



South Alabama Veterans Council

An organization for all people, to serve all veterans.
A coalition of Veterans, Friends and Organizations working together
to further the cause of Veterans in the South Alabama area

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*Capt Hal Pierce, Bill Atkinson, Sy Lichtenfeld, Spiritus Emeritus SAVC
LTC Lou Lartigue, President Emeritus*

NEXT SAVC MEETING – Tuesday, February 18, 2025 – 8:30 a.m.

American Legion Post 88, 2663 Halls Mill Rd., Mobile, AL

On the web – <http://www.savc.info> - Facebook – [South Alabama Veterans](#)



Presidents Corner

Fellow Veterans! What a great start to the new year! Our January meeting was packed and it was a great to have so many new members participate in our council. Even better was the outstanding support and love shown to our outgoing president, Lieutenant Colonel Lou Lartigue! I know that Lou was so happy to receive the well-deserved accolades during the ceremony as well as the many challenge coins and other memorabilia presented to him to honor his service to veterans and our community. As I mentioned, we have officially assigned the title of “President Emeritus” to Lou and are happy to know that he will continue to be a major participant in our SAVC activities!

As we begin planning for our events in 2025, I want to remind everyone that we are getting ready for Armed Forces Day, taking place this Spring at Battleship Memorial Park. Mark your calendars for Saturday morning, 17 May 2025! The events will include a guest speaker, Gold Star family recognition, parachute jump by the Silver Wings jump team, and helicopter display! The highlight this year will be a MRE cookoff competition! We are challenging our VSO organizations to enter the competition to demonstrate your field skills at making the famous “Meals Ready to Eat” actually taste good! Be looking for the application to complete because slots will be limited!

Finally, I ask for your continued prayers for my father who is battling cancer. He is an enlisted Air Force veteran as well as a retired Captain from the US Coast Guard Reserves. I will need your help in the planning and execution of our sponsored events since he depends on me as his primary healthcare provider. May God continue to Bless all of our veterans in the months ahead! See you in February!

Robert “Frank” Barrow
LTC (US Army Retired)
President, South Alabama Veterans Council



Chaplains Corner

It's now FAITH Read Hebrews 11:1

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

Faith doesn't make things easy; faith makes things possible. Because without faith, it is impossible to please God; you must believe He is. Because with God, all things are possible.

Noah had faith that the flood was coming, not because he had seen it coming, but that he had heard it and believed. Not just mere belief that the flood was coming. His faith moved him to prepare the ark as he was told.

Abram and Sara conceived and had a child even though they were past the childbearing age. The Lord Jesus Christ kept his promise and made the impossible possible.

Have the faith to believe in our Father, who can do ALL things. Even when they seem impossible. Have the faith to move when God says to move. And wait when He says to wait. So, by faith, we believe it; by faith, we receive it; by faith, we count it done, done, and done.

In Jesus' Name, Amen!
Pastor Lloyd Michael Austin,
Chaplain SAVC



South Alabama Veterans Council VETERANS SPOTLIGHT



**Robert Shawn Davidson,
USA (Ret)**

After retiring, Shawn Davidson returned to Mobile and Frank Barrow, President of SAVC, has found a place for him in the Veteran's community; as a South Alabama Veterans Council member, Shawn will be serving as Deputy Vice President of Operations. Welcome home, Shawn; our community looks forward to working with him.

Robert Davidson is a retired Army officer who has held numerous leadership and command positions in both conventional and special operations forces. He has deployed around the globe in support of national military and foreign policy objectives. He is a graduate of the Senior Army ROTC Program at the University of South Alabama and attended other military and civilian institutions, culminating at the Army War College.

His last military assignment was with the Army G-3 5-7 as an Army Strategist in charge of MRAP Combat vehicle requirement. Before returning to Mobile, he served as the Chief of Staff to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Critical Technologies.

PRESIDENTS

TRANSITION DAY

During the January SAVC transition meeting, several organizations took the opportunity to thank Lou and congratulate him on his decision to step down from the 15-year position of President of SAVC. Since 2009 he's led the South Alabama Veterans Council's efforts, ensuring issues facing veterans remain at the forefront.

The South Alabama Veterans Council is an organization for all people serving all Veterans. A coalition of Veterans, friends, and organizations working together to further the cause of Veterans in the South Alabama area.

The South Alabama Veterans Council organizes many of the veteran-boosting events in Mobile and Baldwin Counties. Col Barrow wants the SAVC's work in the past years to continue in support of our present and future veterans.



