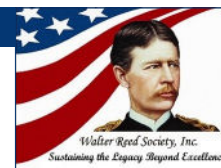
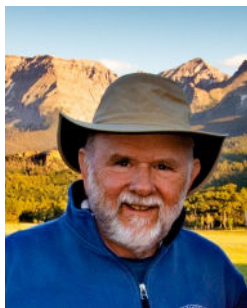


Walter Reed Society, Inc.



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

Appointed

Director Public Relations

Tansill Johnson

Liaison to Other Non-profits

Rick Erdtmann

Liaison to Alexander T. Augusta

Military Medical Center /ATAMMC

Clance Gross

Liaison Sports and Recreation

Carlton Kammerer

Administrator (ex-officio)

Editorial/Graphic Design

Hermalene M. Taylor

Office of Distinction

President Emerita

COL (R) Janet Southby

Past President

COL (R) Joseph Konzelman

It has been an eventful few months for the Walter Reed Society with numerous in-house opportunities to support patients, families and staff as well as activities by our partners. Frequent readers of our newsletter will know that for several years the Society has been providing grants to other local nonprofits that support military patients and families. You also know that on occasion we support others organizations that are not so local but that support the military and their families. These non-local organizations are always well known to at least one Board member. Many of our activities in this regard are addressed within this newsletter; I encourage you to spent some time learning all that is being done.

At our Annual Meeting this past May, CAPT Melissa Austin, WRNMMC Director, spoke of the many efforts that are being made to increase patient care at the hospital. These efforts are somewhat in response to the Deputy Secretary of Defense's December 6, 2023 memo — Stabilizing and Improving the Military Health System. There are numerous reasons why the military healthcare system is in its current situation, short of staff and short of patients. The DEPSEC's memo has drawn attention to these and hopefully will result in improvements.

The Society was honored to help arrange the presentation and placement at WRNMMC of a maquette of the Viet Nam Women's Memorial located on the National Mall. Along with the American Red Cross the Society presented the second Rose Mologne Award to Red Cross Volunteer Pat Gross. Follow-on articles and photos of both events are included. We have received a number of thank you letters from the hospital staff as well as others we support.

This edition also has articles on some of the other organizations we support either with financial grants or via consultation and advice. These include Friends of USU, Leashes of Valor, Blue Star Families, and the American Health Information Management Association Foundation's scholarship program. Also there is an image of our 2024 Holiday Collectible honoring the 100th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty becoming a National Monument.

Sadly the Society has become aware that in the past few months several Society members have passed away. Past Society President MG (Ret) Enrique Mendez, members BG (Ret) Van Coots, LTC (Ret) Sherman Ragland are the deaths that we know about. Brief tributes for each of these wonderful men are in this newsletter. There are possibly deaths of other members that we do not know about thus we are unable to honor them.

As you can tell this newsletter contains a wealth of information about our activities none of which could be accomplished without our very generous donors and our all-volunteer Board of Directors. A very sincere thank you to our donors and to our Board.



WRS ANNUAL HOLIDAY EVENT DECEMBER 8TH — DETAILS ON Page 4





VALDECTORY



A Past President of the Walter Reed Society, Enrique (Hank) Méndez, Jr., passed away May 16, 2024; he was 92. A beloved and respected leader in military medicine for decades, he was a gentle and kind soul. Born in Santurce, Puerto Rico he graduated from Stritch School of Medicine of Loyola University in Chicago. He served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps for 28 years, retiring in the permanent rank of Major General. He served as Deputy Surgeon General of the Army and finally the Commanding General of Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, DC.

After retiring from the Army, Dr. Méndez returned to his native Puerto Rico to become, first the Dean, and subsequently, the Dean and President of the Ponce School of Medicine. He then served as Medical Director of Damas Hospital in Ponce before becoming Secretary of Health of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. In December 1989, President George H.W. Bush nominated him to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs. He served in this position until January 1993. He later became a partner in the health care consulting firm Martin, Blanck and Associates.

Dr. Méndez was a Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine and a Fellow of the American College of Physicians. His awards and decorations as well as honorary doctoral degrees are too numerous to detail here.

