

Charles Edward Joeckel Jr.

On the afternoon of October 17, 2007, Charles E. "Butch" Joeckel Jr. passed peacefully at his home in Naples, Florida.

Life-long resident of the Washington DC area, Butch was raised in Colmar Manor, Maryland, graduating from Bladensburg High School, Class of 1965. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1966 and served his country in Vietnam. In 1968 during the "Tet Offensive," Corporal Joeckel was wounded in combat, which resulted in the loss of both legs above the knees. He returned from Vietnam a highly decorated veteran, receiving the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Navy Commendation Medal with Combat Valor and numerous meritorious citations, medals and honors.

Realizing the immediate need for improved health care for America's veterans; Butch joined the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) professional staff as a National Service Officer. He served in various capacities until 1988 when he became DAV National Adjutant. He resigned from DAV in 1993.

Throughout his illustrious career he was devoted to improving the quality of life and care of our nation's veterans. Butch worked passionately and tirelessly within various organizations. He served on the Board of Directors of Help Disabled War Veterans. He was a member of the President's Task Force To Improve Access To Health Care For Our Nation's Veterans and was an accredited veterans' representative for the National Veterans Legal Services Program. He also served as the Executive Producer of the American Veterans Awards (AVA) in California, a program that recognizes distinguished veterans, our nation's military branches, as well as our military families. Butch was a member of a multitude of Veterans' Service Organizations, among them American Combat Disabled Veterans, which he co-founded and the National Association For Uniformed Services.

Butch was appointed as a Commissioner to the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission on March 23, 2004. He, along with twelve distinguished fellow comrades, deliberated continuously on a full range of veterans' benefit programs, including compensation and assistance for veterans and their families. The Commissioners strived to author equitable formulas and recommendations for benefits and services intended for veterans with disabilities and deaths attributable to military service. After a thorough, comprehensive and objective analysis, the Commission submitted their report to the President of the United States and members of Congress on October 3, 2007. Commissioner Joeckel worked relentlessly for his fellow disabled veterans and argued fervently on their behalf. His particular interest was the young men and women now returning from the Middle East. Having been a combat-disabled young Marine, Butch was acutely aware of the hardships these soldiers face. His life's work was concentrated on affairs regarding quality of life and living with dignity as a disabled veteran including spousal support for those who faithfully served our country as they rehabilitate and reintegrate into civilian life.

Although he worked as a champion for veterans, Butch's devotion and love for his family was his priority. He is survived by his wife, Dianne, his father, Charles Sr., his three children, Chuck, Tammy, and Scott, his sister and brother-in-law, three sister-in-laws, eleven nieces and nephews and seven grandchildren. Butch's passing is a great loss for his family, friends, and fellow Americans.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to American Combat Disabled Veterans, reference the Butch Joeckel Project, 175 Brightwater Drive, Annapolis MD 21401. Funeral services will be held at Arlington National Cemetery. **Notification of date and time will be announced the week of November 5th in the Washington Post.**

"You just have to do the right thing." - *Butch Joeckel*
Semper Fidelis