



2022 Impact Report

Images from Guardians of Freedom program

CEO & FOUNDER LETTER

2023 marks the seventh year of Hero's Bridge serving aging veterans.

The organization began with the launch of what became our signature program, the Battle Buddy program. Set out to pair older veterans with younger ones who shared common experiences from war. It recognized that even though all wars are different, in many ways they are the same. The program recognized that even well-adjusted older veterans may experience a recurrence of post-traumatic episodes when the stressors of aging begin, such as the loss of a spouse or when health begins to fail.

In our infancy, we promised to grow as the need presented itself. And did we grow...

Throughout the pages of this year's annual report, you will find statistics about our growth during the past seven years. Two that best represent this growth are the number of veterans we serve, and the number of volunteer hours logged.

Our earliest data indicates that in our first full year, we served 30 needy veterans through the Battle Buddy program. I am pleased to report that those figures have now grown to 506.

Likewise, our pool of volunteers has risen. In the early years, we were pleased to have just 8 volunteers visit with our veterans. Today, I am excited to announce that the number of volunteer hours reported for 2022 more than doubled that of 2021 from 1,029 hours to 2,101 hours.

It bears repeating that in just one year, we have doubled the number of hours we've been able to give to veterans through the dedication and commitment of our volunteers.

In this annual report, we celebrate growth. The growth of our volunteers, the growth of veterans we serve, the growth of donors whose support we welcome, and even the growth of our staff which has risen from five to seven personnel in recent months.

We also celebrate the growth of our mission. My participation with Stand To Veteran Leadership program at the George Washington Bush Institute offered me a national network of like-minded individuals and the opportunity to make my case for a nation-wide call center for aging veterans.

Seven years ago, this was considered an ambitious endeavor by many although the mission was simple: improve the quality of life for aging veterans. But here we are at the beginning of another year with hope and optimism for what lies ahead for our aging veterans.

Our aging veterans will continue to receive services from our original programs, like the Battle Buddy program, and have new experiences like our Honor Guard excursions.

Most important though is the progress toward our Veterans Village. As the ink dries on this report, work is happening to move the village forward from concept to creation.

While the past year's growth has been remarkable, I predict what comes from 2023 will truly be astounding.

Sincerely,



Molly Brooks RN-BC, CHPCA
CEO & Founder

MISSION & VISION

Hero's Bridge® is dedicated to serving elderly veterans, age 65 and older by bridging veterans to a better quality of life through age specific and innovative programs. These services are available to our heroes wherever they call home, at no expense to them or their families.



HERO'S BRIDGE VOLUNTEERS

In 2022, Hero's Bridge had 383 volunteers and 38 youth volunteers who served a total of 2,101 volunteer hours.



Top Ten 2022 Hero Helpers

1. **Judy Shupp** - 171 hours
2. **Nick Travis** - 90 hours
3. **Cindy Burbank** - 89 hours
4. **Kimberly Beahm** - 87 hours
5. **Alice Cotter** - 78 hours
6. **Carolyn Kirkland** - 75 hours
7. **Ed Benson** - 68 hours
8. **Greg Bertollini** - 63 hours
9. **Bill Benner** - 60 hours
10. **Michael Bongiovi** - 58 hours

Hero's Bridge is grateful for the time and dedication of every one of our volunteers. We appreciate small gestures of kindness, such as phone calls and birthday cards to our veterans, as well as larger time commitment projects like yard work and helping our veterans move.



HEROES SERVED



Battle Buddy

Bridging younger and older veterans in a special model of care that decreases social isolation and increases advocacy.

In 2022, the Battle Buddy program resulted on average in:

- ★ 540 annual visits by staff and volunteers



Home Front

Bridging our older heroes to healthy and safe housing conditions.

In 2022, we performed 47 Home Front interventions which included:

- ★ 8 visits for yard clean-up
- ★ 5 critical home repairs
- ★ 5 miscellaneous repairs
- ★ 4 electrical repairs

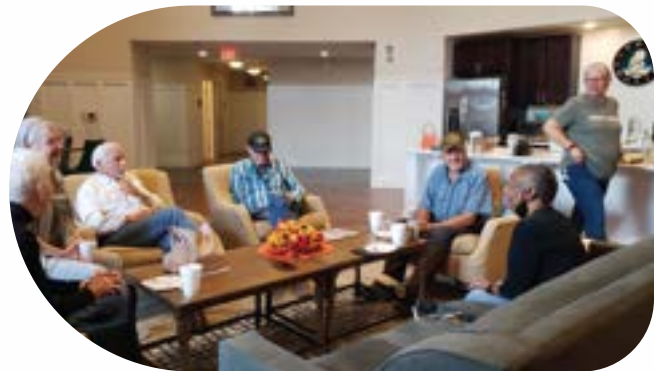


Honor Guard

Bridging our veterans to better mental health by facilitating a healthy processing of their time in service.