He is survived by his wife of many decades, Olga; a son, two daughters and their families, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

To say "Thank You for Your Service" does not seem adequate for all that he gave to us. He was a revered leader, mentor and friend. Sir, you will be missed. ★



Major General Enrique Méndez, Jr.
U.S. Army (Retired)

John R. Pierce, MD COL, MC
USA (Ret)
WRS President





Walter Reed Society, Inc.

IN MEMORIAM



Brigadier General Norvell Coots
U.S. Army (Retired)

Walter Reed Society member Brigadier General (Ret.) Norvell (Van) Coots died on June 12, 2024 as a result of injuries sustained in a horseback riding incident. He was 65 years old.

Dr. Coots, a dermatologist, retired as a Brigadier General from the U.S. Army in 2016. He was the final Commander, Walter Reed Healthcare System from 2008 – 2011. He culminated his 36 years of military service as the Commanding General of Regional Health Command Europe, while concurrently serving as the Command Surgeon for the US Army Europe and 7th Army. He was also Deputy Commanding General of the US Army Medical Command, Assistant Surgeon General for Force Projection at the Pentagon, and Surgeon, US Forces Afghanistan.

After retirement from the Army he became President and CEO of Holy Cross Health and the Maryland Region of Trinity Health. He held a number of other leadership roles to include Chairman of the Board, Maryland Physicians Care; Chairman of the Board, National Institutes of Health Clinical Center; and Board Member, American Hospital Association. His awards and recognitions are too numerous to be included here.

He is survived by his wife, Claudia; two teenage children — Maximilian and Catalina; a sister — Elizabeth Early; a stepsister — Dr. Denise Holland; and a host of extended family and friends. He will be sorely missed by all who knew and loved him.



Walter Reed Society, Inc.

IN MEMORIUM



Sherman L. Ragland
LTC U.S. Army (Ret)

Walter Reed Society member Sherman L Ragland, LTC US Army (Retired) died on July 10, 2024. He was 90 years old.

He graduated from Central State University in 1956 and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army. He later earned the Master of Social Work Degree from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. From 1968-1976 he served three commanding generals at Walter Reed Army Medical Center where he pioneered several U.S. Army social work and Army Medical Corps initiatives.

Upon retiring from the Army he worked at the

National Institutes of Health, where he retired as the Deputy Associate Director for Special Populations. He served as the President of the Alumni of the Federal Executive Institute and was a Past President of the National Association of Social Workers.

He is survived by his wife Dr. Delores Parron-Ragland. LTC Ragland is also survived by his three children and six grandchildren. COL Ragland and Dr. Parron-Ragland were enthusiastic supporters of the Walter Reed Society faithfully attending all membership meetings. ★

★
He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. ★



Issue 26

FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON

Each year we come together for an end of year holiday gathering. Our annual event is a time to reflect, remember and celebrate community, friendship, cause and purpose. We salute and share fond memories of all members past and present who have and continue to help so many during our holiday giving season.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
WRS

HOLIDAY GATHERING

Sunday

December 8, 2024

★
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 11/25/24** ★

support@walterreedsociety.org
301-571-1580

DIRECTIONS: Post 41
parking and entry located
— 8110 Fenton Drive



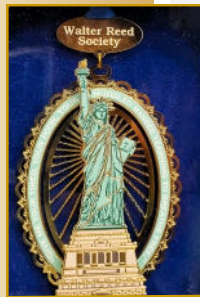
WRS 2024 COLLECTIBLE

THE STATUE OF LIBERTY CELEBRATING FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY

This year's collectible commemorates the 100-year anniversary of the Statue of Liberty being named a National Monument in 1924.

"The Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World" was a gift of friendship from the people of France to the United States and is recognized as a universal symbol of freedom and democracy.

The Statue of Liberty was dedicated October 28, 1886. The U.S. National Park Service has cared for the colossal copper statue since 1933.



**STATUE
OF LIBERTY**
\$20 each

Design copyrighted by Beacon Design. Etched from solid brass. 24kt gold plated.

The collectible is 3" x 2" of solid brass finished in 24KT Gold with the WRS oval namedrop.

Proceeds from our annual giving help patients and families at WRNMMC and other facilities in the National Capital Region.

VISIT WALTERREEDSOCIETY.ORG FOR MORE COLLECTIBLES AND ONLINE PURCHASES. Payment Methods: credit cards or checks payable to: **WRS**; **mail to:** WRS, 8901 Rockville Pike, Box 303, Bethesda, MD, 20889. **WANT ITEMS DELIVERED BY 12/25? Estimated recommendation: Payments should be received for processing by 12/11/2024. QUESTIONS?** Contact: support@walterreedsociety.org or 301-571-1580.

