



Lou Lartigue
251-471-4322
Council President

Pat Downing
251-751-6619
Council VP

Fran Barber
251-605-1290
Secretary / NewsLetter
Lloyd Michael Austin, Chaplain
251-391-8176

Tom Schwarz
251-649-8459
Treasurer / Chambless Fund

Pete Riehm
251-442-4349
LNO/MC

SAVC e-mail: support@savc.info

Capt Hal Pierce, Bill Atkeison, Sy Lichtenfeld, Spiritus Emeritus SAVCS

NEXT SAVC MEETING – Tuesday, January 21, 2025 – 8:30 a.m.

Vets Recover – 1200 Spring Hill Ave – Mobile, AL

On the web – <http://www.savc.info> - Facebook – South Alabama Veterans Council

Presidents Corner:



"Here we are at another year's end. The past year has been a fast and productive year for the SAVC. We have conducted or participated in numerous Veteran events and ceremonies. Our Grant Program has awarded grants of over \$3500. We have conducted eleven monthly programs that were filled with a variety of speakers and Veteran news and information.

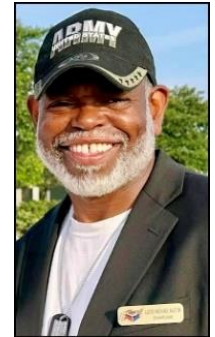
We are making a difference for the Veterans of South Alabama and influencing Veteran needs and benefits within the State. Next year promises to be even more active and rewarding.

As we enter the Christmas season I ask that you go out of your way to include a Veteran who may need a buddy. Do your buddy checks, and you will find them. Keep all those service men and women in your prayers who are guarding the Gates of Freedom and are away from their families during these times.

The SAVC family wishes each and every one a great and Holy Christmas and Holiday Season"

*Lou Lartigue, President, US Army LTC (Ret)
President, South Alabama Veterans Council*

Chaplains Corner



Season's Greetings:

It's good news for everyone;

Read Luke 2:10

"And the angel said unto them, fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

The Bible says that on this day, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord, was born. It doesn't give us a specific day or date, which has caused many debates, but the Bible focuses on the event that took place in the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, The great I AM, The king of kings and the Lord of lords. This is a reason for great joy; He came to save His people from their sins. And He is able to save anybody because He is an equal opportunity, God. Have a Merry Christmas.

In Jesus' Name, Amen!

*Pastor Lloyd Michael Austin
Chaplain, SAVC*



January 21, 2025 - Mark your calendar

The South Alabama Veterans Council will not have a December meeting. December will be a month of planning for the months to come in the New Year. January, we start the year with our new President, Frank Barrow, Col US Army (Retired).

MERCY+JOY+PEACE+BLESSING

WITH A GIFT FROM GOD ABOVE,
HIS SON HE SENDS WITH LOVE.
OUR SAVIOR BECOMES AS MAN,
HIS PROMISE TO UNDERSTAND.

LEAD US TO HEAVEN HIS PLAN,
HIS WORD HEARD IN EVERY LAND.
WITH LOVE INSTEAD OF WRATH,
FOR THOSE WHO FOLLOW HIS PATH.

SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS

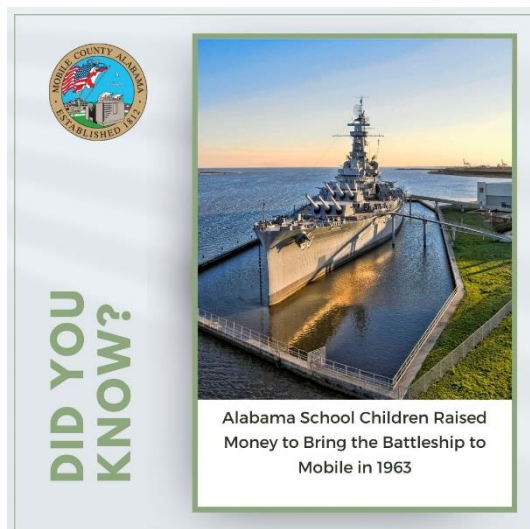
CHRISTMAS TIME IS NEAR,
ANGELS VOICES YOU HEAR.
GREAT HOSANNAS THEY SING,
THE WISEMEN GIFTS TO BRING.

