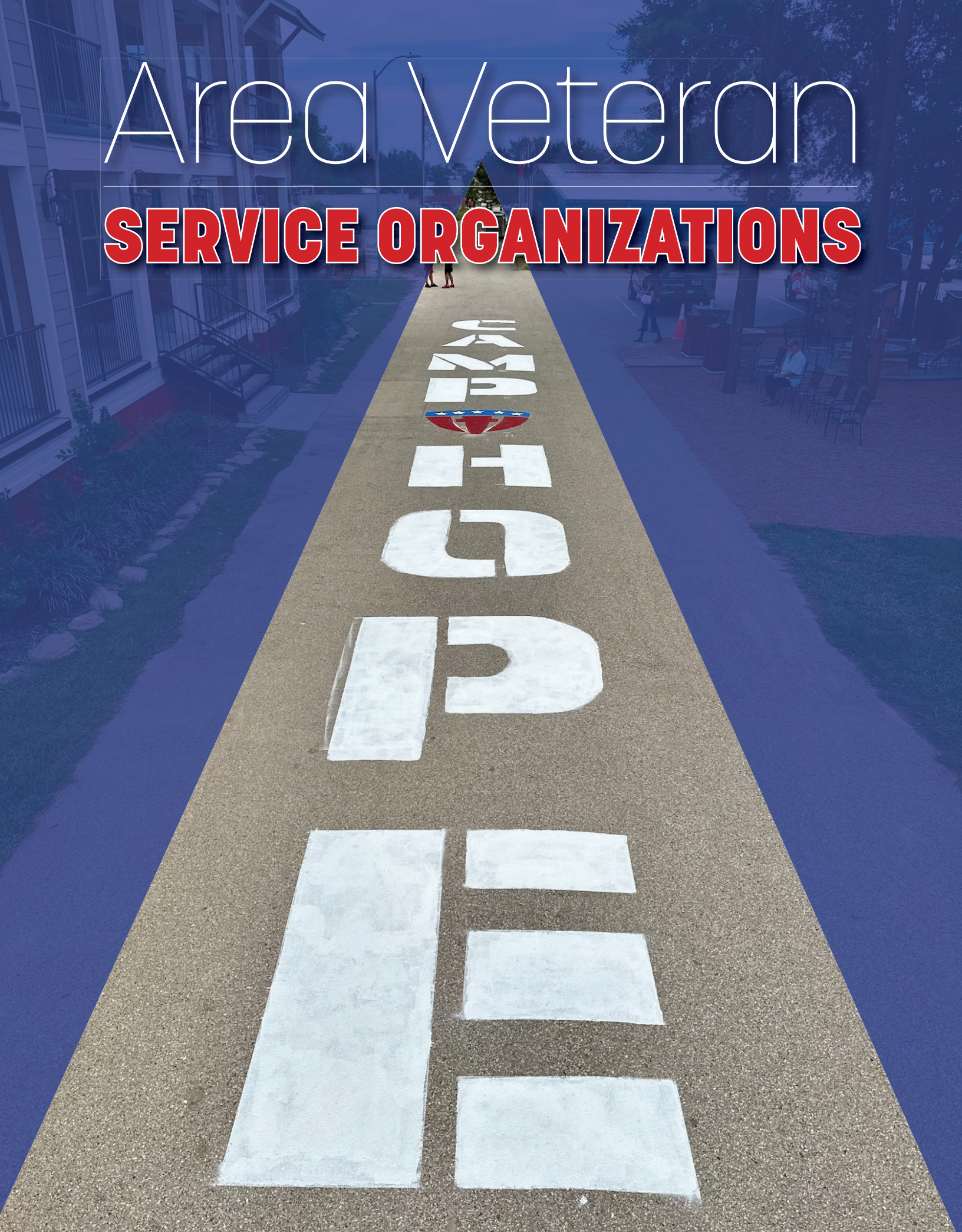


Area Veteran

SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS





Taking Care of Those who Protect(ed) Us

By Matt Beardmore

According to the U.S. Department of Defense, there are more than 1.3 million active-duty military members, with 16.5 million living veterans, per the U.S. Census Bureau. And there are several organizations in and around Tomball that are doing their part to support as many of them as possible.

Boots For Troops

Tomball-based Boots For Troops has shipped out more than 4,400 care packages to military service members stationed around the world since Jimmy and Lindsey Rogers founded the non-profit in 2015, when he was still in the Navy. Every care package comes with the service member's choice of boots, although Lindsey Rogers, the organization's director of operations, said that "99 percent of requests are for new combat boots."