Issue 26

'STATURE' AND SERVICE HONORS

WRS ASSISTS WITH PLACEMENT OF VIET NAM WOMEN'S MEMORIAL MAQUETTE AT WRNMMC

The maquette is in the Hall of Heroes between the America Building and the Garage America. The donor of the maquette, a Viet Nam era veteran, desires to remain anonymous. WRS assisted with the process of the donation and provided the walnut base and plaque.



Vietnam Women's Memorial Maquette
Glenna Goodacre, Sculpture

This bronze study above and the monumental Vietnam Women's Memorial located on the National Mall were sculpted by artist Glenna Goodacre. The effort to memorialize the contribution of women in the Vietnam War was envisioned and led by U.S. Army combat nurse Captain Diane Carlson Evans. This tribute to over 265,000 women who served in the Armed Forces of the United States during the Vietnam War, including 10,000 women — the majority military nurses — who served in the Vietnam theater was placed on the National Mall close to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 1993. The bronze study above was provided by a generous anonymous donor with the assistance of the Walter Reed Society.

WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER
Bronze Plaque on Pedestal Drawing

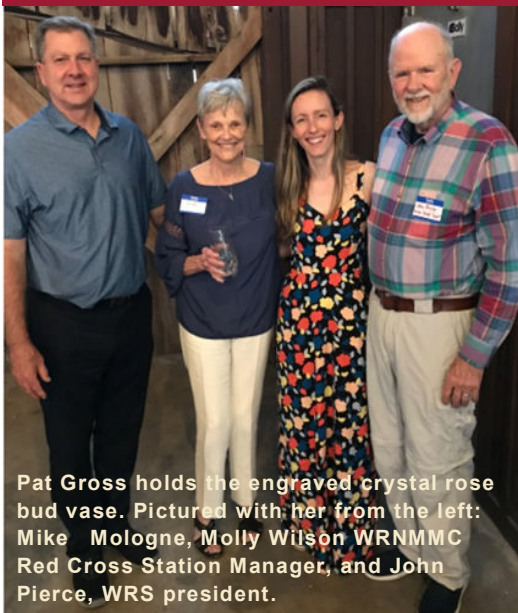
COL Jan Southby, US Army (Retired), Walter Reed Society President Emeritus and Viet Nam veteran assist CAPT Melissa Austin, WRNMMC Director, (center) cutting the ribbon to dedicate the installation of a maquette of the Viet Nam Women's Memorial at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on March 28, 2024. The ribbon is being held by a senior nurse from the Navy, Army and Air Force.

The photo culminates a 15 month journey that began when former Army Surgeon General, Lt. Gen. USA (Ret), James Peake contacted WRS to introduce Diane Evans — founder of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project. Evans was seeking assistance to place a maquette at WRNMMC. As a former Army nurse and Viet Nam veteran (1968-69) — she founded the project in 1994 with plans to honor the service of over 10,000 American military women, mostly

nurses, who served in Vietnam. After 9 years of work and support of many in all 50 states, a 7 foot tall bronze sculpture with 4 figures — 3 women and a wounded soldier — was dedicated Veterans Day 1993 on the National Mall Washington, DC. More than 60 miniature statues or maquettes are made.

Other DC area site locations: The Pentagon; National Museum For Women in the Arts; Disabled American Veterans. National sites: OAMEDD Museum, San Antonio, TX; Oklahoma University School of Nursing; Arkansas State Capitol and Clinton Presidential Library both in Little Rock; Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Angel Fire, NM; Covenant Hospital, Lubbock, TX; American Legion of Minnesota at Minneapolis; Sheridan College, Sheridan, WY.

WALTER REED SOCIETY AND AMERICAN RED CROSS PRESENT SECOND ANNUAL ROSE MOLOGNE AWARD



Pat Gross holds the engraved crystal rose bud vase. Pictured with her from the left: Mike Mologne, Molly Wilson WRNMMC Red Cross Station Manager, and John Pierce, WRS president.

