

Vol III, No. 6 - September 2019



**Indian River Chapter MOAA**

**P.O. Box 644047**

**Vero Beach, FL 32964-4047**

*Indian River Chapter*

*Since 1983*

**NEW MEMBERS WELCOME**

Do you know someone who is a retired or former military officer or widowed spouse of an officer, but not a member of our chapter or MOAA? If so, ask them to join and contact Carroll Oates at 954-494-8742.



**2019 Officers and Board**

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**1st Vice President**

LTC Carroll Oates 954-494-8742

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**2nd Vice President**

MAJ Terry Treat 703-304-4935

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LtCol Eric "Rip" Wieler 794-9719

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**INDIAN RIVER CHAPTER NEWS**

[www.ircmoaa.org](http://www.ircmoaa.org)

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

I hope everyone had a wonderful summer and had the opportunity rest, relax, travel and visit with loved ones. Rest assured our chapter remained busy during this summer hiatus!

Carroll Oates and I along with our spouses attended the **2019 Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) Convention** in Safety Harbor, Florida June 21-23. The event hosted by the Tampa Chapter was a success both from a professional perspective as well as a great time to socialize with fellow officers.

The **2020 FCOC convention** will be held in Palm Beach Gardens and will be hosted by the Palm Beach-Martin County Chapters from 29-31 May at the newly furnished Palm Beach Gardens Marriott.

Our chapter members continued to play a major role in the leadership and activities of the **Veterans Council of Indian River County** and played an active role in organizing and participating in Memorial Day 2019 Ceremony on Memorial Island Sanctuary, Veterans Helping Veterans (VHV) Program, 4th of July Parade in Sebastian, and much more.

I will be presenting a robust agenda for the remainder of this year and as always I encourage the continued involvement of the membership.

**Bob Albrecht**  
**President**

**NEVER STOP SERVING**

September 2019

## BOB ALBRECHT'S MESSAGES

### September 9th Board of Directors Meeting

Our Chapter September Board Meeting will be held at the Vero Beach Airport conference room on Monday September 9th at 1:30 PM (1300).

We have many items to discuss concerning our chapters involvement upcoming activities. These include support of the Veterans Council Golf Tournament, Vero Beach 2020 Air Show, Walk-A-thon for Military Suicide Awareness (sponsored by IRC Gold Star Mothers), and much more.

I encourage committee chairs to attend this meeting; moreover, all chapter members are welcome to attend.

### Indian River Chapter Awarded a Five-Star Level of Excellence Award for 2018

Indian River Chapter has been recognized by MOAA with a Five-Star level of excellence award for 2018. Every year, MOAA's affiliates compete to receive a four- or five-star Levels of Excellence Award.

The very best councils and chapters receive five-star awards, while above-average councils and chapters receive four-star awards. This year, 135 of MOAA's very best councils and chapters earned five-star awards, while 23 above-average councils and chapters received four-star awards.

Congratulations to all the members that contributed to our successes in 2018 that earned Indian Chapter the designation of a Five-Star Chapter.

### Annual Veterans Council of Indian River Golf Tournament

This year the tournament will be held at Grand Harbor Golf and Beach Club on **Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 11:00 AM**. Proceeds of the annual golf tournament directly benefit the veterans and families served by the Veterans Council of Indian River County. See the attached sponsor and player registration form.

**Bob Albrecht**  
President

## LEN FRIEDLANDER'S LETTER OF CONGRATULATIONS

I would like to congratulate you and the members of your chapter on your selection for the MOAA Five-Star Level of Excellence Award. MOAA's topnotch councils and chapters compete annually to receive Levels of Excellence Awards, and the very best chapters receive Five-Star awards. You are truly deserving of the MOAA honors, and help to make the Florida Council a leader in MOAA. The LoE Award Certificate and Medallion will be presented to the awardees at the upcoming FCOC Leadership Forum on January 10/11 2020 in Orlando.

I hope to see you and your chapter leadership at the event.

Once again. Congratulations and thank you.

Len

**Len Friedlander, Col, USAF (Ret)**  
President, Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC)  
Military Officers Association of America



## MESSAGE FROM CARROLL OATES

The MOAA team for **Veterans in the Classroom** has begun its new school year. Carroll Oates and Terry Treat conducted a flag class on the first day of school, Monday August 12, 2019. They report that they already have additional classes scheduled. If any member MOAA member or spouse would like to observe one of the classes, please contact **Carroll Oates, Terry Treat, or Patty Ryan**.

Watch for the October 2019 MOAA magazine. Many of our IRC MOAA members are mentioned in an article, "A Chapter with Vision and Purpose."

We are planning an Officer's Call get together in the next 3 months, likely at The Walking Tree Brewery.

# Annual Veterans Council of IRC Golf Tournament Saturday, October 5th



## Grand Harbor Golf & Beach Club 4985 Club Terrace, Vero Beach, FL 32967

11am: Check in. Free Driving Range.

