



The
INTERCOM
 MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
 Cape Canaveral Chapter, Inc.



Happy New Year!



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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

**Steve Cusick, Captain, USN (Ret),
President, MOAACC**



ALWAYS VIGILANT

Yesterday, Dan McIntyre and I had the distinct honor of attending the **60th Anniversary** Celebration of the commissioning of the US Coast Guard Cutter, **VIGILANT (WMEC-617)**, whose motto is “*Always Vigilant*”. By the way, our

MOAA Cape Canaveral chapter was a major sponsor of this patriotic event, just as we support numerous other such events, activities, and individuals throughout Brevard County.

As I prepare these comments today on December 7th, I am especially reminded of the dastardly Pearl Harbor attack, the “**Date of Infamy**” which cost the lives of over 2400 of our brave military members.

First, please let me express my profound gratitude to Colonel Rick Kniseley and the chapter leaders who have done a truly outstanding job in 2024. Well-Done (or Bravo Zulu as we usually say in our profession!) Our major accomplishments have been previously noted in detail, resulting in another FIVE STAR Level of Excellence Chapter Award among other accolades. My perspective (and our reputation) is that we are the BEST MOAA Chapter in America, and I am certain that we will remain Always Vigilant to the needs of our community and “Never Stop Serving” as in the past.

As we begin 2025, MOAACC is indeed poised to reach new heights as our members continuously bond together to achieve results much greater than we ever could individually. Our Challenge is to keep up the great work and stay Vigilant to our goals of working for the betterment of our military, veterans, their families, and students in our community. You may ask, “How do we do this?” The obvious answer is to stay informed and be active in chapter activities, encourage new members, (bring along a friend) and find opportunities to excel in our efforts.

Thank you so much for the distinct honor of selecting me as your president. With your support and vigilance, we will undoubtedly be successful. Happy New Year and see you soon!

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Rita Shapiro, CAPT (ret)

Welcome to The Intercom (our newsletter) in the New Year!

Hello everyone! I am humbled to introduce myself as the new Executive Editor of the newsletter of our nonprofit organization. It is an honor and privilege to be stepping into this role. I am eager to work with our team to continue sharing the stories, insights, and achievements that define our mission of “Never Stop Serving”.

I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible leadership of our outgoing Executive Editor, Amir Pishdad Sr. for past two plus years. His dedication and vision have shaped our newsletter into the valued resource it is today. I am grateful for the strong foundation and for the trust our community places in our publication.

In this new chapter I look forward to serving you, and also looks forward to your participation by you providing the newsletter with your valuable articles, stories, and photographs on a regular basis. Together, we will continue to make this newsletter a reflection of the heart and soul of our organization.

Again, Happy 2025, and Let Us Keep Serving!

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JANUARY EVENTS (Click Event for Details)

- 1/04 MOAACC 2025 Installation Banquet - 5 PM
@ Indian River Colony Club - Colony Hall
- 1/09 TMBC - 8 AM
@ Indian River Colony Club - 19th Hole
- 1/14 On-The-Go Luncheon - 11:30 AM
@ Urban Prime - Melbourne, FL
- 1/16 TMBC - 8 AM
@ Indian River Colony Club - 19th Hole
- 1/17 - 1/19 Florida Council of Chapters Leadership
Training Seminar
@ Rosen Centre - Orlando, FL
- 1/17 FCoC Casino Night-Charity Fundraiser in support
of The MOAA Foundation - 7 PM
@ Rosen Centre - Orlando, FL
- 1/21 MOAACC Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
@ Indian River Colony Club - Chapel
- 1/21 MOAACC Luncheon - Guest Speaker Stephanie
Robinson, Brevard Emergency Mgmt - 8 AM
@ Indian River Colony Club - Colony Hall
- 1/23 TMBC - 8 AM
@ Indian River Colony Club - 19th Hole
- 1/25 - 2/01 19th Annual MOAACC Good Deeds
Foundation Cruise
@ Celebrity Equinox - Depart Port Canaveral
- 1/30 TMBC - 8 AM
@ Indian River Colony Club - 19th Hole
- To see details for these events,
visit <https://moaacc.org/events>

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See more in the online version
at <https://moaacc.org>

INTERCOM Photo & Article Submission Rules

PHOTOS:

- Photos must be in "High Resolution" in .jpg format and sent as an **"Attachment."**
- When sending photos, select "actual size" on computer or cell phone and send as **"Attachment."**
- Submit only up to two photos per article. More photos may be accepted if necessary.
- All photos must have "captions" of who, what, when, where and why.

ARTICLES:

- Articles must be in Microsoft "Word" format in Times New Roman 12 font. **PDF NOT ACCEPTED**
- LIMITS: One article per email, not more than 375 words. Each Article must include Author Name & Rank

DEADLINES & SUBMISSION EMAIL:

- Photos & Articles are **DUE NO LATER THAN the 15th of each month or sooner.** Please send ALL submissions **ONLY** to the following: intercom@moaacc.org
- **DO NOT SEND Cc TO EVERYONE**

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- Comments and suggestion are welcome. Contact EXECUTIVE EDITOR: intercom@moaacc.org

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Vacant
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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

John R. McMahon, BG, USA (Retired)

Lame Duck Activities

Happy New Year! I trust your holidays were blessed and enjoyed with family and friends and that your new year ushered in with high hopes and a positive outlook toward our future. As I write this, the 118th Congress is winding its way down to a holiday recess while it faces the need to extend the current Continuing Resolution (CR) which ends on 20 Dec or contend with a government shutdown. A proposal to extend the CR to keep current (FY24) funding levels intact until at least 14 March 2025 should give both chambers of Congress adequate time to pass the FY2025 budget, albeit 5 ½ months late. The latest sticking point revolves around both chambers agreeing to extend the FY18 annual Farm Bill while adding additional economic assistance for farmers and ranchers who are operating in the red. There's also a pending proposal to approve a \$100 B disaster aid bill for recent victims of hurricane, fire and flood damage. With so much urgent business to attend to, it is hard to imagine Congress taking time off for the holidays.

