

THE PATRIOT

Issue 9 of the Huron County Veteran Service Office newsletter • October 2022



Army Sgt. Patrick Ryan Carroll Memorial Highway dedicated

NEW LONDON — The parents of the late Patrick Ryan Carroll, Amy Griffiths and James Carroll, admired the new highway sign named in their son’s honor.

A portion of State Route 162, from outside of New London to Fitchville, is now known as the Army Sergeant Patrick Ryan Carroll Memorial Highway.

The New London community held a dedication ceremony July 10. Rep. Dick Stein, of the Ohio House of Representatives from the 57th District, Huron County Commissioner Terry Boose and U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Andy Hance spoke during the event.

Pastor Jerry Shirley, of First Baptist Church in New London, said when anyone passes the memorial sign, it should remind them of a

The parents of the late Patrick Ryan Carroll, James Carroll and Amy Griffiths, unroll the flag attached to the newly revealed highway sign on Ohio 162 outside of New London. (PHOTO BY CARY ASHBY/HCVSO)

true American hero.

To conclude the ceremony, twin brothers Greg and Joseph Roberts, 2022 New London High School graduates, performed “Taps” on trumpet. Todd Conley played “Amazing Grace” on bagpipes.

Patrick Ryan Carroll, who was born on Sept. 3, 1985, worked at several jobs after graduating from New London. Eventually, he decided he wanted to follow in the footsteps of his father,

In this Issue:

Need transportation?	2
North Fairfield park is named after WWII veteran	3
HCVSO gets new DAV van	3
Navy veteran honors ship by making Missing Man Table	4
Toys for Tots train honors late Vietnam War veteran	4,5
Veterans breakfasts schedule	5
Trips to Nat'l Veterans Museum in Columbus	5
Big turnout for Military Appreciation Night	6,7
Maxton Sowiak: Gone but not forgotten	7
Army veteran reflects on Vietnam War experience	8



Need transportation?

The Huron County Veteran Service Office offers transportation services to any VA and medical appointment.

At least 48 hours before your appointment, call 419-668-4150. You also may request transportation online at huroncountyvets.com. Under the "services" tab, click on "transportation."

We recommend you call as soon as you have your appointments, as ride availability fills up quickly.

Be ready to provide all of the following: Your full name; phone number; date, time and location of your appointment; and the last four numbers of your Social Security number.

Ryan Wolfe or Cary Ashby, of the transportation department, will call you the day before your appointment to confirm your ride.

grandfather and great-grandfather and joined the U.S. Army.

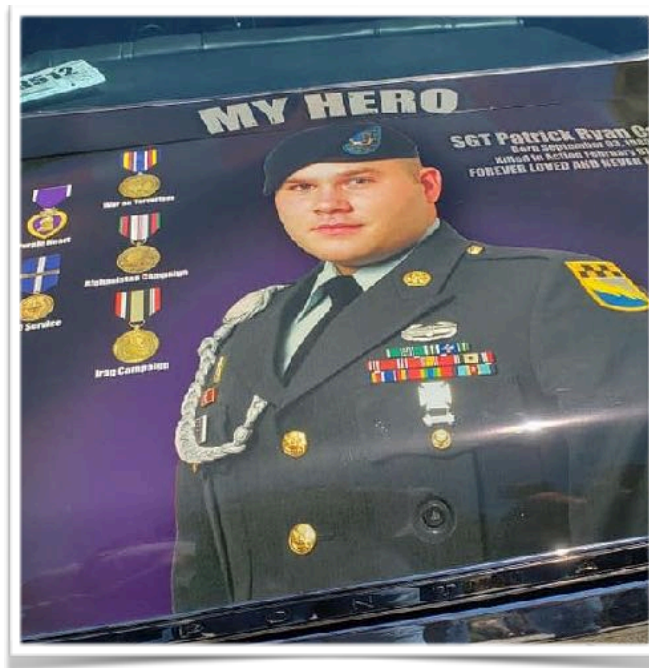
"I think he got tired of the real world and the Army is one of those places where right is right and wrong is wrong and it still means something," said his father, who served in the Army and eventually retired from the U.S. Army Reserves after 22 years.

Through his military career, Patrick Ryan Carroll was stationed at multiple locations across the world. In August 2010, he volunteered to go to Afghanistan.

Carroll was a member of the 319th Military Intelligence Battalion, 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade and 82nd Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, N.C. He served in Iraq and Afghanistan during the Global War on Terrorism. Carroll was awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Afghanistan Campaign, Iraqi Campaign, and NATO medals.