1pm: Scramble Shotgun Start

5:30pm: Cash Bar Cocktail Hour

6:30pm: Dinner & prizes for Closest to the Pin, Longest Drive, & more

### BECOME A SPONSOR!

- Hole Sponsor: \$150 each
- Silver Sponsor: \$1,000
- Gold Sponsor: \$2,000
- Platinum Sponsor: \$2,500
- Tournament Sponsor: \$5,000
- Cash donations & raffle items are also appreciated.

**Golf Registration Deadline  
Friday, September 27th**

For more information, please contact Jim Romanek at 772-410-5820 or [fundraising@veteranscouncilirc.org](mailto:fundraising@veteranscouncilirc.org).

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Disclosure: A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the state. Call 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) or go to [www.FloridaConsumerHelp.com](http://www.FloridaConsumerHelp.com) for more information. Our registration number is CH12904. Tax Exempt EIN: 59-2970832

Please submit this form with your check or credit card information by September 27th, 2019 to P.O. Box 1354 Vero Beach, FL 32961.

Please retain a copy of this page for your tax purposes.



Single player, \$150

Foursome, \$600

Fee includes golf, carts, beverages on course, and dinner

Dinner only, \$75 per person

No refunds. Proper dress code required. No denim.

Golf/Dinner fees: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsorship fees: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsorship level: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Registration: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Chk#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Golfer #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Golfer #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Golfer #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Golfer #4: \_\_\_\_\_

#### PAYMENT INFORMATION. Please check payment type.

VISA     MASTERCARD     DISCOVER

Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Digit Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of charge: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

September 2019

**OUR SPEAKER FOR SEPTEMBER 20 IS U.S. NAVY CAPTAIN WINSTON SCOTT**



Our speaker is retired US Navy Captain and former **NASA astronaut Winston Scott**. Capt Scott served as a mission specialist on the Space Shuttle *Endeavour* in 1996 and the Shuttle *Columbia* in 1997, and conducted 3 spacewalks.

He is one of only 536 people on our planet who have been in space, and one of only 226 who have done a spacewalk. Captain Scott was born in Florida, and educated at Florida State University and the Naval Postgraduate School. He has logged over 7,000 hours in 25 different military and civilian aircraft, to include ASW helos, the F-14, F-18, and A-7, and made more than 200 shipboard landings.

He will relate to us his space experiences and provide insight into what's next for the US space program.

This is a remarkable opportunity to meet an exceptional person...don't miss it!



**Photo: U.S. Navy Captain Winston Scott on a space walk.**

**MESSAGE FROM PATRICIA RYAN, THE TREASURER**

*You now have the opportunity to pay your chapter dues and make donations online.*

This will make things more efficient across the board. You will no longer have to send in a physical check, and the chapter will get their funds quicker. Additionally, there is no charge to the chapter for this service, as National MOAA covers any service charges. There will be detailed instructions in the October and November newsletters to explain this new process.

As always, you are welcome to pay the old fashioned way, either by cash or check!

**Now and Always  
We'll be There.**



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September 2019

**A WWII Story: Joseph B. McDivitt (1917-2019)  
Chiasso, Switzerland, April 28, 1945.**

Six hundred desperate German army soldiers want to force their way into Switzerland. The Swiss Federal Council had refused all such entries. The Germans fear the Americans, who had arrived the evening before in nearby Como, will hand them over to the Russians, and threaten to detonate trucks filled with explosives at the border crossing situated in the middle of the town.

The mission of the Swiss-Italian Infantry 32nd Regiment is to protect the border. Its commander, **Colonel Mario Martinoni**, rides to Como in a car marked with a Swiss flag and a white flag of truce. Only the Americans can now defuse the dangerous situation.

The officers of the US 13th Tank Battalion had spent the previous night at the “Hotel Metropole Suisse”. The commander decides: “Mac, you take care of it!” Mac is **Major Joseph B. McDivitt**, battalion executive officer, not yet 28 years old. McDivitt has served during the entire war with the 1st Armored Division, “Old Ironsides”: from November 1942 as a Second Lieutenant in Operation Torch, the Allied operations in Morocco and Algeria, from October 1943 in Italy from Naples to Cassino to Anzio, and as a Captain during the liberation of Rome and the breakthrough over the Apennine mountains. Major McDivitt’s war ends in Chiasso. The following day, he is ordered to return home. He remains a soldier and retires in 1966 as a Colonel.

**Locked up in the soccer stadium**

On April 28, 1945, McDivitt deliberately chooses to drive, not with tanks, but with only a few soldiers in three open jeeps to the border where he finds die-hard Nazi troops and Swiss soldiers confronting each other.

The young major with the boyish smile promises to the Germans upon his word of honor as an American officer that they will not be handed to the Russians. The Germans surrender and are locked up at the soccer stadium of Como. Under the eyes of the Swiss soldiers, their arms are stacked like firewood. Chiasso is saved and the border intact.

Narrow-minded Swiss military superiors charge the resourceful local Swiss commander, **Colonel Mario Martinoni**, with violating Swiss neutrality. His promising career – Swiss Army commander General Guisan called him once the most brilliant Swiss-Italian

officer of his generation – ends without glory. By pure chance, McDivitt hears about this almost ten years later. A Swiss officer meets him in an American staff course, McDivitt talks about Chiasso, takes out his wallet and produces a carefully preserved photo of Colonel Martinoni. They never met again face to face, and Colonel Martinoni dies in 1981.

