



SEMPER FI & AMERICA'S  
FUND

For Our Combat Wounded, Ill, and Injured

# THE GIFT OF CONNECTION

WINTER NEWSLETTER — 2020





# DEAR FUND FAMILY AND FRIENDS

AS I REFLECT ON MY ONE-YEAR anniversary with Semper Fi & America's Fund, I do so with great humility and gratitude. This year, The Fund has had to navigate the unknowns of an unprecedented health crisis. Through it all, I have been reminded every day as to why I chose to be a small part of this special family.

Our work is incredible because it is unique. *Semper Fi & America's Fund is in every sense of the word a family — close knit and rooted in a culture of forming deep personal relationships that result in lasting bonds with those we serve. That is our mission.*

In my short time

with The Fund, I've had the privilege of meeting many of our talented case managers, visiting nurses, and staff who selflessly dedicate themselves every day to meeting the needs of our members. They assist those we serve in adapting to and overcoming extraordinary challenges. In the end, they enable those we serve to achieve the highest possible quality of life and independence. It is because of the unwavering financial support of our donors that their work is possible.

As 2021 approaches, The Fund is laser-focused on building on our accomplishments and targeting areas for future improvement. I am confident that together we will continue to grow to meet the needs of our

current and future heroes.

May each and every one of you and your families have a peaceful, safe and enjoyable holiday season.

*Happy New Year and Semper Fidelis.*

SINCERELY,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Dunford". The signature is fluid and cursive.

GENERAL JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, JR.  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
SEMPER FI & AMERICA'S FUND







• Bob & Renee Parsons •



# DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!

THE BOB & RENEE PARSONS FOUNDATION is launching their Double Down for Veterans annual match campaign for the 9th straight year! *Due to their generosity and passion for our military families, every donation made to Semper Fi & America's Fund through December 31, 2020 will be matched, dollar-for-dollar, up to \$10 million. With the help of donors like you, we can raise \$20 million to continue our vital mission — Serving Those who Preserve our Freedom.* Since 2012, the campaign has raised more than \$122 Million! We know our work is critically important for decades to come for the service members and families we have assisted, in addition to the many more in need of our help.

Semper Fi & America's Fund's goal is to embrace those who are catastrophically injured and ill, those struggling with traumatic brain injury, PTSD, multiple amputations, burns, and the injuries and illnesses impacting their quality of life

and independence. As you know, many of these conditions have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through your generosity, you are sending a powerful message to each wounded, ill, and injured service member, veteran, and their family, that they are always honored, appreciated, and remembered. They will never be alone and their impact on our nation will never be forgotten. We invite you to please **Double Down** for these heroes and their families this giving season!





## LIFETIME SOLUTIONS — HOW WE HELP

### SERVICE MEMBER & FAMILY SUPPORT

*Assisting the family unit from injury through recovery*

- Bedside Financial Support
- Housing Assistance
- Transportation Assistance
- Specialized & Adaptive Equipment
- Visiting Nurse Program
- Caregiver Support & Retreats
- Skip's Kids Program
- LCpl Parsons Welcome Home Program
- Disaster Relief Program

### TRANSITION

*Integrating Service Members back into their communities*

- Veteran to Veteran Support
- Apprenticeship Program
- Education & Career Assistance
- Veteran & Unit Reunions
- Semper Fi & America's Fund Odyssey Retreat

### INTEGRATIVE WELLNESS

*Providing wellness tools to improve body, mind, and spirit*

- PTSD & TBI Support
- NeuroFitness
- High-Tech Wellness Devices
- Post-Traumatic Growth Video Resources
- Counseling
- Peter Murphy Sports Program
- Arts & Music Program
- Jinx McCain Horsemanship Program
- Tim & Sandy Day Canine Companions Program



SEMPER FI & AMERICA'S  
FUND  
*For Our Combat Wounded, Ill, and Injured*



# SEMPER FI & AMERICA'S FUND FISCAL YEAR 2020 AT A GLANCE



\$17,467,000  
SERVICE MEMBER & FAM-  
ILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

\$3,448,000  
INTEGRATIVE WELLNESS  
PROGRAM

\$2,707,000  
TRANSITION PROGRAM

Semper Fi & America's Fund is dedicated to providing immediate financial assistance and lifetime support to combat wounded, critically ill and catastrophically injured members of all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families. We deliver the resources they need during recovery and transition back to their communities, working to ensure no one is left behind.





# SAM FLOYD —



## OPERATION COFFEE



APPROXIMATELY 17 VETERANS commit suicide every day. It is a sobering statistic and one that almost included me. While I was fortunate to get help, far too many veterans do not. They suffer in silence, oftentimes with loved ones by their side who are helpless and unsure what to do.

