The Knox County Joint Veterans Council are looking for volunteers!!!

The Knox County Joint Veterans Council is located at the Knox County Veterans Service Office located at 105 E Chestnut St. Mount Vernon, Ohio. The post conducts regular meetings on the third Thursday of each month. The meeting time is 7:00 P.M. Contact Carol Riley @ 740-504-3264 to schedule services. Contact Eddie Stage@ 740-504-1597 if you are interested in volunteering. Thank you!



They stand guard silently, vigilantly through whatever Mother Nature dares throw at them. They do so with great pride to honor one of their own. And they do this without thought of payment. For them, honoring a fallen brother-in-arms is compensation enough.

For the families of the deceased soldier, they are the ever-watchful sentinels, and their selfless act is a much-appreciated tribute.

They are the Joint Veterans Council.

WWII explosive removed from city building site on Okinawa

Japanese troops removed and defused an American shell believed to be from World War II from a construction site in Okinawa's capital city over the weekend. Five members of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force's 101st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit on Sunday moved the 5-inch shell by crane into an explosion-proof container and defused it, a spokesman for the city's Disaster Prevention and Crisis Management Division said by phone Tuesday. The shell was discovered Nov. 28 in the Matsuyama district of Naha city. About 60 people from 30 households and nine businesses were asked to evacuate during the removal, according to the city's website. The operation began at 9:28 a.m. and concluded ahead of schedule at 9:55 a.m., the spokesman said. Traffic was restricted to a radius of about 80 feet beginning at 7 a.m. and lifted after the removal. The shell was taken to a prefecture-managed warehouse to be detonated later, he said. Some Japanese government officials spoke to the press only on condition of anonymity

The discovery is the latest at Naha construction sites. Another 5-inch, U.S.-made shell found in October was removed from the Uebaru district and defused in December. The Japanese government has been ramping up searches for similar ordnance at airports across the country. The government began surveys in October at Miyazaki Airport on Kyushu, the southernmost of Japan's four main islands, after a World War II-era bomb exploded that month. Magnetic surveys began in December at Naha Airport, along with airports in Sendai, Matsuyama and Fukuoka. Crews disposed of nearly 22 tons of unexploded ordnance leftover from WWII on Okinawa between April 1, 2023, and March 31.



Nancy Leftenant-Colon, first Black woman to serve in US Army Nurse Corps, dies at 104

Retired Maj. Nancy Leftenant-Colon, the first African American commissioned into the U.S. Army Nurse Corps after it was desegregated in the 1940s, has died at the age of 104. Leftenant-Colon died peacefully at a nursing facility in her hometown of Amityville, N.Y., on Jan. 8, her nephew, Chris Leftenant, told National Public Radio on Wednesday. "Lefty," as she was known to many, was lauded for breaking down racial barriers and for her lifelong dedication to preserving the legacy of African American military pioneers.

Born on Sept. 29, 1920, near Charleston, S.C., Leftenant-Colon was one of 12 children of James and Eunice Leftenant and the granddaughter of a freed slave, according to her official biography. Her family left the Jim Crow South for Amityville in 1923. After graduating from nursing school in 1941, Leftenant-Colon attempted to join the military but was told Black nurses weren't allowed. She kept trying, and in January 1945, she was accepted into the Army Nurse Corps as a reservist with the rank of second lieutenant. Black nurses were still prohibited from joining the regular Army at the time. Her first assignment took her to Lowell General Hospital in Fort Devens, Mass., where she treated World War II casualties in the final months of the conflict.

President Harry Truman signed an executive order abolishing segregation in the military in 1948. Upon hearing the news, Leftenant-Colon applied for regular Army Nurse Corps status and became the first Black woman integrated into the Corps. She was assigned at the time to the 332nd Station Medical Group at Lockbourne Army Air Base, now Rickenbacker Air Force Base, in Ohio. It was the same base where the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of primarily African American military pilots and service members who fought in World War II, were stationed. Leftenant-Colon chose to transfer to the Air Force when the service split from the Army after the war. She was deployed overseas during the Korean and Vietnam wars. In addition to helping set up field hospitals in war zones, she was a flight nurse on the first medical evacuation flight during the battle of Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam, according to her biography on the Tuskegee Airmen website. Leftenant-Colon's final assignment was to McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., where she retired as chief nurse in 1965. "This is what I wanted, and this is what I went after," Leftenant-Colon said of her career in a 2023 interview with CBS.

