay James of Fairfield Guides Unleashed. Later in the day, they went to multiple locations to deer hunt, including the Seneca Army Depot, a former munitions storage facility on just over 10,000 acres. This protected government land has allowed the local deer population to flourish for more than 60 years, including the extremely rare white deer. The following day included some great deer and pheasant hunting before being honored with a wonderful banquet at the Caneytown Fire Department’s Club. Van Winkle Founder and CEO, John McKeever, was honored to have present our guests and heroes for the event and was presented with a beautifully crafted trophy (written as “trophie”) by event host, Dr. Keith Tabbell. The camaraderie, connections, and friendships made at this amazing event will forever remain the Heroes for many years to come. We would like to express our sincere appreciation and thanks to Dr. Keith Tabbell and the Caneytown Fire Department’s Club for graciously hosting and honoring our Heroes. This event would not have been possible without the outstanding pandemium, care, and dedication of this wonderful community of people. Special recognition to VRHA Guide Direx Vandurmin for his assistance throughout the event.

“This trip has truly been one of the best experiences of my life. I have made so many new friends and I pray they all become lifelong friends. When this organization gives you a chance for unexpected service to come together and share their experiences, the lasting impact is absolutely amazing. The professionalism and dedication are so evident even when you would never see it. These girls wanted to be out just successfully in the woods more than they could have been. Having classes on how to dress and process will open a new world of opportunities for the staff of this event. I just wanted to say thank you on my behalf. You’ve helped turn our staff into the best event we’ve ever had, and I hope you realize it went above and beyond your expected expectations. What you do gives you a new chance to do the same on normal again.”

5th Annual W PA Archery Deer Hunt

November 9th - 11th

The 5th Annual W PA Archery Deer Hunt welcomed four of our Heroes to Blair Valley, PA. Our Heroes arrived to enjoy an outstanding home-cooked meal and were each presented with custom-made blankets courtesy of Dale and Susan Thevenot’s fabricator, Catholene. Our Heroes told us that the earliest morning setting into their blind. After a morning of hunting, our Heroes were given a tour of one of the local guides’ collection of game animal mounts. The Heroes enjoyed the personal tour and hearing the stories behind these huge mounts and hunts. Our Heroes headed back out to the blind in the afternoon before returning to the lodge for a warm meal and some great bonding time around the dinner table. The atmosphere made it seem like they were among family, making it easy to relax, enjoy incredible meals, like venison chili and Bailey’s wedding soup, share experiences and form new friendships. We would like to recognize local guides Todd Noller, Scott Crowder, Tom Haney, and Steve Thevenot for honoring our Heroes with their tremendous skills and hospitality. Additional thanks to Fiona Bevonvot, Stephanie Ouel, Fiona Condon, and Dale Thevenot for their outstanding dedication and contributions. Our highest praise and gratitude to Roots Dan and Susan Thevenot and family for your incredible hospitality and care of our Heroes, and also to Van Houtz Guide Ken Smith for his outstanding work throughout the four-day event.

“Thank you so much for the hospitality and support. I had an amazing time. Our staff and family made everyone feel so welcomed. The best day was the first day, and the hunting time was such a beautiful place. Thank you for allowing me to hunt and connect with other veterans. This trip gave me a chance to relax and enjoy the outdoors. Thank you for everything.”

6th Annual Murphy Family & Friends Gulf Coast Cast & Blast

November 9th - 12th

Thank the 35th L.L. Bean 450-pound and event dial-in host Heroes for the 6th Annual Murphy Family and Friends Gulf Coast Cast & Blast Event. Unfortunately, the weather took an unexpected turn as the temperature dropped and high winds moved in. Taking the fishing portion of the event off the table. The didn’t deter our Heroes though as they took the opportunity to experience big hunting using dogs, a unique yet highly effective method. Our Heroes enjoyed time in the field and their efforts were met with success. The food and hospitality were top-notch and our Heroes had plenty of time for fellowship and to share stories and experiences throughout the four-day event. This continues to be an exceptional event due to the dedication and assistance of so many volunteers, supporters, and a supportive and welcoming community. Additional thanks and recognition to Host Audie
Murdy and family for their outstanding coordination of the event and their faithful support throughout the years. High praise to WMAU Club Mark Broda for his leadership and efforts throughout the event.

