2025

Mayport Navy League November Newsletter

President – Bob Whitkop (904) 900-8934 http://www.mayportnlus.org

Calendar of Events

November 1 - All Souls Day

November 3 - MMDTG and Diaper Distribution at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church 3-5pm

November 4 - Primary Elections

November 6 - Food Farmacy at Fleet Reserve Assoc at 390 Mayport Rd 10am-noon; MNL BOD meeting at Ocean Breeze Conference Ctr 6:00pm

November 10 - USMC 250th Birthday

November 11 - Veterans Day

November 20 - Hanukkuh Celebration

November 27 - Thanksgiving

SAVE THE DATE

MNL 2026 9th Mike McGrath Memorial Golf Tournament on 20 April 2026

Looking for corporate sponsor contacts- see John Strohofer at cjstrohofer@gmail.com

THERE'S STILL TIME TO GET YOUR VETERANS DAY COINS

Veterans Day is almost here, but it is not too late to honor those who served. When you order today, our domestic production team can craft and deliver your custom challenge coins in as little as two weeks.

Info@AllAboutChallengeCoins.com

USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul returns home

On October 13th, the USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21), a Freedom-variant Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), returned to Naval Station Mayport, concluding its maiden deployment to the U.S. Fourth Fleet Area of Responsibility (AOR).

The seven-month deployment showcased the versatility and capabilities of the LCS class within the U.S. Navy's surface fleet, while making an operational impact and achieved historic milestones.

“I’m proud of the excellent execution demonstrated by Minneapolis-Saint Paul. Underway for 130 of her 200 days deployed and maintaining an operational availability of more than 90 percent, Minneapolis-Saint Paul marked a decisive moment of self-sufficiency for the class, one we will continue to build upon…” his said Rear Admiral Joe Cahill, Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic.

USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul is primarily assigned to the Caribbean and during the deployment achieved many successful counter-narcotics interdictions. The crew seized an historic amount of over 7,153 kgs (15,737 lbs) of narcotics, worth a total of just under $195 million.

USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul is a Littoral Combat Ship that is a fast, agile, mission-focused platform designed to operate in near-shore environments and capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence. *Published by: America’s Navy Press release*

The Mayport Navy League values membership volunteerism and support

SEA CADETS CORNER

Sea Cadets October Drill

On Oct. 4th, the Mayport Sea Cadets supported the Honor Flight out of Jacksonville International Airport. The cadets mustered at 0500 to prepare for the arrival of 23 veterans that would travel to Washington DC for the day. They helped with unloading the veterans from the bus and moving them through the airport. One of the highlights of the morning was being able to interact with the veterans at the gate prior to their departure. Many of the veterans were happy to share stories and experiences from their military careers and were very interested in learning what our cadets wanted to do in the future. Once the veterans boarded their flight, our cadets received a behind the scenes tour of TSA operations. It was a busy morning for everyone.

Thursday evening, October 16th, five of our cadets supported "A Night of Honor" event hosted by Platoon Wave (www.platoonwave.com) on behalf of the Navy Seal Foundation. They attended the dinner and helped the auction event by checking in guests, manning silent auction booths, live auction, and clean-up. It was a great opportunity for a few of them to learn about and interact with Special Operations warriors.

Our last drill of October was October 25th on base. Cadets mustered at the unit house for morning colors, did their second PRT of the year, and quite a bit of work on marching and formations. We also issued and updated their dress white uniforms, all to prepare for the upcoming Veterans Day Parade. We will be marching in the Kingsland, GA parade on Nov. 11th followed by a celebration at the VFW.

Summary and photos by Ron Harnek

SEA CADETS

NS Mayport 4th Quarter Sailor of the Quarter

On Tuesday, October 28th, MNL and its supporting sponsors hosted the Naval Station Mayport 4th Quarter Sailor of the Quarter (SOQ) Award Program at the Ocean Breeze Conference Center on Tuesday, October 28th.

Command Master Chief Strickland opened the program with the Presentation of the Colors, followed by the invocation, and then lunch. The “Thanksgiving holiday” themed meal included: Roasted Turkey w/ Dressing and the traditional side dishes with cookies for dessert.

After the meal, Captain Trumbull spoke about the history of the Sailor of the Year program, and then introduced the keynote speaker, Command Master Chief Thomas Perkins. CMDCM Perkins talked about the importance of the SOQ program and leadership development.

The program was well attended with 180 attendees to include Sailors, Coast Guardsmen, family members and supporters. The program concluded with a group photo.

Are you interested in becoming a MNL Board Member? If so, contact Bob Whitkop for more information.

MILITARY MONDAYS-DINNERS TO GO

and the government shutdown

(MMDTG)

October 6th MMDTG

Photos by George Huchtings

On October 1st, the government shutdown. The military members received their first of the month paycheck but there were looming fears of a continued shutdown without a 15th payday check.

