



HONOR. CONNECT. HEAL.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD: October 2021



Heroes in the field at WWIA's 8th Annual PA Cast & Blast in Rebersburg, Pennsylvania.

Photo courtesy of WWIA Guides Matt Brannon and Corbin McClanahan.

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October was our busiest month as we proudly hosted eight world-class events across the country that included hunting and fishing opportunities for whitetail and mule deer, pheasant, geese, grouse, woodcock, trout, muskie and pike fishing, and more. We were also honored to have some tremendous fundraisers as our incredible WWIA friends and family raised awareness and support on behalf of our combat-wounded veterans. Read on to learn more about one of our phenomenal WWIA Purple Heart Hero Guides in our monthly spotlight feature, as well as the opportunities our Heroes were able to enjoy this month. Stay tuned as we close out the year with more amazing adventures ahead, and as always, we remain grateful for your generosity and support. 💜



Events and Fundraisers

Inaugural SD Archery Mule Deer Hunt

October 7-11 Reva, SD





Four of our combat-wounded Warriors recently traveled to Reva, South Dakota for the Inaugural South Dakota Archery Mule Deer Hunt. This is a unique event and a true hunt experience with Heroes camping in tents in the area they are hunting. Our Heroes were welcomed at the [Lemmon American Legion Post 66](#) where they were honored with an outstanding meet and greet dinner. Everyone was up early the next morning for a quick breakfast and then set out for a full day of hunting. Our Heroes covered a lot of ground throughout the day as they glassed and stalked from different vantage points along the buttes. There was a plethora of game seen with a nice whitetail buck being harvested. Everyone returned to a delicious dinner courtesy of the Clark family as they talked about the events of the day and spent time sharing stories and laughs. Our Heroes arose the next morning to some heavy fog and light rain making it difficult to glass very far, but thankfully the weather cleared in the afternoon. Although a number of deer were seen, none were taken. There was a great deal of anticipation on the final day of hunting with the weather being ideal for stalking mule deer. Two whitetail deer were harvested by our Heroes, and one with a long bow, a challenging and rewarding accomplishment. Dinner that evening was graciously provided by the Gebhart family at their home, and it was a wonderful time for everyone to reflect on the excitement of the past few days. The hunting, camaraderie, and accommodations on this event were second-to-none, and our Heroes returned home with new friendships and lifelong memories of a restorative and relaxing time in South Dakota. Our gratitude and thanks to Host Finn Sacrison and his outstanding supporters for their coordination and care, and for making this new event so spectacular from start to finish. Special recognition and praise to WWIA Guide Derek VanBuren for his efforts and support throughout this five-day event.

"This trip to South Dakota has been amazing from being right on several nice deer the first day, to the whole community coming together to support WWIA. It is so nice to see so many giving people supporting such an awesome organization. The friendships I have made with like minded people will last a lifetime. I cannot thank WWIA enough for this opportunity at a once in a lifetime hunt, and the chance to spend time with such a great group of men, thank you!"

8th Annual Central Pennsylvania Cast & Blast

October 7-11 Rebersburg, PA





Nine of our Heroes gathered in Rebersburg, PA for an exciting time at the 8th Annual Central Pennsylvania Cast & Blast. This stellar event provided the opportunity for our Heroes to take in some amazing bird shooting and spectacular trout fishing while connecting with fellow Purple Heart recipients over five days. After everyone arrived and got settled, they enjoyed an evening of food and fellowship as they were treated to wood fire brick oven pizzas courtesy of [Pappas Pies](#). Sitting around the campfire sharing stories and laughs was a great start to the trip. The next morning began with a delicious breakfast, some trap shooting, and an amazing historical military weapons overview. The Heroes loved learning about the history of different weapons and had the opportunity to live fire some of them, such as an AK-47, an M-1 Garand, a .300 blackout suppressed, and a Mauser among others. After a hearty lunch, they spent time getting fly casting lessons and then were treated to an outstanding wildlife tour at [Penn's Cave](#) as they learned about and observed a variety of animals, including elk, bison, bears, whitetail deer, coyotes, wolves, mountain lions and more. Special thanks to the Schleiden Family for honoring our Heroes with this unique tour. After returning to camp, everyone enjoyed a wonderful spaghetti dinner with meatballs and sausage with cheesecake for dessert while enjoying live music courtesy of [Sgt. Bob](#).