Honor Guard interventions in 2022:

- ★ 19 stories and/or local media stories
- ★ 11 socials held
- ★ 4 shadowboxes made with lost medals and awards replaced
- ★ 2 Guardians of Freedom portraits added to collection
- ★ 3 community exhibits of Guardians of Freedom portraits
- ★ 3 honor ceremonies



Hero's Bridge nearly doubled its number of volunteer hours from **1,029 in 2021** to

2,101 in 2022.

HEROES SERVED



Resource Scouts

Addressing social determinates of health by bridging veterans to earned benefits and important community resources.

- ★ 194 rides provided
- ★ 193 care packages delivered
- ★ 503 home-delivered ready-to-eat meals provided
- ★ Multiple rapid relief interventions including assistance with gas cards, utility assistance, medical bills, motel stays, and groceries



Paw Patrol

We use animals as healers to significantly reduce pain, anxiety, depression, and a variety of other issues for our veterans.

In 2022, we connected animals and heroes:

- ★ 69 Paw Patrol visits
- ★ 5 pet supply donations
- ★ 7 birdhouses maintained



TeleHero

- ★ Provided 60 weeks of tablets in homes
- ★ News and music from their era
- ★ Connection to family and friends
- ★ Built in Wifi to rural veterans



Hero's Bridge volunteerism translates to a **VALUE OF \$62,925** according to the IRS national definition of the dollar value of volunteer time.



TOP 2022 DONORS

INDIVIDUALS

- Shawn Barsness
- John Victor, Jr.
- Ed and Sharon Benson
- Brian Cohn
- Sid Stromme
- Patrick Holland
- Rochelle Hamilton
- Mr. and Mrs. James Phelan
- Inge M.
- Cynthia Burbank

BUSINESSES

- Country Chevrolet
- Embrace Home Loans
- Virtual Strides
- University of Virginia Community Credit Union
- Fun Run Racing LLC
- Northern Virginia Association of Realtors
- Prince William Senior Resource Group
- Fauquier Health
- SPARC Research
- Peak Roofing Contractors

GRANTS

- Commonwealth of Virginia- Department of Veteran Services
- PATH Foundation
- Northern Piedmont Community Foundation
- Active & Thriving Community Grants Program
- Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission
- Culpeper Wellness
- The Latham Foundation
- Fauquier Hospital Auxiliary Pet Therapy
- Miriam L. Halsey Foundation
- Anonymous Foundation

SINCE 2016, HERO'S BRIDGE HAS SERVED 506 VETERANS.

