

Volunteer!

Flagler Volunteer Services

2025 Volunteer Appreciation Event

Tuesday

April 29, 2025

*Thank
you*



Hammock Community Center, Palm Coast

Thank you to Flagler County Parks Dept for the use of the

Hammock Community Center for our event.

2025 Flagler Volunteer Services

Board of Directors and Staff:

Ed Barth—President

Denise Gallo—Vice President

Angela Dawson—Secretary

Beth Taylor—Treasurer

Bella Tarsitano—Member

Bob Snyder— Member

Suzy Gamblain—Executive Director

Judy Bucek—RSVP Project Director/Volunteer Coordinator

Mary Calkins—Office Assistant

A note from the Board President:

It has been a privilege and a true honor to serve as President of Flagler Volunteer Services. During my tenure I have witnessed the many selfless acts of our volunteers. I have been to the rummage sale and the giving store and countless other activities. I have seen first hand the hard work and dedication of each and every volunteer. It is this hard work and dedication that has made our organization successful. This is truly your organization and without your effort, desire, and skill none of what we do would be accomplished.

Today we gather to honor the volunteers of Flagler County. Your hard work and selfless dedication are very much appreciated. Not only by me and the board but also all the people you help. Your contribution to your community is very much appreciated by the county and the various cities that you volunteer in.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Flagler Volunteer Services, I congratulate today's award winners. The organization and community thank you for your service.

From the bottom of my heart thank you for all you do. Without you none of this is possible, with you everything is possible.

~ A note from the staff at Flagler Volunteer Services ~

A note from the Executive Director: *I have been lucky enough to spend the last 30 years of my life as a Volunteer Manager and have had the pleasure of working every day with people who give the very best of themselves to help make a positive impact on our community. I have been blessed to be able to see the difference that you all make whether you are doing something little or something big. We cannot say THANK YOU enough.*

A note from the Volunteer Coordinator: *I am so thankful that I am beginning my 10th year of being able to work with the fabulous volunteers of our community. Your selflessness is remarkable. Working with the volunteers is such an honor and a privilege. Thank you for all you do all year.*

A note from our Office Assistant: *Our volunteers in Flagler County rock! I am amazed at your selfless dedication and willingness to serve whenever and wherever needed. Every single one of you make a huge difference in someone's life. We don't say it enough but you are SO appreciated...THANK YOU!!*



Schedule of Events

MORNING

9:00am Welcome

9:15 am Award Presentations

AFTERNOON

12:00pm Welcome

12:15 pm Award Presentations

Awards will be presented in the following

Categories:

Volunteer of the Year

Volunteer Team of the Year

Bryan Cooper Excellence in Volunteer Leadership

Flagler Volunteer Services Program Awards

Blanketeers

Disaster Volunteer

Giving Store/Rummage Sale

ReadingPals

AmeriCorps Seniors—RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program)

Flagler Volunteer Services Program Awards

BARBARA SHARF—Blanketeer of the Year

Barbara has been making blankets since 2008. She not only works on blankets at home but she brings them to the monthly meetings and works on them there as well. She is usually first to arrive and almost last to leave every month. She offers her expertise to anyone that may need help.

GERI SCOTT—Disaster Volunteer of the Year

Having key people to rely on is extremely important in times of disaster. When a disaster strikes your community, it is impossible to be everywhere all at once. When Hurricane Milton affected our community, several people stepped up to assist. One volunteer was there helping long before the storm came and long after the storm left. Her name is Geri Scott. Geri lives in the western portion of our community. She was instrumental in making sure that there was sand for the sand bags and volunteers to help. After this storm, she assisted with food deliveries and oversaw the shower/toilet trailers that came there. In addition to this storm, Geri has been a key disaster volunteer as far back as 2017. She also serves as the CERT Team lead. She is a fantastic advocate for the western county. Our county, especially the western part, is safer and more prepared because of Geri's leadership.

BOB KNOWLTON—Giving Store/Rummage Sale Volunteer of the Year

When a volunteer plans their out of town events around their volunteer 'obligations', you know you have a great person. Bob has been volunteering for the Rummage Sale and Giving Store for years. He drives our rental truck (perfectly). There have been times that Bob was physically limited, yet he was still there to help. Bob's knowledge and experience makes him a great asset to the organization. No matter what, he shows up to volunteer with a smile on his face.