Leftenant-Colon wasn't shy about speaking of the racism she faced during her career, which overlapped with the civil rights movement. While she served, there was "always fear and discrimination; however, I was determined that it would not deter me," according to a quote in her biography on the National Association of American Veterans website. She married Air Force Reserve Capt. Bayard K. Colon after retirement. Colon died of a heart attack in 1972. The couple had no children. Leftenant-Colon continued to break down barriers after her military career, becoming the first, and so far only, woman to be elected president of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., an organization dedicated to preserving the memory of the historic group. She held the post from 1989 to 1991. Leftenant-Colon was the first African American commissioned into the U.S. Army Nurse Corps after it was desegregated in the 1940s.

"She was an amazing little lady, rest easy Nurse Nancy," the group's national office said in a Facebook post Jan. 9. Five of Leftenant-Colon's siblings also were in the military, including her younger brother Sam Leftenant, a pilot with the Tuskegee Airmen who was killed in a midair collision in April 1945. His remains have yet to be found and identified. Following her military service, Leftenant-Colon worked as a school nurse at Amityville High School, the same school she graduated from in 1939. A new media center at the school was named after her in 2018. Leftenant-Colon, along with selected members of the Tuskegee Airmen, received the Congressional Gold Medal from President George W. Bush in March 2007. "I really feel that I was put here for a reason," Leftenant-Colon told CBS in 2023. "Life has been really very good to me."

Coast Guard to 'Surge Assets' to South Florida to Comply with Trump's Executive Order

MIAMI — The U.S. Coast Guard said Tuesday night that it will be surging ships, boats and aircraft to South Florida and other areas of the country to bolster anti-maritime migration efforts to comply with President Donald Trump's executive order to use the nation's military to defend the border. The announcement comes the same day the acting Secretary of Homeland Security Benjamine Huffman fired Adm. Linda Fagan as commandant of the Coast Guard, which is responsible for maritime security. Fagan was not only the first woman to lead the Coast Guard, but also the first woman in uniform to head any branch of the country's armed forces.

Although the Coast Guard is a military branch, it falls under the command of Homeland Security since it's also a federal law enforcement agency.

Adm. Kevin Lunday, acting commandant, released a statement Tuesday noting the decision to flood South Florida and other U.S. maritime borders with more Coast Guard members and assets is in adherence with Trump's executive order on border security. Lunday said he has directed the agency's operational commanders to surge "cutters, aircraft, boats and deployable specialized forces" to the Florida Straits "to deter and prevent a maritime mass migration from Haiti and/or Cuba."

Other areas of the U.S. and its territories that will see an increased Coast Guard presence, per the announcement, are the maritime border between the Bahamas and Florida, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Somoa, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Coast Guard will also be sending personnel and assets to the southwest maritime border between Texas and Mexico in the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean, reads the announcement, which refers to the Gulf of Mexico as the "Gulf of America" — renamed by Trump in another executive order Monday. Lunday also directed the Coast Guard to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection's anti-migrant efforts in maritime areas of the southwest U.S. border.

Maritime migration from both Cuba and Haiti has slowed significantly since both the state of Florida and the Biden administration deployed increased forces to South Florida and the Keys after a surge in landings in late 2022 and early 2023 overwhelmed local law enforcement.

So many people from Cuba were arriving during that time that the federal government was forced to close Dry Tortugas National Park, located about 70 miles from Key West, in January 2023. About 300 people from Cuba had landed at the park in the weeks following New Year's Day of that year.

However, after Florida National Guard soldiers, Florida Highway Patrol troopers and Florida Fish and Wildlife and Conservation Commission officers — as well as more Coast Guard and Customs personnel sent by the federal government — began to bolster patrols in the Keys, arrivals slowed precipitously.

While migrant boats are still being stopped along the Florida Straits, arrivals on land went from an almost daily occurrence to barely one per month.

Haitian migrant arrivals also increased significantly between 2022 and 2023, but less frequently, albeit in larger boats and groups than those coming from Cuba. However, despite ongoing turmoil and increased violence from armed gangs, maritime migration from Haiti to South Florida has also dropped significantly. The last large arrival of Haitians in South Florida was when a sailboat carrying about 120 people arrived in Key West in June.



Pictures of the Month



Air Force explosive ordnance disposal technicians assigned to the 379th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron pose for a photo during a controlled demolition within the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility



An Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II flies a routine mission over the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, Jan. 3, 2025.