On Feb. 7, 2011, Carroll was killed in action in the Kandahar Providence of Afghanistan.

"A soldier's biggest fear is to be forgotten. The fact that it's 11 years later and they're still fighting for him and his memory is priceless. (There's) no greater honor, no greater pain. I appreciate everything they do," his father said.



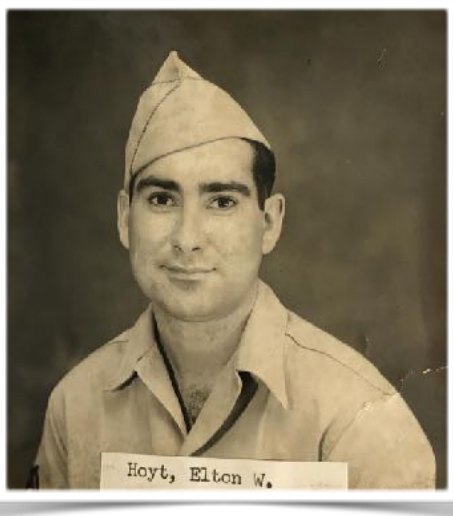
This Pontiac LeMans muscle car honors the life and military achievements of the late Patrick Ryan Carroll, a sergeant in the U.S. Army. (PHOTO BY CARY ASHBY/HCVSO)

Hoyt Park is named after WWII veteran

By RUTH EARL, North Fairfield Historical Association

NORTH FAIRFIELD — Hoyt Park, located on the northwest corner of State Route 162 and New State Road, was dedicated in 1989 in honor of the late Elton W. Hoyt, a lifelong resident and World War II veteran.

Hoyt was the operator of the Hoyt General Store for many years. Each day he raised and lowered the United States flag where the park is located now.



Elton W. Hoyt

He was born Feb. 7, 1916 and died Oct. 24, 1984. Hoyt graduated from North Fairfield

High School in 1934. He served in the U.S. Army from 1942 through 1945.

Over the years, Hoyt Park has become home to significant patriotic symbols. A cannon, purchased by the village of North Fairfield in 1946, now rests there.

In 2009, the North Fairfield Historical Association erected a monument in recognition of area veterans. The inscription was suggested by the late Dale Ebinger, a longtime village mayor and veteran of D-Day. It reads, this was “placed here as a memorial to the men and women of the North Fairfield area who served, are serving, or will serve in the U.S. military, to preserve forever the principles for which our nation stands.”



PHOTO BY CARY ASHBY/HCVSO

The land on which Hoyt Park is located was, in the 1800s, home to a large hotel often used by people from the southern part of Huron County traveling to and from the Milan Canal. The hotel was torn down to erect a depot and power station for the S, N & M Electric Railway.

HCVSO gets new DAV van

NORWALK — The Huron County Veteran Service Office has a new vehicle in its fleet.

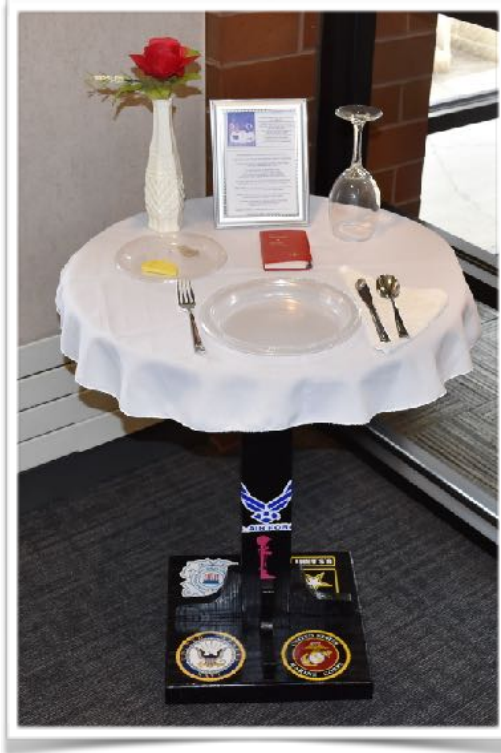
Drivers Tom Lovitt and Fred Walton picked up the 2022 Ford Explorer at the DAV headquarters in Erlanger, Ky. on June 21. Pictured are Walton, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, and Cindy Kinney Patterson, a DAV senior voluntary service specialist.



PHOTO BY TOM LOVITT/HCVSO

Navy veteran honors ship by making Missing Man Table

NORWALK — The homemade Missing Man Table in the lobby of the Huron County Veteran Service Office honors deceased and missing members of the military.



