Craig & Matt Steichen

The Rotary Club of Elgin is proud to honor the journey of Craig and Matt Steichen with the 2015 Rotary Humanitarian Patriot Award.

Operation Warrior Wishes began as a father & son bucket list item: the first item on their list was a dream to be the first father & son ever to attend an NFL game at all 32 NFL stadiums in one season.

As the father & son planned their tour they both felt as if something was missing. They decided to find a way to make this trip special and take this journey for a greater cause; soon their journey turned into a mission. Matt & Craig were inspired with the idea to invite wounded warriors as their guests to each game to say thank you for service and sacrifices they had made.

The official mission began on September 5th 2012 in New York City. Not really knowing what they were getting themselves into, Matt & Craig met Marine Petty officer Damian Smith and Gunnery Sgt Chris Claude.

That day changed Matt & Craig's life forever. The mission gave them a greater appreciation for the service and sacrifices the men and women of our armed forces make for our freedom.

Matt & Craig visited their 32nd stadium in a world record time of 103 days and honored over 65 wounded warriors.

ESPN shared their journey with the world on Veterans Day - opening many doors. Mike Ditka offered to pay for their entire trip. The Steichen's accepted Coach Ditka's offer, and rather that keep the money for themselves they funded creation of Operation Warrior Wishes, an organization continuing their mission of honoring military warriors from the battlefields to the ball fields.

Operation Warrior Wishes has expanded operations to Baseball, Basketball, Hockey, Football, NASCAR, & other Entertainment Event - striving to honor as many warriors as possible. Matt and Craig are hoping to make a greater impact with their mission in the future by working with other organizations to help honor these warriors on and off the field.

For more information you can visit operationwarriorwishes.org

Thank you Craig and Matt for committing to support the journey of our Military servants, and congratulations!

Jeff Harger

The Libertyville Sunrise Rotary Club is proud to honor Jeff Harger with the 2015 Rotary Humanitarian Patriot Award.

As an active local citizen and Club champion for Veterans issues Jeff consistently continues to drive focus on charitable giving and programs that support Veterans. His outreach includes including Veterans in Rotary events as guests and speakers to improve awareness, as well as honor our service heroes. Jeff’s consistent and persistent advocacy for Veterans issues represents the best of the best in setting an example for our Club and community.

Jeff is a fine patriot, former Libertyville Mayor and successful business owner who continues to represent extraordinary commitment to our armed forces Veterans. When we think of patriots who champion our Veterans, Jeff stands out! Congratulations Jeff and Thank You!!

Robert Kauffman

During World War Two Robert Kauffman’s cousin Joe enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and while serving on Iwo Jima at the age of 18 he was shot in the back by a sniper. Joe had grown up as an “adopted brother” with Bob and their close relationship inspired his commitment to Veteran issues. Joe survived his injury but suffered from what was then referred to by terms such as “combat exhaustion” and “battle fatigue” until his early death in his fifties from the stress he experienced. Bob knew he was suffering but did not know how to help him. He was Bob’s favorite cousin and a man with a huge heart, and it was a terrible experience for Bob to watch Joe endure such suffering.

In his studies and research Bob discovered the effectiveness of neurofeedback in the treatment of PTSD and head injury. He now provides pro bono neurofeedback work with active duty military and Veterans helping them to recover from PTSD and head injury - and has worked with dozens of men and women and their families. Bob has also been instrumental in getting an advisory board developed for A Safe Haven here in Chicagoland. A Safe Haven treated over 5000 homeless last year of which 750 were veterans. In the advisory board’s first year, it raised over $75,000 and has much bigger plans for this year. His company Sports Brain, along with the Better Brain Foundation, is developing a study at A Safe Haven with Veterans who suffer from PTSD and head injuries to demonstrate the effectiveness of neurofeedback in treating such problems.

The Rotary Club of Northbrook celebrates your commitment to Veterans Robert, and congratulations!

Rotary Club of Antioch

The Rotary Club of Antioch salutes Rotarian John Phillips for his efforts supporting Veterans of the United States Armed Forces

We thank you for your continued support of Rotary - providing necessary services such as warm coats to those in need through Operation Warm.
Don Long

Don Long joined the Rotary Club of Glenview Sunrise just a few months after the Club’s charter and has been a great member for over twenty-six years. Don’s wife Mary, is a charter member of the Club, and both remain very active as servants for our community.

Don is an unsung hero to our Club and to our town. He quietly gives of himself and is always there to help, never saying no when asked for assistance. Don served as a volunteer, employee and Chief of Glenview/Glenbrook Fire Departments from their inception to his retirement. He continues to volunteer in support of the fire department.

Don served with the United States Army in the Korean War. His love of country and his respect for our military has called him to volunteer in numerous related organizations. For many years Don served with the 20th Illinois Infantry, travelling as part of Civil War reenactments, teaching others about great moments in our military history and promoting awareness of our military heroes, later continuing reenactments with the U.S. Signal Corp.