*As someone who has been in a very dark place and is now committed to preventing veteran suicide, I'm proof that there is hope.*

When I returned from Afghanistan in 2004, I expected life to be “normal.” However, two weeks after returning home, my world crumbled. Sleepless nights turned into days and soon suicidal thoughts crept in. This condition haunted me daily for more than 10 years until one night, lying helpless and broken on my apartment floor, I turned to my wife and asked her to call the Veterans Crisis Hotline. That moment my road to recovery began.

Shortly after I started getting treatment at the Veterans Administration, a former colleague of mine, also a Marine veteran, introduced me to Semper Fi & America's Fund. This exceptional organization, which helps to serve combat wounded, critically ill and catastrophically injured service members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families, literally saved my life. One day early in my treatment while I was unemployed and depressed, I called my case manager at The Fund. She asked me what I like to do and I said “drink coffee.”

*With a cup of coffee in my hand and at my case manager's urging, I entered the Semper Fi & America's Fund Apprenticeship Program which helps veterans start businesses.*

One year later, in 2017, I received a grant for a coffee roaster and my coffee roasting business was born. I share this story to give help and hope to both veterans and their loved ones.

*For veterans suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental illnesses, the biggest piece of advice I can offer is to pick up the phone and start a conversation with someone you trust and who will listen. Conversation is a powerful thing.*

The next step is to commit to taking back your life. I took what I learned from the Marine Corps and challenged myself, as hard as it was, to give back to my country in a different way.





For loved ones and friends, I would say don't worry about trying to focus on pinpointing the problem — because it is impossible. I would encourage them to just keep the focus on being there for that person, show empathy often and remind those in need that together, you will both get through this.

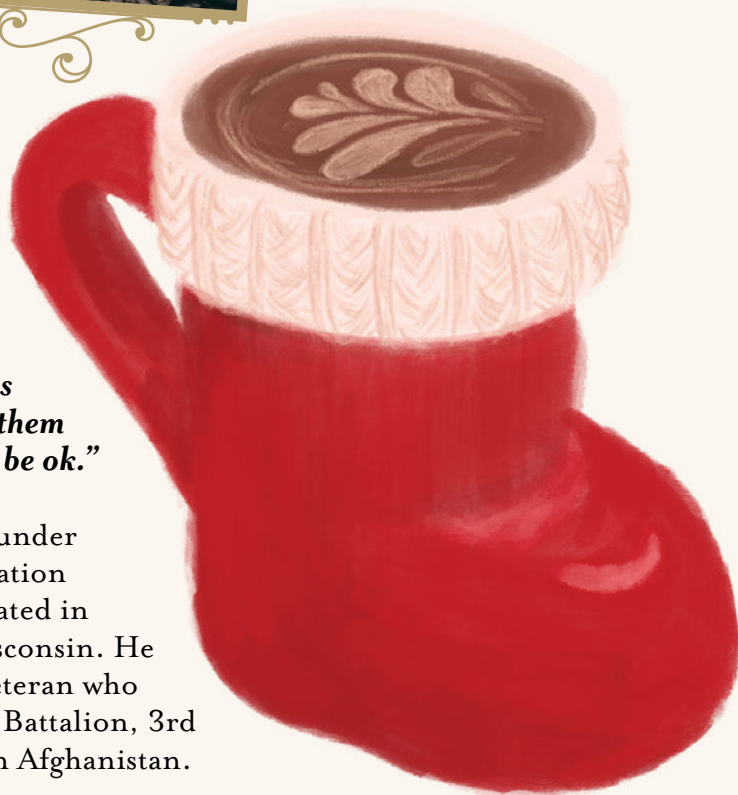
PTSD is a lifelong struggle and one that I have accepted. And, while dealing with these issues are at times complex, I want to urge all struggling veterans and their families to never give up or underestimate the power of conversation.

If it wasn't for that talk with my case manager, I might not be sharing this story today.

*Now, I'm using my love of coffee to help start conversations and save lives. In fact, a portion of each proceed from my sales goes to suicide prevention efforts.*

***Remember, those in need don't always need answers. All it sometimes takes is for someone to tell them that, "It's ok not to be ok."***

Sam Floyd is the founder and owner of Operation Coffee Roasters located in Campbellsport, Wisconsin. He is a Marine Corp veteran who served with the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment in Afghanistan.