Flagler Volunteer Services Program Awards—Con't

CRYSTAL GALLO—ReadingPals Volunteer of The Year

Being a ReadingPal mentor is a school year long commitment. That is made harder when you are going to school yourself and have 2 children in school. For 2 years that has not stopped Crystal Gallo from mentoring up to 6 children each year. Crystal recently received her degree and applied for a substitute teacher position within Flagler Schools. When she asked for a letter of recommendation, she was quick to say “don’t worry, I will still mentor.” She not only got the job, but again made it clear that it will not interfere with her mentoring. Her dedication to the students in this program and county is admirable.

VICKI HENTSCHEL—Americorp Seniors Volunteer of the Year (RSVP)

Vicki Hentschel is one of those volunteers everyone wants on their team. She has worked in our office (Flagler Volunteer Services) since 2011. She is our Monday afternoon go-to person who will do anything we ask of her, she’s dependable and easy to get along with. She is a snowbird so we dread when she says “I’ll see you in December” but we know she will always be back. Vicki doesn’t just volunteer with us, she has volunteered with AARP since 2010 and Elder/SHINE since 2011 (she does this year round since it is phone work) and she also volunteers for a few SWATs here and there. I think Vicki has definitely earned this award for her dedication over the years.

Volunteers who served more than 1,000 hours in 2024

Catherine Brinegar

Roberson Brown

Monique Ianni

Robert Millett

Ann Marie Rumplick

Timothy Brinegar

Maureen Caulfield

Patricia Lumadue

Kevin Riebsam

Barbara Sharf



Volunteers who served more than 500 hours in 2024

Carol Abbott

Debbie Beatty

Jill Dempsey

Brenda Hagedorn

LaJuana McKay

Denise Millett

Nancy Perry

Larry Pulos

Peter Sarni

Jan Sutton

Arthur Tyler

Dawn Abbott

Richard Bellebuono

Marc Friedman

Elvira Hancock

Doris Mendez

Deborah Morman

Will Plaza

Ronald Bruce Ragsdale

William Schuyler

Helen Thomas

Kitty Price Van Horn

Jo Andrews

Kevin Blair

Patricia Griffith

Jeff McKay

Debbie Menz

Jodi O'Neill

Mark Price

Yvonne Saltares

Thomas Semon

Roxanne Thomeczek

James Zimmerman

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

Volunteer of the Year Nominee: Kevin Blair—3 Nominations

1-Mr. Kevin is a VITAL part of our school. He is here every single day, even dealing with his own health issues. He goes above and beyond for our school and a lot of parents even think he is an employee. He has developed such wonderful relationships with our staff, parents and students. He stays late, comes in early, and helps out at almost all events after hours on our campus. From retrieving students for dismissal, helping custodial, assisting in getting school sponsors, walking students through the lunch line, helping at all lunches, directing traffic, helping staff problem solve...We truly appreciate him so much and his commitment to our school. He has had such a positive impact on our school and we are super grateful to have him around!

2- My husband volunteers for Belle Terre elementary school like its his job, he is there early and stays late. he does pretty much everything that needs to be done. He is at car riders in the morning, he helps custodial when they need a extra hand, he just goes above and beyond for everyone and everything. He even steps up to volunteer at Matanzas when we need him. He puts in more than 40 hours a week at the school making sure that everything that needs to be done gets done.

3- Kevin is one of the most impactful people on our campus. He goes above and beyond every day. He gets here early, stays late, and is always someone who we can count on. He goes on mentor fishing trips, helps with dances and employee appreciation events, cooks, helps the custodians with moving and so many other things. He has a great relationships with the students and staff here. Everyone knows who Mr. Kevin is and some people think he is actually employed here. He has gone out in the community and helped get us partnerships with businesses and donations when we need them. He runs errands for us and is extremely dependable and trustworthy. Anything we need, Kevin is here to help us. We are super lucky to have him and he should be the Volunteer of the year!!!!!!!!!!!!

