



Indian River Chapter MOAA P.O. Box 644047 Vero Beach FL 32964-4047 ircmoaa.org

## The Buccaneer

## May 2026

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I am drafting this message as we travel between Maryland and Virginia. We are enjoying family and notching a few bucket list milestones. Last weekend was a First Communion for Walker, our youngest grandson. This weekend is my 50th VMI reunion. The journey reminds me of the commitments we have as a chapter. It is part of who we are as a group.

Our membership meeting for May offers a third treat. Our guest speaker, Melissa Arndt, is a keystone for Indian River County. Her U.S. Army service has equipped her to be a phenomenal Veteran Service Officer. She has the inside scoop on all matters for veteran issues. Plus, she has the firsthand knowledge of how our local community works.

This is a luncheon that will be particularly helpful. Come and benefit from a professional who is dedicated to our home. This is pivotal time in our nation's history. May will be a month in which we can enjoy others who understand and take pride in our personal journey as patriots. Think of the Artemis II mission. We have frontiers ahead to explore!

*Tony Young*

Honoring our family and friends is an important facet of being citizen patriots. We visited Mount Vernon yesterday. George Washington led as few other historical American founders did. His perseverance under prolonged duress was incredible. His strength came in good measure from his family and farm. Think of your own lives: Many times, our foundation offered that key element in our way forward. I admire that in all of you. The more I serve with you, the more I learn new and amazing insights. Truly our team has a wealth of ability and dedication.

This month, we have several ways to keep up our local veteran advocacy. The Air Show, Memorial Day ceremony, and membership meeting are all ways to participate. I have always enjoyed the Blue Angels. Welcoming them is a real privilege. Vero is the smallest venue they visit. You would be hard-pressed to get a better view of the Navy's showcase airmen.

Memorial Day is another genuine hometown gem. Where else will you find a lagoon island filled with such heartfelt patriotic Florida pomp and circumstance? It is red, white, and blue with authentic pride. It is like a Frito-Lay potato chip: Ya cannot simply have one! You return for more and more.



# RECENT HAPPENINGS

## VBHS JROTC Awards

Chapter members were on hand for Vero Beach High School's Junior ROTC Awards Ceremony.



**Bill Duffy presents the MOAA JROTC Award to Cadet Staff Sergeant Aura Castellanos.**



**Terry Treat presents our Chapter Scholarship to Cadet First Lieutenant Anthony Rubino, Cadet Corps Deputy Commander. Anthony will attend Florida Institute of Technology majoring in computer science.**

# FYI

## Big MOAA Accolades

The Indian River Chapter has been awarded the highest honors, five stars for our Level of Excellence and the Harris Communications Award for the newsletter and website! This is the product of your steadfast commitment to serving our veteran family in the full spectrum of means. We have talent and passion. You keep the fire burning with each moment of personal blessing. Thanks!



## Happy Birthday, Bill Keegan!

Bill Keegan celebrates 102 years on Monday, June 1. Bill served as an 8th Armored Division PFC ambulance driver in World War II. He helped evacuate the Langenstein German concentration camp, and he is among the first soldiers awarded the Combat Infantry Badge.

## Vero Beach Air Show May 15, 16 & 17

Dale Content has facilitated the coverage of the IRC MOAA concession booth at the Air Show, which is almost upon us. We will be among the many volunteers who help make this biennial event one of the highlights of life in Vero Beach. Our town serves as one of the favorite venues of the Blue Angels.

Whether you're volunteering or not, be sure to support the Air Show by attending and telling all the newcomers you know what a great event it is!



# The Buccaneer



## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Let's remain committed to recruiting and retaining members. We have a great organization with dedicated chapter officers and board of directors. Remember: Everyone is a recruiter!

**NEVER STOP SERVING!**

**Bob Albrecht**

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### Help Us Grow

Do you know someone who is a retired or former military officer or widowed spouse of an officer but not a member of our Chapter or MOAA? If so, **ask him or her to join** and contact **Bob Albrecht** at **772-257-6678** or **919-616-3873**.

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### Why Join MOAA?

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the country's leading organization preserving and protecting service-earned benefits for uniformed service members and their families. Our members not only lend their voices to a greater cause, but they also gain access to extensive benefits tailored to the needs and lifestyles of military officers.

**Regent All-Inclusive Luxury Cruises**



The World's Most Luxurious Fleet™ offers the most inclusive luxury travel experience at an extraordinary value. If you compare Regent's all-inclusive voyages to the competition in Alaska, Asia, the Tropics, the Mediterranean and Northern Europe the research shows Regent Seven Seas Cruises® offers the best value in each of these regions.