Today, Don keeps our town’s history alive with his service on the Board of Directors of the Glenview History Center. He also works tirelessly as a board member of the Hangar One Foundation—a volunteer organization that operates a museum dedicated to the Glenview Naval Air Station and the Navy men & women that served. In addition Don is the Executive Vice President of the Glenview Council of the U.S. Navy League. As an advocate for our military and outstanding champion of our Veterans, The Rotary Club of Glenview is proud to present the 2015 Rotary Humanitarian Award to Mr. Don Long.

Rob Paddor

Rob Paddor serves on the Board of Directors for the USO Illinois and is a director for the Rotary Club of Skokie Valley. Rob presented an idea to the Chicago Automobile Trade Association (CATA) to arrange fundraising events for military families & Veterans at every new car dealership in Chicagoland. In 2013, the CATA launched his vision of a “Barbecue for the Troops” at 70 dealerships around Chicagoland raising nearly $40,000 for the USO. In 2014 more dealerships participated and a $90,000 charitable donation was made to USO Illinois.

Rob’s devotion to Veterans grew exponentially while attending a USO Gala at Navy Pier when he bid on and won a long distance ride with Ride 2 Recovery - a national organization which aids injured Veterans with specially equipped bicycles. To date Rob has participated in 10 long distance cycling fundraising challenges with Ride 2 Recovery including one in Normandy, France last year. Rob often matches and doubles his sponsors donations.

Rob’s Subaru store is the title sponsor of the annual Chicago Honor Ride and Run held at his dealership in Skokie each June. Last year, nearly $50,000 was raised to help our healing heroes. In addition, Rob chose Ride 2 Recovery’s Project HERO Chicago to receive Subaru of America donations during Subaru’s annual Share the Love Sales Event - as a result $20,000 was donated to Ride 2 Recovery’s efforts locally.

Rob also helps sponsor the No Dough Dinners at Great Lakes Navy Training Center - held at the USO on base.

Thank you Rob for your service to our Military Servants, we are honored to celebrate your commitment with the 2015 Rotary Humanitarian Award!

John Phillips

The Antioch Rotary Club is proud to present the Honorable Chief Judge John T. Phillips as recipient of the 2015 Rotary Humanitarian Patriot Award. Judge Phillips currently is the Chief Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit of Illinois, which includes Lake County; initially selected as an associate judge in 1993 and elected as circuit judge in 2006.

During his time on the bench, Judge Phillips has been a leader in the creation of the Veterans Treatment and Assistance Court (VTAC) in Lake County’s Nineteenth Judicial Circuit.

Created in 2011, VTAC has served as a program through the Lake County courts which allows United States Military Veterans who are involved in the criminal justice system to be diverted into an intensive program involving a team approach working to address the root causes of individual criminal behavior. Judge Phillips was instrumental in the development of this program - which involves a unique partnership including the courts, probation, the Lake County States Attorney office, the Lake County Public Defender’s Office, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Various community members who are also Veterans serve as mentors to individuals who are in the VTAC program to help guide their successful completion of the process. As a champion of the VTAC program Judge Phillips continues to directly impact numerous Veterans coping with and successfully resolving issues which have led to their criminal behavior. Judge Phillips is also a Veteran of the U.S. Air Force, and an active Rotarian with the Antioch Rotary Club.

It is truly an honor to recognize Judge Phillips’ extraordinary advocacy for our Veterans with the 2015 Rotary Humanitarian Patriot Award!

Anthony Sarpe

The Rotary Club of North Chicago is honored to present the 2015 Rotary Humanitarian Patriot Award to Mr. Anthony Sarpe, US Army (Retired).

Mr. Anthony Sarpe is a vocalist and a producer of videos, albums and shows across Chicago, and a combat Veteran living with PTSD. Anthony served four tours in Iraq and Afghanistan as a member of the 101st Airborne Division. He is a dedicated father to his Son, and currently serves with the U.S. Post Office.

Anthony performs his craft regionally and is sought out as an inspirational speaker and mentor promoting awareness for the cause of PTSD. Mr. Sarpe is being given the Humanitarian-Patriot Award for his advocacy and extensive volunteer work at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center, where he performs and inspires Veterans and their families in the combined Post Traumatic Stress Programs and with the Community at large. He is loved for his heartfelt and direct inspirational talks and mentoring. Mr. Sarpe is a regular speaker in the hospital as well as in many regional communities where he has performed for schools, Rotary, civic organizations, and for industry. Mr. Anthony Sarpe has touched the lives of Americans of all ages and is an outstanding spokesperson on the power of expressive therapy in treating Post Traumatic Stress and Depression. Mr. Anthony Sarpe is a recipient of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival Award.

Thank you for your Military service and your continued work as a Humanitarian-Patriot!