Volunteer of the Year Nominee: Meg Crouse

When Meg joined the Flagler County Tax- Aide team in January of 2017 we did not know what a blessing she would be. With her career in the IRS, she brought to our team a knowledge base that has no match and she is an incredible trainer. Meg became our Training Coordinator in September of 2018 and did not look back. We feel that we have the best trainer ever. She is an awesome trainer in person, developed a team of instructors to assist her and tapped other qualified counselors to help. Despite her consultation for the IRS in the fall in Philadelphia, she has coordinated and organized the training for our returning and new volunteers. During the COVID crisis she developed your online videos and training that helped the counselors to continue to be certified!! You are always “on-call” to answer difficult tax questions and research complex issues. In 2022 we went back to in-person “boot-camp” training (7-8 full days of training!) for new AARP Tax-Aide counselors and counselors, trainees have passed the IRS Advanced Test along with all the returning counselors who receive 2-3 days of refresher, new tax law training.

Meg Crouse Continued—

The impact of Meg's dedicated training is felt far and wide by the citizens in Flagler County. Last tax season (2024) the dedicated tax preparers in Flagler County prepared for free more than 2,800 tax returns! We are blessed with Meg and her willingness to voluntarily train our volunteers to provide this vital service to our community. Last season (2024) the volunteers that Meg coordinated the training for volunteered at tax aide sites who volunteered more than 5,600 hours plus the training to become certified by the IRS. (Tax-Aide is a program of AARP Foundation)

Volunteer of the Year Nominee: Adam Ringhiser—4 Nominations

1- Adam is a big part of our community. He is always doing lots of volunteer hours. He's always volunteering at school and at retirement homes and for different clubs. He's always busy and always trying to get things done and he's a great worker. I think he should be volunteer of the year because he has so many volunteer hours and many many opportunities.

2- Adam Ringhiser for as long as I've known him he has always been a leader in situations like when it comes to fixing a problem between people and to strive for the right things. He always makes sure to help out in the community as well spending most of his free time to help the lesser fortunate. I'm blessed to know this person he has pushed me to be a better person in the end.

3- "Through my time knowing this individual, Adam Ringhiser has shown his commitment and dedication to the Flagler county community". In just 3 years, he has obtained over 600 community service hours for his work with the community. He has involved himself in many service events throughout the county and his impact is recognizable in our city. For instance, Adam Ringhiser has volunteered at nursing homes in Palm Coast. There, he participates in many activities such as dancing with the residents and playing various games with them. In doing this, he has created a more positive atmosphere within these nursing homes by bonding with the patients. Furthermore, he has also taken part in events such as Read Across Flagler, where people volunteer to read books to children. This individual was excellent at creating a fun environment for the children while reading to them.

4—Adam Ringhiser's devotion to helping our community has not only had beneficial impacts to the city, but also his friends around him. He has been able to encourage his friends to take action in the community by joining him at these service events. For example, he was the one who inspired me to join Youth Sport Action, a non-profit soccer organization for children. Adam Ringhiser is an inspiration to our community through his volunteer work.

Adam Ringhiser has been very reliable within Youth Sport Action. While advertising for our first soccer match, Adam helped to print out the flyers and even took the initiative to begin handing them out to soccer coaches and elementary schools in the county. Adam Ringhiser is a very important member of the organization due to his tremendous contributions and ideas he brings to our attention.

Overall, Adam Ringhiser is the perfect choice for the Volunteer of the Year award because he has shown his enthusiasm for Flagler County and its citizens. He is extremely dependable within the many service organizations he is a part of and is an inspiration to his peers.

Adam Ringhiser continued -

Adam shows great initiative and values his craft. For being only 16, Adam shows he cares for others and his community. He is a leader for multiple different clubs at Matanzas high school and is even setting up his own charity event. At Multiple different times, Adam has shown the characteristics of a leader through and through. As a friend, he has always been there for me and shown how much he cares for others.