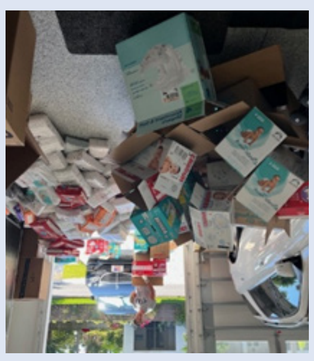
On Monday October 6th, MNL hosted another MMDTG. Chick-Fil-A food for almost 200 dinners was distributed in less than 90 minutes. Families that received food were asked how they felt about the possibility of not receiving a paycheck on the 15th; one family with six children and whose spouse is at sea, just started crying.

The Food Farmacy is sponsored by the COJ and provides grocery food items to those with military ID cards; in the past months, the food carline for food is about 100 cars. On Oct 9th, the carline was over 200 and the food ran out with many military families leaving without food.

The need for food is real. With the government shutdown, the military pay remained uncertain for the 15th which caused increased anxiety and food insecurity concerns within the military families. To help ease the anxiety, MNL hosted a special government shutdown MMDTG food distribution Monday, October13th, just before payday on the 15th. Funds for food distribution were provided from personal donations. Local Action News Jax broadcasted on the 13th and interviewed many military spouses and family members.

Photos by Brian Kennedy and Barbara Ives

October 13th MMDTG



To support military families, the MNL sponsored FREE Diapers & Baby Wipes in conjunction with the MMDTG on the 13th. Through an incredible response from the Ponte Vedra Inn and Club Aqua Exercise Ladies and the South Jacksonville Community Coffee Group over 10,000 diapers were donated and hundreds of baby wipes. Local TV Action News Jacksonville visited a MNL member's home to see stacks of diapers and reported on it.

Per President Trump's actions, the military members were paid on October 15th, but uncertainty remains since Congress has not passed a Continuing Resolution. A large personal donation after October 13th allowed MNL to host another MMDTG on 20 October. Just like the other MMDTGs, the food ran out in less than 30 minutes. The food concerns remain.

The next MMDTG is scheduled for November 3rd. If interested in supporting MNL's food program, please donate and write the check to: Mayport Navy League, PO Box 331944, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233-1715. All donations are tax deductible.

October 20th MMDTG

Photos by George Huchtings

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Jacksonville Sea & Sky 2025 Experience

On Saturday and Sunday, October 25 & 26, the skies and waterways of the First Coast were transformed into the backdrop for the most exciting air acts and military demonstrations.

This free event featured dynamic over-the-ocean sky shows. Due to the government shutdown, the highly acclaimed world-famous United States Navy Blue Angels did not fly. Each day the show included awe-inspiring aviation with an elite lineup of Veteran and civilian performers to the skies with amazing skill and precision. The show line-up included:

- **Mini Jet Airshows featuring high-speed aerobatics in a small jet.**
- **Redline Airshows that blended formation flying, dynamic maneuvers, and smoke effects.**
- **The Titan Aerobatic Team with synchronized maneuvers and aerobatics.**
- **Adam Baker showcased precise gyroscopic freestyle maneuvers**
- **Radial Rumble that brought a vintage flair to the Jacksonville skies.**

It was a great weekend with terrific weather.

FOUNDATION
COMMUNITY IMPACT

On October 16th, the Jaguars Foundation Military and Veterans Program awarded a grant to the Navy League of the US Mayport Council for $5,000 in support of the food program for our military members and families.
The Jaguars Foundation's grants to local nonprofits working with our military and veteran community are made as part of our partnership with the City of Jacksonville's Veterans Resource and Reintegration Center at City Hall.
The public announcement was at the Mayor's Season of Valor/Jaguars Salute to Service Grants press conference on Wednesday, October 29th.

A Prayer to our Veterans

**Oh God, Our Heavenly Father,
You have blessed us with brave men and women
who are willing to defend our freedom.
May Your protection and grace surround them each day.
Let Your healing hand be upon whose who suffer wounds and injuries.
May those who have made the ultimate sacrifice rest forever in
Your Holy Presence.
Comfort the families who mourn and are left to remember
the precious lives of their loved ones.
Help us to honor and support them.
Let us ever be mindful of each sacrifice made on behalf of the
American people by our sons, daughters, husbands, wives, mothers,
fathers, and friends.
Amen**

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Mayport Sea Cadets Support Wreaths Across America

The Mayport Sea Cadets will again participate in placing Wreaths Across America (WAA) at the Jacksonville National Cemetery on Saturday, December 13th.

By contributing to WAA, you are supporting Mayport Sea Cadets. Each $17 sponsorship supports WAA's yearlong program by placing a live, balsam Veteran's wreath on the headstone of an American hero as we endeavor to honor all Veterans laid to rest as part of National Wreaths Across America Day.

Please consider participating in this special program. Your sponsorship honors those who served and lost their lives and supports the Mayport Sea Cadet training programs.

"We are so grateful to the good people of this great nation for participating in our mission to Remember, Honor, Teach." said Karen Worcester, Executive Director of Wreaths Across America.

To sponsor a wreath and support the Sea Cadets, click on the link below.

http://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/FL0943P

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