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U.S. Military Veterans Experience Colorado Fly Fishing, Emotional Conversation

- *Edwards-based Knapp Ranch hosts non-profit Project Healing Waters*

EDWARDS, Colo. – Oct. 12, 2022 – Centennial, Colo. resident and Vietnam War veteran, Rod Lyons, joined fellow veterans on a recent fly-fishing trip at the exceptional Knapp Ranch tucked up and away in the Rocky Mountains.

“It was an honor and a privilege to visit the ranch and to experience the conversation that we all had,” says Lyons. “The property is beautiful and my fishing time there was just outstanding. I am forever grateful for this time and Bud Knapp’s extraordinary support for the veteran members of Project Healing Waters.”

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing is a national non-profit organization dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active military service personnel and disabled veterans through fly fishing and other outdoor activities.

Knapp Ranch invited Project Healing Waters to fly fish in the private Knapp lake located at 9,000 feet in the upper West Lake Creek valley in Edwards. Nine participants enjoyed a beautiful Fall day of successful fishing, relaxing and sharing fishing tips.

Over a casual lunch on the deck of the Knapp Ranch main lodge, an emotional discussion ensued about the challenges the veterans have each experienced and continue to experience – and how they continue to heal.

Lyons served as a hospital corpsman attached to the U.S. Marines K Company, 3rd Battalion, 26th Regiment, on Hill 861 during the infamously brutal Battle of Khe Sahn from Dec. 26, 1967 to April 17, 1968. The senior medical representative during the entire siege, the other hospital corpsman in K Company reported to him, and Lyons himself was wounded.

“I was wounded from enemy mortar fire in the left shoulder and arm and awarded a Purple Heart Medal,” says Lyons, who retired from the U.S. Navy Reserve as a Master Chief Hospital

Corpsman (E9), with 28 years served. “My actual disability is for a permanent heart condition from Agent Orange toxins that were used in our area of Vietnam. I also have disability for PTSD and hearing loss.”

Every participant had a lifechanging war experience to share, with challenges both in war and after. They described how being outdoors and in such a beautiful setting opens them up to talk, connect, continue to heal, and find hope in nature.

“I was very moved by the veterans who visited Knapp Ranch and hearing their individual stories,” says Knapp Ranch owner, Bud Knapp. “Our peaceful and tranquil setting brings comradery and is the support these veterans deserve. It was truly an honor to host them.”

To learn more about Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc., as well as how to donate and volunteer opportunities, visit <https://projecthealingwaters.org/get-involved/>.

PHOTO CAPTION:

Bud Knapp, center and in Knapp Ranch white shirt, is surrounded by the veterans he hosted recently at his Edwards-based working farm. The veterans are participants in Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, a national non-profit that strives to effectively serve the deserving past and present members of our armed forces who have made great sacrifices in the service of our nation.



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