Years later, I am the Consul General of Switzerland in Milan, the big Italian city near the Swiss border. During a dinner with the city council of Chiasso, the conversation touches upon the events of 1945. I cannot help but remark that Martinoni and McDivitt should have long ago been honored with a monument. The councilors meet the proposal with enthusiasm. Deputy Mayor Roberta Pantani, now a member of the Swiss parliament, energetically pursues the project, together with the local military reserve organizations. The solemn inauguration of the monument is scheduled for April 28, 2010.

I locate McDivitt, by now over 92 years old, in a suburb of Los Angeles, call and explain to him what has been planned. His answer: “I have waited for that call for sixty-five years. Count me in.”

**Often in life, gratitude comes too late. Not in this case**

A grand week with Joe follows. His Vietnamese wife Myly accompanies him, by now herself a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army. McDivitt had saved her in 1975 in Saigon from the Communists who had already entered the city. Many know the picture of people being evacuated from the roof of the American Embassy in Saigon. McDivitt is on it.

We visit with him all the important locations from those days, even the place where **Benito Mussolini** and his mistress **Clara Petacci** were shot. He particularly insists on that, because since 1945, he believes that he might have prevented this summary execution. On the evening of 27 April, some Italian resistance fighters in Como told McDivitt that they had captured the Duce. Would he like to see him? McDivitt was dead-tired and said no. The next morning, Mussolini was dead. At the place where this happened, the small village of Giulino di Mezzegra above Lake Como, I convinced Joe that this execution had not been decided by local fighters, but by the communist leader for Northern Italy, Luigi Longo, and the socialist politician Sandro Pertini, who much later was the Italian president.

**(Continued on next page.)**



Photo: Joseph McDivitt

Photo: Colonel Mario Martinoni (Switzerland) and Major Joseph B. McDivitt (USA), 1945

(Continued from previous page.)

McDivitt is relieved, but by now, we have drawn the attention of the villagers. They show us the house where the Duce spent his last night. They invite us for an espresso in the local café. A man produces a bag and asks us to open it. Inside are a rusty Luger pistol and a pair of elegant lady's pumps. They are supposedly the pistol that the man's uncle had used to finish off Mussolini and the shoes of Clara Petacci. Se non è vero...

August 1, 2011, Switzerland's National Day. The city of Chiasso appoints Joseph B. McDivitt, who has come once again, this time accompanied by his son David, and beaming in a brand-new U.S. colonel's dress uniform, its honorary citizen. Often in life, gratitude comes too late. Not in this case. Joseph B. McDivitt passed away January 20, 2019, in Los Angeles. Well done, sir!

#### David Vogelsanger

*David Vogelsanger is a Swiss diplomat, currently the Swiss Ambassador to New Zealand. He is a long time friend of our own Terry Treat.*

### Indian River Chapter Newsletter

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### FROM THE EDITOR

#### By Robert Scheppy

Would you like to submit an **Article of Interest**? Send it to Robert Scheppy, Editor, for inclusion in the Newsletter. [scheppy70@gmail.com](mailto:scheppy70@gmail.com)

### OUR PUBLISHER

**Postal Connections** publishes our Newsletter. The store is owned and operated by **Marc Richard**, a fellow MOAA member. Marc is located on 1275 US Highway 1, Suite 2, Vero Beach, FL 32960. He's next to a Publix. Tel 772-778-4241. Fax 772-778-4246. [pca228@postalconnections.com](mailto:pca228@postalconnections.com)

September 2019



**SEPTEMBER CHAPTER LUNCHEON REGISTRATION**

**IRC luncheon, Friday September 20, 2019**

**Vero Beach Yacht Club, 11:30 AM**

Our speaker is retired US Navy Captain and former NASA astronaut **Winston Scott**. Captain Scott served as a mission specialist on the Space Shuttle *Endeavour* in 1996 and the Shuttle *Columbia* in 1997, and conducted 3 spacewalks. He is one of only 536 people on our planet who have been in space, and one of only 226 who have done a spacewalk. This is a remarkable opportunity to meet an exceptional person...don't miss it!

**Menu Choices: \$22.00**

- (1) Chicken Breast Alfresco
- (2) Meatloaf w/Wild Mushroom Sauce
- (3) Chicken Cobb Salad

Dessert – per Chef

( **Kelly Menger** can be contacted at [kcremens@hotmail.com](mailto:kcremens@hotmail.com))

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—TEAR LINE—

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**Send reservations and payment by 5:00 PM**

**Friday September 13, 2019**

**VERO BEACH YACHT CLUB**

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Menu choices: \$22.00 per person**

- (1) Chicken Breast Alfresco \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Meatloaf w/Wild Mushroom sauce \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) Chicken Cobb salad \$ \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make payments by check payable to IRC-MOAA. Mail to:

**IRC-MOAA**

**PO Box 644047**

**Vero Beach, FL 32964**