



VETERANS

★★★ HALL OF FAME ★★★

BENJAMIN A. DEFONCE

Benjamin A. DeFonce was a Corporal in the United States Marine Corps. He responded to the call to serve when the Korean War began.

Born to Salvatore and Sarah Marano DeFonce in 1931, he was a lifelong resident of Harrison. After graduating high school, he went on to attend the University of Miami. When the War broke out, Mr. DeFonce heard the call to serve his Nation. He was stationed at Camp Pendleton in California and was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, where he was sent to the front lines of the Korean War.

Mr. DeFonce fought valiantly at Heartbreak Ridge, where he was wounded trying to give help and support to his fellow Marines. Upon recovering, he was sent back to the front lines and was injured numerous times. Due to his bravery and gallantry, Mr. DeFonce was awarded two Purple Hearts. He achieved the rank of Corporal before he retired.

After retiring from active service, Mr. DeFonce continued to support our military veterans as the Veterans Services Officer of Harrison. Each year, Mr. DeFonce directed Harrison's Memorial and Veterans Day parades. Always there to help those in need, he assisted fellow veterans in receiving benefits that they earned. He also was at the forefront when it came to collecting donations for those in need and driving local veterans to their doctors' visits. He served as a local District Leader for 65 years.

A dry wall contractor by trade, Mr. DeFonce operated his business for many years in Harrison. He was actively involved with the American Legion and VFW and was also a member of the Giovanni Caboto Club and the Harrison Volunteer Fire Department.

In addition to his service to our Nation and community, Mr. DeFonce had a love of horses, working as a trainer at Yonkers, Roosevelt and other regional raceways.

An original member of the "Lucky 13" Club, each year Mr. DeFonce would proudly award the trophy to a Harrison High School football player in memory of two Harrison Korean War Veterans who died in the line of duty.

He continued to serve his beloved community until shortly before he died. Mr. DeFonce will always be remembered as a cherished member of the Town/Village of Harrison. He was a man of Faith, Family and Country and set a wonderful example. He passed away September 18, 2021, predeceased by his loving wife and surrounded by his devoted family.



**BENJAMIN A. DEFONCE IS HONORED POSTHUMOUSLY
AS A 2022 VETERANS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE BY
SENATOR SHELLEY B. MAYER.**

2022