Pat Gross is the second recipient of the Rose Mologne Award in Recognition of Outstanding Service with Excellence in her Red Cross volunteer work at WRNMMC. She was also presented the WRS' Rose Mologne coin. The award honors Rose Mologne, a founding member of WRS and a 40-year American Red Cross volunteer. Rose — who passed away in 2022 — was also the wife of Major General Lew Mologne, former Walter Reed Army Medical Center commander.

Gross has been a Red Cross volunteer since 2010, serving in multiple capacities before taking on the role of Red Cross Office Management Lead. She serves as the welcoming face of the Red Cross at WRNMMC greeting visitors with warmth and professionalism. Her exceptional interpersonal skills and genuine care create a positive atmosphere for all who enter the office. She plays a pivotal role in managing Red Cross office operations with remarkable organizational skills and attention to detail. She consistently goes the extra mile to support WR patients and all staff.

Walter Reed Society, Inc.

A NEW 'LEASH' ON LIFE

"We make a difference in the lives of veterans," so when we learned about the non-profit organizations that train service dogs, we looked into **Leashes of Valor**. They offered us another way to reach out to our veterans who have serious challenges," said Dan Bullis, Vice President of Patient Services and Warrior/Family Support.

Leashes of Valor was founded in 2017 by retired Marine Corps Capt. Jason Haag, who suffered from severe symptoms of post-traumatic stress following three deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Though he tried many treatments, it was a service dog named Axel that ultimately changed Haag's life.

"I wanted to give that gift to others," Haag said. Since its founding, Leashes of Valor has successfully paired more than 30 dogs with veterans with PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, and other "unseen wounds" of their military service. Though Axel passed away in January 2022, his legacy lives on at Axel's Place, Leashes of Valor's 10-acre property in Fredericksburg, Va.

Leashes of Valor's motto is One Leash Saves Two Lives—the life of a veteran and the life of a dog. That's because whenever possible, canines that enter into the program come from shelters and rescue groups or are owner surrenders.

An estimated 3.2 million dogs are euthanized in the United States every year.

Service dogs share a common, important thread with those in the military.

Intense training is required and key to a successful partnership with the veteran. Service dogs train for up to two years before they are paired with a veteran. The veteran then spends 10 days at Axel's Place learning how to work with their new service dog.

The success, the positive influence each service dog has had on the veterans, is impressive.



The Leashes of Valor website has photos and testimony from many veterans that capture and communicate the close attachment, the bonding between the veteran and their dog.

The WRS Board of Directors voted to support Leashes of Valor with a significant donation of \$100,000, which covers all costs associated with the two year process of raising and training four service dogs including food, veterinary care, transportation, training, and other expenses.

"We are humbled and grateful for this tremendous donation," said Chris Bowers, program director for Leashes of Valor and a retired Marine who lost his leg in a bomb blast in Iraq.

Bowers credits his service dog with helping him reintegrate into society after the catastrophic injury.

"This tremendous donation will truly change the lives of veterans who carry the scars of their service—whether visible or invisible," Bowers said. "But it doesn't end there. These dogs have a ripple effect. They allow veterans to reconnect with their families and take active roles in their communities again."

As part of its sponsorship Leashes of Valor has invited the WRS to name the four dogs to honor those who have given so much to their country, through their work with the military medical community. Words of the organization at "One Leash Saves Two Lives" summarize this important and valuable effort. 🇺🇸

— by Tansill Johnson

Society Collaborates to Expand Our Reach

WRS' mission focuses on WRNMMC and other military healthcare facilities in the National Capital Region (NCR); however, we also reach out to other NCR non-profits to increase ways to positively influence lives of military patients and families. We do this through financial support (grants), knowledge of the system, information on contacts, as well as advice and guidance. (continue on page 7)

Issue 26

WRS MATTERS



Long-time WRS Liaison for Sports and Recreation Carlton Kammerer accepted a check for \$7,500 from Bob Plata, Senior VP of BUNZL, York (pictured above right) with a group of wounded warrior event participants. Carlton (third, left) in what he calls “his funny pants.”

its fund-raising golf tournaments. In August 2024 BUNZL of York, PA the tradition of support continued at the Country Club of York tournament.

BUNZL Golf Event Benefits WRS

BUNZL, an international distribution and services corporation, is a consistent, dedicated WRS supporter thru

(cont. from page 6) Society Collaborates to Expand Our Reach

One of the groups we work with is Friends of the Uniformed Services University (FUSU), a group similar to WRS that supports the medical school. For the past two years, John Pierce meets with them monthly to support military medicine within the limitations allowed as non-profits. Led by Tammy Alvarez, FUSU sponsored an event in May at the National Press Club — “Imagine Combat Without Military Medicine” — to call attention to USU’s role in military medicine. WRS member LTG (R) Ronald Blanck led the panel discussion. Current Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) Lester Martinez-Lopez attended and answered questions about the current state of military medicine. The event received significantly positive reviews including an offer to begin “Military Minute” — a twice daily, two-day-a-week, on-air spot at local radio station, WMAL. The topic— military medicine’s role in defending our country — may begin airing this Fall.

2024 WRS Veteran Scholarship Recipient

“It is with immense gratitude that I extend my thanks to the donors and sponsors of the AHIMA Foundation (Veteran) Scholarship program. This award allows me to step into the final semester of my RHIA program...”

Suzanne Packebush
Davenport University

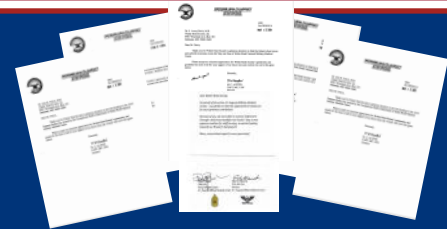
Community Building Art Works: 2023 Report

In fall 2023, WRS helped sponsor a successful event organized by Community Building Art Works. CBAW assists veterans, active-duty military, their spouses and caregivers to build bridges and develop bonds and connections in a variety of ways. One is their annual fall event — “Day of Belonging.” Professionals facilitate musical performances, readings, and creative writings by participants and outside experts, including art workshops — painting, marbling, wood working, and bookbinding.

\$1,500	➡	2	Veterans Facilitator Stipends
\$1,850	➡	5	Veteran Artists Hotel costs
\$1,450	➡	5	Hardship Stipends

— COL Rick Erdtmann (Ret) WRS Non Profit Liaison

WORDS OF THANKS



WRS Acknowledgments

Donations and funding thank you letters from WRNMMC and A.T. Augusta Military Medical Center (ATAMMC):

WRNMMC

- ◇ Graduate Medical Education— NCC graduation ceremony; National Thank a Resident Day; Chief Residents Leadership Symposium
- ◇ Federal Observances and Cultural Awareness for May and June
- ◇ Occupational Safety Department Summer Safety Day

ATAMMC

- ◇ Doctor’s Day; Research Symposium

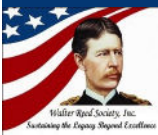
— IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS —

2023:CONNECTING MORE, HELPING MORE

Blue Star Families of the National Capital Region: 2023 Report

“Blue Star Families National Capital Region Chapter thanked WRS for the *“critical investment in our work, specifically our programs addressing the unique and often profound needs of Caregivers of wounded, ill, or injured veterans and military children. Together, we continue to strengthen military families by connecting them with their neighbors to create vibrant communities...”* Programs and events were supported by WRS in the BSF National Capital Region Chapter. **Key partnership initiatives included:** Caregivers — Empowering Caregivers — Cohort Creative Writing — Workshops for Veterans & Caregivers — BSF Books for EFMP Families Annual Stars — Stripes & Snowflakes — Holiday Party BSF National Capital Region.

250+
EVENTS HELD
*
9,900+
PARTICIPANTS



WALTER REED SOCIETY, INC.
8901 Rockville Pike, Box 303
Bethesda, MD 20889
Phone: 301-571-1580
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



#38118

**CFC GIVING
TUESDAY
DEC 3RD**



A SALUTE TO VETERANS DAY 2024



KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION and its President Jeff Brodeur (center) are long-time WRS supporters. In May 2024 Jeff and a group of supporters met at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in front of The Unspoken Bond statue — temporarily re-located in the Arrowhead Building. Pictured far right: John Pierce, WRS President and Dan Bullis, WRS VP for Patient Services (second to the right). ★

WRS GRANT RECIPIENT VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS

"Thank you for helping...make a difference...you've been part of a wounded veteran's rehabilitation and changed their lives forever."

Engineering Wounded Veterans. One Fairway at a Time



"Words cannot express how much your donation means to us."