SAVC, COL PAT DOWNING, MOPH, CVMA 28-6, Vets Recover, and P L Wilson Detachment, MCL made Lou an honorary Maine.

"Farewell and Welcome"



LTC Barrow and LTC Lartigue cutting the "Farewell/Welcome" cake.

Thanks to John Joe Dec, USCG (Ret) CPOA/DAV, for getting the cake and pastries donated by Publix.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Tuesday, February 18, 2025 – 8:30 a.m.
Denton Drake American Legion Post 88,
2663 Halls Mill Rd., Mobile, AL

Breakfast \$5.00

DENTON

HE LIVED HIS LIFE ON EARTH "ALL IN",
FAITHFULLY ALIVE AVOIDING EVIL AND SIN.
A "SUPER HERO" OF THE MARVELOUS KIND,
HE IS TO BE REMEMBERED WELL FOR ALL TIME.

NOW RESIDES IN THE WORLD WITHOUT END,
AN EXAMPLE AND MENTOR, A TRUE FRIEND.
IN A BEATIFIC LIGHT WHERE HE NOW SEES,
OUR CREATOR GOD IS VERY WELL PLEASED.

JOMAC - Faith in Action Fully Alive
On behalf of:
The South Alabama Veterans Council

ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNVEILING OF THE
JEREMIAH DENTON MEMORIAL STATUE AT THE
ART DOES IT GALLERY, DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA
NOVEMBER 10, 2019

SAVC, CAVC, NAVFOC, AND RRVC THE VETERANS VOICE

VETERANS UNITE

In addition to the South Alabama Veterans Council in the Mobile/Baldwin area, two similar groups currently exist elsewhere in Alabama: the Central Alabama Veterans Collaborative (CAVC) in Birmingham and the North Alabama Veterans & Fraternal Organizations Coalition (NAVFOC):



South Alabama Veterans Council

www/savc.info



Central Alabama Veterans Collaborative
(CAVC) www.facebook.com/AlabamaCAVC/



North Alabama Veterans & Fraternal
Organizations Coalition (NAVFOC)
www.navfoc.com

Now, a group of veterans is forming a similar group effort in the greater Montgomery area, to be known as the "River Region Veterans Coalition (RRVC)." The new RRVC group hopes to hold its first meeting sometime in February and will be organized similarly to SAVC. The RRVC organizers have been grateful for the guidance they have received from the other regional veterans groups in Alabama and hope that in the future, SAVC, CAVC, NAVFOC, and RRVC can work together to advocate for the state's large veteran community.



James McEachin, a war hero, actor, and Patriot, passed away recently. He was the Mobile Area Veterans Commission Patriot of the Year in 2013. R.I.P., your spirit lives on



Dr. John Morton-

Finney
"I never stop studying. There's always lots to learn. When you stop learning, that's about the end of you." Dr. John Morton-Finney was an accomplished lawyer, civil rights activist, and academic who accumulated eleven degrees throughout his life. Born in Kentucky on June 25, 1889, Morton-Finney was one of seven children. His father, a former slave, and his mother, a free woman, taught their children the value of education. Though Morton-Finney was only 14 when his mother passed away, he shared her love for education and aspired to serve his country.

Before he began his academic pursuits, Morton-Finney joined the 24th Infantry Regiment of the United States Army. Morton-Finney fought in the Philippines. After being honorably discharged from the army in 1914, he earned his first degree in 1916 from Lincoln College in Jefferson City, Missouri, where he also met and fell in love with Pauline Ray. The two married, relocated to Indianapolis, Indiana, and together had one child, Gloria Ann Morton-Finney. To support his family, Morton-Finney taught at Crispus Attucks High School. Eventually, Morton-Finney assumed the role of dean of foreign languages at the high school and taught African American youth the importance of quality education for 47 years.

While working full-time, Morton-Finney continued his education. He successfully completed all of the degree requirements to receive his Ph.D. in Education at Indiana University, but he decided to turn down the degree. Afterward, he chose law and earned five degrees in the area, including his first law degree from Lincoln College in 1935 and his J.D. from Indiana University in 1946 at the age of 57. He then embarked upon a lucrative career. After passing the Indiana bar in 1935, he entered private practice and eventually was allowed to argue cases before the Indiana Supreme Court. He also continued his education, earning his last academic degree from Butler University at the age of 75. In 1972 John Morton-Finney, now 83, was admitted to practice law before the United States Supreme Court. At age 96, he earned his Doctor of Letters degree through Lincoln College (now University). He was inducted into the National Bar Association Hall of Fame in 1991 before retiring in 1996 at the age of 107, making him one of the longest-practicing attorneys in United States history.