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**PLEASE JOIN US** for an online webinar – use the QR code or call for the date & time for the next presentation.

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## HONORED IN MAY

BM1 John Harold **Irvin** Jr., USN: 7 May 1972

PFC Donald S. **Humphrey**, USA: 12 May 1951

PFC Clifford **Barnwell**, USA: 21 May 1944

S2C John Marion **Mixon**, USN: 27 May 1942

SGT Charles L. **Futch**, USAAF: 29 May 1943

## LOOKING AHEAD

### USA 250 Veterans Ceremony Riverside Park, 4:30 p.m.

Our city leaders are working hard to plan the 2026 Fourth of July celebrations, because **you're only 250 once!**

A special veterans ceremony will be part of the festivities, acknowledging the phenomenal contributions of all who have served, supporting the American spirit, and motivating future leaders.

All are welcome, so tell your friends! There will be pomp and circumstance fitting for the occasion, which will include elements of history, heritage, and even the future, with a focus on aviation and the digital age.

Why all the fuss? The American Revolution marked a historical precedent of self-government and self-control of a nation-state, a demonstration that government is not the prerogative of a particular social class.

The military aspect is key because liberty is predicated upon security, and citizens must be willing to defend and protect their liberties. We follow in the footsteps of heroes such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, LaFayette, and Henry Knox.

Be sure to mark your calendars for this once-in-a-lifetime experience!



**USA ALL DAY**  
CITY OF VERGENNES JULY 4TH EVENT

**PARADE!**  
Begins on  
14<sup>TH</sup> Avenue  
10am

**250th Year Events**

- Old Train Station - 10am - 12pm
- American Antique Car Association Static Antique Car Display
- Begins on 14th Avenue - Parade 10am - 12pm
- Riverside Park - Food Trucks 4pm
- 4:30pm - 5:30pm "Respect to Colors"

**Veterans Ceremony**

- 6pm "Riptide" Band Entertainment
- Contests throughout the evening!
- Pie Eating Contest - Hot Dog Eating Contest - Hoop Contest! Prizes to be awarded.
- Children's area
- 9pm - Fireworks

**VERGENNES** EST. 1776

USA ALL DAY 250 YEARS

# TREASURER'S REPORT

April 2026

Special bank balance is \$4501.05 with no transactions. A portion of this is being held for future improvements to WWII Memorial.(\$2677.58), thus our chapter balance \$1823.47.

Business checking account balance is \$6889.25.

## Revenue in February:

Total Deposits \$1239.00

## Disbursements in April:

2097	Marc Richard	\$ 88.34	Special gift
2099	Mike B	\$1000.00	Scholarship
2100	Vero Beach Yach Club	\$ 924.85	Luncheon

*Roger Grubic*, Treasurer



## Legislative Action Center Card



### TAKE ACTION!

**GROUND ZERO**  
Open your browser and go to [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org)

**STEP 1**  
Click Log In and enter your MOAA username and password **\*IF this is your first time, you must enter correct address that is displayed in the box that is shown.\***

**STEP 2**  
From the top menu, click Advocacy

**STEP 3**  
Select Legislative Action Center from the dropdown

**STEP 4**  
Browse the list and choose a campaign you support **\*IF responding to a "Take Action" Alert, the campaign will appear on screen.**

**STEP 5**  
Review the pre-written message and personalize if desired

**STEP 6**  
Click Send to submit your message to Congress

**STEP 7**  
Look for the confirmation screen – your action is complete

**\*IMPORTANT: Make sure cookies are enabled in your browser or the site may not load properly.**

**NEVER STOP SERVING**

## Schedule of Upcoming Events

LEGEND: Board Meetings, Member Luncheons, Chapter Events, Events of Interest  
Historical Events

4 MAY: 1300 IRC MOAA BOD Meeting, United Way Bldg. 1<sup>st</sup> floor

6 MAY: 0930 Sanctuary Committee Meeting, VB City Hall

8 MAY: VE Day

10 MAY: Mother's Day

15 MAY: 1200 IRC MOAA Members Luncheon, VB Yacht Club

15–17 MAY: Vero Beach Air Show

17 MAY: Armed Forces Day

25 MAY: 0900 Sanctuary Island Memorial Day Ceremony, Vero Beach

1 JUNE: 1300 IRC MOAA BOD Meeting, United Way Bldg. 1<sup>st</sup> floor

3 JUNE: 0930 Sanctuary Committee Meeting, VB City Hall

6 JUNE: D-Day

14 JUNE: U.S. Army Birthday; Flag Day

21 JUNE: Father's Day

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### 2026 MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY



Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary

**9:00 AM Monday, May 25**

Full military honors with the Parade of Colors  
Keynote Speaker: Colonel Gerry Berry, USMC (Ret.)