"Thank you for bringing us to play in the Hunt! Thanks for being a part of WMAU. See you next year!"

5th Annual Double Creek Lodge TN Muzzleloader/Archer Deer Hunt
November 9th - 12th

Part of our Heroes converged on beautiful Helenwood. "To take part in the 5th Annual Double Creek Lodge TN Muzzleloader/Archer Deer Hunt! Our Heroes started their 4th day off with a delicious home-cooked breakfast before heading out to their assigned hunting areas. After an enjoyable day in the field, our Heroes had plenty of downtime to enjoy the hospitality of food and drink and to get to know one another over stories and laughter. The next morning, our Heroes set out for another full day of hunting and then returned back to the lodge for another fist-class dinner. On the last evening, our Warriors spent several hours talking about their lives, their service, their injuries, and what they hoped to do going forward. It was a great day of camaraderie amongst the Heroes. We would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to Hosts Dennis Reynolds and Shelly Cohen for their tremendous hospitality and support of WMAU and our Heroes throughout the years. Special thanks to WMAU Club Dan Lindbloom for his outstanding efforts and care throughout the event."

"I am absolutely amazing you are providing for us all. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

3rd Annual WI Prairie Du Chien Duck Hunt
November 9th - 12th

Two of our Heroes traveled to Wisconsin for the 3rd Annual Prairie Du Chien Duck Hunt. They were warmly welcomed at the Club but Lodge by members of the local community and were treated to an outstanding fishing trip while getting to know everyone. They were also presented with some big fish! Waterfowl gear, warm clothing, backpacks, hand nets, stang, chows, and a nice arrangement small box header. The next morning our Heroes hit the water after a very breakfast and quickly went to work harvesting some beautiful ducks. After a light lunch, our Heroes had the chance to meet with Mike Valley of Valley Fish and Chows and from the Discovery series "River Rat" to teach his commercial fishing trips and active gill-netting. They were able to put nets and observe some large northern pike and walleye that were caught and released. It was a unique opportunity and our Heroes enjoyed the camaraderie and education. The next day our Heroes traveled down to the Mississippi River to successfully hunt for Canada geese ducks off the river bank and then earned the art of "hodenting" snapping turtles from Mike Valley, with two of the six turtles caught weighing over 30 lb. After an adventurous day, our Heroes were honored and treated to a delicious waterfowl dinner cooked by Kenneth and Luis Munoz when enjoying the conversation and camaraderie among one another. This was another exceptional event as our Heroes formed new friendships, enjoyed the locale of some amazing holding experiences, and left with a greater appreciation and love for our Heroes on this spectacular event. Additional appreciation and thanks to Matthew Cagle, Booster Yeaman, Chinča Cézé, Mike Valley, for their dedication and contributions, and to WMAU Club Dan Lindbloom for his outstanding support throughout the event.

"I had never been hunting before this trip and I had some reservations about killing a living thing, but to see how much the animal appreciated and knew what it was doing the way I really changed my perspective on hunting. It was only after I saw the animal appreciate and knew what it was doing that I realized I was going to learn a lot. The way that they usually treat the people they appreciate and work with. It made me realize how much I appreciated them. I can say that the best part was being out of the cold, fresh air, and being close to nature. That, for me, was a lot more to me. Thank you for making this experience a wonderful one."

