

DPD RETIREES PEER SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

“In the war for the streets, there are no unwounded soldiers.”



ORIGINS

The Denver Police Retiree Peer Support Team (DPRPST) had it’s first meeting on July 14, 2019. The Retiree Peer Support team came into existence after the tragic death of a retired DPD officer in an apparent suicide. The retiree’s apparent suicide triggered action to move a long-time vision into action, when retirees Marco Vasquez and Joe Black met with then DPD academy commander John Coppedge and decided to move forward with the development of a peer support program. It was staffed by retirees, and it focused on the needs and concerns of DPD retirees.

What we didn’t know at the time was that the Denver Police Retiree Peer Support Program was the first of its kind in the country and possibly the world! We teamed up with DPD Police Psychologist John Nicoletti, who was and is a strong supporter of the DPD and police officers in general, and John agreed to provide clinical supervision and training for the retiree peer support members at no cost. The mandatory training required for all retiree peer support members includes eight hours of training provided personally by Dr. Nicoletti and additional training at team meetings throughout the year.

Dr. Debra Tachi is our clinical supervisor, and she is available to aid and advise all peer support members in their work with retirees. Debra attends all peer support meetings.

The Retiree Peer Support Team also enjoys a close working relationship with the Denver Police Retiree Association (DPRA), and one of our strongest supporters is DPRA President John Schnittgrund.

John has created a DPRA board position for DPRPST representa-

PEER SUPPORT
COORDINATOR
Marco Vasquez

VOLUNTEERS IN
POLICING
COORDINATOR
Laura Stickney

PEER SUPPORT
STEERING
COMMITTEE

Barb Archer
Jennie Springer
Mark Beluscak
Joe Black
Tracie Keesee
Ti Blair
Marco Vasquez



NEED A HELPING HAND?
Retirees Peer Support
Psychologists
Nicoletti/Flater
Phone: 303-989-1617
Or www.nfa.com
Peer Support
Phone: 720-340-1485
Or email us at
RetPeerSup@gmail.com

VETERANS’S CORNER

The VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System (ECHCS) hosted a ground breaking ceremony on Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024, for the newest VA outpatient clinic. It will be built at the corner of Prairie Hawk Drive and Dacoro Lane in Castle Rock. The County’s 20,000 Veterans will have access to all the services found at other regional VA Medical Centers including primary care and physical therapy options at a more convenient location. The new facility is expected to open in mid-February 2025.

Veteran’s Crisis Line
Dial 988 then press “1”
You are not alone!
DT4LIFE.ORG

INSPIRING
THOUGHTS

“You don’t hold your own by standing guard, but by attacking and getting well hammered yourself.”



(continued from Page 1)

tion, and retiree Mark Beluscak currently holds that position. We have found that a close liaison with the DPRA helps to serve our retirees. The DPRA website, <https://www.dpra.info>, has a listing of retiree peer support members and their contact information. This enables a retiree or family member to contact a retiree peer support member directly. This information is located under the members only section of the DPRA website. Retirees can also contact us at (720) 340-1485 or email us at

retpeersup@gmail.com

Currently, the DPRPST has about 35 trained retiree peer support team members. The team meets quarterly and conducts relevant training and speaker presentations for the members. Since 2019, we have had the opportunity to connect with and help many Denver Police retirees and family members.

One of our guiding principles is *strict confidentiality*. We recognize that a breach of confidentiality could be devastating to a retiree and the peer support program. We continually reinforce the need to maintain the highest level of retiree-client confidentiality.

We conduct annual certification training and if you are interested in becoming a retiree peer support team member, contact me at marco@vasquezclan.net or contact any retiree peer support member for any questions about the program. In the meantime, remember to practice wellness and stay safe and healthy!

Marco Vasquez

DPRPST Coordinator

TRUE STORIES-THE WORLD OF AVIATION



Edward "Butch" O'Hare, his father Edward "Easy Eddie" O'Hare, and Al Capone

Story 1

Many years ago, Al Capone virtually owned Chicago. Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic. He was notorious for enmeshing the windy city in everything from bootlegged booze and prostitution to murder. Capone had a lawyer nicknamed "Easy Eddie." He was his lawyer for a good reason. Eddie was very good! In fact, Eddie's skill at legal maneuvering kept Big Al out of jail for a long time. To show his appreci-

ation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big, but Eddie got special dividends. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago city block. Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocities around him.

Eddie did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddie saw to it that his young son had the best of everything: clothes, cars and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Cost was no object. And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong. Eddie wanted his son to be a better man than he was. Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things he couldn't give his son; he couldn't pass on a good name or a good example.

One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision. Easy Eddie wanted to rectify wrongs he had done. He decided he would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Al "Scarface" Capone, clean up his tarnished name, and offer his son some semblance of integrity. To do this, he would have to testify against The Mob, and he knew that the cost would be great. So, he testified.

Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago Street. But in his eyes, he had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer, at the greatest price he would ever pay. Police removed from his pockets a rosary, a crucifix, a religious medallion and a poem clipped from a magazine. The poem read:

*The clock of life is wound but once and no
man has the power
to tell just when the hands will stop at late
or early hour.*

*Now is the only time you own. Live, love,
toil with a will.*

*Place no faith in time. For the clock may
soon be still.*

Story 2

World War II produced many heroes. One such man was Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare. He was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific. One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone

had forgotten to top off his fuel tank. He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship.

His flight leader told him to return to the carrier. Reluctantly, he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet. As he was returning to the mother ship he saw something that turned his blood cold, a squadron of Japanese aircraft speeding their way toward the American fleet.

The American fighters were gone on a mission, and the fleet was all but defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger. There was only one thing to do. He must divert them from the fleet.

Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted 50 calibers blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch wove in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until his ammunition was gone. Then, he continued the assault.

He dove at the planes, trying to clip a wing or tail in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible, rendering them unfit to fly. Finally, the exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction. Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier. Upon arrival he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the gun camera mounted on his plane showed the extent of Butch's attempt to protect his fleet. He had destroyed five enemy aircraft.

This took place on February 20, 1942, and for that action Butch became the Navy's first Ace of W.W.II, and the first Naval Aviator to win the Congressional Medal of Honor. A year later Butch was killed in aerial combat at the age of 29. His home town would not allow the memory of this WW II hero to fade, and today, O'Hare Airport in Chicago is named in tribute to the courage of this great man. So the next time you find yourself at O'Hare International, give some thought to visiting Butch's memorial displaying his statue and his Medal of Honor. It's located between Terminals 1 # 2.

**Remember that Veterans Day is
November 11, 2024!**