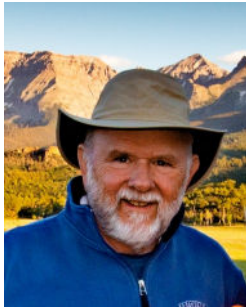


## President's Message



John Pierce

### WRS OFFICERS

#### Elected Officers

##### President

COL (R) John Pierce

##### First Vice President

COL (R) Brian Foley

##### VP Communications

CSM (R) Ricardo Alcantara

##### VP Development

Vacant

##### VP Membership

Vacant

##### VP Patient Services

SGM (R) Dan Bullis

##### VP Programs

Vacant

##### VP Finance

Vacant

##### VP Projects

COL (R) S. Avery Davis

##### Secretary

COL (R) Edward Coll

##### Treasurer

LTC (R) John Wetterau

##### Historian

COL (R) John Pierce

##### Appointed

##### Director Public Relations

Tansill Johnson

##### Liaison to Other Non-profits

Rick Erdtmann

##### Liaison to Alexander T. Augusta

##### Military Medical Center/ATAMMC

Yamayra Ahornio

##### Liaison Sports and Recreation

Carlton Kammerer

##### Administrator (ex-officio)

##### Editorial/Graphics/Design

Hermalene M. Taylor

##### Office of Distinction

##### President Emerita

COL (R) Janet Southby

##### Past President

COL (R) Joseph Konzelman

We begin our 30th year of service in 2025, a significant and noteworthy milestone. Thanks to the support of many faithful and generous donors, the diligent work of our all-volunteer board and the outstanding support of our administrator we can all be pleased with our record of support and assistance to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) and the military medical community within the National Capital Region (NCR). This newsletter contains a partial listing of the support and assistance that we provided in 2024 to WRNMMC, Alexander T. Augusta Military Medical Center (ATAMMC) at Ft. Belvoir and to other non-profits that serve military families in the NCR. Please take a look; we look forward to providing even more assistance in 2025.

WRS leadership had the opportunity to meet with both new Chiefs of Staff at WRNMMC and ATAMMC. In December 2024 we met with COL John MacFarlane at ATAMMC; and in February 2025 we met with CAPT Juan Rosario at WRNMMC. These meetings were introductory for them to get to know us and our work.

Also there are heart-felt letters of thanks and appreciation for the assistance we provided to three military families. The items provided for the families are considered luxury items by TRICARE. So, TRICARE will not provide them. You can easily tell by the letters how important these "life changing" items have been to these families. We were thrilled and had to share them with you.

This spring along with the American Red Cross we are sponsoring the third annual Rose Mologne Award for service excellence. Rose a charter member of the Society and long-time Advisor to the Board was a Red Cross volunteer for 40 years. We are pleased to honor her each year with this award to a Red Cross volunteer.

A couple of the behind the scenes projects that we have been working on for some time are the updating of our website and our by-laws; neither of these had been attempted in over a decade. The new website won that race and is on-line and functional. The site still needs a few tweaks that we are working on; thanks to CSM (Ret) Ric Alcantara, Tansill Johnson and Hermalene Taylor for all their work. The by-laws are still a work in progress but getting nearer to completion.

Speaking of websites, in reviewing WRNMMC's website Articles in the News and Gallery Section I noticed a couple of good news items that might be of interest. The hospital and its programs in Primary Care Medical Home and Behavioral Health were recently reaccredited by The Joint Commission; in addition WRNMMC receives an "A" Grade for Patient Safety from the Leapfrog Group for Fall 2024. Congratulations to the hospital and its staff.

As always I want to thank our Board of Directors for all their work making it possible for us to provide the assistance that we do. I believe we are making a difference for the WRNMMC and ATAMMC patients and staff. Also a BIG thank you to Hermalene Taylor our Administrator for her contributions to our success.

Please join us for our Annual Meeting on May 4, 2025 at American Post 41 in Silver Spring, MD. We will hold elections for our Board positions. I hope to see you on May 4th.



# Issue 27

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION

The purpose of the annual meeting is to conduct the business that may properly come before the Walter Reed Society membership. This year includes election of WRS Board of Directors.