9th Annual MO-KAN Ducks, Bucks, and Trapping Event
November 10th - 12th
The NWRA-MO-KAN chapter has done it again. This amazing event consisted world-class hunting for trophy whitetails and ducks in both KS and MO, as well as a successful Heroes Shooting College. The NWRA-MO-KAN event is made up of over 150 dedicated volunteers operating many different components and lasting 5 days. The heroes stayed at the world-class Naper Hunt Club in Naperville, IL. The members rolled out the red carpet once again, making the Heroes feel right at home. Our sincere thanks to Naper Hunt Club and its amazing members and friends for their support given to the Heroes & the Foundation.

On Friday, Nov. 10th, the NWRA-MO-KAN Fundraiser banquet was held with well over 400 supporters of the Foundation in attendance. The banquet was a huge success and is a community favorite. NWRA Founder and CEO, John J. McCadden was also present at the banquet and throughout the hunting event, which added a special element to the festivities. The banquet was sponsored this year again by Western States Fire Protection. Special recognition and thanks to the banquet committee members and Banquet Chair Cari Franck Saturday, Nov. 19th, the Heroes attended a dinner prepared and hosted by the Christian Fellowship Church in Mound City, MO. On Sunday, Nov. 20th, the Heroes attended a special dinner at Naper Hunt Club. Terry Supple and Robin Schill spearheaded an amazing fundraising effort involving the Alliant City, MO area due to raise money for the Foundation and secure a Henry Golden City 22 for all the heroes. Special thanks to the 12th Man Wrap for providing all the transportation from Naper Hunt Club to the gun.

The MO-KAN machine was sold for $20,000 this year thanks to all of our generous patrons at the dinner as well as individual donors and MO-KAN event sponsor Vision Commercial. Thank you MO-KAN volunteers for all your hard work, expertise and hours each off you are truly the heart and soul of our Heroes.

"I have been on an honor to be invited by the finest sportsmen in the country to do the honor of being here. I have been able to do this over 40 times and to be here is an honor to me."

3rd Annual MN Whitetail Deer Hunt
November 18th - 20th

Foot of your Heroes back on some gorgeous western deer hunting over four days in remote Kabetogama, MN. This part of Minnesota has the ideal boreal conditions for some top tier whitetail bucks, and our Heroes enjoyed world-class hunting, food, and accommodations throughout the week. The hunting certainly lived up to the expectations, as our Heroes were able to harvest beautiful mature does. The highlight of the trip was the opportunity for our Heroes to form close bonds with their fellow Purple Heart brothers and to leave with new friendships and support for the journey. Special recognition and appreciation to Jay Olin for proudly hosting our heroes and working consistently to raise the bar on an already superb event. Special thanks to local guides Chris Thorpe and Cole Edelbrock and to property owners Fred and Trudy Hohm and Gerald Peters for their outstanding support and the use of their hunting lands. Our gratitude to folks like Scott & Todd Hewes for their assistance, to C&J's for a wonderful dinner, to Jim Nichols for his tremendous coordination and care, and to NWRA Guide, Jeremy Smith for his support and efforts throughout the trip. In addition, we want to thank all of the volunteers and supporters for their incredible dedication in making this event so successful.

"Thank you so much for the chance to come on a hunting trip of a lifetime. Everything for the trip has been out amazing, not likely a hour I have not been thrilled. The game and licensed were taken care of and exceeded all expectations. As was the venison and all the others. The guides knew the area well and everyone had a great time. The experience was just what everyone was looking for."

The 2018 Pave Tech Contractor Party NWRA Fundraiser
FOR YOUR OUTSTANDING AND GENEROUS SUPPORT OF WWIA AND OUR PURPLE HEART HEROES

Boulder Hill Elementary “Hats Off to Veterans” Fundraiser

THANK YOU
BOULDER HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FOR YOUR OUTSTANDING
GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT
OF WWIA AND OUR HEROES

We would like to express our sincere appreciation and thanks to all of the staff and students of Boulder Hill Elementary School in Montgomery, IL for their incredible support of WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes. Boulder Hill held a fundraiser on November 9th called “Hats Off to Veterans.” Students had the option to donate $1.00 to the fundraiser and were then able to wear a hat all day at school. WWIA is truly honored to have been selected as the recipient of Boulder Hill’s Fundraiser. Special thanks to Principal Mike Litchfield and to all of the parents, students, and staff for their outstanding patriotism and support. Go Bobcats!