# “YOU’RE TOO FAR FOR MY HANDS TO HOLD YOU, BUT NOT TOO FAR FOR MY HEART TO CARE”



WE FREQUENTLY DON’T ALWAYS fully appreciate the healing power of touch, of a hug or an embrace. Yet, it is part of what makes us who we are. To touch is to feel and to feel is to care. To care is to love and to love is the joy and strength of family. We are a family caring for and about each other, in so many ways. We are a family united together in service to our country and to each other. But, in these challenging COVID times, that touch, that embrace which affirms our love and commitment to each other isn’t always possible. In truth however, our inability to hug and embrace each other in person is really the true affirmation in itself of our caring for each other and our concern that all of us stay safe and healthy until we get through this. That’s hard to remember sometimes because all our lives we’ve experienced that touch, that hug, that embrace and equated it with love and caring. We assumed that the

absence of that hug or embrace was the absence of caring. But, nothing could be further from the truth. *In these times, let’s have a different belief to see us through: that inability to hug and embrace is that expression of love and caring because it signifies our commitment to each other’s health and well-being, our affirmation of our love and caring for all of us, the members of our family. While the physical touch may not be there or be possible in these times... the heart will always be there...and will*

*always care. Stay strong, keep the faith, and know that, one day, that hug and that embrace will be back!*

FORREST FAISON, M.D., FAAP,  
VICE ADMIRAL, MEDICAL CORPS,  
UNITED STATES NAVY (RET),  
38TH SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY,  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SF&AF







# HOW WE STAY CONNECTED

Military families are quite familiar with the inconsistency that can accompany holiday celebrations from one year to the next. From moving an entire family across the globe to year-long deployments, each birthday, anniversary, Christmas, and other holiday celebrations pass in a new and different way. However, an inspiring lesson we all can learn is that service members and their families find ways to adapt. Our holiday season is upon us and maybe it is easy to focus on how things will be altered. However, by taking a page from our military families, we can find new and creative ways to adapt, connect, and even make new traditions! We asked a few of our service members how they plan on celebrating their holidays this year:



1. Thanksgiving has always been the most meaningful holiday for our family. A time to come together as a family and reconnect. This year will be our first holiday away from extended family since our move to Florida, so FaceTime is definitely something to be thankful for. Also... hot apple cider, 'Tis the season.

2. We will have just driven across the country from California to Camp Lejeune. So we will spend the holidays unpacking and getting settled in to a new place but that's a part of the military life we choose to live. It will be the start of a new adventure for our family.

This holiday season our little family of six will celebrate

by being goofy and laughing every chance we get. Life is full of good things and bad things. Sometimes we can do something about it and sometimes we can't. What we do have control over is how we choose to greet the moment we are currently experiencing. Semper Fi & America's Fund has improved the quality of my life with their generosity and our family will pay it forward by supporting Semper Fi & America's Fund any way we can.

3. I'm going to spend my holidays at home & celebrate via technology. Zoom, FaceTime, the like.

4. Even in the midst of COVID,

we plan to spend the holidays getting together more often with family and friends — safely of course because now more than ever, we all need the contact, socialization, and joy. We plan to take the time to write and send more cards this year in effort to contact those we cannot see. We will do some Christmas shopping utilizing vendors who help support the Semper Fi & America's Fund mission and will encourage others to do the same!

5. As hard as it is to not be together in person this year with our family, we are so thankful and blessed to be able to zoom while we open our presents Christmas morning!



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# DEAR FUND FAMILY AND FRIENDS,

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE NEWSLETTER AND UPDATES! Words cannot adequately express how deeply grateful we are for your ongoing support and love, most especially this past year. *The Fund faced one of the most challenging times since its inception, but through it all, our donors remained faithful and in our corner every step of the way.* Thanks to this dedicated and generous group, we were ready and able to respond to triple the number of requests for assistance related to COVID support, in addition to our normal operations.

More than ever, we realize that whether in peacetime or combat, The Fund is critically important in the lives of our military families. Our “secret sauce” is lifetime relationships — relationships that have been built over the years with our hospitals, clinics, active duty units, donors, and those we serve. Although things may look a little different today, these connections define who we are and help ensure that we are able to adapt and overcome any challenge. I am convinced that as long as we stay connected, we can get through adversity together.

It’s a wonderful time of year to say **Thank You** for your efforts, patriotism, and love for our wounded, ill, and injured military families. Here’s to 2021 and hoping that it brings peace, joy, and love to you all!

GOD BLESS!  
KAREN

*Karen Guenther*

PRESIDENT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, FOUNDER



*Semper Fi  
&  
America's Fund*

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&  
America's Fund*





# SEMPER FI & AMERICA'S FUND

*For Our Combat Wounded, Ill, and Injured*



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SUITE 102, PMB 609  
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**\$228,000,000**

GIVEN IN ASSISTANCE

**25,000**

WOUNDED HEROES  
& THEIR  
FAMILIES ASSISTED

**235,000**

NUMBER OF GRANTS