



Battle Rattle: Now with More Fun!

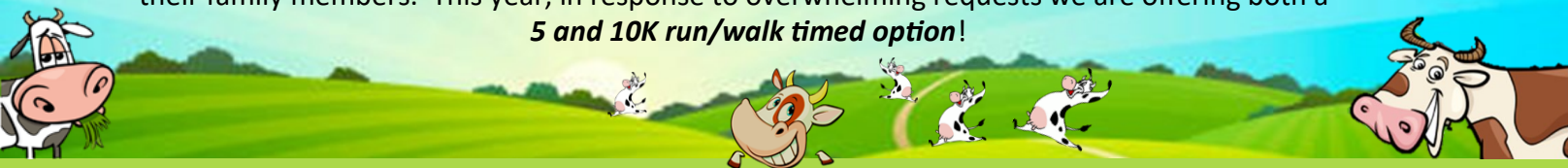
October 28, 2023



5K

10K

Join us for LMVFM's 5th annual "Battle Rattle 5K/10K Run/Walk on October 28, 2023 at St. John's Lutheran Church, 7914 W. Cook Rd, Ft. Wayne, IN. Please join us for a scenic run/walk through the country roads of Lake Township, while we facilitate community involvement in the support and assistance of our Veterans, Military Contractors and their family members. This year, in response to overwhelming requests we are offering both a **5 and 10K run/walk timed option!**



The Battle Rattle run/walk is a great way to support LMVFM mission of *providing free care and counselling services to our military Veterans, contractors and their families* while enjoying the scenic country roads of Lake Township. The race will be timed by Watt's My Time.

Sign-up is easy-peasy at: <https://runsignup.com/Race/IN/FortWayne/LMVFM>

Donations of these items help us to keep our programs and services free to those we serve.

Gift Cards (especially gas and general merchandise) of any amount, **Unused stamps, Small/Large Business Envelopes**

LMVFM is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Your gifts are tax-deductible.

Christmas in JULY

Yup-that's right, before you know it the LMVFM 2023 Christmas Ornament Adoption Appeal, which begins November 1st will be upon us. On average the appeal raises nearly half of the funds LMVFM needs yearly



for the programs and services we provide for free for our veterans and their family members. Each year in July, ornaments are checked over, freshened up, in preparation for the appeal ahead.

Celebrating 16 years of ministry!



Come help us celebrate our 16th year of ministry on Wednesday **October 18, 2023** for lunch or dinner at **Granite City Food & Brewery, 3809 Coldwater Rd, Fort Wayne, IN.** Where else can you enjoy good food, tasty beverages, and a free piece of Birthday cake knowing that **20%** of your

tab will be donated to help our veterans? This popular event has been enjoyed over the years by our many friends and ministry partners from Fort Wayne and the surrounding area. We enjoy seeing our "regulars" as well as meeting new friends!

Dine-to-Donate is an easy way to support our ministry work, and catch up on the work we are doing with your support.

So mark your calendars today and we'll see you there!



Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries, Inc
3480 Stellhorn Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815
260.755.2239 www.lmvfm.org



Summer

2023

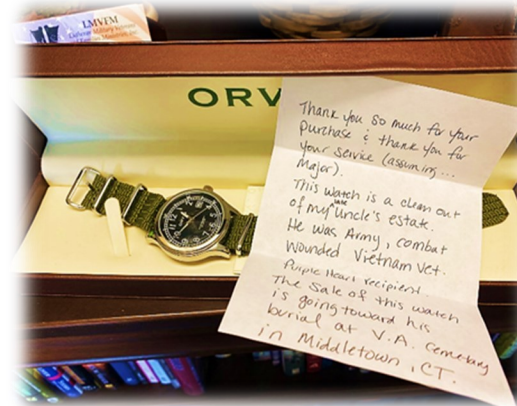
"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

God Winks and Links Us Together



Recently I went out to feed the "zoo". The zoo is comprised of an assortment of wild things, who live in the neighborhood. With regularity they gather on the front porch of my house every evening on into the small hours of the morning for a snack or two. It's a great way to get rid of leftovers, and also fun to watch.

The following day was Memorial Day, and having a few hints to go on, I found what I thought the sellers phone number was. Hoping that it was not a land line, and that if she received it that she'd read it and not just delete it, I and her sent her a text message to thank her for the watch and her note telling me about her uncle.



On this occasion, after filling their bowl I started back and noticed a package by the door, and took it on inside with me.

Within a few minutes my phone "dinged" alerting me that she had responded and had sent me a link to her late uncles' obit. which you can find here: <https://www.legacy.com/.../name/william-dowling-obituary...>



Most of the things I order come to the office, and I so had no idea what I'd find in the mailer. Upon opening it up I was happy to find that it was a military watch that I had ordered from a private seller to replace the one, that after many years of faithful service, had gone on to the great time keeper in the sky. If you've ever ordered something online, you know that what you ordered, may not be what you receive. So, as I opened up the watch box, I was delighted to find the watch, was as advertised, working and in great condition. However, included with the watch was something I had not expected and far more meaningful, in the form of a personal note.

Memorial day is always a tough day for me and many others. I am so grateful for the "God Wink" I received through the ordering of Bill's watch. It's pretty special-I'm not sure I can wear it now, knowing all that I have learned. But all kidding aside, when I do wear it, I will remember Bill, as I will the men and women like Bill who have given their all for the freedoms we enjoy today.

