

**The Rathdrum Veterans Recognition Committee Proudly
Announces the 2019 Distinguished Veteran**

CHARLES TITUS TILL

Known by one and all as Charlie Till, he has achieved the unique rank of Field Marshal in the Disabled American Veterans. He is the only person ever to hold this position in the entire DAV. Charles Till was born in Philadelphia and, to this day, can remember visiting Independence Hall and running his finger down the crack in the Liberty Bell as a second grader. His family moved to Palm Beach County near the Florida Everglades when he was about nine years old. After high school, he enlisted in the United States Navy from May 1965 to April 1971. He graduated from Tarter Missile school as a Fire Controlman Third Class and later attended advanced Fire Control schools. After a full year of advanced naval technical and electronics training, he was assigned to three first line guided missile destroyers: USS King (DDG-14), USS Sampson (DDG-10) and USS Conyngham (DDG-17).

FTM3 Till made two deployments to the Mediterranean, several short cruises to the Caribbean and one to the North Atlantic during the height of the cold war. His ship was among the first to render aid to the USS Liberty after having been savagely attacked by Israeli air and surface units. Not only did his ship render aid, her missiles and guns ensured that no one would dare attack the now defenseless USS Liberty. During the Cold War, the United States Navy was almost always in a heightened state of battle readiness, and Charlie's duties were to ensure that his ship's missile fire control systems for surface-to-air and surface-to-surface defense were always up and ready to launch. Although there was not a shooting war in the Atlantic, the threat was extremely high and never abating.

Released from active duty in April 1971 to the Temporary Disability Retired List from the Naval Hospital in Philadelphia, he then spent 350 days between 1990 and 1997 in VA hospitals in Reno and San Francisco where talented surgeons saved his left leg. There were people at Fort Miley, San Francisco who came to believe that he was on the hospital staff. He went on to a career in appliance repair, followed by the design of alternate energy and solar systems in the residential market. Salesmanship and people skills were developed and honed in many years

of doing trade shows, marketing and sales. He earned a degree in Graphic Design in 1999 from Sierra College in Rocklin, California.

He met a California girl (Carol J. Wright) while attending Navy schools in Maryland in 1966 and married his bride of 50 years in 1969. They would settle in Nevada County, California and reside there for 35 years before relocating to Post Falls. Their daughter Amber lives in Davis, California, and is a conservationist for the U.S Department of Agriculture. She holds degrees in Molecular Biology, Biochemistry and Natural Resource Planning.

In his free time, Charlie is a competition shotgun and Glock Pistol shooter. He is also a cowboy shooter, where he dresses in period clothing and shoots in competition with cap and ball pistols, shotguns and rifles at various cowboy ranges in the area. The large amount of ammunition he shoots yearly has been instrumental in his expertise in hand-loading his own ammo.

Field Marshal Till has been a member of the DAV for 29 years and the American Legion for seven years. During the last decade, Charlie has sold hundreds of raffle tickets. His skills and enthusiasm in representing veterans make him a superior representative and a great salesman. The profits have benefited the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Kootenai County Veterans Council, and the National Order of Trench Rats.

For the past ten or more years Charlie has been a force behind the annual DAV Ft. Sherman Chapter 9 Christmas Project, averaging 100 children of veterans in distress from over 30 families each year. The project is an event requiring months of advance preparation and tremendous coordination and planning, along with the raising of an average of \$20,000 in donations. He has contacted local merchants and organizations for assistance, including cash and in-kind donations. He has raised thousands of dollars yearly for the benefit of local veterans and their families. He personally visited the families of recipients to determine any special needs which could be addressed by the Chapter. He has helped organize the gift wrapping with nearly 100 volunteers and the delivery of hundreds of presents, checks, gift cards and so forth. He came up with the ideas of sending families to dinner at the Coeur d'Alene Resort, and on boat trips to the North Pole and Santa on Lake Coeur d'Alene, and family trips to Triple Play.

Charlie is always working with, for and between various veterans groups and other civic groups ranging from the Kiwanis to the Hauser Gun Club. He is always ready to assist a veteran in need or to work to find a resource that can help in that particular case. To that end, he designed a unique Chapter Web Site (dav9.com) that is filled with local veteran information and guidance on how to get assistance from the VA.

Charlie's finest attribute is his untiring, innovative work on behalf of veterans in the area. There have been occasions when he has worked himself into exhaustion. He is a happy person who never tries to gain personal recognition for his accomplishments. Field Marshal Charles Titus Till has earned the respect of one and all, and is an example of a veteran who translates his caring about his brother and sister veterans and their families into concrete actions that are meaningful and give hope and help to those in need.