**Rain or Shine**

**Ample Parking Available at Riverside Park  
Please Bring a Lawn Chair**





# The Buccaneer



## 2026 OFFICERS & BOARD OFFICERS

President	COL Tony Young	772-321-2692
1st Vice President/Programs chair	CPT Marc Richard	772-532-7599
2nd Vice President/Legislative Affairs	LCDR Dale Content	772-713-4025
Secretary	Kim Palazzolo	954-806-1754
Treasurer	CPT Roger Grubic	386-589-3157
Membership Chair	LTC Bob Albrecht	772-257-6678
Chaplain	1LT John Palazzolo	954-675-7075
Immediate Past President	MAJ Terry Treat	703-304-4935

## 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LTC Bob Albrecht	772-257-6678
CPT William Duffy	772-532-6523
Bethany Fortunato	941-730-3476
Capt. Maryann Grodin	240-678-9494
Carolyn Riordan	239-272-1502
LtCOL Jay Torres	540-850-5113
LtCOL Jim Rannazzisi	703-303-2672

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Indian River County Chapter, in keeping with national and state MOAA bylaws and requirements, is politically nonpartisan. However, our Legislative Affairs Chairperson makes a deliberate effort, per the responsibility of the role, to inform membership of candidates' positions. The Legislative Action Center can be found at [moaa.quorum.us](http://moaa.quorum.us).

If you are interested in becoming a member of our chapter, please join us at our monthly luncheon and general business meeting on the third Friday of every month. For more information contact our Membership Chair, Bob Albrecht ([ralbrecht1702@comcast.net](mailto:ralbrecht1702@comcast.net); 772-257-6678)



# VERO BEACH YACHT CLUB

For Fun and Friendship

## MONTHLY CHAPTER LUNCHEON REGISTRATION

IRC-MOAA Luncheon, 3rd Friday of Month

3601 Rio Vista Blvd.

Vero Beach Yacht Club, 11:30 AM



Melissa is a 20 year veteran of the US Army having served from 1998 until her retirement in 2018 as a Signal Support Systems Specialist. Hailing from Elizabeth, West Virginia, she served in a variety of leadership and operational roles across Europe and the United States in support of both contingency and combat operations.

Deployments included Macedonia and Kosovo in support of stability operations in the Balkans. She also deployed twice from Fort Carson, Colorado to Iraq with the 3rd ACR. While with the 4th Infantry Division, Melissa completed an additional two combat deployments to Iraq. Her final assignment was at Fort Drum, New York, where she deployed to Afghanistan as the Command Sergeant Major for Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 10th Mountain Division.

Melissa was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster as well as numerous other awards and decorations. Since retiring from active duty in 2018 at the rank of Master Sergeant, Melissa transitioned into public service. Beginning in 2020, she served as a Veteran Service Officer. In 2022, was promoted to the Veteran Services Manager for Indian River County.

In this role, she oversees two county offices and has expanded the team from three to eight personnel. Their mission is to ensure that veterans and their families can effectively access their earned benefits.

In the current fiscal year alone, Melissa and her staff have assisted more than 3,500 veterans and their families, including over 800 new clients. Additionally, in just the first half of the fiscal year, they have secured over \$3.6 million in compensation, pension, and survivor benefits on behalf of those they serve. It remains Melissa's privilege to continue serving veterans, their families, and our community.

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Send reservations and payment by 5:00 PM Wednesday before

MENU CHOICES AT \$25 PER PERSON

IN ADDITION, PLEASE CONSIDER A DONATION TO OUR CHAPTER  
please indicate if you would like it to go to a particular purpose

----- amt. \$-----

Name(s)-----

### MENU CHOICES AT \$25 PER PERSON:

**CHICKEN PICATTA:** Capers, lemon, butter, mashed potatoes, haricot verts

**SALMON SALAD NICOISE:** Haricot verts, egg, tomato, olives, potato, spring mix, dijon vinaigrette

**BABY SHRIMP POT PIE:** Pie dough, potatoes, carrots, english peas, tarragon, simply dressed salad

Select your meal(s). Make checks payable to IRC-MOAA. Mail checks to:

Roger Grubic, Treasurer IRC-MOAA

2460 3rd Pl SW

Vero Beach, Fl 32962

Also payable online at [ircmoaa.org](http://ircmoaa.org) Roger will collect checks at door with prior notice.