Meanwhile, in the way of updating my last installment, the projected Republican majority in the House narrowed slightly as the last contest was finally called in California, giving the Republicans a 220-215 edge, a net loss of one seat in the aggregate from the 118th Congress. Historically, as a percentage, this would be the second smallest majority in the House. However, with three Republican incumbents identified by President-elect Trump for positions in his cabinet, the advantage is diminished further to 217-215, at least until these prospective vacancies are filled. While I mistakenly reported that Governor Desantis will appoint replacements for the two, House vacancies in Florida, they actually won't be filled until a special election is held on 01 April 2025. (Gov Desantis will appoint a replacement for Senator Rubio.) In New York, a replacement for Rep Elsie Stefanik, nominated to be UN Ambassador, will be decided in a special election slated to occur 70-80 days after her resignation from Congress which is still pending.

The House Speakership will likely fall back onto the proven shoulders of Rep Mike Johnson (R-LA) who won the Republican nomination in mid-November leading up to a vote on 3 January 2025 when the new 119th Congress is sworn in. Johnson has referred to himself as "the quarterback" in the new House and to President-elect Trump as "his coach," seemingly apropos metaphors for their respective roles given the Nation is at the height of the football season. With the unlikely outcome of any or all three of the upcoming special elections going Democratic, Johnson's role seems secure. However, given such a slim

majority in the House, the prospects for President-elect Trump's early legislative agenda goals may be called into question. Time will tell.

Specifically, the House and the Senate have not yet agreed on which legislation to consider first under their new unified control of both chambers, with the extension of the 2017 Trump tax cuts in contention. Republicans generally want to extend the tax cuts even though the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates letting them expire will have a negligible impact on the economy and suggests higher tax revenues would spur higher private sector investment and reduce the federal deficit. Republicans seek some quick "wins" for the new President, but the House and Senate agendas are notably out of sync. The Senate must confirm Trump's nominees and work with the House to fund the government to avoid another shutdown. Beyond funding the government, the House must draw up the funding bills for the remainder of FY25 before handing them off to the Senate. Incoming Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) recently outlined the Senate's top priorities: to pursue Trump's promise of immigration crackdown, to expand fossil fuel production and to boost defense spending. All of this takes time, and the misalignment of priorities between the two chambers is problematic. Stay tuned.

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Susan Morse

Senior Vice President - Wealth Management

321-722-5426

susan.morse@ubs.com

Daniel Levy, CFA, CPWA®

Financial Advisor

321-722-5427

daniel.levy@ubs.com

UBS Financial Services Inc.
6905 N Wickham Road, 2nd
Floor, Melbourne, FL
32940-7552
321-729-6770

advisors.ubs.com/indianriverwmg 

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POINTS TO PONDER

MAJ (Chaplain, USAR Ret.) Bill Adams, MOAACC

Admiration for Allied Officers

My first encounter with an allied officer was in 1985 at Fort Sill, OK, home of the U.S. Army Field Artillery. Assigned there for the Officer's Advanced Course, I sponsored a young IDF (Israel Defense Forces) Captain. In theory, he would learn from my professional training; in reality, he taught me from his combat experience in the 1982 Lebanon War. Only later did I understand that this is the norm in US-Israel relations: We supply the resources; they supply the experience.

Israel's is a "peoples' army," not a professional one, envisioned as a melting pot and education system for the millions of new immigrants the Jewish State has been absorbing since its founding in 1948. Its junior officer corps is the backbone of its nation's security and chief means of unifying a society of immigrants from over 100 nations.

On an Israel battlefield tour that I led, Charlie our guide announced that his son Shahar was training to be an officer. Israelis are so proud of their officers.

We collected our loose change to tip Charlie, asking that he let us share in honoring his officer candidate by taking him out to dinner on us. The proud papa was thrilled! Later he wrote to say he had given all the cash to Shahar. This exemplified the teaching of Rabbi Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

So many other rabbis have inculcated that truth such that today it is an Israeli national cultural value. That is why Charlie did not include himself in the gift but gave it all to his son. Shahar explained what he did with the money in this amazing text: "I feel a sense of mission in what I do and my service in the IDF, so the gift will enable me to purchase equipment for my soldiers to be prepared. Thanks to you, I guess we are not alone."

We will never know how much money we gave because we never counted it! But the outcome points to a multiplication miracle God accomplished to make sure this allied officer in training got the message that he and his soldiers do not stand alone in the defense of their nation.

HEALTHY LIVING

Rita Shapiro, CAPT (ret)

Simple Resolutions in the New Year that you can Stick to:

Every year people make resolutions for the upcoming year. The gym memberships go up, people buy home equipment such as exercise bikes, rowers, treadmills, and Elliptical trainers. But after a month or two all go away by the wayside. Gym memberships go poorly utilized. The new home equipment gathers dust or become a drying rack for towels. The reason is perhaps people make unrealistic resolutions.