Volunteer of the Year Nominee: Deanna Arthur

Deanna is a very accomplished and dedicated volunteer for the Fitzgerald Performing Arts Center. She is very detailed oriented and expects no less from other volunteers when called upon to supervise. Besides ushering, Deanna manages the lobby and concessions. She also volunteers in the Box Office on Mondays and when needed for the evening Program and School shows. She also supervises Hospitality for the Performers and our annual Subscribers. Deanna is also a dedicated supporter of the Alzheimer's Association through her own non-profit organization "Papa's Pride." Deanna is well deserving of this award and would value it's significance.

Volunteer of the Year Nominee: Brielle Goldberg

Brielle has had a passion for water safety and swim education since childhood. Perhaps influenced by her mother's passion of the same that led her to teach babies to learn to swim. I became aware of her water safety effort when she led a project focusing on it during her senior year in high school. This led me to invite Brielle to join as a volunteer in WaterSafe. She has served in multiple capacities but has led WaterSafe more than 5 years as executive director. During this time our organization has grown and serves multiple countries. There is no way to determine how many young children's lives have been saved through her efforts and accomplishments WaterSafe swim scholarship program she oversees. Hundreds of children have had free swimming lessons over the years WaterSafe has been in existence. Brielle's excellent leadership has brought cooperation and partnerships with dozens of local and national organizations extending WaterSafe's mission "to save young lives and mitigate preventable injuries through WaterSafe and Sun safety education". One partnership she completed was with the Florida Swimming Pool Association that has contributed thousands of dollars in swim scholarship funds to WaterSafe.

Brielle's work is entirely volunteer but she has always gone above and beyond what any volunteer could ever be expected to perform.

Volunteer of the Year Nominee: Caroline Johnson

Caroline finds, rescues, heals and adopts the abused, abandoned and lost pets, with no pay and assists the community with vet emergencies and finds foster homes for them. She does all this for the voiceless with only a reward of her passion to help those that cannot help themselves. She does fund raising to pay for veterinary care and anything the animals need. She deserves to be recognized for her unselfishness and support she gives.

Volunteer of the Year Nominee: Cayti Brinegar

My nominee brings strong assets to their role and our group is incredibly fortunate to have her as our Chief Executive Officer.

She is dedicated and hardworking, extremely organized and focused on continuously learning and developing best practices. She brings a positive high energy and a personal touch. As a volunteer in the organization, she makes you feel like family.

Cayti brings true professional attributes to the organization and genuinely cares about delivering excellent quality work. She is able to integrate both an understanding of the big picture strategy and goals, as well as attention to details. She also always goes above and beyond the call of duty in pursuing excellence.

My nominee easily develops and fosters relationships with businesses, the kids she serves, volunteers, and our guests. She actively participates in meetings and almost all if not all events. She is terrific in welcoming our new business owners, volunteers and members.

I highly recommend my nominee for Volunteer of the Year Award. She is motivated and positively engaged, serving as a true inspiration all while maintain a full-time job.

VOLUNTEER TEAM OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

Volunteer Team of the Year Nominee: Flagler Palm Coast High School ROTC

There are some things that older adults can not do, and moving a lot of heavy things is one of them. Three times a year, we call on the students of ROTC to help us move all of our donations or holiday gifts from storage to the venue. We would be unable to support our mission of the Giving Store without their assistance. The support of the students and their directors is remarkable. There would not be a Rummage Sale or Giving Store without them.

Volunteer Team of the Year Nominee: WES PTO

I would love to nominate this group of parents and grandparents. They go above and beyond to assist in the needs of Wadsworth Elementary School. Every Friday, this team delivers provision packs to scholar classrooms. Thursday evening, they go to Provision Packs in Ormond Beach with their scholar and help bag nutritional items for weekend or holiday needs. They also bring the bags to the school the following day. This helps admin free up their time to take care of much needed things. This team has volunteered their time setting up events, participating and breaking down events. They spend hours in school and out of school pricing items, purchasing and prepping. From holiday shops, book fairs, assisting in classrooms, to anything needed. This team has shown flexibility and dependability.