We are now in the last half of the year. The months ahead are some of the busiest that our ministry has ever encountered. It is my prayer that this recent "God Wink" will serve as a reminder that we are called to be in relationship with those we have been called to serve, and those among us. It's personal to myself and the LMVFM team and I thank God for His call to this ministry, and for your prayers and support.

Leslie

Make a Donation at no cost to you!

Each year, Thrivent distributes a portion of its funding to non-profit organizations selected by its member. Eligible Thrivent members have an opportunity to direct their "Choice Dollars" to LMVFM at no direct cost to them! This is a easy yet important step, as LMVFM receives a significant amount of its annual donations from these Choice Dollars.

Don't let them Expire!

You must direct your Choice Dollars each and every year or they expire, even if you have donated in the past. To donate your Choice Dollars please visit Thrivent.com, or call them at: 1-800-847-4836.



LMVFM is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Your gifts are tax-deductible



By the Numbers

Post-traumatic Stress (PTS) and Suicide go hand-in-hand as a threat to the well-being of our warriors.

Military suicides have continued to climb more than a decade after the rate more than doubled. A few years ago, as with so many long-term crises, military experts began calling the high rates of suicide the "new normal." Since then the once readily-accessible monthly military suicide figures are now only released three months after each quarter, so the April-June figures will not be made available until September and even then they are usually late.

The lack of timely reporting of military suicides only serves to keep the American public, whose sons and daughters are at the greatest risk, in the dark.

At LMVFM, we say: It is unacceptable to accept the high rates of military suicides as the "new normal" when there are ways to effectively reduce those numbers.

We do more than tell you the sobering truth about climbing military suicide rates. We combat it daily with direct counseling support services to vets and by training professionals, pastors and congregations who care for them.

During the first quarter of 2023, military suicide rose 28% over and above the same period in 2022.

While law makers have been placing more attention on addressing mental health issues and suicides among our military, little if any attention has been paid to the same issues

by our civilian military contractors when they return home from war. These men and women carry the same injuries and wounds of war that our military members experience. However, unlike military members, these contractors do not receive medical or mental health care from the military or the VA.

First Quarter Active Duty Suicides	
2022	2023
Q1	Q1
75	94

In 2011, LMVFM began providing, without cost, the same care and counselling services to our nations military contractors. After the tumultuous 2021 year, we have also opened our doors to Law Enforcement and other first responders as they continue protecting our communities.

Watch for a detailed report on military suicide in the next issue of the LMVFM Newsletter.

Please pray for the LMVFM team, as we continue to bind the wounds of war of those who have put their lives on the line and their family members for our nation.

LMVFM's "Paws & Effects" program promotes and incorporates specialized calm, well-trained service dog team members who assist us during counselling sessions and training programs. The results from our counselling sessions speak for themselves as our clients can attest. But the successes of our programs are not limited to the four corners of the LMVFM office.

Today, puppies from two of Dooly's litters are currently in the care of two pastors who use them in their ministries. Smidgen (top right) and Wyclif (lower left) bring peace, comfort and even joy to many people. This wonderful outreach effort is an

expansion of the services provided by LMVFM, and made possible because of the generous support of our donors, and ministry partners.



This summer Dooly's fifth litter was born. These eleven cuddly balls of fur will soon grow to share unconditional love with their new families. We are also awaiting, and looking forward to welcoming Dooly's sixth litter later in August.

*As of 1 Aug, 2023 Dooly has fathered 41

"Oh the places you'll go, the people you'll meet with team LMVFM"



Basic Training 101

- Understanding military culture, and the potential challenges that veterans may face when they return to civilian life.
- Understanding the relationship between "Moral/Spiritual injuries and "PTS", and common causes.
- Addressing negative coping strategies, i.e., Alcohol/Substance abuse, Avoidance of triggers/painful reminders, withdrawal from society....
- Suicide—when the desire to end the pain results in death.
- Effective Strategies and tools/resources for caregivers working with veterans, contractors and their family members.

If your congregation would like to learn more about the unique challenges of military service and how to help those who serve we would love to put you on our 2024 schedule. To schedule a seminar please call us at: **260.755.2239**, or shoot us an email at **lmvfmoffice@gmail.com**

LMVFM presentations and seminars at congregations and groups, and presence at mission events across the nation afford us the opportunity to raise awareness of the unique challenges and issues involved with military service. Many of those attending are either family members, or friends of someone serving, as well as veterans. These events also provide us the opportunity to hear their questions and concerns about things they have observed in their veteran and have led to many of the referrals we receive.

MAIL CALL

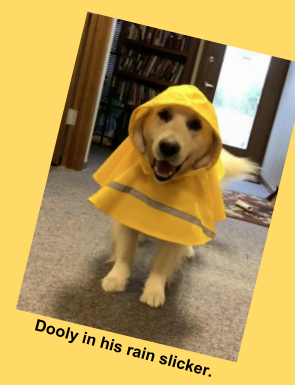
Dear CH Haines,

I was visiting my grandma's house and saw your newsletter on her table. I really liked the pictures of Stanley and Dooly. They look like they work hard, but do they ever get to play? Thanks, Dakota

Hi Dakota! We're so glad that grandma keeps up with news from LMVFM and we're glad you enjoyed the doggie photos. The answer is YES, the boys get time every day to have fun and play. The fact is that counselling people who have been traumatized can be stressful to not only the humans that are helping them, but our furry four legged team members, Stanley and Dooly. Every day we make sure that the boys take breaks for some play time and rest every day. Here are a few pictures of them having a fun time and being goofy.



Stanley with 2 toys!



Dooly in his rain slicker.



Stanley & Dooly playing in the snow



Dooly loves to cuddles with his Lamby