JINGLE BELLS ON EACH REINDEER,
SANTA CALLS NAMES WITH CHEER.
ALLELUIA IN BETHLEHEM TOWN,
SILENT NIGHT IS FULL OF SOUND.

ALLELUIA CHRIST IS BORN

*Merry Christmas!
Wise Men I still seek Him.*

*Joe L.
JOMAC -*



P.O. Box 65 • Mobile, Alabama 36601
(251) 433-2703 • FAX: (251) 433-2777
www.usalabama.com

Media Advisory: For Immediate Release

November 19, 2024

Contact:

Hannah Nelson, Director of Communications, USS ALABAMA Commission and Battleship Memorial Park, 251-327-8750



USS Alabama Battleship Commission announces Selection of New Battleship Memorial Park Executive Director

The USS ALABAMA Battleship Commission is pleased to announce that Commander Mark J. Fields, U.S. Navy (Ret.) of Tuscaloosa has been selected as the ninth Executive Director of USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park.

Commander Fields takes the helm effective January 1, 2025. He follows Maj. Gen. Janet L. Cobb, U.S. Army (Ret.), who retires December 31, 2024 after 9 years as Executive Director.

Commander Fields is the current Tuscaloosa County License Commissioner, and past Chief Human Resource Officer for Tuscaloosa County.

As a Naval Surface Warfare Officer, his sea assignments include Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer, USS BRONSTEIN (FF 1037); Damage Control Assistant, USS BUCHANAN (DD 14);

Combat Systems Officer, USS MCINERNEY (FFG 8); Executive Officer, USS PIONEER (MCM 9); and Executive Officer, USS ARDENT (MCM 12). He concluded his service with assignments to the Joint Manpower and Personnel Directorate (J-1) on the Joint Staff and the Naval Sea Systems Command at the Washington, D.C. Navy Yard. In 2007, Commander Fields retired following 20 years of active service.

Maj. Gen. Charles H. Gales, Chairman of the USS ALABAMA Battleship Commission, commenting on Commander Fields' hiring, said, "His selection as the Executive Director assures us that we have the right person to lead our memorial park. Mark Fields will bring superb leadership and management to the park and a deep sense of commitment to our mission and our park employees. We are very fortunate to have someone of Mark's caliber to occupy this very important position."

-- 30 --

USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park

In just one week, we will celebrate our Holidays at USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park! See what a traditional holiday was like during WW II with fun stories, crafts, music, and more! Guests can enjoy the event and tour the USS ALABAMA Battleship. Refreshments may be purchased from our vendor, Mo'Bay Beignet Co.

Date: December 8, 2024

Location: Medal of Honor Aircraft Pavilion

Time: 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Price: Free!



South Alabama Veterans Council VETERANS SPOTLIGHT

Major General Janet Cobb US Army (Retired)



Janet Cobb has come a long way from working in the potato sheds of Baldwin County at 14 years old. After graduating from Foley High School, she joined the U.S. Army Reserve. 42 years later, the Commanding General of the 81st Regional Support Command would retire.

She enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve in May 1974 and served until August 1976. She was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in Signal Corps in May 1978 from the University of Alabama ROTC program, where she was named a Distinguished Military Graduate. MG (Ret.) Cobb was the fifty-fourth general officer and the first female general officer to graduate from the University of Alabama. In April 2017, MG (Ret.) Cobb was one of seven selectees for the inaugural University of Alabama ROTC Hall of Fame.

She commanded at the detachment, battalion, brigade, directorate/brigadier general, and major general levels. Her deployments include post-Desert Storm operations at the Ports of Al Jubayl and Ab Dammam, Saudi Arabia, and Operation Iraqi Freedom port operations at the port of Ash Shuyabah, Kuwait (2002-2003).

MG (Ret.) Cobb's additional deployments were joint assignments, where she served as Commander of the 598th Transportation Group (Terminal) (2007) in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, overseeing military ports in Europe and North Africa, and Director of the Central Command Deployment & Distribution Operations Center (Camp Arifjan, Kuwait)(2011), which directed all intra-theater airlift for Iraq and Afghanistan.