VOLUNTEER TEAM OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

Volunteer Team of the Year Nominee: Flagler County Emergency Management

I am honored to nominate the 2024 Flagler County Emergency Management Volunteer Team for the prestigious Flagler County Volunteer Services - Volunteer Team of the Year Award. Comprised of 31 dedicated individuals committed to making a difference in our community, Flagler County Emergency Management Volunteers have demonstrated outstanding service, passion, and leadership throughout the year. Flagler County Emergency Management Volunteers stand out for the impactful 4,280.75 combined hours that were volunteered in calendar year 2024 (an increase of 205.75 hours from calendar year 2023). Throughout the year, the Flagler County Emergency Management Program has been actively involved in a wide range of initiatives. Their tireless efforts have assisted with the following: • Front Desk Operations • Emergency Management Logistics • Planning Support • Exercise Support • Special Needs Program • Emergency Support Program • Supplemental Communication Program Beyond their tangible contributions, Flagler County Emergency Management Volunteers serve as an inspiring example of selflessness, dedication, and altruism. Their passion for service is contagious, inspiring others to get involved and make a meaningful difference in Flagler County. Cooperation and positive interaction are two qualities the Flagler County Emergency Management Team embrace. Positive Interaction - it's evident from talking with Emergency Management volunteers on the phone at the Emergency Operations Center working at our front desk, it's a positive experience! Cooperation - Without doubt when we activate our Emergency Operations Center, Emergency Management volunteers put volunteerism into coordination overdrive and help us in the call center, in our radio room and with EOC logistics! In recognition of their outstanding achievements and unwavering commitment to volunteerism, I wholeheartedly nominate Flagler County Emergency Management Volunteer Team for the Volunteer Team of the Year Award. Their collective efforts embody the true spirit of community service. Thank you for considering Flagler County Emergency Management Volunteer Team for this esteemed award. They are truly deserving of this honor, and their impact will continue to resonate for years to come.

Bryan Cooper Excellence in Volunteer Leadership Nominees

Nominee— Robert Millett

Commander Millett is a dedicated worker who puts in hundreds of volunteer hours with FCSO COP. He is our internal computer I.T. contact as well as a TCI. He goes above and beyond to help our COP Division with training, education, and information services. He takes on assignments as needed volunteering on special assignments. He does a fantastic job for the FCSO COP Division.

Nominee— Robert Millett

It is with great honor that I recommend Citizen Observers Patrol Commander Robert Millett for The Bryan Cooper Excellence in Volunteer Leadership Award. In 2024, Commander Millett demonstrated unwavering dedication and exceptional performance. He is the Commander of the FCSO Citizen Observers Patrol Traffic Crash Investigations and a member of the COP Senior Staff. He handled 192 vehicle crashes with and without injuries. As the Commander of TCI, he also handles numerous lost properties, damaged property reports, funeral escort details, and other functions such as the point of contact for all of the COP Program computer automation. He created dispatchers' computer logs for calls for service, fingerprinting, and special details, and prepared monthly productive reports to me for the Sheriff. Beyond his investigative duties, Commander Millett has played a critical role in modernizing and automating our dispatch, marine control, and bike operations. He also prepared comprehensive monthly reports and analyzed productivity data for the entire year. His commitment extends well beyond expectations, often volunteering 30+ hours per week to ensure efficiency and excellence in all aspects of his role.

Robert Millett Continued—I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for Commander Robert Millett in recognition of his exceptional leadership, creativity, and dedication to the Community Civilian Policing (CP) program. His ability to utilize both people and resources effectively has led to meaningful opportunities for community engagement and volunteer development. Commander Millett has demonstrated a remarkable talent for assessing the skills and interests of volunteers and inspiring them to reach their full potential. His understanding of organizational needs and goals allows him to engage volunteers in a way that is both effective and impactful. He has successfully matched the needs of the volunteers with the operational requirements of the organization, ensuring that both benefit from a well-structured and motivated team. In addition to his leadership in volunteer coordination, Commander Millett has played a pivotal role in managing special details such as funeral escorts and other community service initiatives. His commitment to professionalism and ethical service is evident in his meticulous approach to maintaining essential records. He ensures that our automated systems—including dispatch logs, fingerprint records, and other crucial documentation—are kept up to date. Furthermore, he diligently prepares monthly reports, which are presented to the sheriff to provide a clear and comprehensive overview of our operations throughout the year 2024.