BRANCHES

Army 54%

Air Force 37%

Navy 20%

Marine Corps 11%

Guard 3%

WAR ERAS

Vietnam 63%

Korean 21%

WW II 7%

Others 7%

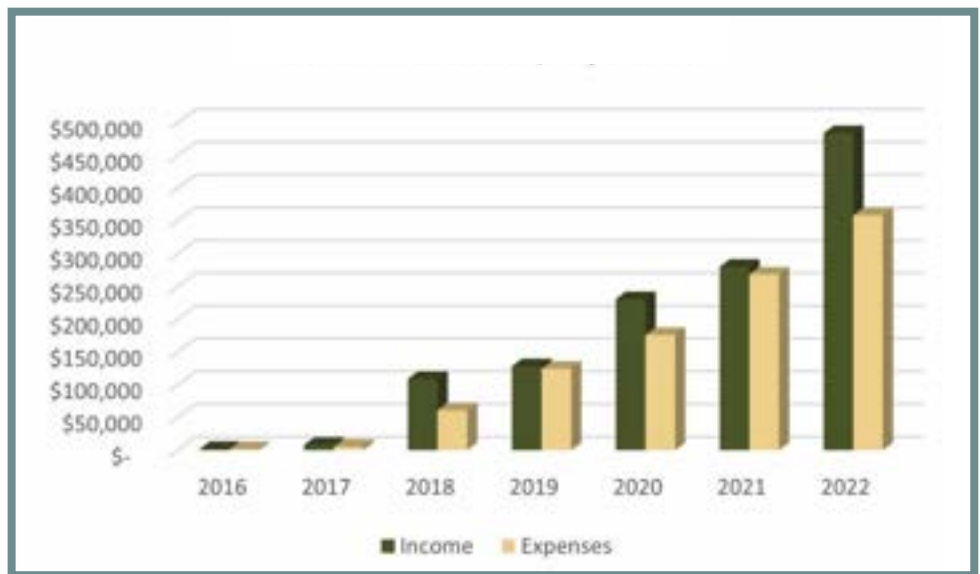
Cold War 1%

OUR SUPPORT IS GROWING

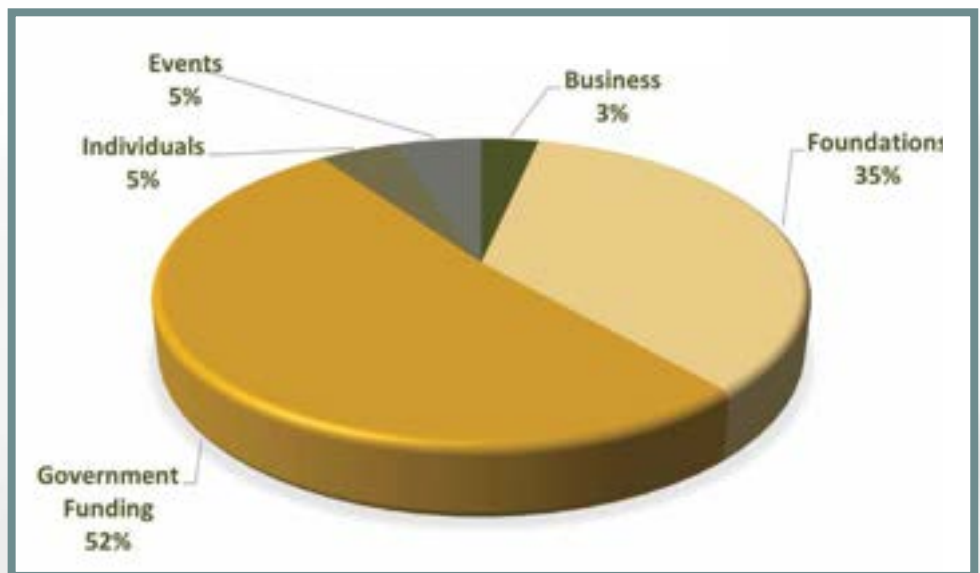


Heat Map of Hero's Bridge Donors

ANNUAL REVENUE /EXPENSES



SOURCES OF SUPPORT



HERO'S BRIDGE CONTINUUM OF CARE FOR VETERAN JOHN VICTOR



Veteran participation in programs increases with time.

Hero's Bridge first met 1950s Army Cold War veteran John Victor in April 2021 from a referral from volunteer Cindy Burbank. Since then, John has pleased us all and has become a popular veteran with Hero's Bridge staff and volunteers.

In 2021, at age 90, John was living independently maintaining his home and large property, where he had lived for three decades, with occasional help from neighbors and friends. His wife passed away in 2016 and their daughter, 45 minutes away, made regular visits to see John. No longer able to drive, friends and family feared that John was at risk of becoming isolated as time passed.

John's involvement with Hero's Bridge programs began slowly.

Unable to drive for groceries, Hero's Bridge signed John up for meal service. He called upon receiving his first order of 14 meals and shared how

appealing they looked. That first evening, he was going to try the chicken and teriyaki meal and would report back in a few days.

Support for John increased with transportation to and from his home for doctor appointments. This led to interest from John in the Hero's Bridge Battle Buddy program. John was then introduced to Hero's Bridge volunteer Judy Shupp. The two hit it off and presently, Judy takes him grocery shopping every week.

In August 2021, John had his photo taken to be included in the Guardians of Freedom traveling exhibit that introduced the community to local veterans.

Three months later, John was in the Hero's Bridge van ready to spend the day at the Army Museum. Since that first excursion, John has not missed any Hero's Bridge monthly excursions. More and more volunteers were helping him with rides to doctor appointments, repairs around the house, installing safety bars around his shower, increased yard maintenance, and visits just to say hello.

Not long before John's 91st birthday, he was treated to a pedicure with Hero's Bridge Battle Buddy Coordinator, Janelle Huffman, since it was still on his bucket list.

We continue to learn from John from his contributions on his experiences from the Cold War efforts in Germany to his beekeeping hobby. His pleasant demeanor, charming smile, and friendliness have us all wanting the best for him.

