



The  
**INTERCOM**

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA  
 Cape Canaveral Chapter, Inc.



Photo by Pish Pishdad



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## JANUARY EVENTS

Click Event for Details

- 1/4 Current Affairs & TMBC - 8 AM  
@ Indian River Colony Club - 19th Hole
- 1/6 MOACC 2024 Installation Banquet - 5 PM  
@ Indian River Colony Club - Colony Hall
- 1/9 On the Go Luncheon - 11:30 AM  
@ Urban Prime Restaurant, Viera, FL
- 1/11 TMBC - 8 AM  
@ Indian River Colony Club - 19th Hole
- 1/16 MOAACC B.O.D. Mtg. - 9:30 AM  
@ Indian River Colony Club - Chapel
- 1/16 MOACC Luncheon - 11:30 AM  
Guest Speaker, CAPT Winston Scott,  
USN, Astronaut  
@ Indian River Colony Club - Colony Hall
- 1/18 TMBC - 8 AM  
@ Indian River Colony Club - 19th Hole
- 1/25-1/28 MOAA FCoC Leadership Seminar  
@ Rosen Center in Orlando
- 1/25 TMBC - 8 AM  
@ Indian River Colony Club - 19th Hole
- 1/29-2/9 18th Annual MOAACC Good Deeds  
Foundation Cruise
- 1/29 Gary Powers Jr. Presentation - 1 PM  
@ Veterans Memorial Center & Park - Gray Hall

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>

## PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



**Lt Col Brian R. Whalen, USAF (Ret)**



Welcome to 2024! We are starting fast. We'll have a Current Affairs presentation on January 4th, then our Installation Banquet on January 6th. Then January 9th will take us to On-the-Go Luncheon and Toni Lowe will do another outstanding job. I am looking forward to our January 16th Luncheon, where CAPT Winston Scott, USN (Ret), a former Naval Aviator and Astronaut among many other accomplishments, will be our speaker. The month will end with the departure of our Good Deeds Foundation's Cruise. Visit our website for more information.

2023 was a record year. The Good Deeds Foundation (GDF) is still tallying up the funds raised by their Golf Tournament. The GDF contributed over \$100,000 in support of numerous activities, visit the GDF section of our website for details. (<https://moaacc.org/good-deeds/>)

The Scholarship Corporation gave out \$60,000 in scholarships last year, another record. We emphasized the importance of engaging with our elected officials via the MOAA Quorum site. MOAA national recognized our chapter's continued excellence with another Five Star Levels of Excellence (LOE) Award. The LOE is MOAA's most prestigious award that can be earned by chapters and councils. Our monthly magazine, The Intercom, and our website won the Five Star Harris Communication Award recognizing the outstanding job we do communicating with our members and community. The award submissions are now due in February, so start working on your input now!

These awards and recognitions are the results of the outstanding work down by our chapter in a myriad of activities. I want to encourage everyone to become more active in the chapter and get involved, it is very rewarding. We have a lot of interesting and accomplished members. You really get to know someone when you spend an afternoon with them sitting under our MOAACC canopy at a veterans' event in a park.

Thank you allowing me to be your President this past year. I benefited immensely from the sage advice from our Past Presidents. There are so many people that helped me this year, and I cannot list all of you. However, please know how much you have helped and I definitely appreciate you. Now I look forward to working with our incoming officers and board. They have a lot of good ideas and will continue to improve our chapter.

Note: The slides and the recording from the November Annual Meeting are available on the MOAACC website.

## 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.
- Submit one photo per article, or more if absolutely necessary.
- All photos must have “captions” of who, what, when, where and why.

### ARTICLES:

- Articles must be in Microsoft “Word” format. PDF NOT ACCEPTED.
- LIMITS: One article per email, not more than 375 words. Each Article must include Author Name & Rank

### NEW DEADLINE & SUBMISSION EMAIL:

- **Photos & Articles are DUE NO LATER THAN the 15th of each month, to give our staff enough time for editing. Do not send your submission to Jeremiah, Rita, or Pish. Please send ALL submissions to the following email address:**

[intercom@moaacc.org](mailto:intercom@moaacc.org)

### INTERCOM PUBLICATION:

- THE INTERCOM is published 12 times annually by the Cape Canaveral Chapter, Inc. (MOAACC), an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Alexandria, Va.
- Contents of the Intercom articles are opinions solely of the authors and do not express the policy or official views of MOAA or The Cape Canaveral Chapter (MOAACC)
- The advertisements that appear in this publication do not reflect an endorsement by MOAA or by MOAACC.
- Comments and suggestion are welcome. Contact EXECUTIVE EDITOR: pish104@bellsouth.net

#### Health of the Chapter

Do you know of a member who is ill, in the hospital or in rehab?

Let Ellie Joy know and she will be happy to send them a card from the chapter.

Ellie Joy, SSM • [ejoy@cfl.rr.com](mailto:ejoy@cfl.rr.com) • (321) 961-2962



## EXECUTIVE EDITOR & PAO

**Amir M. Pishdad, CW3, USA (Ret)**

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of “The Intercom” during 2023! Your contributions exemplify great Teamwork!

“Let’s Roll” together to make 2024 even better!



*Wishing You a Delightful,  
Merry & Brightful Season*

## PUBLIC RELATIONS & MARKETING COMMITTEES

### INTERCOM:

EXECUTIVE EDITOR & PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER FOR INTERCOM: Amir M. Pishdad, Sr.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Rita Shapiro

LAYOUT/GRAPHICS: Jeremiah Zeleny

PRESS RELEASES & MEDIA LIAISON: Marilyn Sanford

DISTRIBUTION: Jan Clark

WEB LINK AND ELECTRONIC DISTRO: Mike Schroeder

PHOTOGRAPHERS: Skip Taylor, Amir Pishdad, Jr., Gloria Makowski, Tim Pishdad, Jose Prieto

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Marilyn Sanford



## FINANCIAL LITERACY

Captain Bob Houle, USCG (retired)

### “From Asset Allocation to Retirement Realization: A Holistic Approach”

In our previous articles, we delved into two essential aspects of financial readiness for military officers: strategic asset allocation and setting year-end investment goals. Now, let's bring these concepts together to create a comprehensive approach that bridges the path from asset allocation to retirement realization.

#### Connecting Asset Allocation to Retirement Goals

Strategic asset allocation, as discussed in our November article, is the foundation upon which your retirement goals are built. It's like designing a blueprint for your financial future. Diversifying your investments across various asset classes helps you manage risk while pursuing returns that align with your objectives.

Your asset allocation should be dynamic, adjusting as you move closer to retirement. As highlighted in the December article, pre-retirees should consider gradually shifting towards a more conservative portfolio to protect their savings from market volatility. This transition should be coordinated with your retirement timeline and risk tolerance.