WPMI NBC 15 - "SALUTE TO VETERANS"

TO The goal of this program is to celebrate our veterans by showing their picture, name, and branch of service during the news.



Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission
P. O. Box 2187 | Mobile, AL 36652
vetsdaycommission@gmail.com



WPMI NBC 15 is looking to highlight 20 local veterans for its upcoming "Salute to Veterans" Program.

The goal of this program is to celebrate our veterans by showing their picture, name, and branch of service during the news.

This is an excellent opportunity to showcase and honor the incredible veterans in our community!

I would encourage you or someone you know to sign up for this Salute. It's a great chance to honor those of us who have served.

Please fill out the attached application and release form. You can drop it off at the Chamber or mail it to:

Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission
PO Box 2187
Mobile AL 36652

If you have questions, please send email vetsdaycommission@gmail.com

DEADLINE -- FEBRUARY 15

Steve Carey
Col Steve Carey, USAF (Ret),
President, Mobile Bay Area Veterans
Commission
(251) 406-9799

WPMI NBC 15 - "SALUTE TO VETERANS"

APPEARANCE RELEASE

I hereby grant to Sinclair Broadcast Group, which owns, programs, or provides other services to television broadcast station WPMI (the "Station"), the right to use my name, likeness, portrait, recorded voice, biographical material and any written or narrative material, for use in any and all media, without payment of compensation but with other consideration hereby acknowledged, in any commercial(s) produced by Station.

Station shall have the right to broadcast, modify, sell, syndicate, license, lease, give or use in any way determined by Station any of the aforementioned programs or materials to any person, corporation, partnership or entity or destroy any of the aforementioned programs or materials.

I agree to indemnify, release, forever discharge and hold harmless and covenant not to make a claim or sue Station, its parent companies, subsidiaries, affiliates and divisions, stockholders, directors, officers, employees, agents representatives, successors, heirs and assigns and each and every person acting through, under or in concert with them, or any of them (hereinafter collectively and individually referred to as "Released Parties") of and from all manner of action or actions, cause or causes of action, at law or in equity, suits, claims, demands, liability, loss, cost or expense, of any nature whatsoever, known or unknown, fixed or contingent (hereafter referred to as "Claims") which may have or hereafter have against Released Parties by reason of any injuries or damages that I may sustain, whether to my person, property or reputation, as a result of or incident to any commercial produced by the Station in which I appear.

I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE AND AGREE TO ALL OF ITS TERMS:

Signature _____

Date _____

Name (please print) _____

If under eighteen (18) years of age,
your parent or legal guardian must sign below:

I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of _____
and on behalf of _____ as well as myself, have read this
release and agree to all of its terms.

Parent or guardian signature _____

Date _____

Name (please print) _____

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If you have questions, please send email
vetsdaycommission@gmail.com
Or contact Fran: 251-605-1290

WHAT TO SUBMIT:

Any reasonable clear picture of the individual. They can be in uniform or not, it could be from boot camp, or while they were on active duty...or even a current picture.

WPMI NBC 15 will show the individual's picture and say "Thanks to (The Veterans Name) who served in the (Branch of Service). We salute him and all of our Veterans."

Very simple but impactful.



Did you know that Helping 2 Overcome is a part of Vets Recover in Mobile AL?

Vets Recover, or Veterans Recovery Resources, is dedicated to Veteran and military family-centered care. They offer compassionate support through peer programs, a 34- bed inpatient substance abuse treatment facility, and a medical detox unit, along with mental health outpatient services, all aimed at removing barriers to care.

The United States National Reserve Corps is a non-profit 501c3 that provides local municipalities, local and state emergency agencies and federal agencies with trained personnel.



Fred James, Asian American Liaison Officer and wife Paula in Los Angeles "Little Saigon" for the Lunar New Year celebration parade happening February 1, 2025. The USNRC supports the Mobile, AL Veterans Day Parade every year.



WE'RE HIRING!

IF YOU HAVE A HEART FOR SERVING OUR NATION'S HEROES, WE'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU ON OUR TEAM!

Click here to apply today --

> <https://bit.ly/3zqs6dc>



CAST YOUR VOTE FOR ONE OF MOBILE'S MOST FAMOUS SYMBOL

USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park is one of 20 museum ships in the running for a place on **USA TODAY's** 10 Best list! ⚓ Cast your vote for one of Mobile's most famous symbols:

<https://10best.usatoday.com/.../uss-alabama-battleship.../>.