What does the future hold for John?

We can't help but wonder how John will continue to maintain his house, which spans over 2,500 square feet, keep up with his 30-acre property yard, and clear his long driveway of debris so visitors can continue to meet with him.

We hope that when John is ready to move from his home, he will find comfort in the Hero's Bridge Village.

There he will be able to socialize with other veterans, have his 500-square-foot cottage to retreat to for time alone and will always have Hero's Bridge staff and volunteers to ask help of.

Whatever John's future holds, he will not face it alone. At the Village, someone will be there for him when he needs it.

John Victor is just one of 506 veterans that Hero's Bridge has served since 2016.

So many of us have a neighbor that we care deeply for. Someone we are happy to lend a hand to when needed. In the day-to-day shuffle of activities, there often isn't time to think of what will happen to our charming elderly neighbors when they can no longer stay in their homes.

Thankfully, at Hero's Bridge, we have given that consideration.

While we won't be able to provide housing for every elderly neighbor, we will take comfort in the knowledge that we can help nearly 50 elderly people, with priority given to those who have served our country.

*Be a part of Village,
Donate now at
www.herosbridge.org.*



Hero's Bridge had an average number of

25 volunteers each month in 2022.

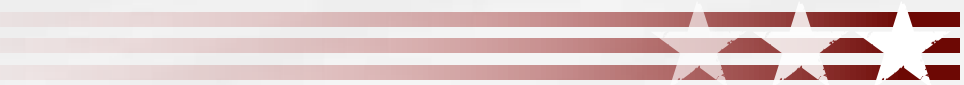


John at the August 2022 excursion to the Cold War Museum in Vint Hill

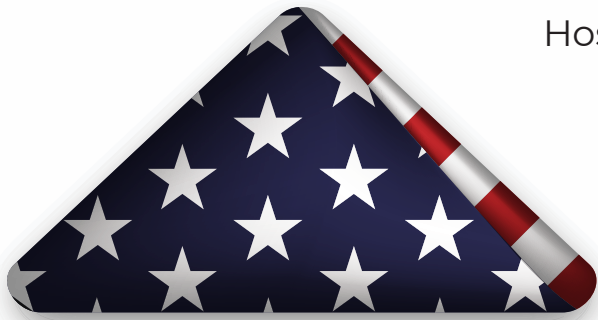


Hero's Bridge has increased its pool of volunteers nearly **FIVE TIMES SINCE 2021.**

THOSE WE LOST



Hero's Bridge remembers the veterans that we lost in 2022. We had the honor of serving them in their final years.



ARMY

- Otis Ashton
- John Brown
- John Butler
- Lynn Caraway
- Eugene Ferguson
- Harris Gilbert
- Richard Graham
- Charles "Chuck" Graves
- William Hadden
- John Lamb
- Robert Post
- James Sisk
- William Speakes
- Hospice Veteran

AIR FORCE

- Charlile Brooke
- Michael Burnett
- Joseph Coppola
- Sam Hall
- Tony Pullen
- Robert "Bob" Sommer
- Lester Via

NAVY

- Michael Cosgrove
- William Lansing
- Steven Sabol
- Rubert Updike

MARINE CORPS

- Andrew Smith
- Richard Wenzke



In 2022, Hero's Bridge volunteers and Battle Buddies visited veterans **540 TIMES.**

THE VILLAGE



While we haven't broken ground yet on our Veterans Village, we are closer now than we ever dreamed possible when we set out on making this vision a reality.

It was just one week prior to the lockdown, on March 7, 2020, that we set out for a full day of filming of our most isolated veterans and their housing conditions, which were shocking, to say the least.

With the raw footage taken and everything shut down, we had the time we needed to have the footage edited and the narrative written. When it was done, we had 15 minutes' worth of film demonstrating the Village Why. Just three years later, we have our location, Village partner, and scores of people supporting this valuable addition to the community for elderly veterans in need.

We also have a community design, village housing layouts, and ancillary components determined. And we have many people to thank that have provided thought leadership, advising and of course financial contributions. We know we wouldn't be where we are, on the precipice of changing how older veterans age, without the people who have helped us get here.

Warrenton United Methodist Church
Commonwealth of Virginia
Senator Jill Vogel
Fauquier County Board of Supervisors
Jesse and Rose Loeb Foundation
Country Chevrolet

The PATH Foundation
Van Metre Homes
CRES Inc.
Faithworks
Providence Capital Partners