#### Year-End Goals: The Roadmap to Retirement

Setting year-end investment goals, as discussed in December, takes your financial planning to the next level. It transforms your asset allocation strategy from a vague idea into a concrete plan. Here's how it all fits together:

**Goal Alignment:** Your investment goals should be an extension of your retirement aspirations. Whether you dream of traveling the world, starting a new venture, or enjoying a peaceful retirement at home, your goals should align with your vision.

**Savings Plan:** Establishing specific goals enables you to create a detailed savings plan. Knowing how much you need to save annually to reach your objectives is a powerful motivator. It gives you a clear target to aim for.

**Risk Management:** As you get closer to retirement, managing risk becomes paramount. Shifting your asset allocation gradually towards a more conservative stance, as discussed in December, helps protect your hard-earned savings from market downturns.

**Tax-Efficient Withdrawals:** Your goals should influence your retirement income strategy. Tax-efficient withdrawal strategies can help you maximize your income while minimizing your tax liability. This is where your knowledge of tax-advantaged accounts and financial vehicles becomes invaluable.

**Legacy Planning:** For those who wish to leave a financial legacy to loved ones or charitable causes, setting goals in December can help you determine how to structure your estate and assets for maximum impact.

#### A Comprehensive Approach to Financial Readiness

In summary, a comprehensive approach to financial readiness involves seamlessly connecting asset allocation and retirement goals. Asset allocation provides the framework for your investments, while your year-end goals give your strategy direction and purpose.

As a military officer, you've honed your skills in planning, execution, and adaptability. Apply these skills to your financial journey. Continuously assess your progress, stay informed, and be prepared to adjust your strategy when needed.

Remember that your financial readiness is not just about numbers and spreadsheets; it's about realizing your retirement dreams. Whether you're a seasoned investor or just beginning to plan for retirement, embracing this holistic approach can set you on the path to a secure and fulfilling retirement, just as you've achieved success in your military career through strategic planning and commitment to your mission.

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## LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

John R. McMahon, BG (Ret), USA

### Allies and Friends

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky roamed the halls of Congress mid-December in an effort to make the case for continuing US aid to his fight for survival against Russian aggression only to return home empty handed for the time being. His attempts to pry additional aid from the European Union (EU) met with similar rejection given objections from member state Hungary known to be Russia's closest ally in the EU. The EU commitment continues in spite of the reticence of Hungary with an overall contribution (military, humanitarian and economic) exceeding \$80 Billion to date while the US total approaches \$75 Billion, a tandem effort that Zelensky hopes to propagate until Ukraine prevails.

Meanwhile, Israel's ongoing fight to annihilate Hamas in Gaza after the horrendous attack by Hamas on innocent Israeli civilians on 7 October continues unabated in spite of US calls for a more "measured" approach to protect Palestinian civilians and allow more humanitarian aid. The US Congress has generally been unwavering and open-ended in support of the government of Israel. A US sponsored plan for an ultimate two-state solution and a Palestinian Authority security force in Gaza after hostilities end seems to be a *non-sequitur* in Israel, at least with its Prime Minister Netanyahu.

The sticking point in the US Congress stems from Republicans who want the Biden Administration and Democrats in general to compromise on immigration policies and security on the US-Mexico border, a legitimate demand given the overwhelming numbers of immigrants seeking asylum and other relief from their home countries. As of this writing, Senate Democrats announced a delay in their upcoming holiday break to work on a bipartisan bill which combines military assistance for Ukraine and measures to address the border crisis. Thus, the Congress must consider approval of a \$110.5 billion emergency spending bill that would direct hundreds of millions of dollars toward sending weapons to Ukraine and Israel, bolster US border security, and provide disaster relief funding as well.

An interesting phenomenon is developing in the House with at least 15 Republicans and 25 Democrats deciding to retire from legislative service. There are multiple reasons for these announcements including running for higher or other offices, shifting district boundaries, outright retirement, and being replaced short of finishing the current term such as is the case with George Santos and Kevin McCarthy. These announcements will play large in the 2024 election

cycle as the control of the House is in play again.

Finally, the Congress passed the FY'24 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The bill authorizes (but does not appropriate, a separate budgeting step) \$886 Billion for Defense after a 310-to-118 House vote reflecting the bipartisan nature of the bill, which followed passage in the Senate by an 87-13 margin. Bicameral negotiators subsequently resolved differences in the legislation thus maintaining Washington's six-decade streak of approving military policy legislation on an annual basis. Better late than never and effective only insofar as the Congress is able to appropriate funds to implement what is authorized to avoid the next possible government shutdown. The authorization still requires appropriated funds from Congress, with deadlines of Jan. 19 and Feb. 2 approaching for the current "laddered" continuing resolutions.

The final 3,000-page conference report on the NDAA authorizes a 5.2% pay increase for service members and civilian employees of the Pentagon (the largest since 2002), provides a variety of measures to improve competition with Russia and China to include an expansion of partnerships in Europe and the Indo-Pacific regions, and the development of hypersonic weapons and upgrades to the nuclear arsenal. Additionally, it allows a submarine deal at the heart of a new security partnership with Britain and Australia, and would extend into 2025 a program that allows the intelligence community to conduct warrantless surveillance of foreign individuals outside the United States. Many of MOAA's priorities were supported in the conference report while others such as the Major Richard Star Act (H.R. 1282 | S. 344) were not. As you know, this legislation would reverse an unjust offset requiring these combat-injured retirees to give up a dollar of DoD-earned retirement pay for every dollar of VA-provided disability benefits they receive. Perhaps there will be an opportunity for inclusion in the next NDAA as we approach a contentious election year.



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## SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE LESSONS LEARNED

**Lt Col Chuck Shaw, USAF, (Ret)**

The monthly “Survivor Assistance Lessons Learned” articles are based on actual experiences for what to do or not to do to help get through a tough time. However, when you lose someone just before, during or soon after a Holiday, that can make it even tougher to deal with. So, I thought I would pass on some tips that might help that I found on the websites of some of the caregiving organizations on how to deal with grief at losing someone close to the holiday season.

**Set realistic expectations for yourself.** Remind yourself that this year is different. Examine the tasks and events of celebrating and ask yourself if you want to continue them. Accept others’ offers to cook, shop, decorate, etc. Consider shopping by phone, Internet or catalog this year if you feel a need to avoid crowds or memories.

**Surround yourself with people who love and support you.** Share your plans with family and friends and let them know of changes in holiday routines. Memories can sometimes be a source of comfort to the bereaved, so share them by telling stories and looking at photo albums.