How about trying something simple that brings you pleasure, is easy to adhere to and does not cost so much?

1. Make a resolution to take two 30 min walks every day. Go for walk during lunch break, after dinner or anytime the weather permits.
2. Be outdoors daily doing the activity you enjoy for at least one hour every day. Play golf, pickleball, bocce ball, tennis, swim, or just some light walking or hiking.
3. Resolve to cook more meals at home and not eat at fast food places. It is cheaper and you know exactly what is in your food.
4. Add more fresh vegetables to your diet. Vegetables give you many needed vitamins and minerals and also much needed fiber. Numerous studies have shown that eating a diet rich in fresh vegetables and fruits, helps protect against various illnesses, such as diabetes, heart diseases, certain cancers, and obesity.
5. Resolve to eat less sweets and limit your intake of sweetened beverages. Sugar after the age of 50 is the enemy to human metabolism. It has been studied that sugary drinks can lead to insulin resistance hence diabetes in the long run, fatty liver because sugar converts to glycol, and not the least dental cavities.

Stay healthy to NEVER STOP SERVING!!



MOAACC GOOD DEEDS FOUNDATION

Donn Weaver, Cpt US Army-fmr

A Year of Promise Ahead

Good Deeds Foundation Starts 2025 in a Strong Position to Help Many

Best wishes from your Good Deeds Foundation Board for a very special and impactful 2025 in all respects. While GDF operates on the USG FY Calendar, the calendar year 2024 ended with a real bang, thus, our first FY quarter was a great launch pad. Thanks to many donors, we had a great November Golf Tournament, with a record \$27,000 gross, and our record setting FY 2024 which had some leftover funds, GDF is ready to perhaps realize our ambitious FY 2025 budget of \$180,000. Wow!

As the GDF meetings resume on 14 January 2025, we are looking for a few new Board members from those MOAACC members who have a couple years of service but would like to join a very special Mission. Please contact Donn Weaver or any GDF Board Member if you are interested.

In December GDF provided some amazing grants including helping two veteran families in dire straits working with the VA and NVHS, to provide help they could not. GDF also provided \$1500 each to support two partner organizations, The Sons of the American Revolution and Back Brevard Heroes, to put on the Last Naval Battle and Brevard Hero Fest at the Veterans Memorial Center in March and May respectively.

Check this issue out for another major GDF partnership — The Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying and Ceremony at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery in Mims. The \$2500 for the ceremony covered half of their total cost, while GDF also funded another \$1000 worth of wreaths. MOAACC/GDF was given full recognition at the Ceremony attended by 2500 people!!

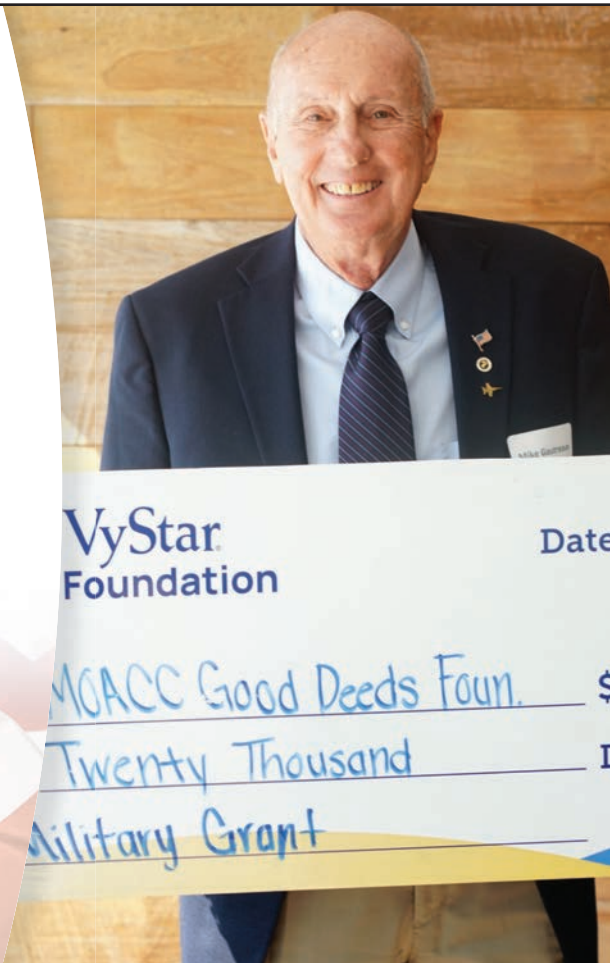
Thanks to all our GDF fantastic Board Members for another banner year as your GDF President, Vice President, and Treasurer look forward to another year, and perhaps another record of giving to active duty, veteran families in need, our youth and to special veteran organizations which make a great difference in the Space Coast.

VyStar Foundation is a proud sponsor of MOAACC

On behalf of The Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC), we extend our heartfelt gratitude for VyStar Foundation's support of The Good Deeds Foundation, allowing us to continue our mission of service and camaraderie. As Vice President of the Good Deeds Foundation and a VyStar member for four decades I am proud of their unwavering support of the military community. Thank you for standing with us as we serve and support those who have served our nation.

Mike Gautreaux

Colonel, USMC (ret)
Vice President, MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation



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Mark Your Calendar!