### WRS ANNUAL MEETING



Sunday  
May 4, 2025  
11:30 AM - 2 PM

**\*\*Cissel-Saxon\*\***

**American Legion Post 41**  
905 Sligo Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Brunch ~ \$30 per person

Mail checks to:  
Walter Reed Society  
8901 Rockville Pike  
Box 303  
Bethesda, MD 20889

or  
pay in-person at door

**\*\*\*RSVP by 4/21\*\*\***

support@walterreedsociety.org  
301-571-1580

Entrance is located in the back of  
building via parking lot at  
8110 Fenton Drive



DIRECTIONS — Post 41 bldg.  
parking and entry location on  
Fenton Street. Point smart phone.

### WALTER REED SOCIETY BOARD ELECTION



In re-doing the Society's By-Laws it has become apparent that we have been remiss in not holding re-election of our Board members at the end of their 3-year term.

If a Board member desired to stay in their position it was simply allowed without holding a reelection.

Therefore at our upcoming meeting in May we will hold a re-election of the Board members who have been in office for more than 3 years or their term of three years is ending.

The slate of Board members for election:

**President** : John Pierce

**Secretary**: currently serving first term

**Treasurer**: John Wetterau

**First Vice-President**: Brian Foley

**Vice-President Patient Services**: Dan Bullis

**Vice-President Programs**: Avery Davis

**Vice-President Communications**: Ric Alcantara

**Vice-President Public Affairs/Outreach**: Tansill Johnson

**Member at Large**: Rick Erdtmann

If you wish to nominate someone beyond the slate above for the WRS Board, please contact us at (301) 571-1580.

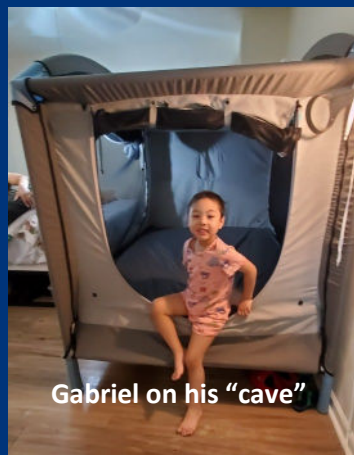
Please ascertain the individual's interest and permission before nomination.



## Walter Reed Society, Inc.

### — GRATITUDE IN ACTION —

#### BIG THANKS FROM FAMILIES WITH LITTLE ONES: WRS 'GRANTS' CUBBY BEDS — MEDICAL DEVICES FOR SAFE SLEEP



Gabriel on his "cave"

Walter Reed Society—We are so blessed to get the cubby bed for our son - Gabriel...The day the bed was delivered and the first time he saw the bed, he...jumped into [it]...immediately and he said "Mommy, thank you for my cave. I love it". The bed saved our life and we know he is safe when he sleeps and that's all that matters to us. From the bottom of our heart, thank you. Sincerely...A Thankful Family

Dear Walter Reed Society,

Thank you for your generous gift of a cubby bed for Flynn. [He] has been struggling for years with achieving safe and comfortable sleep due to his medical issues. When his bed arrived, he was healing from a back injury having a lot of difficulty with daytime activities and sleep alike. Numerous aspects of Flynn's life changed for the better once you provided the cubby bed. We were able to move Flynn into the bedroom next to ours, which he had previously been unable to use because he would try to climb into the floor vents. We also no longer have to child-lock his door since he is safely contained in his cubby bed. We are able to place an air purifier inside his room to support air quality and his breathing overnight, since he can no longer use the unit to elope or dismantle it while he is in his cubby bed. He is now peaceful and comfortable at bedtime.

With better sleep his back healed more quickly. His seizures are also better controlled with improved sleep and injury prevention. His delightful, loving personality re-emerged as he was able to rest in a calm, safe bed consistently. Flynn is also able to have toys, books, and clothing in his room, as well as artwork on his walls. Those little details give Flynn a sense of normalcy and comfort that was not possible before he received his cubby bed. Flynn has begun to thrive this school year and received a star student award from his principal. He has shown improved participation in therapies and that has helped him progress in skills at home, in his classroom and in the community. With improved sleep and safely from self-injury and falls, Flynn has better health overall and more successful recovery from his inevitable setbacks.