**Despite the temptation, try to avoid “canceling” the holiday.** It is OK to avoid some circumstances that you don’t feel ready to handle, but don’t isolate yourself. Make some time for solitude, remembering and grieving, but balance it with planned social activities.

**Allow yourself to feel joy, sadness, anger – allow yourself to grieve.** It is important to recognize that every family member has his/her own unique grief experience. No one way is right or wrong. Experiencing joy and laughter during a time of grief does not mean you have forgotten your loved one.

**Draw comfort from doing for others.** Consider giving a donation or gift in memory of your loved one. Invite a guest who might otherwise be alone for the holidays. Adopt a needy family during the holiday season.

The most important thing to remember is there is no right or wrong way to celebrate the holiday season after the death of a loved one. The best coping mechanism for the first holiday season is to plan ahead, get support from others and take it easy.



## POINTS TO PONDER

**Chaplain Tom Unrath**

It is a New Year, a time for resolutions, new beginnings, hope, determination, purpose. Yet...

As this is written in December Israel is hammering Gaza with artillery, bombs, missiles, ground forces, essentially almost everything they have. Hamas raided across the Gazan border in October, killed over 1200, and took hostages. Now tens of thousands more Gazans have been killed. By any reckoning this is a terrible situation. I won’t solve it here and neither will you.

The whole circumstance leading to this point did not begin on October 7 last year. Present day Hamas in Gaza, and Hezbollah in Lebanon, even Iranian support of those two is not new. How this might end we will not know for a long time, perhaps decades. It took that long to arrive.

Really this began in 1948. I won’t rehash history, the fighting in the area in the 40s & 50s, ’67,’73, various intifadas. All of it points back to ’48 when Israel was formed, and unlimited immigration of Jewish people began. A “Two-State Solution” has been sought. Even now it and other ideas come to the table.

Unfortunately, that table is the setting of some of the most sacred places of the three Abrahamic religions. We share so much that it tears at our hearts to see it damaged, people killed. The fires of hatred burn and spread in such horrible ways they may engulf the very birthplace of what is sacred to us.

In December, Christians celebrated the birth of Jesus, our Messiah, God in human form. He who said to us, “Love one another as I have loved you,” came to earth to live among us and show the love God has for all people. He asks of us, no, commands us to love one another. That means action.

Love is not merely a warm, happy, soothing embrace and feeling. It is action. Action to **do** those things which are loving.

What are we called to DO at this time? How can we demonstrate genuinely, and concretely love for the other? How can we begin to alleviate the suffering there? How can we show the love which God desires for and from us? God asks us to love others. That is **ALL** others, not just the ones easiest for us to choose.

Let us BE a source of new beginning, determination, purpose and most especially hope this New Year!



## Mark Your Calendar!

# MOAACC Luncheon

At Indian River Colony Club, on  
16 January 2024, 11:30 AM - 01:00 PM



CAPT Winston Scott, USN, Astronaut

## Luncheon Speaker

**WINSTON SCOTT,**  
**USN, ASTRONAUT**

**“Reflections From  
Earth Orbit.”**

Winston Scott is a former NASA astronaut and retired U.S. Navy Captain. Scott entered Naval Aviation Officer Candidate School after graduation from Florida State University in December 1972 and was designated

a Naval Aviator in 1974. He served as a production test pilot flying the F/A-18 Hornet and the A-7 Corsair aircraft. Scott has accumulated more than 5,000 hours of flight time in 20 different military and civilian aircraft, and more than 200 shipboard landings.

Scott was selected by NASA and reported to the Johnson Space Center in 1992. He logged 24 days, 14 hours, and 34 minutes as a mission specialist in space during his two missions STS-72 Endeavour and STS-87 Columbia. Scott performed three spacewalks totaling 19 hours and 26 minutes. STS-72 Endeavour launched January 11, 1996 and retrieved two satellites while in orbit. Scott completed his first spacewalk, or EVA, lasting 6 hours and 53 minutes. His goal was to evaluate techniques utilized in the assembly of the International Space Station.

STS-87 Columbia was Scott's longest mission and the fourth U.S. Microgravity Payload flight. They launched November 19, 1997, and conducted several experiments such as the effects of zero gravity on physical functions of the human body. He performed two more spacewalks on this mission which included manually capturing the Spartan satellite and testing EVA tools and procedures.

In addition to being a naval aviator and an astronaut, Winston Scott is a musician and has a second-degree black belt in Shotokan karate. He graduated from Florida State University in 1972 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Music and also has a Master of Science Degree in Aeronautical Engineering. In July 2005, Scott published the book, “Reflections From Earth Orbit.” Scott currently resides in Melbourne, Florida and is the Senior Vice President for External Relations and Economic Development at Florida Institute of Technology (FIT). He plays the trumpet for the Winston Scott Cosmic Jazz Ensemble, and directs a faculty band at FIT which they call “TWITCHY” after the initials of each band member.

## Luncheon Details: (Cost: \$25)

Meal choices are:

1. Hamburger Steak with Mushroom, gravy mashed/veg
2. Caesar Salad with Grilled Chicken
3. Vegetarian option available upon request

All meals include rolls & butter, coffee & tea and the Chef's sweet choice for dessert. Cash bar available.

Please **RSVP/cancel by 10 January 2024**, online, or by contacting Grace Catron at [events@moaacc.org](mailto:events@moaacc.org) or (417) 294-0798. You can [pay online](#) with credit card, pay at the door, or mail payment with RSVP to:

MOAACC

c/o Michael J Schroeder, Treasurer

PO Box 254186

Patrick SFB, FL 32925

## SPACE COAST NAVY WIVES' CLUB

Please join us for our first meeting of the new year on January 19th, 2024 at **THE TIDES**. Social hour begins at 11:30am and lunch will be served at noon.

This month our speaker will be Jane Hodges, Ph.D. Dr. Hodges is a NASA retiree and will be presenting a NASA update. It will be interesting to hear about all the things happening with the space program at NASA.

Lunch selections are Bruschetta chicken with roasted potatoes and sauteed spinach or a Chef Salad. For dessert we will have fruit cobbler.

For information and reservations, call or text Rebecca Kersey at (201) 607-0006 no later than noon Tuesday, January 16th.

Remember, friends and spouses are always welcome.

Ellie Joy (321) 757-0193

## MOAACC On-the-Go Luncheon

January O-T-G will be on 09 January 2024 at:

**Urban Prime – Restaurant and Market**

2435 Metfield Dr., Viera, FL 32940

Please contact Toni Lowe at 321-474-6888 to sign up.