The Inaugural WWIA 5K is Coming!

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

Let’s Hit the Road in Support of Our Purple Heart Heroes

Tampa Bay, get ready for the WWIA 5K! Join us on Saturday, January 12, 2019. This fun 5K offers you the choice to run, walk, or stroll through beautiful Al Lopez Park. Our race 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 cream, awards, and more! Discounted registration is available for Veterans who show their military ID or Driver’s License with a “V” symbol at packet pickup with Promo Code VET20. Purple heart recipients will be able to participate free with registration to WWIA by using Promo Code HeroFREE. Visit https://wwia.org/registration to complete all three steps at the top of the page. Proceeds benefit the WWIA. We also have limited sponsorship opportunities available. Please email us at info@wwia.org for more information. Thank you.

WWIA November Spotlight
For our November Spotlight Feature, we are honored to introduce you to WWIA Hero and Guide Derek VanBuren. Derek is a U.S. Army and Michigan National Guard Veteran with 20 years’ experience. He has been proudly married to wife Kate for 15 years and together they have two amazing children, EJ (15), and Amelia (11). They currently reside in Newaygo, Michigan in the Upper Peninsula. Derek is a graduate of Northern Michigan University and works as a Safety Engineer for the Actona Guard Reserve. He also serves as a guide with Purple Mountain, L.L.C., conducting bear hunts in the Northern part of the state. Derek plans to expand his guiding duties and also run a trophy for frontiers when he retires from the Actona Guard Reserve in a few years. He would also love to host an event for WWIA in the future.

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

I first learned of WWIA while at Walter Reed Army Hospital in the summer of 2009. While there I filled out an application and a few months later I received a call from LTC (retired) John McCollum inviting me to hunt with him at Camp Mackinaw in the fall of 2010. It was an absolute blast and an awesome experience getting to meet John, Jake Witherbee, and the other heroes that were on that event. After the event I sent a note to John thanking him for the opportunity and for what he is doing for Purple Heart recipients across the country. John asked me if I would be interested in being an Associate with the Foundation. I immediately said, “Absolutely.”

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

Hunting, fishing, trapping, and the outdoors have always been a big part of my life. After returning from overseas, the first thing I wanted to do was spend more time with my family and friends was to work in the solitude of the peaceful woods near our home. It’s spending time afield that is such great therapy and I am blessed to see what it does over and over again for other Purple Heart recipients on these awesome events that WWIA has to offer. I also try to be able to share what knowledge and experiences I have gained over the years with others, as well as learn from others. After every event, I feel I’m gaining so much more knowledge and experience.

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

Without question, the biggest benefit has been seeing what it does for others. I love seeing fellow combat wounded vets taking joy in catching a big fish, harvesting a nice spring turkey, or telling the story of how they made the shot on a nice whitetail buck. Anything that might be bothering them goes away when things like this happen, and I can’t help but feel a bit of joy in that. I also enjoy meeting and spending time with the friends and volunteers of these events. They are some of the most amazing people that you will ever meet. I have made many great friends as a result of the Foundation in all of the great places I have been able to go.

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

WWIA is a way of saying thank you to our nation’s Purple Heart recipients for the sacrifices that they have made, and even though it is hunting and fishing, it is so much more than that. It’s about fellowship, camaraderie, excitement, happiness, and so much more. I have never been on an event that brought warmth shared, and put being able to enjoy each other’s company while doing an activity that is mutually enjoyed is such a great experience. This Foundation is doing amazing things for those that have sacrificed a lot for our country.

