



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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CAPT HAL PIERCE, SPIRITUS AMERITUS SAVC

on the web - savc.net Facebook — [South Alabama Veterans Council](http://SouthAlabamaVeteransCouncil.org)

The next Meeting will be Tuesday, June 15, 2021 — 8:30AM
— at Saucy Q —

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States.

From its Galveston, Texas origin in 1865, the observance of June 19th as the African American Emancipation Day has spread across the United States and beyond. It was on June 19th that the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free

Today Juneteenth commemorates African American freedom and emphasizes education and achievement. It is a day, a week, and in some areas a month marked with celebrations, guest speakers, picnics and family gatherings. It is a time for reflection and rejoicing. It is a time for assessment, self-improvement and for planning the future. Its growing popularity signifies a level of maturity and dignity in America long over due. In cities across the country, people of all races, nationalities and religions are joining hands to truthfully acknowledge a period in our history that shaped and continues to influence our society today. Sensitized to the conditions and experiences of others, only then can we make significant and lasting improvements in our society. —various sources; internet

As of April 1, the latest data available, there are

2,168 burials in the Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Spanish Fort, aka *Arlington South*. 1,746 of that total are Veterans; 461 are spouses and 14 are dependents. To be buried at ASVMC at Spanish Fort, as at other Veterans Cemeteries, a proof of military service is required, usually a DD-214. At death -or immediately following- is a bad time for your survivors to be looking for papers and trying to make arrangements. The answer? Preregistration. This takes care of the paperwork and saves a lot of hassle and worry at a very emotional time. It does not mean, however, that you get to pick a spot or a time to be buried.

The Battleship Commission has reviewed the bids for replacing the teak deck on the Battleship USS ALABAMA (BB60) and voted to accept the low bid by Youngblood-Barrett Construction and Engineering of Mobile, AL. Their bid was only \$8,049,000.00. The work will be done in several phases in order to accommodate the tourists and is expected to take about three years to complete. The teak will be coming from Myanmar so hopefully the unrest there will not escalate to war.

We will soon have information on where and when to send your money to support this project.

RDML Kent Davis, US Navy (ret), Commissioner, Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs said,

If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.



“We’ve had a busy, busy year.” Speaking about the Cemetery in Spanish Fort he said, “The demand for the cemetery has outpaced the original estimate. The last two months we’ve had 41 interments per month.” When the cemetery was established there was a 100-year plan which called for the cemetery to be built in phases. What we’re dealing with now is Phase One. Plans have been drawn up for the expansion into Phase Two. Requests for federal grants have been sent. This plan calls for completion of Phase Two near the end of 2023. “The worst thing that can happen to a cemetery is to run out of burial space.” The timeline for this expansion has been moved up a couple of years.

At one time there was a Veterans Service Office in each of the 67 Counties in Alabama. The budget situation about fifteen years ago forced the closure of many of the offices. “Two years ago when I came into office,” said Davis, “I thought it was time to take a look at the situation, take a strategic look at the map and the budget and see if we can start going in the opposite direction.” A plan was put together to open ten new offices and then COVID hit and slowed the proceedings. The last of the ten new offices opened in Alabaster, AL, on May 4, 2021. This brings the total to 60 Veterans Service Offices in Alabama; seven of the counties have low Veteran population and will not have an office as these Veterans will be serviced out of neighboring counties.

The District 3 Manager, Lynda Jenkins, has an office in the Bay Haas Building, 11150 Government St in Mobile. Lynda oversees the Veterans Service Offices in South Alabama.

The Federal VA is concerned with the ‘short-term’ care of our Veterans; long-term care is up to the States. The Federal VA operates hospitals, clinics, and Vet Centers. The State VA runs Veterans Homes. At present there are four Homes in Alabama. The Fifth Home is currently being planned for construction in Enterprise in the Wiregrass area of south-eastern Alabama. There is a waiting list of about 500 Veterans desiring entry into the Homes.

The Home in Pell City is a model home; delegations from all over the US have been out to visit this Home. All Four Homes have all recently been renovated and are “like new” again.

The four traditional missions of the State Department of veterans Affairs are: State Veterans Homes; Veteran Service Offices; Dependent Scholarship

Program; State Veterans Cemetery. “About two years ago we set out with a new mission of what we call ‘outreach engagement’ or partnerships with other organizations.” Organizations such as the South Alabama Veterans Council, Veterans Recovery Resources and other such organizations. A new assistant commissioner for Outreach Engagement was hired and a “whole new office” was formed. Most Veterans are upstanding outstanding citizens “above the average population in just about every measurable statistic” but there are a few who need a hand up, not a hand out. We deal with things like mental health, homelessness, opioid addiction. “One of the things we’re really intent on tackling is Veteran suicide.” One of the partners in this is John Kilpatrick and Veterans Recovery Resources. Alabama is among the worst states per capita for Veteran suicides. A State task force was formed a couple of years ago but didn’t go far before COVID struck. Alabama and 26 other states joined a national effort called “The Governor’s Challenge to Prevent Veterans Suicide.”

May 14, 2021, Governor Ivey announced a new effort which brought together ideas from and parts of previous efforts called Alabama’s Challenge for Preventing Suicide. The state legislature actually put some money into the budget for this challenge. “We’re serious about this,” stated Davis, “because it’s a serious issue.” HJR 28, extended the Alabama Task Force on Veterans’ Suicide created by HJR 151 through the last legislative day of the 2022 Regular Session.

The Blue Star Salute is held at Battleship Park on Armed Forces Day, the third Saturday in May. This year’s event, May 15, “was one of the more successful events we have done,” said Council President Lou Lartigue, “and that’s mainly because of the efforts of all the people who worked on it during the year.” We had many ‘ZOOM’ meetings and only a few in-person meetings on-site at the Park to finalize the plans.

The 5K run kicked off at 7:00 with 327 runners ranging in age from 4 to 84 who came from five States. There were about 60 vendors including civilian and military interests. The Silver Wings Parachute Demonstration Team was a big hit as was the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter from our National Guard unit which became a static display after the jumpers were safely on the ground. Bruce Mitchell with members of the 9th&10th Horse

The Wuhan virus has done what no woman had been able to do...cancel all sports. shut down all bars. and keep men at home!



Cavalry presented the Colors on horseback to open the ceremony. Retired USAF BG Paul Pocopanni was the main speaker. Montford Point Marines conducted a Flag-Folding Ceremony as part of the Gold Star Families portion of the program. Names were read and roses were laid to honor those whose lives were lost since 9/11/2001 in the War against Terrorism. Music was provided by the 151st Army Band and Mr Rob Robinson of the Birmingham Opera.

We've not gotten the final accounting from the Blue Star folks in Birmingham but we're confident that it's all good.

Christine Elser added a few more Veteran-owned businesses to her database. Several of the businesses already on the list were present at Armed Forces Day. At present there are 35 businesses listed. Alabama Veterans Resource Guide lists Veteran-owned and Veteran-friendly businesses as well as a listing of meetings and happenings of interest to Veterans. Check it out - it's free to use and free to register your business.

Rain falls, sun shines, grass and weeds continue to grow in Oaklawn Memorial Cemetery. Veterans Memorial Recovery Team -Bill, Fran, Sherri, Neil- continues to fight the elements and Mother Nature. We're trying to raise a little money to bring in a professional company to clear the entire 20+acre cemetery and get it to a point where it can be managed a little better. We formed a 501(c)3 non-profit to be able to accept donations. We've received several good donations and a couple of grants which we have put to good use. We have received a bid -the only response to our request- for \$200K+ and now we wait for response to our recent grant request. As we cut the grass and weeds in one area, growth continues in all other areas of the cemetery. A few families come out bi-weekly or monthly to clean their one or two graves; members of Montford Point Marines Association have a section they take care of; Boy Scout Troop 555 has a section; St Thomas Catholic Church is represented in a section; a group from US Coast Guard Aviation Training center. Mostly, the cemetery is abandoned and uncared for. We're primarily looking for the burial places of Military Veterans and as we find one we place a small American Flag beside the headstone

and record the information on the headstone and the GPS of the grave; this information with a picture or two of the grave is uploaded to Find a Grave along with any other information we're able to uncover about the Veteran. In order to be certain of finding the Veterans, we must clear the entire cemetery. This takes money. You can help — we have an account at Commonwealth National Bank (2214 St. Stephens Road, Mobile, AL 36617 or 2861 Springhill Avenue, Mobile, AL 36607) where you can make a direct deposit; we have a Pay Pal account you can put money in or you can send a check, payable to VMRT, to Veterans Memorial Recovery Team, 9060 Ponderosa Dr S, Semmes AL, 36575. So far we've cleared and documented 10,229 burials with 881 of them being Veterans. At the beginning we were told there may be 10,000 burials in the cemetery; the actual number is going to be closer to 20,000. We'll have a final number in another two or three years. Or four.

Veterans Recovery Resources (VRR) has accrued about \$4.8Mil of the \$6Mil needed to complete the renovations of the old school building which will become their clinic with rooms for outpatients. The roof has been replaced so the workers inside won't get rained on as they work. The State Legislature just approved a budget which includes \$1Mil for VRR. If all goes good, they hope to see it complete some time next year - they hope by Veterans Day, 2022. "There's no de-tox or withdrawal management treatment options in South Alabama," said John Kilpatrick, "and there are very few across the country so we've had some deep conversations with the Warrior Care Network and the Marcus Brain Institute." All of the programs that offer treatment for PTSD or TBI require the Veteran to be sober and stable. VRR plans to be "the resource in the Country to provide that initial withdrawal management and initial treatment for substance abuse."

John is the founder and executive director at VRR. His 32 years in the military including four deployments give him an insight into mental and emotional problems in Veterans that most folks can't have.

Richard Banks "Rich" Landolt is a retired Rear Admiral of the United States Navy where he served for 33 years. He last served as the Senior Civilian Representative of the Secre-

I LOOK AT PEOPLE AND SOMETIMES THINK "REALLY? -- THAT'S THE SPERM THAT WON?"



tary of Defense in Europe and the Defense Advisor to the U.S. Ambassador to NATO. He previously was the Executive Director of Public Safety for the City of Mobile, AL. Landolt was commissioned a Naval officer through the ROTC program at the University of Florida where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science. As a Surface Warfare Officer he commanded three ships and served during the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"World War One and World War Two; 100 million people died," said Landolt. "At the end of WWII, Europe was devastated, Japan was devastated. America, we held our own." After the war America took on the role of World Leader. President Truman's Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, and a few smart diplomats from Europe go together and came up with the Washington Treaty which gave rise to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Treaty was signed in Washington D.C. on 4 April 1949 by 12 founding members. NATO promotes democratic values and enables members to **consult** and cooperate on defense and security-related issues to solve problems, build trust and, in the long run, prevent conflict. NATO is committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes. If diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military power to undertake **crisis-management** operations. "As somebody said in 1949," said Landolt, "NATO is designed to keep the Russians out, keep the Germans down and keep America in." The Berlin Wall came down in 1989 and the Soviet Union fell apart in 1991. In the aftermath of this political upheaval NATO had to rethink their mission. Where once there was an East Europe and a West Europe now there is just Europe. The Soviet Union was the main reason for the formation of NATO. When the Treaty was signed in 1949 it was signed by twelve Nations not including Germany. Between 1989 and 1991 it grew to fifteen and now there are thirty Nations in the alliance. There are twelve articles in the Treaty. Article 5 states that "an attack on one is an attack on all." Article 5 has only been invoked once: September 11, 2001. When the US was attacked, NATO came together in our support. NATO is still part of the support mission in Afghanistan and that future is uncertain. NATO is "seeking relevancy" and is expanding

into the Middle East. They're still in Iraq. NATO is a security-defense alliance and the European Union is an economic alliance. Europe is in trouble. There are border problems, immigration problems, secession problems such as 'Brexit.' Europe is a mess. "America is still a great country," said Landolt, "and we will continue to support NATO and Europe."

President Trump tried to get the NATO nations to pay more for their own defense. He pushed them to spend 2% of their GDP on defense programs. We wanted NATO to take care of Russia because we, the US, have to take care of China. Germany is the largest economy in Europe and they are only at about 1.5% and their armed forces "are in terrible shape." Europe has many internal problems. North Europe is worried about Russia; South Europe is worried about terrorism coming out of North Africa. Eastern Europe borders Russia and they are worried about what goes on in Ukraine; Western Europeans falsely believe there is safety in distance.

"China has worldwide ambitions. They are competitors and they are evil." China is buying as much infrastructure as they can. China owns parts of both sides of the Panama Canal; they own all or part of ports around the World; they own seaports, airports and train yards and depots throughout Europe. When you go to your favorite store, look on the shelves and see what you can find that was not made in China. Smithfield Foods, Inc is the largest pork producer in the World. Based in Smithfield, Virginia, they set the standard for meat processing and packaging. There are more than 40K team members, family farmers and supply chain partners. They are one of the largest employers in the State of Virginia. Smithfield Foods was recently bought by China.

"We have great innovators and entrepreneurs," said Landolt. "What China has, they stole from us. China has institutionalized and industrialized even intellectual property." There are many Chinese students in our schools and colleges. A large percentage of those students likely have ties to the Chinese military and are in school to learn, copy, steal industrial and military technology. 'HUAWEI' is China's communication technology and all the servers for it are in China. Huawei is required to give to the Chinese government

LET'S STOP SENDING MONEY TO OTHER COUNTRIES AND LET THEM HATE US FOR FREE.



any intelligence that goes through the servers. "TikTok (Musically) is a short-video social platform powered by music, with which users can create and share fun music videos anytime anywhere they want. You can add a song to your video, choosing from the app's song bank or picking a song stored in your device." -from the 'net

TikTok is another Chinese 'data collection agency' which, unfortunately, is very popular with American young people.

China is not our friend.

Rich Landolt now moves on to another chapter and the *NextBigThing*.

Debbie Walker has been recognized by DAV Chapter 7 in Mobile for her many years of hard work in the Chapter and State Offices.

Rick Moritz recently went through knee replacement - he's at home recuperating. He needs thoughts and prayers. Beverly needs it, too.

Jerry Cherne recently had heart bypass surgery and was at home for a couple of months. It was good to see him at the early-morning Memorial Day doings at Battleship Park.

The Korean War Veterans, Gulf Coast Chapter, announced a scholarship fund was set up for Ms Mallory Sims, granddaughter of long-time SAVC member and Korea Vet Harry Sims who passed away last year. Mallory has been accepted by Auburn University School of Veterinary Medicine. She was awarded a \$1500 scholarship by the 25th Infantry Division and the KWVA has endeavored to match that; SAVC is proud to chip in and help out.

Tom Schwarz announced the dissolution of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 701 (Mobile) and the transference of members to at-large status or to Chapter 416 in Birmingham.

Chapter 701 was formed November 4, 1993; the charter was received from National in January 1994. The Lower Alabama Vietnam Veterans Memorial was designed and, in large part, built by members of Chapter 701. Several of those members lived in Baldwin County and later separated and formed Chapter 864 in Fairhope.

The US Armed Forces Honor Guard of Baldwin County is seeking individuals to join the organization to ensure our fallen fellow

Veterans receive full military honors at their burial or celebration of life ceremonies; they also support the communities of Baldwin County in many civic events. There is no age restriction; only requirements are to have been honorably discharged and have a willingness to continue to serve your country. For more information, or to join, call Legionnaire Judy Whidbee, 251-545-6578.

The National World War I Memorial at Pershing Park in Washington, DC is a planned memorial commemorating the service rendered by members of the United States Armed Forces in World War I. In 2014, Congress authorized the World War I Centennial Commission to develop the WWI Memorial in Pershing Park, located at 14th Street NW and Pennsylvania Avenue NW. Situated on Pennsylvania Avenue, only a block from the White House, the World War I Memorial is dedicated to the millions of Americans who served and died in that massive conflict.

The new national memorial was built within Pershing Park at the site of the American Expeditionary Forces Memorial, dedicated in 1981 to honor the soldiers who served in Europe during the war and their commander, Gen. John Pershing.

The World War I Memorial, however, now honors all Americans who served, including service members from the U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, those who served in places other than Europe, and civilians as well. Approximately 4.7 million Americans served during WWI. Two million were deployed to Europe and more than 116,000 died there, either in fighting or from non-combat causes like the influenza pandemic of 1918. Another 204,000 returned home wounded. The Memorial is open to the public and is expected to be completed in 2024.

26 May 2021

Medill News Service | By Karli Goldenberg
The House Committee on Oversight and Reform unanimously agreed to send two bills to the House acknowledging two groups it said have previously gone unrecognized. The legislation would offer benefits to Gold Star children, or children of service members who died while in uniform, and covert air transport employees who served in military conflicts. The Gold Star Children Act would extend federal hiring preferences to the children of veterans who died during a war or campaign

The most important rule in a gunfight is: Always Win - there is no such thing as a fair fight.



or who are totally disabled as a result of their service.

Rep. Van Taylor, R-Texas, authored the Gold Star Children Act.

Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., who chairs the committee, also expressed her support for the Air America Act of 2021. Employees who worked for Air America, the Central Intelligence Agency's proprietary airline, actually conducted search and rescue for pilots and personnel during the Vietnam War and provided vital transportation for thousands of troops, refugees and rescues in Laos.

"The employees of Air America have never been recognized as federal employees, and therefore were never deemed eligible to receive a federal pension," she said. "It's now clear that, while their employees were nominally working for Air America, they were really working for the federal government. This legislation would classify time employed by Air America as creditable service, making those employees, or their heirs, eligible for federal retirement benefits."

The bill has more than 100 co-sponsors in the House.

Brother Richard Ullo rides with the local PGR and has been invited to come to SAVC and tell us about his service with the PGR. Possibly two or three other members will come with him.

Pastor Richard Ullo was called to be the pastor of Bible Baptist church, Spanish Fort, in January 2009. He married his wife Sharon in 1986. He later graduated from Bible College with a Bachelor's Degree in Christian ministries. Pastor Ullo and his wife began a Deaf Ministry in Texas, reaching over 300 Deaf and Hard of Hearing People with the Gospel. Later his family moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana to serve as an assistant pastor, youth pastor, & Christian school administrator. He moved to Spanish Fort, Alabama in order to rebuild a small church. Under his leadership Bible Baptist Church has continued to consistently grow.

Flag Resolution of June 14, 1777 - stated: "Resolved: that the flag of the United States be made of thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation."

Flag facts from the Smithsonian Institute

TOAST TO THE FLAG

Here's to the red of it There's not a thread of it
No, nor a shred of it In all the spread of it
From foot to head, But heroes bled for it,
Faced steel and lead for it, Precious blood shed for it,
Bathing it red!

Here's to the white of it- Thrilled by the sight of it,
Who knows the right of it But feels the might of it
Through day and night? Womanhood's care for it
Made manhood dare for it, Purity's prayer for it
Keeps it so white!

Here's to the blue of it - Beauteous view of it
Heavenly hue of it, Star-spangled dew of it
Constant and true; Diadems gleam for it,
States stand supreme for it, Liberty's beam for it
Brightens the blue!

Here's to the whole of it - Stars, stripes and pole of it,
Body and soul of it, Oh, and the roll of it,
Sun shining through; Hearts in accord for it,
Swear by the sword for it, Thanking the Lord for it,
Red, White and Blue!!

Author: John Daly

Chevrolet used the Starterator, a vacuum controlled mechanism in place of a separate mechanical foot starter on passenger cars in 1933-1934 Master models and 1935-1937 Master Deluxe models. This feature would allow the driver to press down on the accelerator pedal to start the car.

The **United States Army (USA)** is the land service branch of the United States Armed Forces. It is one of the eight U.S. uniformed services, and is designated as the Army of the United States in the U.S. Constitution. As the oldest and most senior branch of the U.S. military in order of precedence, the modern U.S. Army has its roots in the Continental Army, which was formed (**14 June 1775**) to fight the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783) before the United States of America was established as a country. After the Revolutionary War, the Congress of the Confederation created the United States Army on 3 June 1784 to replace the disbanded Continental Army. The United States Army considers itself to be a continuation of the Continental Army, and thus considers its institutional inception to be the origin of that armed force in 1775.

Try not to become a person of success, but rather try to become a person of value. — Albert Einstein



The U.S. Army is a uniformed service of the United States and is part of the Department of the Army, which is one of the three military departments of the Department of Defense. The U.S. Army is headed by a civilian senior appointed civil servant, the Secretary of the Army (SECARMY) and by a chief military officer, the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) who is also a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is the largest military branch, and in the fiscal year 2020, the projected end strength for the Regular Army (USA) was 480,893 soldiers; the Army National Guard (ARNG) had 336,129 soldiers and the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) had 188,703 soldiers; the combined-component strength of the U.S. Army was 1,005,725 soldiers.

As a branch of the armed forces, the mission of the U.S. Army is "to fight and win our Nation's wars, by providing prompt, sustained land dominance, across the full range of military operations and the spectrum of conflict, in support of combatant commanders". The branch participates in conflicts worldwide and is the major ground-based offensive and defensive force of the United States.



L) Col John Kilpatrick, US Army (ret), VRR
R) Michael Austin, Chaplain SAVC, VRR



Rich Landolt, Navy Vet



L) Rear Admiral Kent Davis, US Navy (ret)
R) Col Pat Downing, US Army SF (ret)



L) Omer Oglesby, Air Force Vet
R) Flynn Christian, Army Vet

"Patriotism is supporting your country all the time, and your government when it deserves it."

– Mark Twain

L) Janet Oglesby, Veteran of many years married to Omer
R) Karen Montee



*except where noted all
Photos By Bill Atkeison*





FACES OF THE PRICE OF FREEDOM — Blue Star Salute Foundation
display of photos of those from Alabama who died in service since 9/11/2001



Buffalo Soldiers present the Colors



Montford Point Marines fold the Flag



Vendors at Blue Star Salute/Armed Forces Day