## SAVE THE DATES for 2024 MOAACC Events:

25-28 January 2024 - [Florida Council of Chapters Leadership Training Seminar 2024](#)

16 April 2024 - [ROTC & JROTC Awards Ceremony](#)

21 May 2024 - [MOAACC Luncheon to Honor Students With Service Academy Appointments or ROTC Scholarships](#)

16 July 2024 - [Scholarship Award Presentations](#)

10 October 2024 - [Past Presidents Dinner Dance](#)

19 November 2024 - [Annual Membership Business Meeting](#)

7 December 2024 - [Annual Christmas Dinner Dance](#)



# MOAACC GOOD DEEDS FOUNDATION

Donn Weaver, CPT (Fmr) USA

## Civil Air Patrol Squadron Grows and GDF Support Helps



The Patrick Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol held their annual holiday party and promotion/awards night on 06 December. The festivities took place in one of the hangars of the USAF 920th Air Rescue Squadron. The unit leaders recognized key community partners including MOAACC and our Good Deeds Foundation. GDF presented the unit \$1200 earlier and provides other support including cash awards for the outstanding cadet of the year.

That honor went to Cadet Captain S. Wiseman, who is also a JROTC leader and football player at Merritt Island High School. Wiseman and other cadets helped the unit grow from 21 cadets in 2022 to just over 40 in 2023. Together with their parents, friends, and adult leaders, more than 100 attended the holiday event for the CAP to experience this great facility. Donn Weaver represented MOAACC and the GDF. After the awards were handed out, it was clear the program is supporting the development of some super young Americans and future leaders.

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### Certificate of Appreciation for Supporting Veteran Children at Holiday Party at VMC

At the Veterans Memorial Christmas Party on 13 December the American Legion Post 344 AUX presented MOAACC's Good Deeds Foundation a thank you certificate to \$700 provided to help support their 2023 Christmas Party.

They expect 38 children of veterans who have been stressed by the economy and could not otherwise afford a great party, food and presents that will be provided. The party will be held in the VMC Gray Hall on 16 December. Here is another great example of several veteran related organizations coming together to make one great event to support veterans and their families.



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## *New State-of-the-Art USCG Building Dedication*



*Ribbon Cutting*



*Rear Admiral Douglas Schofield  
Commander USCG Seventh District*

On December 08, 2023, a new 21,000 square-foot multi-mission facility was unveiled. The new building was constructed to support Coast Guard personnel and the missions of MSU and Station Port Canaveral. This represents the Coast Guard's commitment to support Port Canaveral's exponential growth.

The state-of-the-art facility provides improved operational capabilities and better protection from heavy weather events and consists of berthing rooms for overnight duty crews, a dining facility, training rooms, workshops, a boat bay, and a fitness room.

MSU Port Canaveral has a crew of 29 active duty, reserve and civilian personnel who carry out port security, marine safety, search and rescue, and waterways management missions, along with environmental response and disaster assistance operations. The unit's area of responsibility spans 857 miles of navigable waterways throughout central Florida and its east coast.

Station Port Canaveral is comprised of 45 active duty and 30 reserve men and women. The station's core missions include search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, recreational boating safety, ports, waterways, and coastal security. Their area of responsibility spans 57 miles offshore including north of Haulover Canal, south to Malabar, the Indian River, and Banana River.



*L-R: Rear Admiral Amy Grabel  
Assistant Commandant for Engineering & Logistics*

*CWO3 Phillip Dawalt  
Commanding Officer, USCG Station Port Canaveral*

*Captain Janet Espino-Young  
Commander USCG Sector Jacksonville*

*Commander Sarah Brennan  
Commanding Officer USCG Marine Safety Unit Port Canaveral*

*Rear Admiral Douglas Schofield  
Commander USCG Seventh District*

*Captain Neal Armstrong  
Commanding Officer USCG Facilities Design & Construction Center*

# VyStar 2023 Veterans & Military



MOAACC Photos by Pish Pishdad



L-R: Lee O'Quinn, Vice President of VyStar Credit Union, Titusville; Amoy O Guthrie, VP of Melbourne Branch, Mike Gautreaux, Col, USMC, Vice President of the Good Deeds Foundation, and Donn Weaver, CPT, USA, President of the Good Deeds Foundation



Golfers, Terry Melloy and Jim Pittman

# Supporters GDF Golf Tournament



MOAACC Photos by Fish Pisklad





## Best Wreaths Across America Event at CCNC, Despite Severe Weather



*One Ceremony of 14 held at every section at the same time.*

**R-L: Hans Hunt of SAR and MOAACC; RADM Wayne Justice, USCG, Ret of MOAACC, Donn Weaver of MOAACC and WAA.CCNC; BM2 Neika Burke, USN, of the Naval Ordnance Test Unit at Port Canaveral; Joe Tichich of MOAACC and VFW Post 10131.**

On Wreaths Across America (WAA) Day, 16 December, more volunteers, families and members of the public attended Ceremonies and Wreath Laying events in Brevard County than ever before.

The Cape Canaveral National Cemetery (CCNC) led the way and reported:

The WAA at CCNC conducted 14 ceremonies. At 1000 hours simultaneous ceremonies were held at all 14 sections in CCNC where more than 12,000 veterans and spouses have been laid to rest.

The FHP and CCNC confirmed more than 650 vehicles with at least 1800 people attended the solemn event.

Nationwide, 4104 WAA Locations were scheduled to hold ceremonies and wreath laying events. WAA set a record this year as generous citizens had purchased over 4 million remembrance wreaths by the 28 November deadline.

CCNC Director Ed Lyons and several on his staff volunteered their time to support the WAA/CCNC project led by Bette Nelson and a great team of Section leaders and almost 150 volunteers, to include parking, logistics and security which resulted in smooth and safe event.



*Chaplain William P. Adams carrying a wreath to a headstone.*

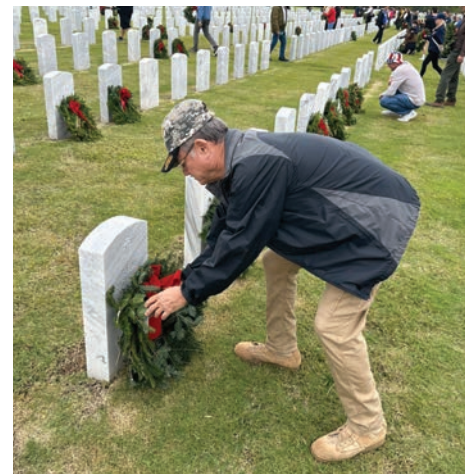
Almost everyone who attended, reported that it was meaningful and well organized.

Perhaps one family said it best: "There was so much love and respect for veterans here today that we did wreaths for our friends and helped with many others. In fact, our family members are buried at another VA cemetery. They cancelled, you did not. Thank you."