Save the Dates for upcoming MOAACC Events:

- 1 January 2025:** Scholarship Application Process Opens
- 4 January 2025:** MOAACC 2025 Installation Banquet
- 17-19 January 2025:** MOAA FCoC Training Seminar & Convention in Orlando
- 21 January 2025:** MOAACC Luncheon - Guest Speaker Stephanie Robinson, Brevard Emergency Mgmt
- 22 March 2025:** Retiree Appreciation Day, UCF, Student Union Center
- 15 April 2025:** ROTC & JROTC Awards Ceremony
- 20 May 2025:** MOAACC Luncheon to Honor Students with Service Academy Appointments or ROTC Scholarships
- 15 June 2025:** Scholarship Application Process Closes
- 15 July 2025:** Scholarship Award Presentations
- 18 November 2025:** MOAACC Luncheon & Annual Membership Business Meeting
- 5 December 2025:** MOAACC Annual Christmas Dinner Dance

Space Coast Navy Wives' Club

Please join us for our first meeting of 2025. We will meet on Friday, January 17th at THE TIDES. Social hour begins at 11:30am and lunch is served at noon.

Our Speaker: Dee Wardle from Wesche Jewelers. She will walk us through Jewelry History. With a representative from Wesche Jewelers, they will provide highlights from Victorian era and finish in the modern era.

Our Menu: Bruschetta chicken with roasted red potatoes and glazed carrots, or Greek Quinoa Salad. Dessert will be Carrot Cake.

For more information and to make reservations, please call or text Ellie Joy at (321) 961-2962 no later than noon, Tuesday January 14th.

Remember friends and family are always welcome.

Ellie Joy

(321) 757-0193



MOAACC MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Welcome New MOAACC Members for January 2025

Last Name	First Name	Prefix	Service	Duty Status	Member's Sponsor
Ball	Edmund	COL	Army	Retired	
Custis	Susan	CDR	Navy	Retired	
Lim	Alan	Dr	Navy	Retired	Arnold Lim
Mazyck	Geraldine	Mrs.	Surviving Spouse	Surviving Spouse	
Sherrill	Karen	Major	Air Force	Retired	Steve Cusick



SCHOLARSHIP CORPORATION

Col D Brent Baysinger, USAF (Ret)

As we begin 2025 and launch our scholarship application season, I'd like to thank the MOAACC community for making 2024 another successful year for the MOAACC Scholarship Corporation. At our scholarship luncheon last July, we awarded \$77,000 in scholarships to 11 students. This was our largest annual award, and we are extremely proud of the hard work and donations of the Corporation's supporters.


This year we continue to strive to reach as many qualified scholarship applicants as possible. Over the last few years, we have expanded the pool of eligibility from prospective college sophomores all the way up to PhD candidates. I'd like to ask you, fellow MOAACC members, to all to be on the lookout for potential scholarship candidates. As MOAACC members, both YOU and YOUR families represent the greatest audience for which the scholarship exists to serve. In addition, eligible candidates can also be the children or grandchildren of retired veterans residing in Brevard County. We hope you will consider the scholarship opportunity and share it with eligible members of your families, fellow MOAACC members, and those in Brevard who may not have a MOAACC sponsor.

Lastly, inflation and specifically the cost of college remains elevated. You can also support the Scholarship Corporation with your generous contributions. You can become a 'Distinguished Donor' by donating \$1,000 or more and you can become a 'Named Scholarship' donor by donating \$10,000 or more. Both contribution types are recognized on our website as well as put on display at the annual luncheon. In addition, you can support the Scholarship Corporation with your time. If you are interested in getting involved, please reach out to a Scholarship board member. We are always on the lookout for motivated individuals, especially within the Selection Committee.

TAPS

**MOAA CAPE CANAVERAL CHAPTER
MEMBER, AUXILIARY, and SPOUSE DEATHS**
November 2024 deaths listed
for January 2025 Intercom

NONE TO REPORT



MOAACC SCHOLARSHIP DONORS

Distinguished Donors:

- Bill and Betsy Cook
- Dan McIntyre

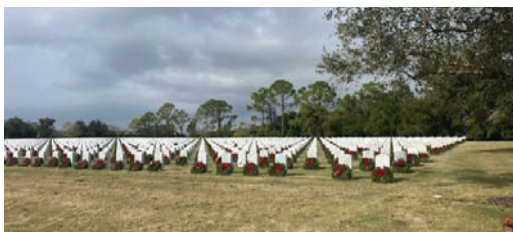


Wreaths Across America: 2024 Ceremony at Cape Canaveral National Cemetery Unforgettable!



RADM Justice addresses the crowd.

WAA Deputy. MOAACC's Good Deeds Foundation, Rolling Thunder FL Chapter 1, AFTAC, Waste Management, American Legion Posts 285 and Aux 242, VFW Post 399, and other sponsors and major donors were thanked along with the CCNC team led by Director Cindy VanBibber and more than 800 WAA volunteers.



Wreath honoring all veterans laid to rest in CCNC.

Service there were hundreds of children and young adults including many from organizations like Sea Cadets, Civil Air Patrol, Space Coast HS JROTC, Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts and more.