IMPORTANT MILITARY HOLIDAYS

February

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Four Chaplains Day | Feb. 3 |
| USO Birthday | Feb. 4 |
| National Salute to Veteran Patients | Week of Feb. 12 |
| Coast Guard Reserve Birthday | Feb. 19 |



The Four Chaplains Story

The 368-foot steamship Dorchester, operated by the War Shipping Administration, was part of a convoy that left New York in January 1943 bound for the Army Command Base at Narsarsuaq in southern Greenland.

To sail from Newfoundland to Greenland, the ship would have to navigate icy seas and pass through waters infested with German U-boats.

After midnight on Feb. 3, 1943, the Dorchester was torpedoed by a U-boat in the Labrador Sea off Greenland and went down in 20 minutes, according to official records.

Of the 904 aboard, 675 drowned or died of hypothermia in the frigid waters. It was believed to be the worst single death toll for a U.S. convoy during WWII.

The Dorchester's loss is remembered most for the sacrifice of the "Four Chaplains" -- two Protestants, a rabbi and a Catholic priest. They were all [Army](#) first lieutenants who went down with the ship.



History

Just prior to the onset of America's involvement in World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sought to unite several service associations into one organization to lift the morale of our military and nourish support on the home front. Those entities – the Salvation Army, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, National Catholic Community Services, National Travelers Aid Association and the National Jewish Welfare Board - became the United Service Organizations or, the USO.

Today, the USO has continued to support our nation's military and their families for over seven decades as they defend our country and its freedoms. By providing support to our servicemen and women as they perform their most challenging duties around the world, our credo is to be always by their side.

The reach of the USO's more than 250 centers extends to countries on every continent, operated by thousands of staff and volunteers whose goals are to match our service members' vigilance and provide best-in-class service to those who sacrifice so much for America.





USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park **January 28 at 8:00 AM**

Now Hear This! Snowbird guided tours are back starting today! After a break due to the weather, we are ready to get back to our schedule of giving our snowbirds guided tours on Tuesdays and Thursdays through Thursday, March 27, 2025. Please arrive early for each tour and meet your tour guide at the bottom of the gangway.



SAVC Minutes January 28, 2025 -

Pastries provided by Publix, John Joe Dec

1. Welcome and Call to Order: Frank Barrow called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m., with 50 in attendance. The Location was Vets Recover.

2. Opening Prayer & Pledge - Travis Conner, USMC, Vets Recover, opening prayer. Pledge led by Judge George Hardesty, USN (Ret).

3. Introduction of new attendees — Frank Barrow

4. Newsletter & Minutes, Fran Barber-Bruyn, Secretary: The November meeting minutes were included in the newsletter, but there was no meeting in December. The minutes were approved as read.

5. Treasury & Grant Presentations: Tom Schwarz reported that White-Spunner presented a donation at the January meeting.

6. Navy & Veterans News: Judge Hardesty

7. Current Veterans Activities and AL News: Jim Jefferies was not available.

8. AL Veterans Cemetery Foundation: Joe Buschell, Admin. reported on the inspection, 2nd committal shelter, robot mowers, and now no fee for spouses interred at the veterans cemetery.

9. USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park, Pat Downing – Reported on the retirement of MG Janet Cobb, Pam Jeffcoat, and installation of Commander Mark Fields, the new Executive Director of the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park, on January 1, 2025. Fields is a retired U.S. Navy Commander.

10. Alabama Dept. of Veteran Affairs: ADML Davis

11. AFD – Planning meeting after SAVC meeting

12. VMRT: JROTC clean-up day at Oaklawn, January

13. Alabama Chapter 92nd Buffalo Soldiers – no report

14. Topics of Interest – ADML Kent Davis shared National and State VA information. He cautioned veterans to be aware of claim sharks.

15. Guest Speaker – Col. Robert F. Barrow, USA, (Ret), Col Barrow transitioned into the position of President of the SAVC by thanking Lou and presenting him with a plaque made from the teak deck of the USS Alabama. Barrow asked for everyone's support during his transition, which is difficult at this time with the illness of his dad.

MOPH, PL Wilson Detachment, MCL, Patrick Downing, and CVMA 28-6, Vets Recover made special presentations to Lou., a special cake was also presented to both Lou and Frank.

16. Good of the order – The next meeting will be at the Denton Drake American Legion Post 88 on Halls Mill Rd., Mobile, AL

17. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.
Fran Barber - Secretary