The same day other Brevard WAA locations, covering about 40 private cemeteries including the first official Brevard Veterans Cemetery in Titusville, held ceremonies and placed wreaths honoring veterans by name.

It may just have been Divine intervention, that heavy rains held off until just after 1 pm, when the ceremonies in most Brevard locations were completed. A final WAA ceremony was held on Sunday at 3 pm at the Pinecrest Cemetery in Cocoa. That is the final resting place of Korean War veteran and Medal of Honor Recipient, Edward Bennett, a Brevard native and namesake for the Bennett Causeway.

To donate or get involved in WAA in Brevard next year check out the website: [WreathsAcrossAmerica.org](http://WreathsAcrossAmerica.org).



*Jose Prieto laying one of many wreaths.*

## BATTLEFIELD COMMUNICATIONS

By Bill Muckler, Captain USMC



Never in the history of mankind has total battlefield action been observed by the public in real-time. The Israeli conflict in Gaza is televised day and night. The war in Ukraine is shown around the world. Every move is documented by video. News correspondents are embedded with the soldiers in full view of their camera crews. We see combatants firing everything from rifles

to rockets. We see the explosions and the rubble. Nothing is left to the imagination of the viewer. Nothing is left unseen.

Reporters have covered conflicts for millennia. Centuries ago they were most likely historians. We know war correspondents have covered battles Americans have fought in. We've seen photographs from the Civil War. But we've never experienced anything similar to what this new technology is bringing us.

What would have happened if the internet, telephones and telegraphs existed in 1814? The Battle of New Orleans was fought between the British Army and the United States roughly five miles southeast of the French Quarter of New Orleans on January 8, 1815. British Secretary of State and War, Henry Bathurst, issued secret orders to General Pakenham on October 24, 1814, commanding him to continue the war even if he heard rumors of peace.

The battle took place fifteen days after the signing of the Treaty of Ghent which formally ended the War of 1812 on December 24, 1814, but news of the agreement had not yet reached the United States from Europe. The British possessed a large advantage in numbers, training, and experience. The American forces defeated the British Army in slightly more than thirty minutes. Americans suffered just seventy-one casualties while the British suffered more than 2,000 including the deaths of Major General Sir Edward Pakenham and his second in command Major General Samuel Gibbs.

The Battle of New Orleans would never have been fought if news of the signing had been communicated instantaneously to both armies in real time. The technology of today would have saved the lives of soldiers who would have already been headed home by January 8, 1815. History would have undoubtedly been changed. Would the hero of the battle, Andrew Jackson, be elected as the seventh President of the United States?



## MEMBERSHIP BRIEF

### Welcome 15 new members:

- Sarah Brennan, CDR, USCG**  
**Lance Carey, Lt Col, USAF (Ret.)**  
**Eugene Cavallucci, Major, USAF (Fmr.)**  
**Oswaldo Cruces, 2LT, USA**  
**Don Deal, LCDR, USN (Fmr.)**  
**Mason Elizondo, 2LT, USA**  
**Chandler Hake, 2LT, USA**  
**William Kosky, LTC, USA (Ret.)**  
**Mrs. Beverly Merrilees, Surviving Spouse**  
**Mrs. Mary Lou Northrup, Surviving Spouse**  
**Vincent Palermo, 2LT, USA**  
**Thomas Rozek, COL, USA (Ret.)**  
**Winston Scott, CAPT, USN (Ret.)**  
**Elysia Slattery, 2LT, USA**  
**Nita Sood, CAPT, USPHS (Ret.)**

## TAPS

### MOAA CAPE CANAVERAL CHAPTER MEMBER, AUXILIARY, and SPOUSE DEATHS

**November 2023 Deaths listed  
for January 2024 Intercom**

**Shirley Melloy, Spouse of Terry Melloy,  
Maj, USAF, Ret**

**07 November 2023**

**Lester R. Johnson, CPT, USA Ret**  
**09 November 2023**

**Frank Tantillo, Lt. Col, USAF, Ret.**  
**13 November 2023**

**John D. Beeson, Col, USAF**  
**15 November 2023**

**Robert Merrilees, RADM, USCGR**  
**18 November 2023**

**Richard A. Northrup, BrigGen, USAF, Ret**  
**20 November 2023**





# VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER UPDATE

**Donn Weaver, CPT, USA (Fmr)**

## Gold Star Family Christmas Tree Honors and Remembers Local Fallen Military Members



After adorning the tree, GS family members l-r: Donn Weaver, Jen Johnson, Kathy Hokula, Jeanne Weaver, David Perry, Carol LiCalzi and Jerry Hokula. Not pictured, since they were getting the outdoor "tree" ready, are Don and Dorothy Walsh.

In 2014 Gold Star Mom Jeanne Weaver organized local families who had lost their immediate loved ones to create a very special Christmas Tree. At first it was displayed for many years at the Merritt Square Mall during the holidays. Then, the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) offered a better and very special place - the 6000 sq foot VMC Military Museum.

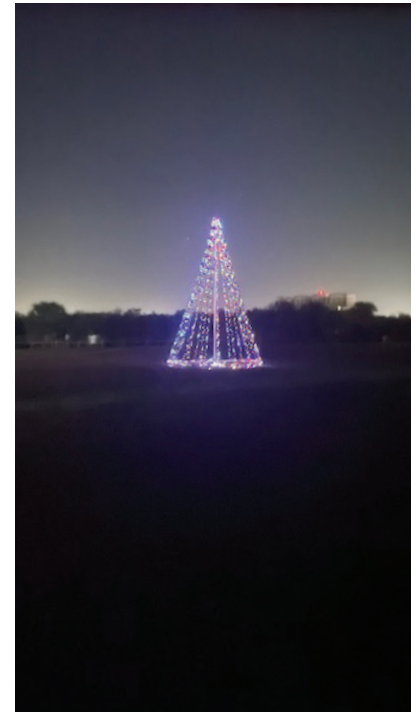
On 09 December the tree was again adorned with love by seven Gold Star Family members who had crafted a large star with pictures and names of their loved ones who lost their lives as a result of military service in any era. This year three were added and the stars now total 22. Each tells a story of service and sacrifice as all Gold Star Families hope their loved ones' deaths will not be forgotten.

The tree will be on display through January 6 at the VMC Museum located at 400 S. Sykes Creek Pkwy, Merritt Island, FL 32952. The Museum is open Mon- Sat 1000am - 4 pm and on Sundays 12-4pm. Rolling Thunder Florida Chapter 1 based at VMC sponsors the tree and supports Gold Star Families since their mission is to remember and account for all the POW and MIA personnel who have not come home. This year,

VFW Post 10131 in Cape Canaveral funded the uniforms and beautiful adornments for the tree. Many thanks to both.