MG (Ret.) Cobb was assigned to the Department of the Army Staff as the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, G-4, (Mobilization and Training) from 2011-2014. She was mobilized and served in the Pentagon on the Army Staff as Deputy G-4 in 2012. In October 2013, then-Secretary of the Army John Marsh appointed MG (Ret.) Cobb to the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee for a two-year term.

Her last assignments were as Commanding General of the 81st Regional Support Command at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, and Senior Commander of the U.S. Army Garrison at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico. On August 8, 2016, she retired from the Army of the United States after 42 years in uniform.

Her decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (3), and various campaign and service awards.

She holds a J.D. from Cumberland School of Law, Samford University, an M.S.S. from the United States Army War College, and a B.A. from the University of Alabama.



Maj. Gen. (ret.) Janet Cobb, JD '84, was inducted into the 2024 Army ROTC Hall of Fame which honors graduates of the Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps who have distinguished themselves in military or civilian pursuits. The Hall of Fame recognizes Army ROTC Alumni who have made lasting, significant contributions to the Nation, the Army and the history and traditions of the Army ROTC.

MG (Ret.) Cobb is a past USS ALABAMA Battleship Commissioner. She serves on the boards of the Historic Naval Ships Association, The Lee Foundation, and the Equine Therapy Group for Veterans. She is a member of the Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission Board of Trustees and serves on the Veterans Initiative Advisory Council of the Community Foundation of South Alabama. MG (Ret.) Cobb holds a real estate license with the State of Alabama. She is a member of VFW Post 5658, American Legion Post 99, and other professional and civic organizations.

Cobb has announced her retirement on December 31, 2025. In 2015, she became the first woman to serve as Executive Director of the, overseeing the 155-acre property USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park.

Former Alabama VA commissioner speaks out after being fired by Governor

MONTGOMERY, Ala. ([WSFA](#)) - After the Alabama Board of Veterans Affairs voted to keep Kent Davis in his role as the state's veterans affairs commissioner, Gov. Kay Ivey exercised her executive authority to override the board and immediately [terminated](#) him in October.

"I'm no longer commissioner, and my life has been turned upside down, so this is not going to go away," said former ADVA Commissioner Adm. Kent Davis. Davis says he is now taking legal action against Ivey. "I have been, I think, defamed in public. My family has been affected by this. I'm still recovering from stage three cancer," said Davis.



See the full interview by [By Julia Avant](#)

Published: Nov. 4, 2024 at 5:55 PM CST

[Former Alabama VA commissioner speaks out after being fired by governor](#)



The ADVA has 62 offices statewide that provide Veterans with free services, including hands-on assistance in submitting applications for VA compensation and pension claims, and assisting with all other state and federal veterans benefits and services.

Find office locations and hours

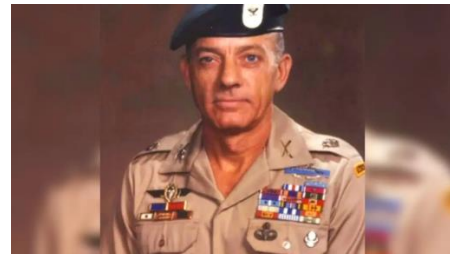
here: <https://va.alabama.gov/serviceofficer/>

Legislation to rename the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Guntersville, Alabama, in honor of Alabama native and Medal of Honor Recipient Colonel Ola Lee Mize.

The U.S. Senate unanimously passed U.S. Senator Katie Britt, R-Ala., and U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville's, R-Ala

Mize was a true patriot who embodied the American ideals of courage, selflessness, and honor. He devoted his entire life to putting his country ahead of himself by showing true bravery in the face of danger time and again. Alabama is proud to call him one of our own.

U.S. Representative Robert Aderholt, R-AL-04, introduced the companion legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives, which passed the House without objection in September.



Alabama's U.S. Representatives Back Bill To Expand Veteran Benefits

The House passed a bill expanding healthcare, housing, education, and support for veterans, which is now heading to the Senate.

By [MARY CLAIRE WOOTEN](#)

Published on November 20, 2024 at 7:38 am CS

On Monday, the House passed a bill that would expand support for veterans, enhance healthcare services and create more opportunities for retired service members in education and the workforce. The bill now heads to the Senate, where its prospects remain uncertain due to the Democratic majority and differing views on the proposed reforms. The legislation, known as the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act, received overwhelming bipartisan approval, passing by a vote of 389-9. Many of the sections in this bill were previously introduced in Congress, such as the similarly named Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act but are now combined under this one comprehensive bill. This bill is a significant win for Republicans, who have raised concerns about the Department of Veterans Affairs and advocated for increased access to at-home care for veterans.