Word has spread quickly and there are currently between 1,600 and 1,800 requests for a care package through Boots for Troops' website, www.boots4troops.org.

"From everything I've heard, receiving a care package is described as Christmas morning," she said. "It changes their whole morale while on deployment."

The organization also purchases roundtrip flights for junior enlisted service members to head home for the holidays. In addition, it launched a military spouse scholarship fund and supports an annual fund for a veteran in need of a service dog.

★ Boots For Troops | www.boots4troops.org

PTSD Foundation of America

The PTSD Foundation of America operates a five-acre residential treatment facility called Camp Hope in Houston, Texas. Camp Hope is a six- to 18-month interim and transitional housing program for combat veterans that is designed to be "a safe space for the victims of trauma and post-traumatic stress in which to experience healing." As of October



2023, there were 108 residents participating in the program, which provides them with peer-to-peer mentoring and professional counseling as well as the “tools they’ll need to integrate themselves into civilian life,” “This is at no cost to the veterans or their family members,” said Marilyn Kinyo, the foundation’s Communications and Marketing Manager.

“(PTSD) won’t ever go away, but it can get better,” said Zackery Wallis, who served in the Marine Corps and now leads the foundation’s Houston Outreach Team. “If you leave it untreated, it’s like a mushroom growing in the dark getting bigger and bigger.”

U.S. Army veteran Randall Seaton can relate. It was not until he “hit rock bottom” that he accepted help. “When I spoke with someone about Camp Hope, I decided I had nothing else to do,” he said. “I had tried other facilities and they just didn’t work. I knew this place might help.” Seaton is now the team’s lead veteran coordinator.

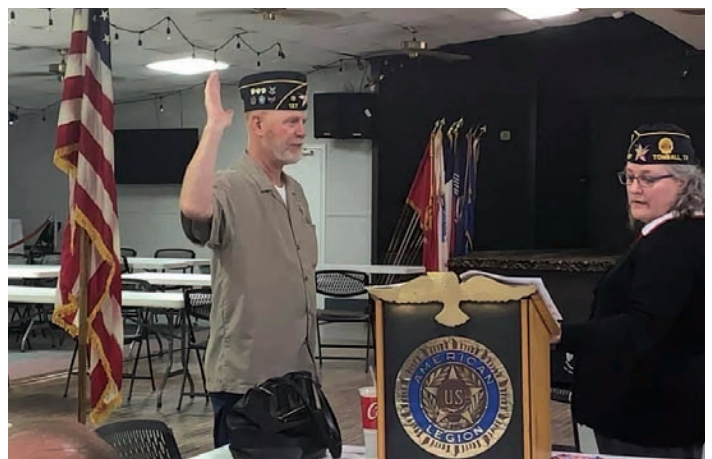
★ PTSD Foundation of America | www.ptsdusa.org

Tomball VFW Post 2427

As the Post Commander of Tomball VFW Post 2427, Greg Knox, who served in the Navy for 16 years, has experienced first-hand the benefits of having a place to develop camaraderie with other veterans.

“We are a place of refuge, if you will,” he said.

Post 2427, which has more than 560 members on the national books, is not just a place where veterans swap old war stories, Knox said. They also support the families of active-duty service members while they are overseas, provide resources for members in need and volunteer within the community.





Established in 1899 as the American Veterans of Foreign Services, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) has more than 5,600 posts worldwide. Post 2427 is in the middle of a capital campaign to raise up to \$750,000 for a new roof and other repairs on its hall at 14408 Alice Road. Donations can be made at <https://donationbricks.com/vfw2427>.

★ **Tomball VFW Post 2427** | www.vfwpost2427.org

American Legion Post 127

At American Legion Post 127 in Tomball, the 100 or so current members that meet monthly at the VFW Post 2427 hall are part of an organization that has nearly 2 million members at 13,000 posts around the world.

With the American Legion's four pillars (Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth) as its guide, Post 127 participates in a variety of activities within the community, including providing emergency funds and building wheelchair ramps for veterans in need, holding flag ceremonies, sharing the American Legion message and judging the annual American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program.

"We are making a difference at the grassroots level," said Brad Halliday, Post 127's Vice Commander and a U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy veteran.

Fortunately, a number of organizations in and around Tomball are doing the same.

★ **American Legion Post 127** | www.txlegion127.org/wp/