Starting next year, there will be an expansion of the Gold Star Tree to a second, outdoor location, a large fir tree that will be planted in the Veterans Memorial Park before December 2024.

This year, during the evening of 09 December, the Community Advocacy Group of Merritt Island (CAMI) and the VMC hosted the inaugural illumination of a fabricated tree made by VMC President Dean Schaaf and some helpers. Gold Star families participated in the Ceremony with one dad, Don Pearsall, conducting the final countdown to a successful lighting. From now on the tree will serve two purposes: The Merritt Island Community Christmas Tres and the VMC Gold Star Family Tree.



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For more information about both projects contact Donn Weaver, 757-871-6576.

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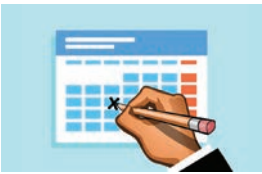
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# Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar

## JANUARY 2024 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/>

### January

**27 Jan** — Historic Preservation and Heritage Tourism Seminar VMC Gray Hall 0800-1600. Sponsored by Museums of Brevard (MOB) Contact Dean Schaaf VMC President and MOB officer on 321-453-1776 ext 5.

**27 Jan** — JROTC County Wide Run and Shoot Competition in Veterans Memorial Park 0700-1230. Details in December.

**29 Jan** — Guest Lecture Series at VBMC Gray Hall — 1300-1430: Gary Powers Jr, so off the late, famed U-2 Pilot shot down over the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War. Newly unclassified materials, his new book and an update of analysis about why, what happened after his father's capture, took decades to unravel as the truth.

**30 Jan** — VMC Library Discussion Series, 1800-1930, presenter Norm Desmarais will discuss what happened to the first British Settlement in America. Highly recommended for anyone interested in a good mystery and the early settlement of British North America. Refreshments provided.

### February

**04 Feb** — Hearts to the Troops 5K Fundraiser sponsored by OASIS 0700-1000 at VMC Park. Packing Valentine boxes of goodies for deployed troops afterwards for mailing overseas. Sponsorships and information available at 321-243-7753 or via cofounder@oasisofcfl.org. OASIS supports troops deployed in harm's way all year round with a number of packing events with the goodies and postage purchased through grants and via such Fundraisers.

**04 Feb** — Anniversary to Remember the Immortal Four Chaplains of WWII 1400-1530 in the VMC Plaza. They went down with their transport ship helping troops in 1943 after a German Torpedo attack in then icy Atlantic. Sponsored by VMC with support from the Marine Corps League of Brevard County.

**10 Feb - 4 Feb** — JROTC Squad Drill Meet 0700-1230 with 10-12 Schools Expected and more than 150 cadets in the Veterans Memorial Park on MI. Supported by MOAA Cape Canaveral Chapter Good Deeds Foundation (all trophies) and the VMC.

**17 Feb** — Second Annual Back Brevard Heroes Fundraiser Car Show in Veterans Memorial Center Park 1000 - 1500. Registration details in early January. BBH support First Responders and Veterans.

**24 Feb** — JROTC Squad and Platoon Drill Meet 0700-1230 with 10-12 Schools Expected and more than 150 cadets in the Veterans Memorial Park on MI. Supported by MOAA Cape Canaveral Chapter Good Deeds Foundation (all trophies) and the VMC.

**27 Feb** — VMC Library Discussion Program 1800-1930, Topic and Speaker TBD

### March

**09 Mar** — JROTC District Drill Meet with all disciplines 0700-1300 with 10-12 Schools Expected and more than 150 cadets in the Veterans Memorial Park on MI. Supported by MOAA Cape Canaveral Chapter Good Deeds Foundation (all trophies) and the VMC.

**16 Mar** — Ceremony to Remember the Last Naval Battle of the American Revolutionary War fought off the Coast of Cape Canaveral in 1783. 1000-1200 at the VMC Plaza Area with food and drinks and a parade pf colors and wreaths with many in colonial attire. Put on by the Sons of the American Revolution Brevard Chapter along with the DAR and VMC. Contact Donn Weaver 757-871-6576 for more information.

**26 Mar** — VMC Library Discussion Program 1800-1930, Topic and Speaker TBD.

### October

**31 Oct** — BCSO Shred Event in VMC Park 0900-1030. BCSO conducts monthly shred services at various locations and will release their 2024 schedule in January.

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





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Lt Col Brian Whalen, USAF Ret

#### **CAREER SUPPORT RE Transition (TCS)**

Pending

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## HEALTHY LIVING

**Rita Shapiro, PT, MA, DPT**  
**Resolutions or Actions?**

January traditionally is a National Staying Healthy Month and that is when everyone tends to make resolutions to eat healthy, exercises regularly, visit family, and so on, and so on.....

What is more important is to not just resolve but DO!

1. **Make positive changes** to exercise daily and allow yourself to be gadget free for one day each month
2. **Eat Healthy:** challenge yourself to stay away from fast-foods and processed foods. Resolve to cook at least one meal a day for yourself.
3. **Drink water,** not sodas or sugary drinks. Research shows that chances of heart attack can be reduced when one drinks at least five glasses of water per day. (Source: <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>)
4. **Get up and move:** Walk at least 250 feet every hour during your waking hours. Moving helps improve blood flow to your extremities. (<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/benefits-of-walking>)
5. **Read:** A study from university of Sussex found that reading can help reduce cortisol levels by about 68%, hence reduced stress. So please read, but probably something that you enjoy reading.
6. **Spend time outdoors:** Studies have shown that spending time in green spaces can boost self-esteem and improve mental health. (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5663018/>)



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## Florida Tech ROTC Commissions five new Army Lieutenants

By Steve Bond, COL (ret) US Army



MOAACC members with New Army Lieutenants at the Florida Tech Commissioning Ceremony on December 15th. From Left—COL Steve Bond, MOAACC; 2LT Elysia Slattery, 2LT Vincent Palermo, 2LT Oswaldo Cruces, 2LT Chandler Hake, 2LT Mason Elizondo, and LTC Hans Hunt (USA, Ret), MOAACC Student Affairs Committee.



Marquee on the Student Union Building at Florida Tech flashes congratulations for New Army 2nd Lieutenants Commissioned on December 15th.

While the marquee flashed congratulations, Florida Tech ROTC cadets, family and friends gathered in the Hartley Room of the Student Union building for the Fall Commissioning Ceremony. In the ceremony, five new officers received their commissions as 2nd Lieutenants in the U.S. Army. The five also completed the requirements to graduate from Florida Tech at the Fall commencement. During the commissioning ceremony, the new officers took the oath of office and pinned on their new “gold bars”—the rank insignia of Second Lieutenants and heard messages and congratulations from the President of Florida Tech, John Nicklow (Ph.D.) and Guest Speaker, Brigadier General Mark A. Holler (USA), recently retired as the Deputy Commanding General for 8th U.S. Army.