The program featured RADM Wayne Justice, USCG, Ret as keynote speaker along with Chip Hanson as Chaplain, Rachel Smith singing the National Anthem, Linda Clark playing Taps as well as VanBibber, Nelson, and Weaver. Eight wreaths were placed as the ceremony ended to honor all veterans who have served or are serving from all branches of the military. This year's honors went to:

- Doug Bisset, US Army
- Jim Carleton, US Marine Corps
- Dave Clayton, US Navy
- Rick Kniseley, USAF
- Capt Trevor Schneider, US Space Force (Active Duty)
- Dan McIntyre, US Coast Guard
- LCDR Dimitri Wiener, USCG for Merchant Marines (Active Duty)
- Steve Fritz, Rolling Thunder for POW/MIA

About 10 minutes before the 1000 hours Ceremony, hard rain began. The cold rain stopped, and the sun came out for the next two hours to complete the entire ceremony and laying the 10,400 wreaths. Some noted it was a great sign of how veterans are remembered and honored thanks to WAA beyond the geography of the five counties that are supported by CCNC.

To learn more about WAA/CCNC for next year and beyond, to donate wreaths or to volunteer to help, check the WAA National website and link to CCNC.

The website is: www.wreathscrossamerica.org/FL0320P

On a rainy Saturday in December, more than 2500 people came to Remember, Honor and Teach as the Wreaths Across America (WAA) Ceremony and Wreath Laying took place at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery. During year-long fundraising WAA/CCNC was able to raise enough funds to purchase 10,400 wreaths from the Maine WAA headquarters and thus cover every eligible in ground grave site on 14 December 2024. It was the largest ceremony and public event at the CCNC since it was opened in 2016.

Major sponsors came together to cover the costs of the ceremony which was led by Bette Nelson, the WAA CCNC Location Coordinator and Donn Weaver,



Bette Nelson with WAA Ashley Furniture Driver who has been bringing wreaths from Maine for six years.

This year WAA sent out 3.43 Million Wreaths to over 4100 locations in America and even 100,000 to France at our WWII Cemetery. WAA began in 1992 only in Arlington National Cemetery as a donation from the Morrill Worcester family of Maine. In 2005 a photo of wreaths at all ANC grave sites after a heavy snow fall, went viral and donations poured in to help the WAA mission. Every year since then more and more locations were added. The Mission was refined: Remember (every veteran by name); Honor (Their service and sacrifice to include their families); Teach (make sure America's youth understands their service). At the 2024 CCNC



All Wreath presenters were escorted by LTC Hans Hunt, USA Ret and member of the Sons of the American Revolution dressed in colonial attire. Wreath Layers prepare.



Over 800 volunteers including at least 30 MOAACC members support the 14 Dec WAA Ceremony at CCNC with wreath laying.

USCG Cutter VIGILANT Celebrated her 60 years of Service on December 6th, 2024, at Station Port Canaveral



The USCGC Vigilant

The current crew along with former members of the crew, local USCG supporters, and three former Commanding Officers gathered at Station Port Canaveral to celebrate this significant milestone for the VIGILANT.

Following introductions and review of historical events involving outstanding mission success over the years, each of the commanding officers delivered remarks on their memories during their years as commanding officer of the VIGILANT.

Following the ceremony, all attendees were served an outstanding lunch by the culinary crew of VIGILANT which was sponsored by VFW post 10131 Cape Canaveral and MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation.

USCGC VIGILANT (WMEC 617) is the third of the Coast Guard's RELIANCE class medium endurance cutters. She is the twelfth cutter to bear the name VIGILANT, dating back to 1790 when the original VIGILANT was built for the Revenue Cutter Service. The present VIGILANT was commissioned on October 3, 1964, at Todd Shipyard in Houston, Texas at a cost of 2.3 million dollars. From 1964 to 1989, VIGILANT was home ported in New Bedford, Massachusetts. In February of 1989, after twenty-five years of active service, VIGILANT was decommissioned to undergo an 18-month Major Maintenance Availability at the Coast Guard Yard. On November 16, 1990, she was again commissioned and proudly rejoined the active fleet at her new homeport of Port Canaveral, Florida.



VIGILANT has been involved in numerous unique operations such as participation in the primary recovery team for project GEMINI in 1965. VIGILANT secured her place in history in 1970 as a result of the “VIGILANT Incident” where Simas Kudirka, a Lithuanian seaman attempted to defect to the United States by leaping from his Soviet ship to the deck of the VIGILANT off Massachusetts. (See “VIGILANT Incident” below) VIGILANT also served as On-Scene Commander when the tanker ARGO MERCHANT grounded near Cape Cod spilling her cargo into the sea, earning the Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation for her role in the cleanup of the spill. VIGILANT also played a key role in operation ABLE MANNER to stop the Cuban exodus and operation SUPPORT DEMOCRACY to enforce the UN embargo on the island nation of Haiti. During the span of two patrols in 1994-1995, VIGILANT conducted seven migrant repatriations, returning over 1,400 migrants to Haiti.

Since 1979 VIGILANT has seized sixteen vessels and over a quarter of a million pounds of marijuana and cocaine. In 1981, VIGILANT was awarded the Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation for the rescue and seizure of the motor vessel VIVIANA whose crew attempted to scuttle and burn their drug-laden vessel. In 1994 she seized the vessel DAYBREAK with over 600 pounds of cocaine destined for the United States. In June 1996, VIGILANT boarded and seized the sailing vessel ELLE with 4,000 lbs. of marijuana on board. In June 2003, VIGILANT assisted the Pacific Area TACLET with the escort of the motor vessel YALTA, after the TACLET located over 3 tons of cocaine concealed in a hidden compartment.

VIGILANT continues her history of operational success. During routine patrols in the Florida Straits, VIGILANT has been responsible for the safe transfer of migrants attempting to seek refuge in the United States. While on VIGILANT, these migrants were treated for various injuries and illnesses and received general care until they were transferred to another unit or repatriated.

VIGILANT’s awards include the Coast Guard Unit Commendation, Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation (6 awards), Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation, Humanitarian Service Medal (3 awards), Coast Guard Special Operations Ribbon, and the Coast Guard “E” Ribbon (12 awards).

In her 60th year of service to the nation, VIGILANT remains Semper Paratus, performing with unparalleled success in a wide range of Coast Guard missions. Firmly rooted in her history of accomplishments, VIGILANT will continue to live up to her motto, “Semper Vigilans... ALWAYS VIGILANT.”



Ship's CO CDR Jonathan Potterton and his wife.



From left to right with their years serving as commanding officer- Captain Caleb Corson USCG (ret) 2007-2009, Captain Jim Mongold USCG (ret) 1997-1999, Captain John Clay USCG (ret) 1991-1993, CDR Jonathan Potterton, current Commanding Officer of USCGC VIGILANT.



STUDENT AFFAIRS

Colonel Steve Bond (USA-Ret), MOAACC Army LNO

Florida Tech ROTC Commissions four new Army Lieutenants at Fall Graduation



New Army Lieutenants at the Florida Tech Commissioning Ceremony on December 13th with guests, from Left to Right—COL Steve Bond (USA-Retired)-MOAACC, Dr. John Nicklow-President Florida Tech, New Second Lieutenants Zavala, Troisi, Cullum, and Aukland, CAPT Bill Toti (USN-Retired)-Guest Speaker, and LTC Rob Stillings-Florida Tech Professor of Military Science.

Unique among over 1,000 recent graduates from the Florida Institute of Technology and Eastern Florida State College at the Fall commencement ceremonies were four who also completed the requirements to be commissioned in the U.S. Army as Second Lieutenants through the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). On Friday, December 13th the Army ROTC Panther Battalion held the fall commissioning ceremony in the Hartley Room of the Florida Tech Student Union building on campus with families, friends, ROTC instructors, and other cadets on-hand to witness the event. At the ceremony, four new Lieutenants took the commissioning oath of office and pinned on new “gold bars”—the rank insignia of Second Lieutenants in the ceremony. Three of the new Lieutenants met the requirements to graduate from Florida Tech, and one graduated from Eastern Florida State College. In the ceremony they heard messages and

congratulations from the President of Florida Tech, John Nicklow (Ph.D.) and guest speaker, Captain William (Bill) Toti, (USN, Retired)—Both Dr. Nicklow and Captain Toti are Cape Canaveral Chapter members, and Bill participates in our speakers’ bureau.

The new graduates and Army Second Lieutenants are:

- Haley K. Aukland—Haley graduated from High School in Morris, Ill, and received her Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Management from Eastern Florida State College. She was commissioned in the Aviation Branch and hopes to be an Apache helicopter pilot.
- Silas J. Cullum—Silas graduated from High School at Christ Church Academy in Jacksonville, FL. He received his Bachelor’s degree from Florida Tech in Mechanical Engineering and was commissioned in the Army National Guard as an Infantry Officer.
- Olivia A. Troisi—Olivia graduated from Heritage High School in Palm Bay. She received her Bachelor’s degree from Florida Tech in Biomedical Science. As a cadet, she served as the Battalion Commander and was the recipient of the MOAA Medal and Cleland Bugler Award—Both sponsored by the Cape Canaveral Chapter. She was commissioned as an active duty, Medical Service Corps officer.
- Marco A. Zavala—Marco graduated from High School in Chicago and received his Bachelor of Science degree Biomedical Science from Florida Tech. He also graduated from the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. He was commissioned as an active-duty Medical Service Corps Officer and hopes to continue his education to become a Medical Doctor.

The new Lieutenants were also congratulated by LTC Rob Stillings, Florida Tech Professor of Military Science. The Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC) presented the new Lieutenants with “Gold Bar” commissioning sets, membership in MOAA and the Cape Canaveral Chapter. Colonel Steve Bond, US Army-Retired, Past MOAACC President, and President of the MOAA Florida Council presented the Gold Bar sets and wished the new officers the best of luck as officer in the United States Army.



L-R, COL Steve Bond (USA-Retired), CAPT Bill Toti, and LTC Rob Stillings meet before the ceremony.



Marquee at the Florida Tech Student Union Building congratulates the New Army Lieutenants.

Six Soft Targets: A Novel

By Bill Muckler, Captain USMC

We are told to “Remember Pearl Harbor.” It made America strong. We have been told to remember other tragic events over the years. They made us strong. After 9/11, we swore we would “Never Forget.” Sadly, since September 11, 2001, our great America has become weaker and softer.

America is a target for terrorists, socialists, and so many others who wish to weaken her that it is becoming difficult to keep count. The objective is to make America soft, destroy its culture, and change Western civilization into something we won't recognize and many never return to.

Scholars will argue when Islamic Jihad began. It can be 632 CE or 1972 CE. We can all agree it has affected our lives for more than fifty years. Americans have been warned, but they have gone unheeded. An era of steady cultural and economic decline is now heralded as the new normal.

This is a story of what will happen if Americans continue to ignore the signs and pursue a soft, hedonistic future of self-decadence.

This is a work of fiction to alert Americans of potential disasters and pending terror. Attacks on American Soil can be prevented only if its citizens decide to fundamentally return the republic to a time when the rule of law and the Constitution were first once more.

Seven wealthy Islamic fanatics have an objective. Turn the planet clock back to the seventh century and destroy the Satanic Western civilization. A plan is devised, the resources assembled, and willing martyrs are found to make it happen. The day is set to achieve its holy standing in history. Their vision is a worldwide Islamic caliphate brought about by a series of concurrent events that will overshadow 9/11. They vow the infidels will learn the true meaning of terror and readily submit to Allah.

An Islamic sleeper embedded in America is appointed to carry out the devastation of six soft American targets. Loathing of American infidels drives them to commit the perfect attacks of destruction while two former American veterans work to identify and stop this carnage despite the treachery of American officials who relish results that will further their lust for power.

Plans are made. Hardened, disciplined believers meticulously carry out research to cripple the infidels and their modern infrastructure. Precise attacks are executed that cripple the country.



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VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER UPDATE

2024 Christmas Tree Lighting at Veterans Memorial Center



R SCRUGGS

Grand Illumination of The Christmas Tree built and donated by the VMC President and MOAACC Board Member, Dean Schaaf to the Veteran Memorial Center. About 800 attended the event sponsored by the Community Advocacy of Merritt Island (CAMI). MOAACC members Donn and Jeanne Weaver also attended and spoke about the dual purpose of the tree as a Gold Star Family Remembrance Tree. A live tree will be planted in 2025 as the VMC Park \$8.2M Amphitheater and other upgrades are underway.



R SCRUGGS

CAMI hosted over 40 vendors and six food trucks.



R SCRUGGS

CAMI Leaders explain the propose of the event while popular local band "Hot Pink" takes a break from live music over several generations.



YOUNG EAGLES FLIGHT RALLY

Sponsored by EAA Chapter 724, Merritt Island Airport

For Children and Grandchildren (8 Through 17 Years Old) of:

Military:

- Gold Star Families
- Critically Wounded Service Personnel
- Those Who Lost Their Battle With Depression

Law Enforcement & First Responders:

- Killed in the Line of Duty
- Critically Wounded in the Line of Duty
- Those Who Lost Their Battle With Depression

Cost: Free Flight and Aviation Intro
Date: February 22, 2025

FAA Approved Aircraft & Licensed Pilots
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Location: Merritt Island Airport
900 Airport Rd.
Merritt Island, FL 32952
"Follow The Signs at the Gate"

Bring your camera!

Parents or Guardians Must Register Online Starting Feb 8, 2025:

<https://youngeaglesday.org/?12312> The Young Eagles Coordinator is: Don White, 321-266-7410

The permission forms must be signed in ink and brought to the event by the parent or legal guardian. Photocopies cannot be accepted. Your Child's name and flight will be entered into <https://www.eaa.org/eaayouth/free-ye-flights/eaayoung-eagles-logbook> so that they may review it for many years.

Background:

Began in 1992, with 2.3 million children flown to date. Originally conceived to introduce 1.0 million children to aviation before the Wright Brothers 100th Anniversary of flight. It has continued on after 31 years. Past Honorary National Chairpersons have been: General Chuck Yeager, Actor and Aviator Harrison Ford, And Captain "Sully" Sullenberger of the "Miracle on the Hudson" fame.

Also: All participating families are formally invited to the Brevard County Military Museum, 400 S. Sykes Creek Parkway, Merritt Island, FL 32952. The Director is Mr. Donn Weaver, 757-871-6576, VP VMC and Gold Star Coordinator.

Support by Association of the United States Army, Space Coast Chapter:

<https://www.ausa.org/chapters/space-coast-chapter>

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=ausa%20space%20coast>

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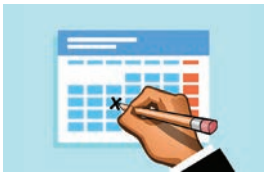
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Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar

JANUARY 2025 AND BEYOND

Contact VMC for any additions or other information.

NOTE: Some Events Change in-between our monthly mailing of the VMC Calendar.

Keep up to date with those changes using our web link:

<https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/upcoming-veterans-events/>

or contact donnweaver2020@gmail.com for more information or to participate.

JANUARY 2025

10-11 Jan — Palm Bay JROTC Air Rifle Commanders Cup Match, PM Friday; 0800-1200 Saturday at Palm Bay Jr/Sr HS.

26 Jan — Salute to Service Opening Ceremony at the Challenge Cup National Softball Tournament, Space Coast Stadium in Viera 1500- 1730. Features honoring veterans and first responders as a week-long tournament of slow pitch softball teams from across the country begins. Sponsored by USSSA, FAVOB, BCSO and many more. Vendor tents welcome. Opening game between FHP/BCSO/Brevard Fire combined Team and PSFB Veterans and Active-Duty Military. Special BCSO flyover, Rolling Thunder Bike Parade on warning track, ceremonial first pitch and much more. Contact Donn Weaver, VMC, 757-871-6576 for more information.

28 Jan — BVMC Library Discussion Series. 1800 - 1930. The presentation will be: "The Strategic Triad" by Bill Ellis. There has been much discussion about the continuing cost-effectiveness of the strategic triad, which is a Cold War concept. With Russia resurgent and China rising as a peer competitor, these discussions are now more critical than at any time in recent decades. During his US Air Force service, Bill was a missileer and a program manager in strategic systems.

