

# National Veterans Creative Arts Festival

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION CATEGORY - GROUP MUSIC DIVISION

### *Kansas City*

#### **BAND OF BROTHERS**

**VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC AND CENTER FOR REHABILITATION AND EXTENDED CARE  
MARTINEZ, CALIFORNIA**

Three veterans from very different walks of life met while receiving care at the VA Outpatient Clinic and Center for Rehabilitation and Extended Care in Martinez, California. Each was undergoing treatment for a variety of health issues but they had one thing in common – a desire to connect with others. They did this through music.

Virgil Icban, a Navy veteran of the Vietnam era, was undergoing rehabilitation for bilateral amputation. He had dedicated his personal and professional life to helping the people of his community, by serving as a family support counselor and basketball coach. His point of view is, “Remain strong in your determination and let others know you can achieve your dreams and goals.”

George Rowan Jr., (known as “Jack London George”), who served in the Army National Guard from 1962 to 1968, was recovering from a major heart attack and also dealing with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. While volunteering as a pianist at hospital and community events, Rowan also found time to work on community restoration projects. “I wanted to give back somehow,” he said.

The third member of the group is Leo Bailey, a World War II Navy veteran. Bailey lost the fingers of his right hand in a skill saw accident and underwent extensive surgeries to replace his fingers. Despite his physical challenges, Bailey served as a great inspiration to other veterans with his musical talents on the keyboard, harmonica and guitar.

Over the course of the rehabilitation period of these three veterans, recreation therapist Darlyn Phillips observed that they shared a love for music and a strong sense of duty to others. She introduced them and asked if they would like to join together as a musical trio. As a result, *The Band of Brothers* was formed.

Their toe-tapping rendition of the song *Kansas City*, which they entered in the 2008 National Veterans Creative Arts competition, received first place in the special recognition category of the music division, and represents their unique and spirited style.



#### **Band of Brothers**

*Pictured (l to r) top row, Virgil Icban and George Rowan, Jr.  
Seated: Joseph “Leo” Bailey*