The new Army Second Lieutenants are:

- Oswaldo Cruces—Oswaldo was an enlisted soldier and graduated from Florida Tech with a Master’s Degree in Business Management. He was commissioned as a Military Intelligence officer in the reserves.
- Mason Elizondo—is a graduate of Merritt Island High School. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from Florida Tech in Computer Science and was commissioned into the reserves in the Cyber Branch. MOAACC member, LTC Scott Waggoneer (USA, Ret) his former Junior ROTC instructor at Merritt Island High School, administered his oath of office.
- Chandler Hake—Chandler attended High School in Pennsylvania and was the ROTC Cadet Battalion Commander at Florida Tech, where he graduated as a distinguished military graduate with a B.S. degree in Computer Science. He was commissioned as an active-duty Cyber Officer.
- Vincent Palermo—Vincent also graduated from High School in Pennsylvania and earned his B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was commissioned as an active-duty Military Intelligence Officer, detailed to Infantry Branch.
- Elysia Slattery—Elysia is a graduate of Eau Gallie High School and earned her B.S. degree from Florida Tech in Oceanography. She received her commission in the reserves as an Engineer Officer.

The new Lieutenants were also congratulated by LTC Rob Stillings, the new Florida Tech Professor of Military Science. Several MOAACC members were at the ceremony and the chapter provided the Lieutenants with “Gold Bar” commissioning sets and membership in the Cape Canaveral Chapter and MOAA.

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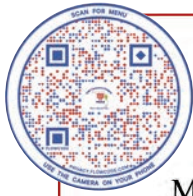
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## More GDF!

### Cocoa Beach Army JROTC Raider Teams Conquer State

By: Donn Weaver, Cpt (fmr), USA



Brevard has a very special and engaged JROTC program in 14 High Schools. Like the sports teams at those schools, JROTC teams compete against each other in military related events during the school year. In the fall, the biggest is Raider Challenge, modeled after the US Army and Army College ROTC Ranger Challenge. It is a grueling five segment event including a 3-mile run, weight carrying fitness test, rope bridge, barrier obstacle course and carrying equipment fitness challenge.

The Veterans Memorial Center hosted, and the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officer Association of America Good Deeds Foundation supported, three Raider events this fall at Veterans Memorial Park. Eventually five schools earned the right to send teams to the Florida State Championship Raider Challenge at the District Meet in Tampa. That event was held on 02 December.

For the first time in memory, one JROTC program won the overall Male AND the Overall Female State Championship. The Florida Raider Championship divided the 54 schools that earned a spot into Tiers. Those 54 had outpaced 164 total Florida JROTC programs to get there. Cocoa Beach beat ALL teams, regardless of Tier with one of the smallest school populations in the completion.

Congratulations to the Cocoa Beach Army JROTC teams: Males led by Billy Day and Noel Danker and Females led by Reagan Fish and Ali Jo Tuggle.

Next semester the veteran community will join the Cocoa Beach family in a ceremony to recognize this amazing achievement. The CBHS Raider Teams were led and coached by their JROTC Instructors, LTC Jim DesJardins, USA, Ret and 1SG Keven Staddie, USA, Ret. Congratulations!!



## FPL Provides Holiday Surprise for Veteran Family in Palm Bay

By: Donn Weaver, Pres. GDF



*The Gray Family, Rob Medina and Keith Van Buren*

For the eighth year in a row, Florida Power and Light has worked with several Brevard Veteran Organizations to identify a veteran and his/her family a very special series of gifts for the holidays. On December 1, Army combat veteran and Purple Heart recipient, Marc Gray, returned to his home in Palm Bay at 5 pm after a routine outing. He and daughter Athena were totally surprised with extensive Christmas lighting, numerous decorations, some great gifts and even a well-trimmed palm tree to make the lights look better. This was the annual FPL secret Santa holiday gift.



*FPL volunteers who helped decorate the house.*

Only Lyndsay, Marc's wife, also an Army veteran, was aware of the plot which had been cooking since August and involved several veteran organizations supporting this plan, including the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC), the Good Deeds Foundation of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC) and the Chapter 453 of the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

This time, last year's recipient of the gift, Keith Van Buren, MOPH member and veteran liaison officer for Rep Bill Posey's Office; Donn Weaver of VMC and MOAACC GDF; and Rob Medina, Palm Bay Mayor and Rep Bill Posey's Chief of staff attended to lend a hand and welcome the family.

FPL also sponsors many other veteran and military events on the Space Coast so many more than the Gray family can appreciate their outreach.

### Palm Bay Marine JROTC Hosts First County JROTC Air Rifle Meet

The brand-new indoor Firing Range of Palm Bay Marine JROTC was the scene on 15 December for the first County wide JROTC Air Rifle competition. Marine JROTC Palm Bay finished on top but there was great competition as seven schools entered from four different Service Branches: Marines, Army, Air Force and Space Force.

The MOAACC’s Student Affairs team and the GDF support all JROTC events including purchasing of all trophies for all such competitions all year long.

At this first meet SA member LTC Hans Hunt, Ret. USA and GDF Board VP Col Mike Gautreaux, Ret USMC, attended and showed MOAACC support. It was a great start in a brand-new facility and bodes well for successful Brevard JROTC teams as the Air Rifle Season continues into February 2024.