Nominee— Nicole Graves

Capt Nicole Graves exemplifies the highest standards of leadership, volunteerism, and professional ethics, making her a distinguished candidate for the Bryan Cooper Excellence in Leadership Award. Her efforts in founding and growing the Civil Air Patrol Flagler Cadet Squadron demonstrate her ability to assess needs, develop potential, and engage volunteers in meaningful service.

In 2024, Capt Graves took the initiative to establish the Flagler Cadet Squadron, transforming a group of seven cadets into a thriving unit of 38 members, with additional potential cadets preparing to join in 2025. She has fostered a culture of servant leadership, instilling in cadets the importance of service to their community. Under her guidance, the squadron participated in its first official volunteer event, Water Safe, reinforcing the values of teamwork and community engagement.

Running a Civil Air Patrol squadron is a time-intensive commitment, requiring extensive planning, coordination, and leadership. Capt Graves has devoted countless hours to ensuring the success of the squadron, overseeing weekly meetings, training sessions, and leadership development activities. Additionally, she manages administrative responsibilities, recruits new members, and fosters partnerships within the community, all while ensuring the cadets receive a well-rounded experience in emergency services, aerospace education, and character development.

Under Capt Graves' leadership, the newly formed Flagler Cadet Squadron achieved the prestigious Quality Cadet Unit Award and the Aerospace Excellence Award from Civil Air Patrol. Remarkably, Capt Graves and her team worked tirelessly to accomplish these achievements within just two months, a feat that typically takes other units an entire year to complete. Additionally, she has successfully ensured that 90% of the cadets have had their first flight, providing them with an invaluable introduction to aviation. Furthermore, 16 new cadets attended encampment, an essential experience for leadership and personal growth within the program. The squadron also actively participated in the Veteran's Day Parade and Christmas in Bunnell, further demonstrating their commitment to community engagement and service.

One of the squadron's most notable milestones was its first promotion ceremony, where every cadet in the unit, including veteran cadets, earned a promotion. Cadet promotions in Civil Air Patrol are not automatic; they require hard work, dedication, and consistent effort both at CAP meetings and at home. This achievement reflects Capt Graves' ability to inspire and motivate cadets to develop their leadership skills and strive for excellence.

Nicole Graves Continued— And it doesn't stop with cadets. Capt Graves has also recruited eight new adult members to Civil Air Patrol, leading them through various training programs to mentor them in working with cadets and serving the community. Her dedication to developing both youth and adult volunteers strengthens the organization and ensures long-term sustainability for the squadron.

Capt Graves effectively utilizes leadership skills by creatively aligning people, resources, and opportunities. During Hurricane Milton, she collaborated with Flagler Volunteer Services to coordinate cadets and senior members in critical relief efforts, including sandbagging operations, manning emergency call centers, and distributing supplies at Points of Distribution (PODs). At the same time, she continued her commitment to Civil Air Patrol at the state level, serving as the Florida Wing Public Information Officer, ensuring clear and timely communication during emergency operations.

Capt Graves' dedication extends beyond her CAP responsibilities. Her professional role at the East Flagler Mosquito Control District places her in the Emergency Operations Center, where she expertly balances her career duties with her passion for volunteerism. Her ability to integrate organizational needs with volunteer capabilities has strengthened both CAP's mission and community response efforts.

Capt Graves embodies Civil Air Patrol's core values of Integrity, Volunteer Service, Excellence, and Respect. She is a model leader who inspires those around her to rise to their fullest potential while always prioritizing service to others. Her exceptional ability to match volunteer interests with organizational goals, coupled with her steadfast commitment to ethical leadership, makes her a deserving recipient of the Bryan Cooper Excellence in Leadership Award.



AND THE WINNERS ARE

2025 Award Winners

Volunteer of the Year—

Caytí Brínegar

Volunteer Team of the Year—

Flagler Palm Coast High School ROTC

Bryan Cooper Excellence in Volunteer

Leadership—

Robert Millett

*Congratulations to all of the
nominees!*



EVERYONE WHO GIVES OF THEIR TIME
HAS AN IMPACT—

WHETHER IT IS A LITTLE OR A LOT—

THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS

