



South Alabama Veterans Council

A Coalition of Veterans, Friends, and Organizations working Together to Further the Cause of Veterans in the South Alabama Area



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251-649-8459

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Chaplain
251-391-8176

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Liaison Officer / MC
251-442-4349



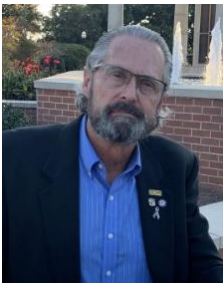
The South Alabama Veterans Council was established in 1998 by Col Glenn Frazier and other Veterans in the Mobile Area. The first meeting was held in the Denton-Drake American Legion Post 88. Welcome Back.

Denton-Drake American Legion Post 88



Capt Hal Perce, Bill Allison, Sy Lichtenfeld, Spiritus Emeritus SAVC

LTC Lou Lantigue, President Spiritus Emeritus



Spring is just around the corner, and warmer weather will certainly be welcome by our Veterans community! I hope all of you enjoyed the Mardi Gras festivities and are now ready to begin tending to your gardens. We had a wonderful turnout at our last meeting, and I look forward to the same again this month. Cody Aloj gave a great presentation on his company's efforts to protect our local waterways. This month's guest speaker is Gina Shaub, Community Liaison for Right at Home. She will inform us about the services her company offers specifically for veterans. I believe she will share critical information that each of us needs to know, and I look forward to her presentation. As always, come hungry since breakfast will be served!

There are several key events in March, including the 107th birthday celebration of the American Legion on Sunday, 15 March, and the Vietnam Memorial Flag Raising ceremony on 28 March, both to be held at Battleship Memorial Park. We invite you to participate and bring your family and friends to celebrate these events. As always, thank you for what you do for SAVC and our veteran community. You are the reason for our council's existence, and I know that our successes are directly related to your hard work! See you there!

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



Greetings!
It's" Behave wisely."

Read 1 Samuel 18:14
"And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him."
We, as believers of Jesus Christ and people of honor, have a standard and a responsibility to uphold. It is simply in the way we behave, or in other words, how we conduct ourselves. The Lord God Almighty is watching and observing our behavior, as well as that of our fellow Veterans, our families, our friends, our neighbors, and people who don't even know us. So we should make a conscious effort to behave wisely in all of our ways, no matter what is going on. We need to always remember that our actions are on display in the sight of God and man.
In Jesus' Name Amen!

In the Name of JESUS!
Pastor Lloyd Michael Austin,
Chaplain SAVC



SAVE THE DATE

MARCH MEETING

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.
Denton Drake American Legion Post 88,
2663 Halls Mill Rd., Mobile, AL

Breakfast \$5.00



GUEST SPEAKER

Gina Shoub
Community Liaison
Right at Home

Gina will speak about Right at Home's VA-covered services and more.

Gina's brother is in the US Army and has served for 28 years, including multiple tours. Several close relatives served in the Marines and the Army. She is a Patriot who supports active-duty military members and veterans.

Right at Home Daphne, AL, provides a range of in-home care options for seniors and adults with disabilities. Don't think of our services as one-size-fits-all. We know everyone's needs are different, so our care plans are uniquely tailored to each individual. Whether it's helping with dressing and hygiene, providing medication reminders, or simply providing transportation to medical appointments, Right at Home's dedicated caregivers will help you or your loved one navigate life.

Right at Home's trusted and reliable caregivers are trained to assist with all types of needs and to deliver an exceptional care experience in a variety of settings: at home, in an independent or assisted living community, or elsewhere.

March

3 March: Navy Reserve Birthday

5 March: Seabee Birthday

13 March: [National K9 Veterans Day](#)

17 March: St Patrick's Day

25 March: National Medal of Honor Day

29 March: [Vietnam Veterans Day](#)

What is K9 Veterans Day?

K-9 Veterans Day is an annual recognition of the incredible contributions of military and service dogs. From battlefields to search-and-rescue operations, to assisting law enforcement and serving as therapy companions, these dogs play an indispensable role. This day honors their sacrifices, dedication, and invaluable services.

March 13th, the Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission will host an event at the USS Alabama Battleship & Memorial Park at 1 pm. I will be interviewing 3 K-9 handlers @ the War Dog Memorial. Vietnam Veteran Tracker Lloyd Pursley will tell his story and also talk about Hank, Lloyd's K-9, who is buried at the War Dog Memorial. Cody Aloi, a retired Navy Dog handler, will talk about his tour in Afghanistan, and Dog handler Andrew Earl will tell his stories. We will also have Eric Carney with his Belgian Malinois (Mal-in-wah), Mayhem, a Human Remains Detection K-9. Eric and Mayhem will be putting on Tactical Biting Demonstrations.



They are more than just man's best friend; they are loyal partners, fearless protectors, and unsung heroes. K9 Veterans Day pays tribute to the dedicated military and service dogs that have served alongside their human counterparts, safeguarding and serving with unwavering loyalty.





**South Alabama Veterans Council
VETERANS SPOTLIGHT**

***Corporal Eugene Bondurant Sledge*
*November 4, 1923 - Died March 3, 2001***

Eugene Bondurant Sledge was born on November 4, 1923, in Mobile. He graduated from Murphy High School in 1942 and enrolled at Marion Military Institute that autumn. Despite having suffered rheumatic fever as a child—a condition that initially delayed his eligibility for combat service, Sledge was determined to serve.

In December 1942, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. He was initially placed in an officer training pipeline and sent to the Georgia Institute of Technology, but fearing that extended training would keep him out of combat for the duration of the war, Sledge deliberately withdrew from the program. He requested a transfer to the infantry and was reassigned to the 5th Marine Regiment as a 60mm mortarman. Sledge deployed to the Pacific Theater and participated in two of the most brutal battles of the war: the Battle of Peleliu and the Battle of Okinawa. As an infantry Marine, he endured prolonged exposure to combat, extreme conditions, and constant loss, experiences that would profoundly shape the rest of his life.

After Japan’s surrender, Corporal Sledge was assigned to Beijing, where he served in support of the Chiang Kai-shek government during the uneasy postwar transition following Japanese occupation. He completed his military service in February 1946.

Returning home, Sledge enrolled at Auburn University, graduating in 1946 with a bachelor’s degree in business administration and joining Phi Delta Theta. After the war, he found hunting difficult and instead turned to birdwatching, an interest that grew into a lifelong scientific passion.

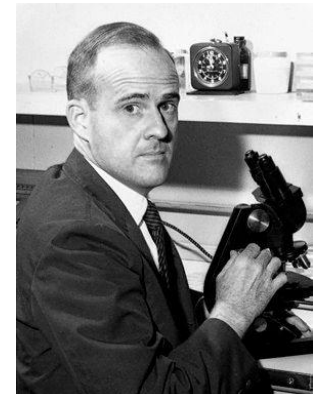
In 1956, Sledge began graduate studies at the University of Florida, earning a doctorate in biology in 1960. He worked for the Florida State Department of Agriculture, Division of Plant Industry, until returning to Alabama in 1962. There, he taught zoology and ornithology at the University of Montevallo (formerly Alabama College) until his retirement in 1996.

Throughout his life, Sledge wrestled quietly with the psychological toll of combat. Encouraged by his wife, he eventually began writing about his experiences, drawing on notes he had taken during the war in the margins of a pocket-sized Bible. In 1981, he published *With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa*, widely regarded as one of the most unflinching and important combat memoirs of World War II. The book later appeared in the PBS documentary *Peleliu 1944: Horror in the Pacific* and served as a primary source for HBO’s *The Pacific*, in which Sledge was portrayed by Joseph Mazzello.

In 2002, a posthumously published memoir, *China Marine*, explored his service in Beijing and further reflected on the enduring effects of war.

Corporal Eugene Bondurant Sledge died on March 3, 2001. He is buried at Pine Crest Cemetery.

His legacy endures not only through medals or memory, but through words, patiently written, painfully honest, and offered not to glorify war, but to tell the truth about it.



The Mobile County Sheriff's Office, Black Hats Honor Guard

The Mobile County Sheriff's Office, Black Hats Honor Guard was created in 2023. Its mission was to render honors to fallen military and first responder veterans in and around Mobile County, AL.

Today, the Black Hats perform services for community organizations, schools, veterans' associations, and government functions. Since the inception of the Black Hats, the unit has proudly stood watch, rendered honors services, or conducted community services for more than 5,000 cumulative hours.

The Black Hats have served in the State Capitol of Montgomery, AL, in official capacities as well as served fallen veterans from the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and first responder agencies across Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. The iconic Black Hats and M1 Garand rifles are more than tools for this group of dedicated volunteers. They are symbols of devotion.

Their slogan has become, "It's more than just a hat." If you would like to request the services of the Mobile County Sheriff's Office - Black Hats Honor Guard, please call:
Phone: (251) 574-7827
or by email:
blackhats@mobileso.com



TAPS (501 (c) 3) provides equipment, training and support for honor guards which provide proper services to military and first responder veterans.

TAPS was formed in 2023 primarily to support the Mobile County Sheriff's Office Black Hats Honor Guard.



The Mobile County Commission supports the Sheriff's Black Hats Honor Guard.

All three commissioners voted to award TAPS with an Appropriations Contract to help cover their General Operating Expenses!

That enables them to purchase gear for Honor Guards, serve coffee at the VA Clinic here in Mobile, and continue to provide Honor Flags to families of First Responders and Military Veterans across our County!



MOBILE BAY AREA VETERANS COMMISSION PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Steve Carey, Col USAF (Ret)

Steve will speak to the 5th - and 6th-grade students during the Career Day at Silverhill Elementary School. This year, Silverhill will be holding a CAREER DAY on Friday, March 13th, in the gym. It is a day when we all have an opportunity to learn more about the World of Work directly from adults with experience in a variety of careers.

Career Day will be divided into two sessions- Morning and Afternoon and "Touch a Truck" outside in the morning.

- 8:00-11:15- presentations for grades K-6th Grade (during their P.E times)
- 9:00-11:00- Touch a truck for PK-2nd

Each presenter will be assigned a "station" or table in the gym and will be visited by the students during their P.E time.



VETS RECOVER

TRANSFORMING THE CULTURE OF CARE

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR

Who: Veterans and Community Members

What: Health & Wellness Fair

When: March 28, 2026 – 10 am to 2 pm

Where: VR Inpatient Building and Garden (1200 Springhill Ave, Mobile, AL)

Why: Increase awareness of health and healthy habits for Veterans and Community

Booths that will be present:

Medical Screening, primary care enrollment, VA Veterans Service Officers, cooking demo, garden tour, Team RWB, Service Dogs of Alabama, Narcan training, kids bounce house, and more. Please join us on 28 March!

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Jared Sundahl
Director of Business Operations
251.405.3677 (Office)
808.888.9536 (Cell)
www.vetsrecover.org



We are proud to stand and applaud these heroes and honor the families who carry their legacy forward.

- Capt. Royce Williams (U.S. Navy, Ret.)
- Chief Warrant Officer 5 Eric Slover (U.S. Army)
- National Guard Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe
- Petty Officer Scott Ruskan (U.S. Coast Guard)



American Legion Post#99~Foley, AL

Did You Know?

Did you know that American Legion Post 99 provides funeral officiating **only upon the family's request**? When a family chooses to have Post 99 lead or participate in funeral services, the funeral director coordinates those arrangements based on the family's expressed wishes.

In some cases, families prefer **not** to involve formal military funeral honors. Instead, they may request a simple, dignified service at the funeral home, at the cemetery, or both. When this is the family's choice, American Legion Post 99 respectfully steps in to **officiate and oversee all parts of the service**, ensuring their loved one is honored with the respect, care, and tradition they deserve.

Post 99 is deeply committed to serving veterans and their families—always guided by what the family wants most.





TOP:
 The February meeting was opened by Chaplain Tony Legear from the Mobile Police Department. Cody Aloj delivered a presentation on the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program and explained how K-9s are used in the local waters of Mobile and Baldwin County.

BOTTOM:
 The United States National Reserve Corps – Mobile chapter recently retired its flag. President Gregory Bone and Don Payne presented the SAVC with a donation, and the SAVC awarded a grant to American Legion Post 88 for their generous use of the facilities.



The SAVC flags are now housed at American Legion Post 88, Mobile, AL



Veterans becoming cowboys: Grand Bay couple trains vets to start cattle operations



Transitioning from military service to civilian life can be both an exciting and challenging journey. For many veterans, this shift involves adjusting to new routines, norms, and expectations. We strive to help make this transition smoother. jeremy@ecpal.biz



**SAVC, CAVC, NAVFOC, AND RRVC
 THE VETERANS VOICE
 VETERANS UNITE**

In addition to the South Alabama Veterans Council, which covers seven counties in southern Alabama, three similar groups are currently active elsewhere in the state: the Central Alabama Veterans Collaborative (CAVC) in Birmingham, the North Alabama Veterans & Fraternal Organizations Coalition (NAVFOC), and the River Region Veterans Coalition (RRVC) in and near Montgomery, AL. SAVC, CAVC, NAVFOC, and RRVC can collaborate to advocate for the state's large veteran community.



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



River Region Veterans Coalition – Central Alabama in and near Montgomery, AL RRVC

www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61574462792355
 RRVC is a non-profit/apolitical coalition of public and private sector organizations that serve military veterans in the River Region of central Alabama.



OUT OF THE DEEP
GULF COAST VETERANS SERVICE
A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

MOBILE MEMORIAL
GARDENS CEMETERY
MEMORIALIZING MEMORIES



6100 Three Notch Rd., Mobile, Alabama 36619
(251) 661-1333



**GARDBERG &
KEMMERLY &**
Attorneys at Law



PP HOSPITALITY GROUP

Publix

The bakery department provides SAVC pastries at SAVC meetings, 9124 Cottage Hill Rd. Mobile, AL

AIRWIND™
creative
tad@airwind.com • 251-454-4875

CONTACT INFORMATION

Alabama Department of Workforce

Keith C Battle Jr - 251-461-4447

keith.battle@workforce.alabama.gov

American Legion District 33 Auxiliary President Sharon Bunton and Sissy Cunningham from Alabama Hospice Care host a hot dog luncheon for the Mobile VA Clinic on the first Tuesday of every month.

Sharon: sharonbunton@yahoo.com

Sissy: sissycunningham69@gmail.com

Creola Veterans Park - Visit the new veterans park
mbrown@cityofcreola.org

Fleet & Family Support Center

Assisting Retirees, Spouses, and Families
Building 625, 151 Ellyson Ave
NAS Pensacola, FL 32508 (850-452-5622)

Gentiva Hospice

Vet Connect Meeting at Springhill College Golf Course, & Gentiva Hospice Ceremon.

Holly.Jordan@gentivahs.com

jwoodwardbarnett@gentivahs.com

Memorial Day Flag Relay: Endel Lee Memorial Day - 'Remember to Remember' flag relay

251-649-1430 endellee@yahoo.com

MOPH Chapter 2206, Andrew Del Gaudio

godfatherdel@hotmail.com

One on One Senior Care

Independent Sitters / CAN's

independentcare@yahoo.com

251-209-0151 / 251-767-2963

QOV Baldwin County - 251-459-3282

lmtipp143@bellsouth.net

QOV Mobile Joyce Reed 251-634-0256

lsubookurm@hotmail.com

RH HomeCare & Transport Services LLC

rhhomocaretransportservicesllc@gmail.com

Right at Home Caregivers

In-home Care & Assistance

Gina Shoub: gina@rahsouth.com

251-459-2556 / 251-459-8671

SACMOAA Phil Gabriel - contactdxd@aol.com

TBI Veteran PEER Mentor

Jerry Peters

ADRS Consultant for South Alabama

jerrytbimmentor@outlook.com

Vets Recover, Chaplain Lloyd Austin

info@vetsrecover.org 251- 405-3677

Website: vetsrecover.org

Vietnam Veterans of America - Meeting 4th Tuesday at Café Acadiana in Silverhill, AL

arleenronnie1967@gmail.com

NG ALARNG (USA) c-334- 451-5021 /o- 251-288-6460

Brandi Sisk - Family Readiness Specialist

brandi.p.sisk.civ@army.mi



Three Exciting Regionals - 1 Final State Championship - The Yellowhammer Veterans Cup Classic will be played across multiple dates and sites throughout Alabama. Events will be played along the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. For 2026, play will begin with the regional rounds commencing with the South Regional round on September 26th, 2026, and will conclude during the State Championship Round to be played over 2 days from November 7th and 8th, 2026.

Enter Into Any of 3 Exciting Regional Qualifiers
 Entry Fee: \$275 per player. A discount is available when registering 2 or 4 golfers at one time

Your entry fee includes:

Day-of-event green and cart fees

Range balls

Player gift

Player breakfast and lunch

Entry into all on-course contests during the day

Regional Entry Fee Does Not Cover Entry Fee into State Final Round

All proceeds benefit the Veterans Endowment Fund, which exists solely to provide funding for Veterans, First Responders and their Families unable to pay for programs at [Vets Recover](#).



SAVC Meeting Minutes February 17, 2026

Publix provided pastries and a remembrance cake for Lou Lartigue, Past President SAVC.

1. Welcome and Call to Order: President Frank Barrow, LTC USA (Ret), called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m., with 63 in attendance. The location was the American Legion Post 88.

2. Opening Prayer & Pledge: Chaplain Tony Legear, Mobile Police Department, offered the opening prayer, Col Barrow presented Tony with an SAVC coin.

3. Judy Ford had to step down due to health. Col Barrow thanked the new chefs, Sophie McGill and Tonya Evans Woolf. A carrot cake in honor of Lou Lartigue was presented by Publix. Paul Prine and Jerry Carl were welcomed..

Col Barrow asked the attendees whether anyone would be interested in meeting in a neighboring county and whether they would be willing to travel to another county for a meeting.

4. Newsletter & Minutes: Fran Barber-Bruyn, Secretary –January minutes are in the February newsletter.

5. Treasurer – Collected \$876 for breakfast, Veterans Commission assistance, two grants, Warrior Legacy Ranch,

Campbell's Helping Hands, and MOAA to support the annual JROTC banquet.

Grant received from the USNRC Mobile unit, which has been deactivated, but will still participate when needed. Thanks, Gregory Bone and Don Payne. Grant presented to Allan McDaniel, CDR Post 88, in appreciation of the use of the facility.

SAVC flags will be on housed and on display at Post 88.

6. Introduction of Guest Speaker: Cody Aloï delivered a presentation on the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program and explained how K-9s are used in the local waters of Mobile and Baldwin County.

7. Navy & Veteran News, Davidson reported on some of the activities the sailors participated in during Mardi Gras.

8. Current Veterans Activities and AL News: Jim Jeffries is out. Keep him in your prayers.

9. AL Veterans Cemetery Foundation: Joe Buschell reported on the Cemetery 4860 interred, expanding with a second committal shelter, another cremation section, and Cathy Miller, USAF, now Director. North Alabama cemetery purchased, and received a grant to start construction. Pre-registration in progress.

10. USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park: Genavese Harris reported upcoming veterans' events. The Budweiser Clydesdales will be located at BMP during Mardi Gras.

11. Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs -

12. VMRT: Fran reported on cleanup efforts by Keep Mobile Beautiful, JROTC, MPM, and Vets Recover.

13. J Gary Cooper, MPM Chapter 33: Cynthia House reported on chapter events, and scholarship applications are open until March 31 for Mobile County.

14. Alabama Chapter 92nd Buffalo Soldiers: Not at meeting.

15. Topics of Interest: Phil Quigley, VP Marketing, Veterans Commission, reported on K-9 Veterans Day, March 13, and the American Legion Birthday Celebration, March 15. Charles Dent, USA -We're inviting our community to come together for the University of South Alabama **Out of the Darkness Walk**, a suicide prevention and mental health awareness event benefiting the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). **Post 88 CDR Allen McDaniel** reported that the American Legion Riders are doing a Flag Replacement at Mertz School, TBD. Lou Lartigue Jr thanked everyone for their support last month. **ADML Kent Davis** gave a brief report on Vets Recover, March 28, free Health and Wellness Fair.

16. Good of the Order: Special honor to Lou Lartigue, Sr, past president

17. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m. Fran Barber, Secretary.