FEBRUARY 2025

Feb (Date TBD) — Free Eighth Annual Every Day is Veterans Day Event at Space Coast Center for Collaboration 1100 Rockledge Ave, US Rt 1, Rockledge. Celebrate veterans with food, drinks and many informational booths. Sponsored by One Senior Place. Call 321-251-6771 to register as a vendor or RSVP for attendance.

01 Feb — County wide JROTC Air Rifle Run and Shoot Competing at VMC Memorial Park. 0700-1200. Hosted by Satellite HS JROTC.

02 Feb — Annual Ceremony to Commemorate the Immortal Four Chaplains of WWII. VMC Plaza 1400-1500. Marine Corps League and VMC Sponsors and Presents.

15 Feb — Annual Commemoration of the WWII Bataan Death March at VMC Park 0700-1100. Air Force and Space Force JROTC units only come together for a long ruck March to remember this tragic chapter in American military history and reflect on the sacrifice of our prisoners of war.

22 Feb — JROTC District Drill Meet at VMC Park 0700-1200. See many teams compete in Color Guard, Squad and Platoon drills.

22 Feb — USAF JROTC Statewide Drill meet for Air/Space Force programs at Melbourne HS 0800-1300.

MARCH 2025

08 Mar — JROTC District Drill Meet with hundreds of cadets in competition in five events. VMC Park 0700-1200.

15 Mar — Annual Last Naval Battle of the Revolutionary War Celebration at VMC Plaza. Sponsored and staged by the Brevard Sons of the American Revolution with assistance from VMC and MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation. Details in December 2024.

29 March — JROTC District Championship Drill Meet at VMC Park 0700-1300. State Championship Qualifier.

For further upcoming events, visit

<https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/upcoming-veterans-events/>

Please help us spread the word and advise of any new events.

Donn Weaver

BVC Immediate Past Chair

Veterans Memorial Center

donnweaver2020@gmail.com



MOAA FCOC News

The December Florida Council Newsletter, The Communiqué is now available!

The December Edition of the award winning MOAA Florida Council newsletter, *The Council Communiqué* is now available online on the new Florida Council website at www.FLMOAA.org/news/. *The Communiqué* has items of interest for Florida MOAA members and all veterans, including State Legislative Advocacy initiatives, activities of the State's 37 MOAA Chapters, information on the upcoming 2025 Leadership Training Seminar and Convention and Charity Fundraiser for The MOAA Foundation in Orlando. *The Communiqué* is published every other month (December, February, April, June, August, October,) and the latest and archived copies are always available online.

Did you know the Florida Council has a new website? Take a look at www.FLMOAA.org.

The Council is also on [Facebook @ MOAA Florida Council of Chapters](#). Be an informed MOAA Member—“Like and Follow” us!



Florida Council of Chapters



**Leadership Training Seminar
& Convention!**



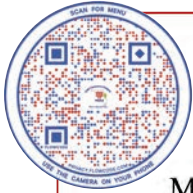
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The Brevard NVHS provided two-night Christmas hotel rooms for the Holidays, food, and gifts for the kids to Brevard Veterans and their families who were at grave risk. The Florida Chapter of US Army OCS provided \$2200 to help with that mission. FLOCSAA is based at VMC, and most members are also members of MOAACC. So, once again, veterans teamed up to help other veterans. Talk about a good feeling!

Pictured are (L-R) Rob McCall, OCSAA FL State Commander, Kasey Corson, NVHS Community Outreach Coordinator, and VMC/MOAACC member Donn Weaver, Vice Commander presenting the money on 05 Dec. 2024, just in time for the holidays.



All Veteran Organizations Have Missions That Include Supporting Our Youth

On 03 December 2024, the Brevard Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) presented a major textbook on the history of our battle against the British to Superintendent Mark Rendell and his staff at the Brevard Public Schools (BPS) main building. The 17 copies will be placed in every high school via the Social Studies Department Chairs. Doug Bisset (L) of SAR, MOAACC and VMC and Donn Weaver (R) with those same memberships, represented all SAR members in this program. The event was publicized on BPS Facebook and in their Legacy Newsletter to parents and other school supporters. With the 250th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence coming up, the educators welcomed the addition of a major history book which reads like a novel.



MOAACC Chapter member and son of COL Jeff Rogers, COL Bryant Rogers' retirement ceremony was held in the 7th Special Force Group (Airborne) Chapel at Eglin AFB, FL on 12 December 2024. COL Bryant Rogers retired from active duty after 30 years of commissioned service.

Pictured left to right are Bryant's brother Spence Rogers, Bryant's wife Zee Rogers, Bryant, Carlie Rogers, and Jeff Rogers.

Annual MOAACC Christmas Dinner Dance

MOAACC members enjoyed thoroughly, as everyone joined in for some camaraderie and cheer at the annual Christmas Dinner Dance held on 07 December 2024 at the IRCC main hall. It was obvious that good time was had by all after a scrumptious dinner when The Showtime Entertainment band playing festive tunes brought everyone to the dance floor!









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The *INTERCOM* is the primary communications vehicle for the Chapter. Copies are mailed to members, friends and other MOAA Chapters throughout Florida and the United States. Additional copies are disseminated at facilities on Patrick SFB and throughout Brevard County. The *INTERCOM* is also posted to our award-winning website (www.moaacc.org) and distributed to over 1,500 email subscribers. Members are patriotic and professional. We encourage our members to support businesses that support MOAACC.

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