The next day, our Heroes hit the fields early to get in some amazing pheasant and chukar hunting. Everyone had a tremendous time with lots of birds flushed and harvested. Lunch consisted of BBQ pork and venison sloppy joes, then everyone was shown how to properly clean their harvested birds so they could be prepared for later that evening. They returned to Penn's Cave for some exceptional fly-fishing. There were plenty of smiles amongst the Heroes as everyone caught some of the biggest trout they had ever seen. Dinner that evening was pheasant bites, mushroom soup, BBQ brisket, and a low country boil, accompanied by more live musical entertainment by [Matt Miskie](#). Everyone raved about the dinner, then relaxed while watching college football, sitting around the campfire, and reminiscing about the day's events.

The last day of the event, our Heroes were able to hit the fields again, harvesting a plethora of birds and also ventured back out to Penn's Cave to catch some more monster trout. The final evening was filled with great conversation over a dinner courtesy of The [Honeybaked Ham](#) Company. Our Heroes time in Pennsylvania was special, and everyone went home with treasured memories, new friendships, a cooler full of pheasant meat, and some [grilled stickies](#) to boot! This is truly a community event and combat-wounded Warriors were honored and revered throughout their stay for their tremendous service and sacrifice to our country. This event would not have been possible were it not for the patriotic support of the businesses and donors of the Centre Region. Our Gratitude to Trina, Gary, Bill, Greg, and Courtney for sharing their culinary expertise, to [Collegiate Pride](#) for the incredible shirts, to [Nittany Beverage](#), [Straub Brewery](#), [W.R. Hickey & Sons](#), and [Dietz & Watson](#) for their contributions and continued dedication. High recognition and appreciation to Gravel Spring Lodge, the [American Legion Post 779](#) and [Sons of the American Legion Post 779](#) for their generosity and support. Special thanks to Host Sandy Deveney and his exemplary team for another spectacular event. High praise to WWIA Guides Matt Brannon and Corbin McClanahan for their coordination and expertise from touchdown to takeoff.

"This trip to PA to meet up with fellow WWIA veterans was something special. I was a sad, broken man on the brink of disaster. I met 10-12 veterans who just loved me, hugged me and assured me of family and a band of brothers who all bled to save others in honor and sacrifice. I'm getting a little older and slower, but they still loved me. Shooting and fishing was great. I will forever remember."

13th Annual Grand Ciel Lodge, South Dakota Pheasant Hunt

October 8-11 Plankinton, SD





South Dakota is home to some of the best pheasant hunting in the world and five of our Purple Heart Heroes traveled to Plankinton, South Dakota to take part in the 13th Annual Grand Ciel Lodge SD Pheasant Hunt. This long-standing event is held at the scenic [Grand Ciel Lodge](#), surrounded by miles of rolling prairies and bountiful creek bottoms, a true sportsman's paradise. Once our Heroes arrived and settled in, they enjoyed a delicious home-cooked meal, then were given a gun safety briefing. They also discussed the agenda and expectations for the coming days while getting to know one another around the dinner table and the campfire. The next morning our Heroes took in some early trap shooting before heading out for their first hunt. Our Heroes made the most of their time in the field, harvesting some beautiful pheasants throughout their stay. When they weren't hunting, our Heroes had plenty of opportunities to relax, share stories, build bonds with their brothers, and take in some incredible meals, such as BBQ spareribs, wild rice soup, pheasant pizza, whiskey meatballs, sauteed southwest corn and pheasant queso dip. When you combine world-class pheasant hunting, the camaraderie of our combat-wounded veterans, and top-tier hospitality in a scenic environment, it's easy to see why this event is relished and so highly regarded by our Heroes. Our gratitude and thanks to Hosts Brad and Julie Boisen for their tremendous support of WWIA and our Heroes during this event and throughout the past 13 years. Special recognition and thanks to WWIA Guide Asa Barrett for his attention and care throughout this four-day excursion.

"Thanks, WWIA for the great pheasant hunt in South Dakota. I have experienced a few outings like this and often find it hard to fully express what it means to me. My first thoughts are, great I get to go hunting. Excitement grows weekly waiting for the day of departure. Once I got to the designated location, I found my thoughts drifting from the excitement of hunting to the emotion of camaraderie I feel surrounded by awesome veterans. I ended up enjoying the stories about service, families, and work as much or more than the hunting experience itself. Being a Vietnam vet, I appreciated being made to feel included. Grand Ciel Lodge was wonderful. Brad and Julie are so giving and really made us feel like family. The accommodations are second to none and the food was great. The guides and dogs really put us on lots of birds. All in all, I came away feeling so appreciated and relaxed."

15th Annual Camp Hackett Group A

October 14-18 Phillips, WI



Three of our combat-wounded Warriors traveled to Camp Hackett, the birthplace of WWIA,

for five days in the pristine wilderness of the Northwoods at the 15th Annual Camp Hackett Group A Event. This event offered a combination of fishing and hunting for our Warriors with the assistance of skilled local guides. Our Warriors were able to bow hunt for trophy whitetails, hunt for ruffed grouse, woodcock, and geese, and fish for the elusive and mighty Wisconsin muskie. Their time in the field, on the water, and around the dinner table was memorable, as they shared stories, laughter, and life experiences with one another. The hunting was exciting and top-notch, but the bonds formed between brothers was without question the highlight of the trip. None of this would have been possible without the incredible support of the local community and the following individuals and Foundation partners: Colonel (Retired) Arthur Kandarian, Bob Bolz, Mike Reed, John Carlson, John Kleczewski, Tom Schenk of [Chippewa River Rods](#), Don Angelo, Casey Williams, Chad and Travis DeLeasky, Pat Fisher, Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Daun, [Hides for Heroes](#), [Dragonfly Energy](#), [Battleborn Batteries](#), [Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation](#), Wayne and Missy Riebe of [The Gateway Lodge](#), [Waupaca Foundry](#), [Club 13](#), [Ross's Sport Shop](#), [Kim's 3 Mile Bar & Grill](#), [Widen Enterprises](#), Cebery LLC, and the [Corner Connection Bar, Cabin and Campground](#)! Our continued thanks to the [Hartford VFW Post 8834](#), [Tomahawk Wisconsin VFW Post 2687](#) and the [Veterans Administration](#) for their amazing support to our combat-wounded veterans. High praise and appreciation to WWIA Event Leader, Art Kandarian for his leadership, coordination, and continued service.

"This was the most incredible experience I've ever had the pleasure to be a part of. Our Hosts, John and Art are two very special Warriors in their own right. We were treated like Heroes, which I have never considered myself to be. The towns people were totally amazing and over generous. This is one great organization and has my support from this day on. Thank you so much to the Wounded Warriors in Action organization for their great sacrifices that they do for the wounded Warriors. You have my appreciation and respect for what you do."

9th Annual Bayfield Cast & Blast

October 14-18 Delta, WI



Five of our Warriors converged on Delta, Wisconsin to partake in some world-class hunting and fishing over five days at the 9th Annual Bayfield Cast & Blast. The Northwoods had gorgeous weather and provided the perfect backdrop for our Heroes to enjoy world-class hunting and get in some well-deserved rest and relaxation. Our Heroes wasted no time, getting in a quick hunt on the evening of their arrival, with one Hero taking a 9pt buck. Everyone conversed and got to know one another while enjoying a wonderful dinner of homemade meatballs, mash potatoes and corn prepared by Brenda Diesing and Lori Huele.

The next morning our Heroes were treated to a delicious breakfast at the famous [Delta Diner](#), a treasured tradition for this event over the past nine years. Then everyone got into their assigned boats and headed out for some exciting muskie and pike fishing. It was a great first day on the water with some outstanding catches made, including three nice muskies measuring 34, 36, and 39 1/2 inches, and a gorgeous 34-inch northern pike. After a full and exciting day of fishing, everyone headed to [Buskey Bay Resort](#) for an awesome walleye and white fish dinner. The remainder of the evening was spent relaxing and talking about the day's highlights and making plans for the upcoming hunt.

Our Heroes rose early the next morning, getting situated in their respective stands about

forty-five minutes before first light. Although there was a great deal of deer activity throughout the morning, none were harvested. They were treated to an unusual sight though, with a large wolf seen running through the field. For lunch, everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch at a local favorite, [PJ's Cabin Store](#). PJ's has been an outstanding and long-time supporter of WWIA and this event. PJ's has a wonderful tradition of stapling currency donated by its patrons to their ceiling, and at the end of each year they remove and count them, then graciously match the total dollars accumulated with a generous donation to WWIA. After lunch, there was some downtime and then everyone eagerly returned to the fields for an afternoon hunt. Once again, there was plenty of activity, but no deer were taken. Everyone's spirits remained high though as they headed back to camp. For dinner, they all feasted on grilled chicken, marinated venison straps, mashed potatoes, and an assortment of desserts while sharing stories and laughs with one another.

On the last morning, everyone decided to try and get in one last hunt, and there was a nice sized doe harvested. It was a great ending to a phenomenal trip. Our Heroes relished their time in the field and on the water, but the true highlight of this trip was connecting with other Purple Heart recipients, sharing like-minded experiences, and building new friendships. This event would not be possible without the support of the local community, and we would like to recognize and thank [PJ's Cabin Store](#), [Liquor in the Woods](#), [Badger Fisherman's League](#), Mr. Russ Heule and [Dairyland Fence Co.](#), and the Kemp Family Foundation for their incredible support and contributions year after year. Our sincere gratitude to volunteers Jamie Vee, Jeff Evans, Jason Edgar, Lelf Wallin, Josh Teigen, and John Bentley for their invaluable assistance and support. High praise and appreciation to Hosts Chris and Brenda Dising of Buskey Bay Resort and the entire Bayfield team of volunteers, supporters, and donors who go out of their way each year to honor our Heroes with this awesome event. Additional gratitude goes to WWIA Guide Jason Gaudette for his coordination and support from start to finish.

"This has got to be one of the best trips I have ever been on. From the setting to the food, to the activities, it has been non-stop fun and friendship. The best part has been the people. Chris and his crew have been gracious, supportive, and welcoming. I was a 15-year addict and have been going through some dark times. This event has given me a new outlook on life, and more importantly on humanity. Thank you so much."

4th Annual North Dakota Wild Pheasant Hunt

October 21-25 Garrison, ND



The outstanding people and city of Garrison, ND proudly welcomed five of our Heroes for the 4th Annual North Dakota Wild Pheasant Hunt (In memory of Glen Schreiner). Upon arrival, our Heroes were graciously outfitted with hunting gear and supplies courtesy of [Scheels Sporting Goods](#) and then were given an honorary escort through town courtesy of the [McLean County Sheriff's Department](#), where residents and businesses came out to show their appreciation for our Heroes service and sacrifice. Everyone settled into their wonderful accommodations at the [Cabernet Inn Lodge](#) before enjoying a delicious meet and greet dinner between the Heroes, Hosts, and event volunteers at the [Totten Trail Bar & Grill](#). Our Heroes enjoyed meeting members of the local community and were also gifted with sweatshirts from Krause's Market and beautiful coaster and koozie sets courtesy of the [Stoehr family](#).

Staeher family.

Everyone hit the fields early the next morning to shoot some clay pigeons and get a safety briefing before a full morning of hunting. It was a successful time with 54 birds harvested. A local news station (KX News) also came out to learn more about the event and how WWIA is helping our Heroes. Click [here](#) to view their news coverage. The hunting that followed over the next few days was simply exceptional as our Heroes harvested a total of 92 pheasants. On the final evening of the event, a wonderful dinner banquet was held at the [Garrison Fire Department](#). Everyone dined on pheasant nuggets and prime rib, courtesy of Krause's Markets. It was an enjoyable time of sharing stories, laughs, and highlights of their time in Garrison. The community support and patriotism surrounding this event are second-to-none, and the residents and businesses of Garrison showed our Heroes a memorable time that will be treasured for years to come.

Thank you to Chris Hickman and [Hunter's Bar & Grill](#) for a delicious Wagyu brisket, ribs, veggies and potato salad dinner and for honoring each Hero with a beautiful custom jacket that included the WWIA logo and Purple Heart medal. They also generously hosted a pump shotgun auction with the proceeds benefitting WWIA. Special thanks to Brenda Staehr for her event support, to [West River Transit](#) for providing transportation throughout their entire stay, to [This That and More](#) for presenting each Hero with a beautiful hand-made quilt, and to the Schreiner Family Farm for providing bountiful hunting grounds, great food, and exceptional hospitality. Our sincere appreciation to the incredible local event guides: Greg Opsal, Chris Brown, Mike Zimmerman, Rick Wagner, and Dick Tronset. High praise to Mike Marshall, Richard Foss, and Vince Selensky for taking such great care of our Heroes with their culinary skills. Our sincere gratitude and applause to Hosts and sponsors, Roy McKenzie of [4-Bulls Meat/Seafood & Deli](#) of Ocean Springs, MS, the [Garrison Chamber of Commerce](#), [Krause's Market](#), and everyone who worked together to make this event such a tremendous success. Special recognition and thanks to WWIA Guide Gabe Fierros for his contributions and care throughout this stellar event.

"This hunt was great; we had a blast! From Gabe to Roy and the rest of the volunteers who put on a great event, I couldn't be more thankful to have spent time with everyone involved. We made lifelong friends and met some great people who did everything to make this a wonderful event that I will never forget. I felt like I was around family every day. The community and the town of Garrison, I thank them so much. Gabe was the greatest Guide; he was professional and made sure we were in good hands. Although we met for a short period of time, I feel all of us have made a connection and will keep in touch in the future. Thank you, Gabe, and WWIA for this experience that I will never forget and for all the memories!"

7th Annual DoubleCreek Tennessee Archery Whitetail Deer Hunt

October 22-25 Hohenwald, TN



Five of our Purple Heart Heroes traveled to the beautiful rolling hills of Tennessee to participate in the 7th Annual DoubleCreek Lodge TN Archery Deer Hunt. The fall weather in Hohenwald could not have been better as our Heroes awoke each morning to set off in search of their quarry. The time spent in the outdoors provided a perfect backdrop for healing, camaraderie, and reflection. The evenings were full of stories, laughter, and leisure while our Heroes enjoyed some of the finest home-cooked meals imaginable. This was

another exceptional event that left our Warriors with a rapport for their fellow brothers, renewed spirits, and lifelong memories. We would like to convey our heartfelt thanks to Hosts Dennis Reynolds and Shelley Cohen for their impeccable dedication and support of WWIA and our combat-wounded veterans. Every year, our Heroes rave about the experience at DoubleCreek being like a home away from home, and that is a testament to the care and attention given throughout this event. Additional thanks to Rob and Amy Reynolds for their outstanding support, and to the local community who continually honor our Heroes through their efforts and generosity each year. Special recognition and thanks to WWIA Guide James Rissler for his tremendous efforts and support throughout the event.

"The WWIA event and DoubleCreek was awesome. I have been to a couple of other veteran events that don't compare to this one. You couldn't ask for better Hosts than Shelley and Dennis. Also, the camaraderie that was there with the other Heroes, it was great to just be there with others that have been through the same. This event was the best time I have had since I have been back and retired. I would come back to this event anytime."

15th Annual Camp Hackett Group B

October 28 - November 1 Phillips, WI



WWIA Founder and CEO John McDaniel welcomed four of our Heroes to the birthplace of the Foundation for the 15th Annual Camp Hackett Group B event. This long-standing event offered both fishing and hunting for our Warriors with the assistance of outstanding local guides. Our Warriors were able to bow hunt for whitetails, shotgun hunt for ruffed grouse and geese, and fish for prized Wisconsin muskie. Whether in the field, on the water, or around the campfire, the friendships made between fellow Heroes were the highlight of this trip and will carry on long after the event. None of this would have been possible without the incredible support of the local community and the following individuals and Foundation partners: Bob Bolz, Mike Reed, John Carlson, John Kleczewski, Jake Nelson, Don Angelo, Casey Williams, Chad and Travis DeLeasky, Pat Fisher, Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Daun, [Hides for Heroes](#), [Dragonfly Energy](#), [Battleborn Batteries](#), [Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation](#), Wayne and Missy Riebe of [The Gateway Lodge](#), Tom Schenk of [Chippewa River Rods](#), [Waupaca Foundry](#), [Club 13](#), [Ross's Sport Shop](#), [Kim's 3 Mile Bar & Grill](#), [Widen Enterprises](#), Cebery LLC, and the [Corner Connection Bar, Cabin and Campground](#). Our continued thanks to the [Hartford VFW Post 8834](#), [Tomahawk Wisconsin VFW Post 2687](#) and the [Veterans Administration](#) for their amazing support to our combat-wounded veterans. High praise and appreciation to WWIA Guide Jake Whipkey for his outstanding support and leadership.

"Thank you so very much. I definitely needed this. It was a great getaway from the everyday norm at home. I don't have anyone to talk to about my military past and let everyday life eat at me. My family can't relate to what I have done, and I don't say much because I know they aren't interested. Arriving here and being able to talk to people and other veterans recharged my purpose and my soul. It was very healing. John and Jake and also my two veteran partners, Dennis and Rusty made it nice to be able to tell stories and let out a lot of frustrations and internal build up. It was nice to sit around the fire and talk about life and different ways to battle issues. I don't have that back home. The patriotism and hospitality were amazing. Thanks to WWIA and the Wisconsin community for helping me feel like I belong and what I did for 20 years had a purpose."

Sand Mountain Pheasant Shoot Fundraiser

October 2 Horton, AL



We had an awesome new fundraising event during the month of October with the introduction of the Sand Mountain Pheasant Shoot. This event was held in Boaz, Alabama and was organized and spearheaded by WWIA Guide Matt Brannon. The event featured an early morning pheasant shoot with 255 pheasants released and included drinks and lunch. A total of \$2,780 was generously raised on behalf of our combat-wounded veterans! Our appreciation and thanks to Matt Brannon for his coordination and thoughtfulness. Special thanks to everyone who came out to participate and support WWIA and our Heroes. Additional recognition and thanks to Ben and Kevin of [Sand Mountain Pawn and Outdoors](#) for hosting this fundraiser.

Mercer Muskies Madness Fishing Tournament Fundraiser

October 15-16 Mercer, WI



The 2021 Mercer Muskie Madness was a huge success! A great time was had by all coming together for a great cause. An impressive total of \$6,085.00 was raised in honor and support of WWIA and our Heroes. Our sincere appreciation and thanks to Wayne and Missy Riebe, owners of [The Gateway Lodge](#) for hosting this annual fundraiser and for their tremendous support of WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes throughout the years. Additional thanks to WWIA Associate Brian Eisch, to all the volunteers and participants, as well as all of these amazing sponsors: [The Gateway Lodge and Resort](#), [Donner's Bay Resort](#), [SS Sport Store](#), [Boulder Marine](#), [Turtle Flambeau Flowage Association](#), [Turtle River Trading Co.](#), [St. Croix Rods](#), [Rollie & Helen's Musky Shop](#), [5 Star Marketing & Distribution](#), [Beaver's Resort](#). Learn more about the Mercer Muskie Madness event by clicking [here](#), or if you're in the local geographic region, make plans to attend this awesome fundraising tournament next year.

A Road 2 Help 7th Annual Motorcycle Ride/Car Cruise Fundraiser

Manhattan, IL

THANK YOU



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We would like to express our gratitude to [A Road 2 Help](#) for their incredibly generous donation of \$5,350.00 in support of WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes. A Road 2 Help's mission is to raise awareness for suicide prevention and PTSD for our first responders & veterans. They raise support by hosting an annual motorcycle and car ride/rally, and also through a variety of raffles and t-shirt sales. You can check out their highlight video from this year's 7th Annual Charity Ride by clicking [here](#). Our sincere thanks to A Road 2 Help Head Chair, Kevin Kelly and his wife Kim, and to all the outstanding volunteers and donors who selflessly contributed to this fundraiser. Thank you!

WWIA October Spotlight





JAMES RISSLER

For the October Hero Spotlight, we are proud to introduce you to James Rissler. James is a Purple Heart recipient who currently serves as a Guide for WWIA, sharing his knowledge and skills with his fellow Heroes on events across North America. James has a great story, and we truly appreciate him sharing some of his thoughts and experiences with us about his WWIA journey.

James, can you please give us a brief introduction and tell us a little about yourself?

Currently, I am an U.S. Army Major. I have served in the military for 23 years as an active-duty soldier. I started off in 1997 as a Combat Medic for an Infantry Division (1-32 IN, Fort Drum, New York). I deployed with them two weeks after 9/11 and landed in Afghanistan for a ten-month deployment. During that deployment, we were in numerous combat engagements, and I was wounded and awarded the Purple Heart (shrapnel wounds from a mortar round and RPG) and ARCOM with Valor for that particular battle (Battle of Shai-e-Kot). A few years following that, I was commissioned as an officer and became a 66T (trauma/emergency nurse). In 2013, I again deployed to Helmond Province, Afghanistan working with a British Group treating CAT A trauma patients. There, we would see 20-30 triple amputated patients a day. I continued my career and then was deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan in 2017 working with various Special Forces groups for operations in and around the city of Kabul. I was awarded a Bronze Star for the various engagements while there. Today, I am the head of the Emergency Department here at Fort Carson, Colorado ([Evans Army Community Hospital](#)).

I am married to Mrs. Gianne ILy Rissler and have two amazing kids that are twins (a 5 year-old boy and girl, Sebastian and ILy). I grew up hunting and fishing with my father. It has always been and remains a passion of mine to spend time in the wood line.

How did you first get involved with WWIA?

I honestly didn't know that an organization such as WWIA existed. Following a deployment, my wife told me that she had signed me up for something and that if they called, she wanted me to go. My first event was the MO-KAN Ducks and Bucks Hunt. This was an amazing experience to see such a large patriotic community being so supportive of military members that were wounded in action.

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

When I had the opportunity to attend my first event, I knew within the first few hours after seeing the Guide interact with the Hosts and Heroes that this was an organization I wanted to be part of. I also knew that I wanted to become a Guide one day.

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

The biggest benefit I have experienced is the mental health and healing it has given me. Not only am I getting to meet some of the best people America has to offer, I also get a sense of peace from interacting with the other Guides/WWIA members, the Hosts, local community members, and the Heroes as well.

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

I don't think you could find an organization that cares more about its people and the Heroes that have served their country. By far, WWIA has the best group of people I have had the privilege to work with.

What would you say to others who are considering getting involved with WWIA either as a Hero or in any other capacity?

I think the best piece of advice I could give is to say that joining this organization as a Hero or Guide is not just an individual decision, it is also a family decision. You must ensure that your family is in the proper place for you to spend time away and that they are willing to support your efforts. I can truly say that this organization makes an impact not only on the lives of wounded Warriors but also on the lives of the Guides as well. In just the short time I have been working with WWIA, I have had Heroes reach out to me, thanking me for what I do and expressing how I have made a positive impact on their lives. That is humbling and rewarding, and that is what this Foundation is all about, helping others. If you would like help with your own personal healing, you should definitely consider joining.



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!

Donations:

Cirrus Tech, Inc. \$2,000

Latrell Redmond (via CARS vehicle donation) \$1,204.97

Donations toward 7th Eagle River Muskie Chal-Lunge

Colin Crawford \$600

Marshall-Dekalb Electric Co-Op \$500

Douglas & Cerissa Holme (in memory of Morgan Phipps) \$500

Donations toward 10th Lake Erie Trophy Walleye Fishing

American Legion Dewey Howlett Post 103 \$2,500

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Donations toward 4th Shell Beach Fishing

Central New York Chapter 490

Military Order of the Purple Heart \$500

Thank You Dragonfly Energy/Battle Born Batteries for
Generously Supporting WWIA and our Heroes

THANK YOU



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FOR YOUR TREMENDOUS SUPPORT OF WWIA & OUR PURPLE HEART HEROES



Our gratitude and thanks to [Dragonfly Energy/Battle Born Batteries](#) for their outstanding donation of \$10,000 to the Foundation in October. They recently installed a solar power system at WWIA's Camp Hackett in Phillips, Wisconsin. This remote camp was powered for many years by a generator, which aside from the unwelcomed noise also required routine maintenance and a fair amount of fuel and attention. The installation of this solar power system allows WWIA to operate more efficiently, with a clean and green off-grid solution, and keeps the focus where it should be, on the Heroes. The Dragonfly Energy team shot this [highlight video](#) from their time at Camp Hackett, which showcases their amazing work and their dedication of facilitating WWIA's mission to bring healing and restoration to our combat-wounded veterans. Our sincere thanks to Dragonfly Energy and Battle Born Batteries for their valued partnership and tremendous generosity to WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes.

Thank You Thomas-Clair Fund for Your Stellar Support

THANK YOU

THOMAS-CLAIR FUND

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NEW JERSEY



We would like to recognize and thank the Thomas-Clair Fund for their incredibly gracious donation of \$8,000 to WWIA. Their generosity and dedication to WWIA and our Heroes is exemplary, and we appreciate their outstanding patriotism and support. ♥

High Praise and Gratitude to Ammo.com

THANK YOU





Our sincere thanks to [Ammo.com](https://ammo.com) for their recent donation of \$7,425.81 to WWIA. They have donated an incredible \$47,114.87 to WWIA and our Heroes since 2019 through their Freedom Fighter program! When it comes time to order your ammunition, please consider ordering from [Ammo.com](https://ammo.com). Whenever you purchase your ammo from them, they graciously donate 1% of your entire purchase back to the Foundation. All you have to do is select WWIA as your preferred "Freedom Fighter" option from the drop-down menu at checkout. Simply go to <https://ammo.com/wwia-supporter> to get started and find out more information. Our sincere thanks to [Ammo.com](https://ammo.com) for their tremendous support and to everyone who chose WWIA as their "Freedom Fighter" designation when ordering previously. We are honored by your support of WWIA and our Heroes and applaud your outstanding patriotism!

Help Support WWIA & Our Heroes During CFC Season

Federal retirees can now make donations in the form of monthly annuitant payments to the preferred CFC charity of their choice! Please consider making a pledge to WWIA.

HONOR. CONNECT. HEAL.

We are in the closing months of the Combined Federal Campaign. Have you made your CFC designations yet? If not, you can easily make a pledge online to help support WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes. CFC allows federal employees and retirees to make charitable contributions to a number of 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 and the pledges and contributions received help non-profits like WWIA continue the work we are doing to assist in the healing

and restoration of our Heroes. As you look to make your CFC charity 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](#). Thank you in advance for your consideration and for your faithful support as you partner with us. With your help, we are changing hearts and minds and bringing healing and restoration to our Heroes. ♥

Our Sincere Thanks to Plum Lake Lions Club

OUR APPRECIATION & THANKS TO: PLUM LAKE LIONS CLUB



FOR YOUR OUTSTANDING SUPPORT OF
WWIA AND THE 7TH ANNUAL
EAGLE RIVER MUSKIE CHAL-LUNGE

We would like to thank the [Plum Lake Lions Club](#) in Sayner, Wisconsin for their tremendous generosity in donating \$3,389.00 in support of WWIA's 7th Annual [Eagle River Muskie Chal-Lunge](#). This tremendous gift makes a genuine difference in the lives of our combat-wounded veterans, and we are humbled and grateful for your support. Thank you for honoring our Purple Heart Heroes with your thoughtful donation!

Support our Heroes Through CARS Vehicle Donation Program

**Fall Into The Season of Giving.
Donate Your Vehicle Today!**



Easy Process | Free Towing | Tax Benefits



1-855-500-3125

1-855-500-RIDE



Did you know that you can help support WWIA and our Heroes by donating your car, truck, van, SUV, boat, motorcycle, ATV, RV, trailer or airplane? Working or not, free towing, tax benefits, and helping support our combat-wounded veterans are just a few of the benefits of using the CARS vehicle donation program. Simply click [HERE](#) to start the donation process or call CARS toll-free at 855-500-RIDE (855-500-7433) 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!

Shop and Support WWIA Through AmazonSmile

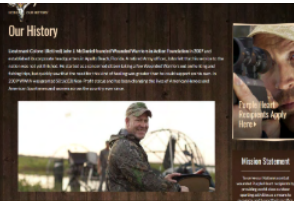


You can help support WWIA whenever you shop at Amazon through the AmazonSmile program! When you select WWIA as your preferred charity, anytime you shop at Amazon a portion of your purchase will go to support WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes! Every bit helps, and these donations come from simply shopping for items like we normally do. If you're not already signed up, simply click [HERE](#) to be taken to the AmazonSmile page, and then select Wounded Warriors in Action Foundation as your charity option. You can also sign up for AmazonSmile on the Amazon Shopping app on your phone. You can find it in the [App Store for iOS](#) or [Google Play for Android](#). Be sure to tell others, as it's a simple way to support us while doing something you already do. Thank you!

Want to Learn More About WWIA? Visit Us Online!



**VISIT US
TODAY!
WWIAF.ORG**



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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813-938-1390 | info@wwiaf.org | wwiaf.org

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