

Special to the Record

The Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund (CRSF) proudly announces that scholarship applications are now available for the 7th year. Deadline for submittal of applications is January 15, 2013, and application forms are available from high school guidance counselors, The Boys and Girls Club of St. Augustine and on the website www.chaserescorlafund.org. The website also contains background information on the CRSF and the previous scholars and has downloadable forms for donation information, table registration and tickets.

The CRSF program has resulted in the awarding of over 35 scholarships totaling in excess of \$36,000 in the past 6 years to deserving St. Johns County students. The Scholarship Fund continues to perpetuate the memory of Leo C. Chase Jr. and Richard C. "Rick" Rescorla, two Vietnam Veterans who both sacrificed their lives in service to our country and who epitomize the character and courage of our greatest citizens. PFC Leo C. Chase, Jr. was killed in action on November 15, 1965, at age 23, just 5 days before he was due to come home. He was the first St. John's County resident killed in Vietnam. Rick Rescorla was a hero at the Ia Drang Battle and his iconic photo is on the cover of the book "We Were Soldiers Once and Young". He survived many battles in Vietnam but was deeply affected by the loss of men in war and carried that with him his entire life. He is also known as the "Man who Predicted 9/11" and he gave his life on September 11th when the Towers collapsed due to a terrorist attack. He is credited with saving over 2,700 people by evacuating them from the South tower. He was last seen headed back up the stairs to look for any stragglers and to make sure to leave no man behind. Both men were true heroes, who gave the ultimate sacrifice. *"Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."* (John 15:13).

Students are encouraged to complete an application which will be reviewed by the CRSF Board of Directors and ranked. Scholarships are awarded based on ranking of applicants and available scholarship funds. Selected scholarship winners will be feted at the 7th Annual Dinner held next year on March 16, 2013, at the Elks Lodge #829 on Anastasia Island. Application forms are self-explanatory and discuss the factors involved and criteria in ranking the applicants with special consideration for students who can demonstrate financial need or who are children of veterans or disabled veterans.

The CRSF was created in 2005 as a result of actions by several local veterans including Sherriff David Shoar and members of American Legion Post #194. In recognition of Leo and Rick's sacrifices and to honor them the CRSF was created to assist underprivileged students with college or professional trade school tuition and books. It is the intent of the Chase-Rescorla Scholarship Fund to memorialize and honor these heroes with a scholarship program awarding scholarships in their names annually through money raised from gifts and donations.

In 2007, the First Annual Scholarship Dinner was held as a fundraising event and since then a Scholarship Dinner has been held every year featuring leaders and heroes who exemplify the type individual sought in the Scholars. In the past the speakers have included a Medal of Honor recipient, survivors of the 1965 battle at the Ia Drang Valley where Pfc. Leo C. Chase, Jr. was killed as shown in the film "We were Soldiers Once "and distinguished Generals and leaders including St. Augustine's own Marine Major General Ronald Bailey. Our Keynote Speaker for 2013 is retired Navy Captain Giles Norrington who survived 1,775 days of captivity including several years at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" in North Vietnam.

Captain Norrington will be honored for his 40 year anniversary of release from captivity. Navy Lt. Norrington was making his 22nd reconnaissance flight into North Vietnamese territory when communist rebels shot off the right wing of his RA-5C Vigilante. The plane erupted into a fireball. As Norrington and his navigator tried to escape, Norrington thought, "It's taking a long time to die." For almost 5 years he dreamed of looking at a horizon. "I prayed for the day we would feel a fresh wind on our faces and feel the indescribable sensation of freedom. The thing was to come home with our honor intact." He said when he returned home after 4 years, 10 months and 9 days in a North Vietnamese POW camp, he and other POW's were treated like American heroes. They "Returned with Honor" which was the POW's motto and he has seen the horizon, felt the wind on his face and is now leading a full and happy life as a citizen of a free and responsible nation. All Americans owe these brave men a great debt of gratitude for their sacrifices on our behalf.

Giles Norrington is a former Marine Infantryman, retired naval aviator (after 34 years of service) who was shot down on May 5, 1968 and released March 14, 1973 from the Hanoi Hilton as a result of the Paris Peace Accord. He is the author of a number of articles on ethics and military history and spokesperson for POW's and a variety of service organizations.

The Master of Ceremonies will be retired Army Sergeant Major Ray Quinn. Tickets are available for individuals at \$40.00 per person and tables of 8 for \$320.00 with reserved seating. The Scholarship Fund is non-profit and all donations are 100% tax deductible. Individuals or companies wishing to contribute to the Scholarship Fund can do so by contacting any of the Board of Directors whose contact information is listed on the website. Without strong support from the community and gracious supportive companies the Scholarships would not be possible.

The Board asks that you consider joining us for this great event. It will be an excellent opportunity to hear from those who have so nobly served our country and to participate in supporting this worthwhile charity. Sponsors will be listed on the website, in the Dinner Program and you will receive complimentary tickets for the evening's festivities. We sincerely hope that you will be able to join us for this occasion. However, if you cannot attend but wish

to support the fund there are provisions for doing so and are described on the website under Donors.

Please help support the Scholarship Fund either through donation or by participation. You can see pictures of present and former Scholarship winners and listen to two of our Scholars in a personal interview on the website.

For ticket reservations contact Cheryl Jefferson at 904 642-2929 or cheryljefferson14@comcast.net

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