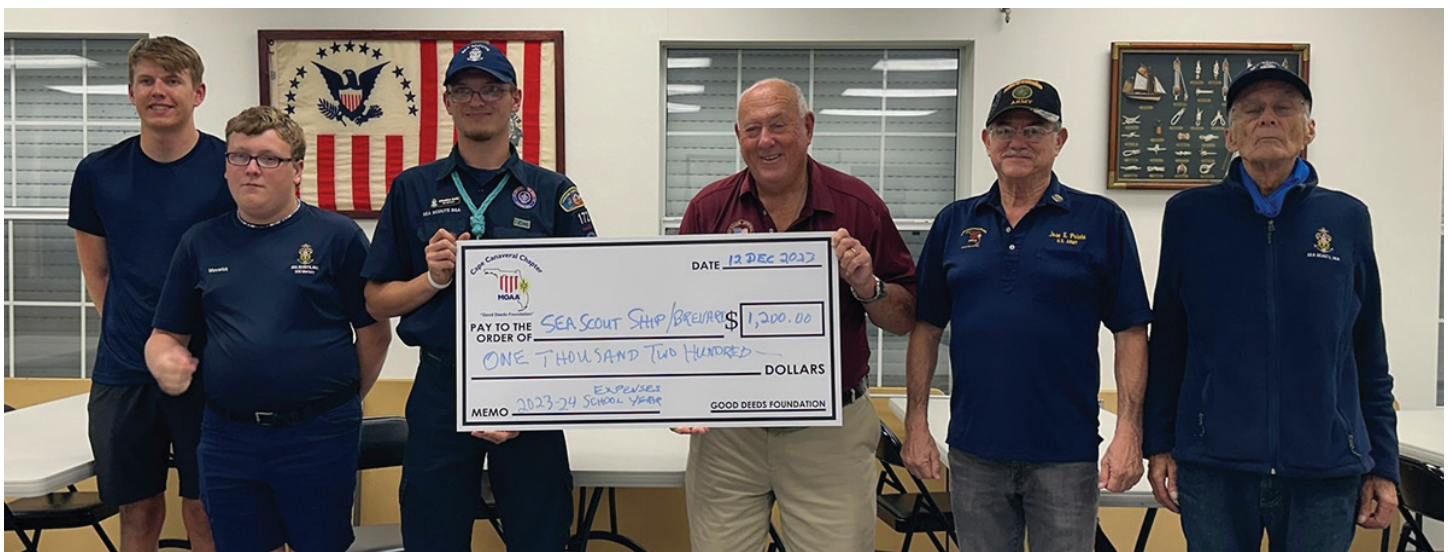


(L to R) Col Mike Gautreaux: USMC, Ret, LTC Hans Hunt USA, Ret guard and check out the GDF provided Air Rifle Trophies that will be handed out at the second County Meet.



Hunt and Gautreaux with one of the teams during a break in the action.

### Palm Bay Sea Scout Ship Receives MOAACC/GDF Support



Jose Prieto, 2nd from right and next to Donn Weaver presents the new Sea Scout Ship scouts and leadership a GDF donation of \$1200 for the school year

During the evening of December 12, 2023, Donn Weaver from Good Deeds Foundation and Jose Prieto from MOAACC Student Affairs, presented a \$1200 check to the Sea Scouts Ship 5172. This is a small new unit in Palm Bay. In past years GDF has supported a Sea Scout Unit based in Sebastian that included some Brevard Scouts. Now that this Brevard Unit has begun with 8 Scouts, GDF will track their progress along with our MOAACC Student Liaison, Florida.

To help this initiative along, Jose gave them an hour briefing on what MOAACC’s Good Deeds and Student Affairs can and will do for them. He also briefed them on serving in the military.

## CAP TICO Squadron Honors MOAACC/GDF at Annual Awards Banquet



*TICO CAP Presentation of Colors*

The Civil Air Patrol TICO Squadron Annual Awards ceremony and party was held on 13 December 2023, at the Vietnam War Hangar at the Warbird Museum in Titusville. More than 100 were in attendance including the cadets, leaders and parents/siblings. The unit that includes cadets ages 12-18, has surpassed to 40 cadet member goal set last summer.

Many cadet and leadership promotions and awards were presented during the festivities. MOAACC/GDF was invited as one of the CAP Squadrons largest donors. The GDF President Donn Weaver had a chance to talk about our organization and plans for the future. MOAACC was presented a Star ornament as a major partner during this evening of recognition and celebration.

It was a good way to wrap up the first semester of the school year which saw unprecedented MOAACC Student Affairs and GDF support to every JROTC, and Other Cadet Units in Brevard County.



*TICO CAP Awards Ceremony*



*Star Presented to MOAACC/GDF in recognition of our support to the TICO Squadron*





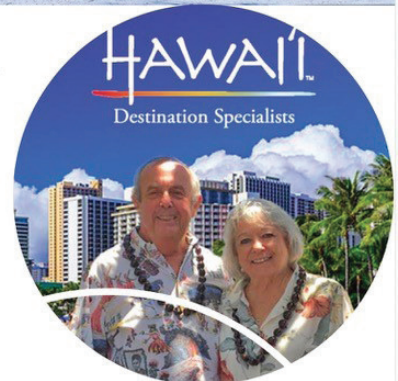
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## *A Tour of Germany*

MOAACC Members enjoy before Christmas snowy Tour of Nuremberg Castle in -Sebald Germany. LTC Irtz organized a 19 person -16 Day Tour. Germany Group visited the cities of Munich, Regensburg, Colburg, Dresden, Seiffen, Nuremberg, & Rothenburg. A few members also enjoyed a relax full vacation at the Armed Forces Recreational Resort – Edelweiss Lodge & Resort in Garmish-Partenkirchen, Germany. Some members took a train to Salzburg, Austria visiting where the Sound of Music was filmed!

..and of course there was plenty of German Bier!



*Sue McDonald, one of the tour participants enjoying the suds.*





Photos provided by Amir Pishdad, Jr.



*Left to Right:*

*LTC USA Richard Lovinson, LTC USA Fred Irtz, COL USA Bonita Layden,  
LCDR USN Amir Pishdad Jr., COL USA Henry Watson III*

# TMBC - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day



MOAACC Photo by Pish Pishdad

R: CDR Donald Reott, USN (Ret) presents guest speaker, Capt Andy Petruska with a MOAACC Challenge Coin after his "Perspectives on Pearl Harbor" presentation at the Thursday Morning Breakfast Club (TMBC) 07 December 2023.

[Click Here for Presentation](#)

# MOAACC Spouses Christmas Tea



# December MOAACC On-the-Go Luncheon



# US Coast Guard Recruiting Event at Viera High School



USCG Recruiting presentation for six class periods with a total of 110 Army JROTC Cadets was held at Viera High School on 30 November, 2023. The recruiting team included two recent basic training graduates, SN Bryant and SA Chapa, recruiter GM1 Rios, active officer ENS Baker and two retired officers, CWO4 McIntyre and LCDR Smith

*Left to right:*

*SN Malaina Bryant, SA Kendra Chapa, GM1 Angel Rios, ENS Zachary Baker, CWO4 Dan McIntyre, LCDR Hilary Smith*

# More Photos from the USCG Building Dedication



MOAACC Photos by Pish Pishradad



# *More Photos from the VyStar 2023 Veterans & Military Supporters GDF Golf Tournament!*



MOAACC Photos by Pish Pishdad





# MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA CAPE CANAVERAL CHAPTER (MOAACC)

## MOAACC Needs Your Support – Advertise!

The MOAACC is comprised of 1,200 members of active, retired, former officers, their spouses and auxiliary members. The Chapter is the largest in Florida and one of the largest in the United States.

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](http://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.

These publications provide a unique opportunity for advertisers to reach military professionals throughout Brevard County.

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