



PRESS RELEASE

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Note to editor: Photo from Monday's rededication of East Providence Fire Department, Mayor Bob DaSilva and Arthur Ring's family

City of East Providence celebrates Veterans Day, honors two U.S. Army Veterans

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI – The City of East Providence held its fifth annual Veterans Day ceremony on Monday, November 11, 2024 at the Garden of Flags Memorial, founded and maintained by the East Providence Battle Monuments Foundation.

During the event, U.S. Army Lt. John Wolf and U.S. Army Sgt. Clarence Butler Jr., both East Providence residents, were presented with proclamations from Mayor Bob DaSilva and Governor Dan McKee.

Lt. John Wolf first moved to East Providence at the age of five, moving from Pennsylvania as his family followed his father's military career in the United States Coast Guard.

In 1967, at the age of 21, following his graduation from Providence College, Lt. Wolf was drafted to the Army and spent time at Fort Jackson, Fort Benning and Fort Dix before being deployed to Vietnam as part of an advisory non-combat unit. Lieutenant Wolf's leadership and selfless service to our country would not go unnoticed as he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his meritorious service.

Upon returning home from Vietnam, Lt. Wolf shifted his focus from defending our nation to enriching and molding the future minds of our East Providence middle and high school students with significant and necessary lessons in history and social studies – two of the most important subjects in academia.

Sgt. Clarence "Junior" Butler moved to East Providence in his early teens, quickly making a name for himself as one of the greatest athletes to walk the halls of East Providence High School.

Sgt. Butler, an All-State athlete in football, basketball and baseball. After graduating from East Providence High School in 1964, he aspired to play sports professionally, accomplishing that goal by

signing with the Baltimore Orioles after graduation, but that quickly changed when he was drafted by the United States Army to serve overseas in Vietnam.

Butler's service began in December of 1965 and throughout his 16-month tour he spent time at Fort Dix, Fort Lewis and Fort Hood.

Before deploying, Sgt. Butler's father gave him a bible and a message. The message was to ensure he always kept the bible on him wherever he went.

Due to the rainy conditions and wet rice paddies, Sgt. Butler kept the bible in the steel plate of his helmet. While coming under fire in Vietnam, Sgt. Butler was hit twice, one of those blunt bullet rounds striking his helmet right where the bible was, softening the blow.

Butler would go on to become a decorated hero, receiving the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star with Valor and the Vietnam War Medal and Combat Infantry Badge.

A message that Sgt. Butler shared was, "Always listen to your elders."

Upon his return home, Sgt. Butler's service to his community continued as he became one of the most distinguished figures in the East Providence Community.

Butler, a Pop Warner Youth football coach, a founding member of the East Providence Heritage Days Festival and has helped raise more than \$250,000 during his 32 years of work for Friends of Townie Athletics.

Lt. Wolf and Sgt. Butler laid down a memorial wreath for those veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice.

U.S. Sen. Jack Reed, Gov. Dan McKee, Congressman Gabe Amo, RI Sec. Gregg Amore, RI Treasurer James DiOSSa, RI Sen. Robert Britto and RI Representatives Matthew Dawson and Jennifer Boylan and East Providence Council President Bob Rodericks thanked local veterans for their service and dedication to their nation.

The East Providence Police and Fire Honor Guards participated in the ceremony along with local scouts who handed out flags to attendees. Cards made by Waddington Elementary students in Mrs. Silvia's Grade 3 class and Miss Feathers library classes.

The National Anthem was sung by Riverside resident Andrea Vargas and Taps was played by East Providence High School Senior James Cassamas. Bristol County Fifes & Drums played patriotic music throughout the event.