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

Get involved! Even if you aren’t a hunter or fisherman given a trip, you won’t be sorry! I have seen so many heroes enjoy themselves so much and get a tremendous amount out of these events. It has changed lives, I know it has definitely changed mine and I am forever thankful for that.

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Sponsors and Friends

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!

- **Donnie Hodge- $1,443.75 via V-Dac/CARS Donation**
- **Bruce Wise- $999.91 via V-Dac/CARS Donation**
- **Andrea Santoro- $663.91 via V-Dac/CARS Donation**
- **Nelson W. Holt Jr.- $2,500**
- **Joseph Vander Zanden-$2,000**
- **Patrick and Mary Fisher - $1,000**
- **Peggy Verick and Scott Buckman-$500**
- **Donations toward 10th Annual Grand Ciel Lodge Pheasant Hunt:**
Vern Eide- $1,000,
Muth Electric- $1,000**

**Donations toward Inaugural ND Wild Pheasant Hunt:
Garrison Super Valu- $5,358,
Younghawk Bear Post 253- $500**

**Donations toward the 4th Annual Newfield Deer Hunt:
Gerard J Messmer, Powderhorns and More- $1,400,
Carol Cook and Family from November fundraiser- $500**

Help Us Tell Others About WWIA!

WWIA NEEDS YOU!

Would you consider representing WWIA at a CFC event in your local geographic area? Our salaried federal employees (military & civilian) represent our single largest source of funding for our Heroes. If you're interested, you can find information on upcoming events where we could use your representation posted to our Facebook page. Then, simply email us at info@wwia.org or message us on Facebook. Thank you for your support!

Take a Look at Our Newest WWIA Video Documentary!

WWIA presents The MO-KAN Documentary

WWIA is proud to present The MO-KAN Documentary. Go behind the scenes with the Missouri Team MO-KAN as they hosted their 8th Annual MO-KAN Ducks, Books, and Tripping Event. See first-hand the tremendous work, coordination, and teamwork that makes this event so successful as they meticulously serve our Purple Heart Heroes. Our sincere thanks to Brian Hendrick and everyone at WWIA MO-KAN Chapter for their exceptional support and hard work throughout the years. Special thanks to Executive Producer Robert Winder for capturing and sharing another outstanding part of the WWIA story. Thank you to EVERYONE who stands with us and helps us in our journey to bring healing and restoration to our Heroes. Please be sure to share this with your friends and family. Enjoy!

Thank You Rapid River Knifeworks!
WWIA would like to recognize and thank Rapid River Knifeworks, the official knifemaker of WWIA for their outstanding and faithful support. WWIA Founder and CEO John McDaniels discovered Rapid River Knifeworks while traveling through Northern Michigan during the early years of the Foundation. He stopped in, bought a few knives and was immediately impressed with the quality, craftsmanship, and uniqueness of their products. Mutual respect and friendship was born and Rapid River has been graciously supplying WWIA with beautiful and functional knives for our heroes and friends ever since. If you're looking for a top quality knife to get the job done 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 Knifeworks Founder and CEO Kris Dunsmore, to General Manager Matthew Seawright, and to all of their talented and patriotic staff for their support and generosity throughout the years.

Shop this Holiday Season and Support WWIA!

SHOP FOR A GREAT CAUSE

when you're ready to shop,
CLICK HERE!

AND SUPPORT OUR HEROES

This holiday season, shop for a great cause by having a portion of your purchases go toward supporting our Purple Heart Heroes! Simply click here and make a difference. Happy (shopping)!

Help Support WWIA Through Vehicle Donation!

Help support WWIA by donating cars, trucks, motorcycles, RV's, boats, airplanes, heavy equipment, farm machinery, etc. (running or not) to CARS.

You can help support WWIA and our heroes by donating your car, truck, van, SUV, boat, motorcycle, ATV, RV, trailer or airplane. V-Disc recently joined the CARS Team to help continue providing opportunities to support our heroes 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 866-556-3683 to have a donation staff specialist help 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.

MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR.
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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