[Alabama's U.S. representatives back bill to expand veteran benefits](#)



Bradley Byrne, POY-Battaglia, Carey-President, VOY- Claxton,
Very Reverend Father Paul G. Zoghby

MOBILE BAY AREA VETERANS COMMISSION

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION,

The Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission would like to thank all those from our community who braved the drizzly weather to support those who served by attending the Veterans Day celebrations in and around the Mobile and Baldwin County area.

To our veterans and their families, we, as a community, appreciate everything you've done for our country. On Veterans Day and every day of the year, we want to express our collective gratitude for your commitment and sacrifice. You are very much honored and very much appreciated for all that you have done. Thank you for your courage and for putting your country first.

To our sponsors, your thoughtfulness and generosity help us honor our heroes every year. Your support and partnership played a key role in the success of our Veterans' events, and we appreciate your participation. Once again, thank you for your support. We value our relationship with you and hope that we can continue to work together in the future.

Sincerely,
Steve Carey, Colonel USAF (Ret)
President, Bay Area Veterans Commission

Mobile And Baldwin Counties Selected As VETERANS REGIONAL SITE

We are very proud to have been selected as a Veterans Regional Site, one of only 56 sites in the United States.

In his 1954 Veterans Day Proclamation, President Dwight D. Eisenhower called for the formation of a Veterans Day National Committee (VDNC) to oversee national planning and coordination of the Veterans Day Parade. Each year, the VDNC designates community Veterans Day Events as regional sites.



USS ALABAMA BATTLESHIP MEMORIAL PARK
AND
MOBILE BAY AREA VETERANS COMMISSION
PROUDLY PRESENTS THE 2024
Veterans Day
Essay Contest Winners



Baldwin County
First Place
Colton Kirksey
Elberta Elementary

Second Place
Ava Smith
Daphne East Elementary

Third Place
Caroline Erdlitz
J. Larry Newton Elementary

Mobile County
First Place
Amelia Albins
Eichold-Mertz Elementary School

Second Place
Ruth Gibbs
Semmes Elementary School

Third Place
Lindley Harrison
Old Shell Road Elementary

Mobile Bay Area Veteran's Day Commission

JROTC Veterans Day Parade Marching Units – Parade Competition

Parade First Place Marching Unit Murphy HS JROTC
Second Place - B.C. Rain HS JROTC
Third Place - Satsuma HS JROTC



2023



2023



2023



A powerful journey spanning the entire nation, the National Memorial Day Flag Relay unites communities in honoring those who have served our country. As the flag is carried from state to state, it symbolizes our collective respect for the brave men and women who sacrificed for our freedom. This event fosters a deep sense of community and patriotism, reminding us all of the values we hold dear. Join us in this nationwide tribute and celebrate the spirit of unity that binds us as Americans.

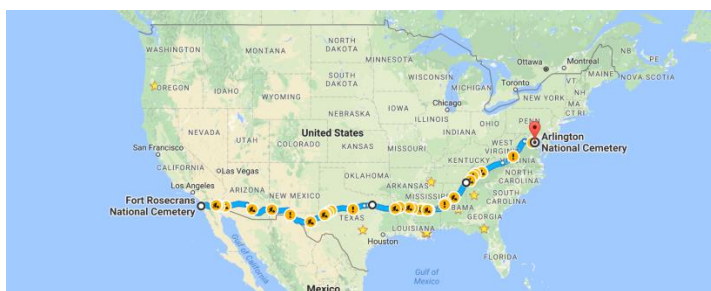
THE MISSION

Relay over 100 U. S. Flags, EACH flag approximately 25 miles at 1 mile increments in groups of two or more

STARTS: Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA

ENDS: Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, San Diego, CA

ALL ON THE SAME DAY!



Flag Relayers

Volunteer to run or jog for a one mile leg (3 miles max.) along a designated route with a partner, each person carrying a U.S. Flag = 3 x 5 feet in size on a small aluminum pole. A preferred Flag Relaying Partner can be arranged with the Segment Coordinator or a partner can be assigned via the registration process, if a participant doesn't already have a particular partner in mind.

