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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PATRIOT MISSION launches www.PatriotWeekend.com to help raise \$40,000 to cover the out of pocket expenses to bring the Blue Angels to the Vero Beach Air Show on May 10-11, 2014.



Most people think the government picks up the tab when the Blue Angels come to town. Not exactly. Washington only covers the cost of jets, gas, pilots, crew and some travel expenses. Vero Beach has to pay for many expenses including transporting military ground equipment to support the F/A 18 fighter jets. This misconception is one reason business sponsorships for our air show are much lower than expected.

The Blue Angels' performance is a thunderous display of United States military might as well as a reminder of the veterans who have served our nation. Hosting the Blue Angels and the other fantastic performers will be great for Vero Beach. Ultimately, the big financial benefit should go to the charities like the Veterans Council and Exchange Clubs. Sadly, they will be the big losers if sponsorships don't pick quickly and substantially.

According to retired Colonel Martin Zickert, Vero Beach Air Show Board Member and President of Indian River County Veterans Council, "The out of pocket expenses necessary to host the Blue Angels will likely reach \$40,000." The issue is not whether the Air Show can cover the costs; the question is what will be left to give to the charities.

To help raise \$40,000 to cover these costs, PATRIOT MISSION designed a strategy that appeals to small business sponsors since many smaller companies do not have branding budgets to support events like the Air Show. Small businesses need to invest marketing dollars into campaigns that will produce tangible products or services that can directly drive traffic to their product or service.

PATRIOT MISSION's creative plan honors America's Veterans (see article below), raises funds for the Air Show and produces custom video content for a local company to use on their website, email promotions or stand alone DVDs. The video production can also be used to record family, community or other personal content. For more information go to www.PatriotWeekend.com

PATRIOT MISSION, Inc. is a Florida based for-profit corporation. For more information on the bestselling book, **The PATRIOT MISSION Story**, including interviews or speaking engagements; go to <http://www.PatriotMission.com> or call toll free **855-To-Rebuild** (855-867-3284).

Saving memories

Patrick McCallister
 FOR VETERAN VOICE
 patrick.mccallister@yahoo.com

Editor's note: Under most circumstances journalistic tradition is to stay out of stories reported. Veteran Voice felt it important to waive that tradition when someone called to tell us about her friend, a veteran with a short time left and many stories to tell. The staff believed it wasn't an option to simply tell her about the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project and let the family take it from there. We elected to tap our resources to find a Vero Beach man who is making a mission of capturing and preserving veterans' stories and connected him with the veteran's fam-



Mark Ossenfort

ily. We elected to tell the story to inspire other veterans to get their stories recorded. As fate had it, the veteran with many stories left to tell died after work started on this story. Veteran Voice dedicates it to a man we didn't know, but who by all accounts was a soldier's soldier. Godspeed, Ted Griesinger.

There's no soft way to say it. Ted Griesinger died of cancer on Saturday, Jan. 11. When he did, many memories of his extensive military life went with him. Memories important to the character of America. A friend — who requested anonymity — wanted some of those memories preserved for posterity and the public.

She called our office in December, saying she hoped *Veteran Voice* would do a biography about Griesinger, but there wasn't a lot of time left. Not in the paper's usual article repertoire. But, there are people who capture and archive veterans' stories for history's sake. Mark Ossenfort is one. He's starting the Veteran's Story Initiative.

Veteran Voice got him in touch with Griesinger's wife, Elizabeth. Ossenfort went to the family's home on a Sunday afternoon and recorded two hours of Griesinger's story.

A couple days later, doctors recommended hospice. Not long after, Griesinger died.

"They talked about a lot of things," Elizabeth said. "Some things I never heard before."

Ossenfort said he was grateful to have captured at least some of Griesinger's memories. Those recorded memories are going to an



Photo courtesy of Mark Ossenfort
 Vero Beach veteran Ted Griesinger recently died of cancer. Before he did, he left about two hours of his military-life story with the Veteran's Story Initiative.

archive that researchers, students and interested folks will soon be able to access by the Internet.

"Every business gives something back to their community," Ossenfort said. "I'm giving back to my community and my country as a business owner."

Ossenfort owns Crossroads Media in Vero Beach, and has extensive experience in videography. He decided to use his skills and equipment to capture veterans' tales. He doesn't charge for the service, but wouldn't mind finding donors willing to help defray some of the costs. Ossenfort hopes to take what's starting as a small, local project and get it national. The Vero Beach man is working with a private high school to help its students regularly record veterans' stories at the Victory Center

Military Store, Indian River Mall, 6200 20th St., Vero Beach. That should start in February.

The Veterans Council of Indian River County owns and operates the combined museum and store. The president, Marty Zickert, said he hopes many veterans go in to have their stories recorded.

"We need to tell the story," he said. "When (veterans) die, they take the story with them. In most cases, they will not have told their children a thing."

Griesinger is about the 15th veteran Ossenfort has talked with on camera to preserve their memories. He gives families DVDs of the interviews.

"That's the most important thing,

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the family gets a DVD," he said.

Ossenfort isn't alone in preserving veterans' stories. Likely the most famous repository of veterans' stories is the Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress's American Folklife Center. The project gives family members and others opportunities to record veterans' stories and preserve them at the library. Bob Patrick is the director.

"This stuff doesn't just get put in a box and shipped up to Maryland," Patrick recently told *Veteran Voice*. "It is made accessible to researchers. It's a history from the bottom up. We have 89,000 collections now. That's oral histories as well as other materials. About 13,000 are actually digitized."

Digitized and available any time to anyone anywhere in the world with an Internet connection by going to loc.gov/vets.

While the project has volunteers who regularly record veterans' stories at public libraries and other places, Patrick said most of the material it has was produced and

sent by veterans and their families.

"The Veterans History Project field kit helps them walk through that process," he said.

Ossenfort said he's not submitting material to the Veterans History Project.

"The government can barely take care of running our country. The last thing they can do is take advantage of the newest technology," he said. "They're working with 15-year-old technology."

This story started with a family friend calling *Veteran Voice*, worried that Griesinger's stories might go untold. She was grateful Ossenfort quickly responded to the opportunity to speak to him.

"I think it's wonderful," she said. "I know he really enjoyed it. (The military is) something he likes to talk about and always has."

She hopes the story will inspire other veterans to record their stories.

Zickert said interested veterans can watch the Victory Center's Facebook page for when student videographers will record stories there. Its website is vcms-fl.com.