U.S. Navy veteran John Lichoff, of Norwalk, made this Missing Man Table for the lobby of the Huron County Veteran Service Office. (PHOTO BY CARY ASHBY/HCVSO)



John Lichoff

The table also has special meaning for U.S. Navy veteran John Lichoff. He made it in honor of the fleet oiler on which he served from 1957 through 1959, the U.S.S. Salamonie AO26.

“I am the head of our Navy association. I also am the curator of our museum in Warren, Ind., where we have all of our ship’s memorabilia,” he said.

Lichoff saw a Missing Man Table at a restaurant and was inspired to build one himself. He later talked to HCVSO Director Matt Raymond about making a table for the lobby. After receiving approval from the Huron County Veteran Service Commission, Lichoff started making it.

His son, a retired Navy chief, obtained the decals of the military branches. Lichoff did some internet research to find out what items needed to be on the Missing Man Table.

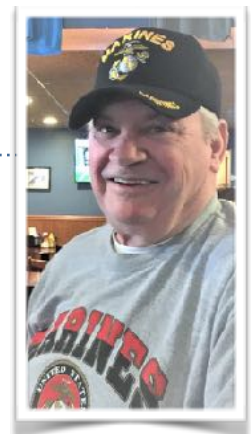
“I probably got in about 20 manhours, in the time cutting, staining, painting and this and that,” Lichoff said. “I liked it so well, I made one for our museum. I have one on permanent display in our museum in Indiana.”

Toys for Tots train honors late Vietnam War veteran

BELLEVUE — The Jim Griffin Memorial Toys for Tots Train is named for a Marine who served in the Vietnam War.

James F. Griffin Jr., of Bellevue, was 73 when he died on Sept. 14, 2018.

Griffin served in the U.S. Marine Corps in the Vietnam War during the Tet Offensive. He was a member of the Elton E. Mackin Detachment #837 of the Marine Corps League in Huron County. He was a lifetime member of VFW



James F. Griffin Jr.



Diana Griffin stands with the Jim Griffin Memorial Toys for Tots Train before the 2022 Fourth of July parade in Norwalk. Her husband was U.S. Marine Corps veteran James F. Griffin Jr. (PHOTO BY JIM RUFFING/ELTON E. MACKIN DETACHMENT #837 OF THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE)

Post 1238 in Norwalk, American Legion Post 46 and Eagles Aerie 490.

Also, Griffin participated in military funerals, often playing “Taps,” and was part of honor guards at parades and football games. Griffin co-owned and ran Griff’s Outdoor Power Center in Bellevue.

★ ★ ★ ★



In April, it was an all-girls trip to the National Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus. From left are: Shelly Collins, Charlotte Pugh, U.S. Army veteran Bernie Bolen-Pugh, U.S. Air Force veteran Betty Hurlahe, Penny Straughn and U.S. Marine Corps veteran Cheryl Fout. To reserve your spot for trips on the second Wednesday of the month and for more information, call the HCVSO at 419-668-4150. The last trips will be Nov. 9 and Dec. 14. (PHOTO BY TOM LOVITT/HCVSO)

Veterans breakfasts

Veterans breakfasts are the second Wednesday of each month at 9 a.m.:

- Oct. 12 - Main Street Café, Norwalk
- Nov. 9 - Invention Restaurant, Milan
- Dec. 14 - Uncle Dudley's Restaurant, Willard
- Jan. 11, 2023 - East of Chicago, Norwalk
- Feb. 8, 2023 - Buckeye Pub & Grub, Norwalk
- March 8, 2023 - Joe's American Diner (V & M Family Restaurant), Willard

Big turnout for Military Appreciation Night

WILLARD — The annual Military Appreciation Night was a historic one for Willard City Schools.

Aug. 26 marked the first time that the Bowling Green State University chapter of the Student Veterans of America had a high school display its basketball court-sized American flag. Students and volunteers unfurled it from the end zone during the pregame activities.

The original plan was for the flag to be displayed a couple years ago in Willard, before the pandemic. Jason Graven, the Student Veterans of America advisor and BGSU military program coordinator, said now that Covid protocols are over, the student group wanted to return to Willard to make sure it would be the first school to use the flag.



Willard High School senior Madie Hall (right) checks in a veteran for the 2022 Military Appreciation Night. (PHOTO BY CARY ASHBY/HCVSO)



Manny Booker, 6, of Willard, pretends to play guitar with 99 to Main at the 2022 Military Appreciation Night. His grandfather (left) is guitarist Donnie Buss, a U.S. Army veteran, and his parents are James and Emily Booker. (PHOTO BY CARY ASHBY/HCVSO)

“We are absolutely excited to partner with a Purple Star high school and these districts that are showing that love for the veteran community. We work with high schools all over the state of Ohio in doing this if we can,” said Graven, who was a military police officer with the U.S. Army.

