PRESS RELEASE

Navy Veteran, John Cook Guest Speaker at Local 9/11 Memorial Ceremony

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Madera, CA – B-K Lighting of Madera to host annual 9/11 Ceremony on Monday, September 11, 2017 at 10 AM. The public is invited to attend.

For the past sixteen years, an annual September 11th Memorial Ceremony has been held in honor of the fallen heroes and survivors of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, Pentagon and in the skies high above America in 2001. This year's ceremony begins at 10 A.M. on Monday, September 11, 2017, at B-K Lighting, located at 40429 Brickyard Drive, Madera, CA.

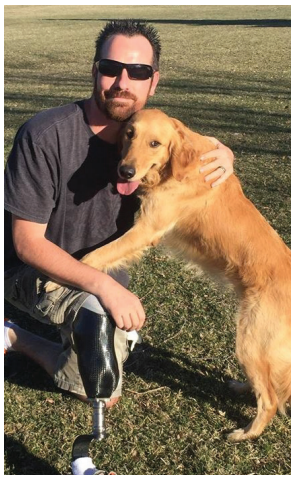
Our guest of honor is Navy Veteran John Cook of Fresno, CA. Enlisting in the Navy after the 9/11 attacks, Cook served eight years as an Aviation Structural Mechanic at NAS Lemoore, and overseas in Guam. Cook also spent time deployed in the Middle East during Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, and Operation Smile.

Following his return home, he was back at NAS Lemoore to continue his military aviation work on F/A-18 fighter jets at Strike Fighter Squadron 146 (VFA-146).

When a MERSA infection lead to an amputated left leg combined with a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder left Cook mission-less and on the couch, he was introduced to Our Heroes' Dreams, a non-profit organization whose mission is to "improve the lives of our warriors and their families, by helping them to accomplish their dreams, that they otherwise wouldn't be able to accomplish because of their disabilities."

There he discovered Assistance Service Dog Educational Center, led by Gerald Whittaker who has been training service dogs in Woodlake, CA for more than 15 years.

Please join us on Monday, September 11 to hear Cook's story, meet his canine companion Ivy, and learn how Service Dogs can transform the lives of our veterans in need.



John (JC) Cook, US Navy Veteran, Our Heroes Dreams Board Member and our honored guest speaker and his service dog Ivy

> **"She's such a well-behaved dog," Cook said. "She can open and close doors and turn on and off lights."**
>
> John (JC) Cook
> US Navy Veteran

continued

B-K LIGHTING
TEKA ILLUMINATION

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www.**bklighting**.com
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Contact:
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Marketing Manager

PRESS RELEASE

ABOUT B-K LIGHTING
Since 1984, B-K Lighting has been dedicated to providing the lighting industry with the highest quality, most innovative and fairly priced outdoor lighting fixtures available. B-K Lighting manufactures standard and custom fixtures for outdoor and landscape lighting including path, sign, area, flood, recessed building mounted, and in-grade applications. B-K Lighting products are installed in high-end residential and landmark applications around the world.

ABOUT TEKA ILLUMINATION
Since 1993, TEKA Illumination has been driven to manufacture sustainable luminaires. All TEKA Illumination products are manufactured from copper, brass and bronze, three of the oldest natural and man-made materials. These materials are extremely resistant to environmental corrosion and physical abuse attributing to their sustainability. Enduring metals. Elemental designs. New technologies. These are the inspirations of TEKA Illumination.

For more information about B-K Lighting + TEKA Illumination products and representatives, visit our websites at www.bklighting.com and www.tekaillumination.com. Monday-Friday 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. PST at 559-438-5800 or fax 559-438-5900. Located at 40429 Brickyard Drive, Madera, CA 93636.

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BIO

John Cook
Navy Veteran and 9/11 Guest Speaker

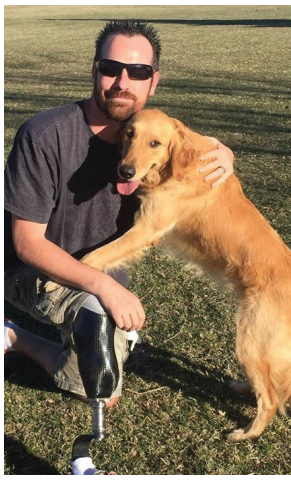
Navy Veteran John Cook grew up in rural Humboldt County in Northern California where he graduated from Fortuna High School in 2001. After the September 11 attacks took place on our home land in 2001 Cook prepared and enlisted in the Navy, January 2003, honorably serving 8 years active duty as an Aviation Structural Mechanic (AM). Cook's first duty station was Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Detachment (AIMD), NAS Lemoore, CA. While at AIMD, Cook was TAD (Temporary Active Duty) to USS Abraham Lincoln for 2 months. His next duty station was Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 (HSC-25), Anderson Air Base, Guam, working on MH-60s helicopters. While at HSC-25 he deployed for 10 months on multiple ships in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, Operation Smile (USNS Kiska, Shasta, and Niagara Falls). Cook then came back to NAS Lemoore, to work on F/A-18 fighter jets at Strike Fighter Squadron 146 (VFA-146), which was attached to CAG-11, USS John C. Stennis strike group.

While working one day Cook broke his right leg and underwent a routine surgery. Cook's life was turned inside out as the military amputated his left leg from a MERSA (methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus) infection after nine surgeries. After being forced from the military in February 2011, Cook felt the impact of being on the couch with a lack of a mission, a severe disability and the VA offering more VA candy to cope with life! Fortunately Cook was introduced to Our Heroes' Dreams and chose to take the OHD mission as his own. Through OHD he learned about Assistance Service Dog Educational Center.

For 15 years, Gerald Whittaker has been training dogs at the Assistance Service Dog Educational Center in the old schoolhouse north of town in Woodlake, CA. Some of the dogs he trains are for veterans who have traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder, or both. John Cook is one of those veterans. Ivy, a female golden retriever, has been his service dog for about two years.

"She's such a well-behaved dog," Cook said. "She can open and close doors and turn on and off lights." When he's using crutches, "if I drop something, she picks it up for me. She makes so many tasks easier." If he has to adjust his prosthesis while out walking, he can steady himself by holding on to Ivy. If he gets anxious, "I just kind of stop and start petting her," he said. "For depression and anxiety, she's amazing." Whittaker and his group deserve credit, he said.

Cook uses his experiences to help other vets overcome the trap of feeling the comfort and safety of the couch and life without a mission. Cook is nearly has nearly completed his studies at the University of Phoenix. He is obtaining a BA in Psychology so he may understand and help those in need even more. Cook is now a KEY asset and quickly becoming a leader to not only OHD board but to the entire organization and to all of the vets that OHD helps!



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