Contact us to be a runner, volunteer, or ask another question. Use the form or info below.

nmdfr2025@gmail.com

CALL/TEXT: (858) 947-3747

Donations supporting this event handled by our 501c3 Sponsoring Organization: Cross the Divide

For more information, follow this link:

[National Memorial Day Flag Relay 2025](#)

Here are some military-related dates to remember in December 2024:

- **December 7:** Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, the anniversary of the day Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii in 1941
- **December 13:** National Guard Birthday
- **December 14:** National Wreaths Across America Day, an annual event where wreaths are laid at veterans cemeteries across the country
- **December 20:** Space Force Birthday
- **December 24:** Christmas Eve
- **December 25:** Christmas Day
- **December 28:** Anniversary of the Army Chaplain Assistant/Religious Affairs Specialist
- **December 31:** New Year's Eve

[National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day - Pearl Harbor National Memorial \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#)



**SAVE THE DATE... DECEMBER 14th 10 AM
ALABAMA STATE VETERANS MEMORIAL
CEMETERY SPANISH FORT
FAMILY WREATH DAY**

Young and young at heart, take home a memory...be a part of history. Join us and bring your friends to honor your family veteran by being a part of Family Wreath Day





The City of Fairhope proudly announces Dr. Tonya Butler as the 2024 Veteran of the Year. Recognized not only for her distinguished military service in the U.S. Army but also for her continued dedication to supporting fellow veterans, Dr. Butler exemplifies the spirit of service and community engagement.



South Alabama Veterans Council and Mobile Memorial Gardens awarded Ring of Hope and Toys for Tots \$1000. each, proceeds received from The Flags of Glory



Flags of Glory, Congressman Jerry Carl received the Veterans Supporter Award



A huge thank you to the crew who raised the flag for the Flags of Glory ceremony. Unfortunately, rain forced the ceremony inside on Nov 10.



Dixie Rear Detachment is getting those care packages ready for our deployed troops.



THANK YOU ABC SIGNS



SAVC Minutes November 19, 2024 -

Pastries provided by SAVC

1. **Welcome and Call to Order:** Lou Lartigue called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m., with 29 in attendance. The Location was Vets Recover..

2. **Opening Prayer & Pledge** Lou Lartigue, opening prayer. Pledge led by Jim Jeffries, USA Veteran.

3. Introduction and welcome—

4. **Newsletter & Minutes, Fran Barber-Bruyn, Secretary:** The October meeting minutes were included in the newsletter, which was distributed via nine snail mail newsletters and 600+ emails. The minutes were approved as read.

5. **Treasury & Grant Presentations: Tom Schwarz's** An anonymous donation, and a donation from Airbus; the grant board meets in January to determine who to distribute grants to. Funds we receive are given back to the VSO and other veteran supporters.

6. Navy & Veterans News: Pete

7. **Current Veterans Activities and AL News:** Jim Jefferies reported American Legion Post 188 membership turned in their charter. VFW is looking at starting a new post in Fairhope. Vietnam Veterans of America Post 864 meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month; they are offering free lifetime membership to Vietnam Veterans of the Vietnam Era.

8. **AL Veterans Cemetery Foundation: Pat Downing:** 4255 internments, an average of 9 internments per month. The inspection in October received the highest scores since opening, with 4689 pre-registered.

Col Barrow suggested being more active with the National Cemetery on Virginia St.

9. **USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park, Pat Downing:** Reported on the Veterans Day Activities at the Battleship. Maj Gen Janet Cobb is retiring on 12/31/2024, and Pam Jeffcoat is retiring on 12/31/24. Battleship closed on Christmas Day.

10. **Alabama Dept. of Veteran Affairs:** Covered by Pat Downing.

11. **VMRT:** MPM helped change the service flags.

12. **Alabama Chapter 92nd Buffalo Soldiers** – no report

13. **Flags of Glory** – Lou reported on the event, which was moved inside due to weather.

Guest speaker: RDML Endel Lee, USN (Ret), presented the proposed route for the 2025 Memorial Day Flag Relay.

Lou reported on the Armed Forces Day, MRE Cookoff.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Fran Barber - Secretary