Graven talked about his job as the BGSU military program coordinator.

“I work with all the student veterans on campus to make sure their course scheduling maximizes their use of military education benefits,” he said. “We have roughly 700 military-affiliated students. That includes veterans, National Guard and reserves and also dependents.”

The honorary captains for the “County Border Battle” between Willard and Plymouth were two Army veterans (Benny Elliott, Willard class of 1967, and Buck Kelley, Plymouth class of 1977) and two U.S. Air Force veterans (Barry Jester, Willard class of 1970 and Scott Steinmetz, 1980). Each game official, the flag representatives, every member of

the chain gang, the Willard and Plymouth marching bands and cheerleaders honored a veteran who was important in their lives.



The Willard Crimson Flashes football team, in camouflage jerseys sponsored by the National Guard, prepare to take the field for pregame warm-ups during Military Appreciation Night on Aug. 26. (PHOTO BY CARY ASHBY/HCVSO)

Current Air Force airman Brittney Zeigler, who graduated from Willard in 2018, delivered the game ball with her father, Brian Zeigler. He graduated from WHS in 1986 and served in the Army for four years.

Pete LuPiba, founder of the Purple Star Award for military family-friendly schools, presented a Purple Star coin for the coin flip.

“This is probably the biggest veteran (event) I have seen,” Willard junior Masyn Johnson said.

Johnson directed veterans to the Military Appreciation Night event and helped unfurl the flag on the field. He shared why the event is important.

“It really brings out our pride and gives our respect to the veterans, which I feel like they deserve more than anything. And it’s just beautiful to see everyone come out as a community together,” Johnson said.

Maxton Soviak: Gone but not forgotten

MILAN — An honor guard from the Elton E. Mackin Detachment #837 of the Marine Corps League participated in the Sept. 2 retirement jersey ceremony of the late Maxton W. Soviak during the Western Reserve vs. Edison football game.

Soviak wore No. 27 for the Edison Chargers. HM3 Corpsman Maxton W. Soviak was killed in action in Afghanistan on Aug. 26, 2021.

Pictured (from left) in the Firelands Regional Medical Center Fieldhouse at Edison High School are: U.S. Marine Corps veterans Jim Hager (rifleman), Jeff Dymond (Marine flag), David Austin (U.S. flag), Tony Burns (MIA flag), Jim Ruffing, and Ron Kearney (rifleman).



SUBMITTED PHOTO FROM THE ELTON E. MACKIN DETACHMENT #837 OF THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Army veteran reflects on Vietnam War



U.S. Army veteran John Hunt, of Stueben, shakes hands with Mindy Soisson-Calhoun, of the Huron County Veteran Service Commission, after being presented medals during the July 20 commission meeting. (PHOTO BY BONNIE GFELL/HCVSO)

opinions.”

Hunt took advantage of the G.I. Bill and earned an associate degree in business management at the Wooster Business College.

On July 20, the Huron County Veteran Service Commission presented him with two medals for his service in Vietnam: The Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Medal Unit Citation and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. Prior to the meeting, during an appointment with a veteran service officer, Hunt learned that he was owed the medals.

Hunt, now 74, was asked what the most valuable thing was he learned while in the Army.

“It was how lucky I had it here in the United States because of how bad it was in Vietnam,” he said. “Everybody back here had it so easy and they just didn’t understand. And I think even today they don’t understand.”

NORWALK — U.S. Army veteran John Hunt planned on doing an apprenticeship with his uncle, a civil engineer.

“He helped build the Hoover Dam and things of that nature and I was going to be his apprentice. Well, he died of a heart attack; that washed away my apprenticeship and I just kinda left college after about four months,” Hunt said.

Then he received a notice that the U.S. Army had drafted him.

“I wanted to hold off for a while because I wanted to get married, so I went down and enlisted,” Hunt said.

The Army gave him a three- to six-month furlough before he entered the service. Starting in 1969, he served for one month short of three years.

Hunt wasn’t well received upon his return from Vietnam. When he came off the plane, people behind a screen barrier “were saying things and trying to throw tomatoes over the top of the screen.”

“You’d want to walk up to them and beat them in the head and knock some sense into them. But they’re like kids; you could tell them something and they don’t listen. They’ve got their ways,” Hunt said. “So now I’ve learned there are a hundred million people out there in the world and every one of them has their own