Thank you for providing...a cubby bed...The quality is excellent and it will support Flynn's best possible health and happiness for many years to come. You have blessed Flynn, our family, and all who know him tremendously! Flynn adds, "I love my bed! So cozy!! Thank you so much!" Sincerely, Flynn's family

#### WHEELS EMPOWER ACCESS TO SUCCESS

Dear Walter Reed Society,

I am writing to express my gratitude for the wheelchair you have generously provided me. This gift has transformed my outlook on my future college and life experiences, allowing me to achieve independence moving forward. With this wheelchair, I will navigate the college



campus with ease, traveling between classes, libraries, and social events without relying on others. This new-found mobility empowers me to manage my schedule more effectively and focus on my responsibilities. The wheelchair will also alleviate the physical strain from walking long distances, which often leaves me exhausted. Now, I can conserve my energy for academic pursuits and engage in extracurricular activities without the worry of fatigue. Additionally, the wheelchair eases my anxiety about navigating the campus safely, allowing me to concentrate more on my education. Thank you, Walter

Reed Society, for this life-changing gift. Your generosity has empowered me to pursue my dreams with confidence and determination. —Sincerely, Julia



## Walter Reed Society, Inc.

### — CONNECTIONS IN ACTION —

#### NIGHT OUT FOR DAV AT POST 41

WRS hosted soldiers and families from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Night Out Program at American Legion Post 41.

On behalf of DAV we wish to thank Walter Reed Society and the American Legion Post 41 for sponsoring and hosting the delightful dinner. All the patients, caregivers and families from the Fort Belvoir Soldier Recovery Unit and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center had a wonderful time.



*"The environment is so...happy. Thank you for the opportunity to unwind."*

Some comments from guests:

*"Thank you for your continued support. Great food, friends and staff as always. We warriors and families just wanted to say thank you."*

*"I loved the dinner. We appreciate all you do for our service members and veterans!"*



Note to WRS Board Member and Post 41 Commander Dan Bullis from Justin Hart, Danny Sotoo and Shaunise Stewart

### SOCIETY COLLABORATES — EXPANDS OUR REACH

The Society's mission is focused on WRNMMC and other military healthcare facilities in the National Capital Region (NCR); however, as you know we have also reached out to other non-profits in the NCR in an effort to increase our ability to positively influence the lives of military patients and families.

In some instances we provide financial support via grants and in some we provide knowledge of the system, information on contacts, advice and guidance. One of the groups we are working with is Friends of the Uniformed Services University (FUSU), a group similar to ours that supports the medical school. John Pierce has been meeting with them via Zoom on a monthly basis for a couple of years with a purpose of supporting military medicine within the limitations we are allowed as non-profits. Tammy Alvarez leads FUSU.

The FUSU sponsored an event on May 22, 2024 at the National Press Club entitled "Imagine Combat Without Military Medicine." While the purpose of the event was to call attention to the medical school and its overall role in military medicine it also brought attention to the overall situation within military medicine. Society member LTG (R) Ronald Blanck led the panel discussion. Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) Lester Martinez-Lopez was in attendance and answered questions from the floor that concerned the current state of military medicine.

The event received several significant positive responses to include an offer by local radio station, WMAL, to begin airing a twice daily two-day-a-week on air "Military Minute" about military medicine and its overall role in defending our country. "Military Minute" is current airing Monday - Friday at 0725 hrs.

— Reprint from Fall 2024 issue

## Walter Reed Society, Inc.

### LIVES WELL LIVED — IN SERVICE TO OTHERS

#### Jimmy McGonigle 1942 - 2024

Jimmy McGonigle, long-time WRS member, passed away peacefully at home in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania on December 15, 2024 at the age of 82.

Jimmy never served in the military but had a heart of gold for those who have — especially for their children. He was a successful entrepreneur in his business life and brought that to his efforts to help military children and families. Before the COVID pandemic, Jimmy along with former Surgeons General of the Army (Ronald Blanck) and

Navy Vice-Admiral (Harold



Koenig) started “Operation: Key West” (OKW) with a goal of providing a respite week in Key West for military families that had lost a child.

The pandemic shut down almost all travel so Jimmy changed his efforts to providing a family night out to include the siblings of children with cancer at the Portsmouth Naval Medical Center. The purpose of this program was to remember the often overlooked well children in the family. This program became so successful that it was expanded to all children dealing with a life-threatening chronic illness at Portsmouth. It expanded again with the provision of “Smile Packages” to the children of these families.

Because of its outstanding success, WRS has been providing support for OKW for several years. Just one example of our support of other non-profits doing outstanding work. Jimmy will be greatly missed but his work lives on as seen in the smiling faces of children from Portsmouth Naval Medical Center. ★

#### Dr. Johannes Blom September 11, 1928 – March 23, 2024

WRS learned of the passing of Dr. Johannes Blom who served as the Chief of Oncology at Walter Reed Army Medical Center from 1964-1979. He was born in the Netherlands, immigrating to the United States through Ellis Island. He had faculty appointments at Georgetown University Medical Center and the Uniform Services University of the Health Sciences. Hans was involved in a number of national cooperative cancer study groups which evaluated investigational treatments in addition to co-authoring “Guide to Therapeutic Oncology” in 1979. He finished his clinical career at the Cancer Treatment Center at Divine Providence Hospital in Williamsport, PA initiating their medical oncology department.

In August of 2020, after 60 years of marriage, his wife, Bo, passed away at the age of 91 due to complications from a broken hip. Hans remained active for the next few years until his passing of natural causes in March of 2024 at the age of 95. Hans and Bo are survived by their three sons: Hans, an orthopedic surgeon in Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Jamie, a radiation oncologist in Anchorage, AK; and Rob a commercial pilot in Edgewater, MD. ★

## Issue 27

### IMPACT IN ACTION — WRS SUMMARY OF ASSISTANCE 2024

In 2024, the WRS community continued our work of service and commitment to support and assist military families. A snapshot of our impact and the people we help are spotlighted here. We encourage you to read the full report on our website — [walterreedsociety.org](http://walterreedsociety.org).

WRS has an Open Proffer to Case Managers and departments to inform them that we stand ready to assist families with purchases and reimbursements of medical equipment and items recommended by the medical staff. All requests sent to our committee have a recommendation by the patient's provider. We do not have a sliding scale of our support based on rank to include lodging and other less expensive items as we have been blessed with great donors who support our work.

#### SUMMARY OF ASSISTANCE

##### WRNMMC and National Capital Region (NCR) grants supported and provided:

- ◆ a family grant to an active duty Army soldier who is on an unaccompanied assignment in Korea. Spouse relocated to Boonsboro, MD where she has a sister and to be close to Walter Reed for the care of her daughter who has Rubinstein Taybi syndrome requiring extensive home care. The family has been in the Army's EFMP. (*AER Ft. Detrick*)
- ◆ a grant for a family who came to Walter Reed from out of state for the wife who has end stage renal failure to receive a kidney transplant. The father is a medically retired sergeant and they have two sons ages 7 and 11. They covered their travel and lodging expenses with their savings. They expect to be at Walter Reed another 2 months and continue to have bills back home consisting of mortgage, car, and all of their other living obligations.
- ◆ a grant to a former enlisted Navy member medically discharged with a 100% disability rating experiencing housing challenges. In and out of subsidized housing—including homeless situations and unable to work due to her medical condition.
- ◆ a personally designed stroller/wheelchair denied by Tricare for a 7 y/o child with a diagnosis of autism with ADHD, lack of coordination, imbalance, no self awareness, risk for elopement and sensory overload. The request for assistance came (*via the pediatric mobility clinic at WRNMMC.*)
- ◆ wheelchair modifications with a special custom seat, backrest and several other items for a 23 year old dependent with the diagnosis of spina bifida that had been supported by Tricare but now disapproved as he has "aged out" of their coverage. The family lives at Ft. Belvoir and the son is entering college in South Carolina.
- ◆ a 20 y/o AD USAF sent to WR from his assignment in Tampa diagnosed with inoperable cancer. So far chemo is keeping it at bay. He gets short of breath, tires easily and unable to self-propel a manual wheelchair. He doesn't have a way to transport regular power wheelchairs. This wheelchair is a new carbon steel that the clinic finds useful in many situations and is not available through Tricare. It allows him independence to get around in his room in building 62 and the hospital area. Also facilitates transport to get around in the community. (*via WRNMMC Mobility Clinic*)
- ◆ a dependent of an active duty in the DC area—a 17-year-old spastic diplegic with cerebral palsy who is cognitively intact with a Q50R carbon fiber Quickie wheelchair. It gives her the opportunity to engage in activities safely at home and in the community with greater energy conservation and safety. However the hemiplegia prevents the performance of many of the mobility related activities of daily living without expanding a great amount of energy. She underwent a "leg lengthening surgery" in February and will attend college next year with a wheelchair that allows independence and ease to transport. This item is not covered by Tricare. (*via WRNMMC Mobility Clinic*)
- ◆ a 23 year old dependent with the diagnosis of spina bifida requires a special wheelchair that had been supported by Tricare; but Tricare disapproved his request for modifications and needed maintenance on the chair as he has "aged out" of their coverage. The family lives at Ft. Belvoir and the son is entering college in South Carolina. WRS provided coverage for the cost for the chair modifications with a special custom seat, backrest and several other items.
- ◆ taxi vouchers to support patients brought, had no way to get back home or were transported from WRNMMC to ATAMMC via ambulance with no way to get back to their POV at WRNMMC. (*via ambulance to the ER at WRNMMC or AT-AMMC.*)

(continued on next page)



## Issue 27

### IMPACT IN ACTION — WRS 2024

- ◆ a special wheelchair for a retiree in need due to a medical condition from a military training accident. He underwent surgery in Feb 2024 for cervical myelopathy. Post-op he continues to have numbness in the upper extremities which impairs his ability to perform a functional grip and grasp pattern. His ability to ambulate is impaired from his cervical myelopathy and lumbar radiculopathies. He can ambulate in the house with a cane but has fallen multiple times. He is not ambulating in the community and using a K4 manual WC on loan from the VA. (*via the MATC*)
  - ◆ a safety bed, recommended by clinical staff—referred to as a "Cubby Bed"—for an 8 year old child of a Navy E-5 diagnosed with severe global developmental delay, epilepsy and autism. TRICARE denied the request. (*via a Pediatric Mobility Clinic nurse /Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation*).
  - ◆ a year-long art project for pediatric in-patients for monthly custom creations of various art projects including a large "tie-dye" project kit, that comes in a box similar to carry-out pizza. This kit is a simple, contained, organized presentation for patients to participate in on their own or in a group therapy session. (*WRNMMC*)
  - ◆ Human Experience Re-imagined Team in providing motivational materials and refreshments. (*WRNMMC*)
  - ◆ Internal Medicine's Integrative Health and Wellness Memory Training Program. (*WRNMMC*)
  - ◆ Psychiatric Continuity Services as they provided innovative services to help our beneficiaries reintegrate into the community. (*WRNMMC*)
  - ◆ Patient Experience Program for the entire year. The activities include Staff Resiliency Week, Staff Resiliency promotional supplies, Patient Experience Week, Human Experience Class, Holiday contest to boost morale, and support for various monthly and special meetings. (*WRNMMC*)
  - ◆ National Capital Consortium's 2024 Chief Residents Leadership Symposium. (*WRNMMC*)
  - ◆ National Capital Consortium Graduate Medical Education graduation at the Strathmore in June 2024. (*WRNMMC*)
  - ◆ Ethics Symposium at *WRNMMC*.
  - ◆ Commissary cards for 90 enlisted personnel during the holiday season at *ATAMMC*.
  - ◆ Nurses Week in May (*WRNMMC and ATAMMC*)
  - ◆ September Hospital Ball (*ATAMMC*)
  - ◆ Third Annual Research Symposium (*ATAMMC*)
  - ◆ equipment to bolster internal fundraising efforts; and a grant to repair and refinish outdoor furniture at the Intrepid Center at *ATAMMC*.
- WRS Assistance to Other Non-profits**
- ◆ Quarterly wounded warrior dinners to fund **Disabled American Veterans** Night-Out Program at the American Legion Post 41.
  - ◆ In collaboration with **Mission M4**, assisted with: the upgraded replacement of the MRI in-bore viewing system at *WRNMMC*; and provided a pediatric gaming station to improve the therapeutic environment for children and their families during inpatient care on pediatric ward at *WRNMMC*.
  - ◆ **Fisher Houses Bethesda** to purchase supplies needed for families in residences.
  - ◆ **Wreaths Across America** for placement in a local veterans' cemetery.
  - ◆ **Community Building Art Works** grant to support their special event in September, "Day of Belonging."
  - ◆ **American Red Cross** to provide Inner Balance Bluetooth sensors for patients in the hospital referred by providers to teach how to shift from stress and frustration to balance and resiliency. Also Alpha Stim devices that may assist with non-drug treatment of anxiety, insomnia, depression, and pain.
- ◆ Funds to **Oakleaf Club of Greater Washington** for their Pediatric Stuffed Animal Program at *WRNMMC*.
  - ◆ In cooperation with American Red Cross — sponsor of the **Rose Mologne Award** given to an outstanding Red Cross Volunteer at *WRNMMC*. WRS provided an engraved crystal rose bud vase and a donation to ARC in the recipient's name.
  - ◆ Grant to local chapter of **Blue Star Families**.
  - ◆ Funds for quarterly events hosted by **Operation Key West** at the Portsmouth Naval Medical Center and their families; also 12 "Smile Packages" (one per month) for the entire family of a hospital-identified ill child.



Read full report, visit website/News page: [walterreedsociety.org](http://walterreedsociety.org) or scan the QR code below to visit WRS website page:





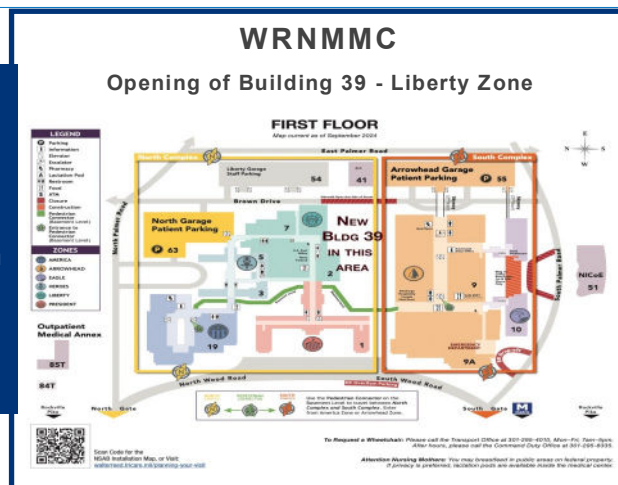
WALTER REED SOCIETY, INC.  
 8901 Rockville Pike, Box 303  
 Bethesda, MD 20889  
 Phone: 301-571-1580  
[www.walterreedsociety.org](http://www.walterreedsociety.org)

**MEMBERSHIP CONNECTIONS:** We continue to develop an electronic mailing list of our membership. Please share your email address and indicate interest in receiving our newsletter electronically.

ARE YOU A WRS MEMBER? ANNUAL - \$25; TWO YEAR - \$40; FIVE YEAR - \$100; LIFETIME - \$500



Visitors who have been to the WRNMMC campus know that construction is the name of the game. Bldg 39 in the center of the map (right) is scheduled to be turned over to the hospital by the time you read this article as well as a demolition to Buildings 2 and 7. Occupancy of Bldg 39 is scheduled for Fall 2025.



Numerous enhancements within Building 39 include:

- ◆ centralized Women's Health Center
- ◆ repositioned Wounded Warrior (WW) clinic
- ◆ new family-centered medical and surgical in-patient bedrooms and amenities
- ◆ a Pain Block and Stone Center



**WRS ANNUAL MEETING AND BOARD ELECTION ~ MAY 4TH ~ 11:30AM - 2PM**

**MORE WRS ANNUAL EVENT INFORMATION AND DETAILS ON PAGE 2**