



ANCHOR LINE Jan-Mar 2026

Moving Forward with Growth and Innovation... Supporting our Sea Services and Youth Groups

This Issue:

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Supported Units and Youth Groups

SMC Events

Member Spotlight

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Youth Group News & Posts

Fundraising

Partnerships Update

From the Council President,

As we chart our course into 2026, I am proud to report that your Sarasota–Manatee Council stands in a position of strength, purpose, and growing impact. Over the past year, we have built meaningful momentum—expanding our partnerships, strengthening our financial foundation, and deepening our support for both our Sea Services and the remarkable young men and women in our youth programs. Because of your continued commitment, we enter this year with our operations fully funded and a clear ability to focus on what matters most—direct support. From our adopted Coast Guard units to our nine youth organizations, every dollar raised and every hour volunteered is making a visible and lasting difference in our community.

Looking ahead, 2026 will be a year of expansion and engagement. We are actively working to grow our youth program reach, strengthen ties with recently adopted Air Station Clearwater and our Coast Guard units, and increase opportunities for members to connect through meaningful events, service projects, and leadership initiatives. Our goal is simple: broaden our impact while preserving the camaraderie and mission focus that define this Council. We will also continue building on our shift toward strategic partnerships—ensuring long-term sustainability while allowing us to remain agile and responsive to the needs of those we serve. This approach is already yielding results and will remain a cornerstone of our success moving forward.

We need your help. As we continue this momentum, I ask each of you to join our upcoming Giving Challenge campaign. Our goal is to raise \$25,000 and engage 300 donors—and we cannot do it without your support. Please help us spread the word by sharing our mission with your friends and family and encouraging them to be part of the impact we are making. Get ready to give! On April 15–16, 2026, visit www.GivingChallenge.org and make a donation to the Sarasota–Manatee Council of the Navy League. All giving ends promptly at 12:00 PM on April 16, so be sure to make your gift in time. Thanks to the generosity of The Patterson Foundation, all online donations will be matched 1:1, up to \$100 per donor, per nonprofit during the Giving Challenge. This is our primary fundraiser for 2026, and your participation—at any level—will directly support our Sea Services and youth programs. None of this happens without you. Your dedication, professionalism, and belief in our mission are what make this Council exceptional.

Thank you for being part of this journey. I look forward to serving alongside you in what promises to be another outstanding year.

Sincerely,

Gene Mora
Council President



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[Instagram](#)
[YouTube](#)
[SMC Web Site](#)

Our Supported Groups

SEA SERVICES

USCG Sector St. Petersburg
USCG Air Station Clearwater
USCG Cutter Resolute
USCG Cutter Venturous
USCG Station Cortez



YOUTH GROUPS

NJROTC North Port High School
US Naval Sea Cadets Maritime Eagles
NJROTC Lemon Bay High School
Charlotte High School NJROTC
Young Marines Imagine School North Port

CGJROTC Pinellas Park High School
Young Marines Venice Middle School
NJROTC Port Charlotte High School
Venice High School Marine Corps JROTC



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Shipmates, Members, and Friends,

We are proud to announce our 2026 Scholarship and National Flight Academy (NFA) Award recipients—exceptional young leaders who stood out in a highly competitive field:

Cash Scholarship Recipients-\$2500 Each

- Adelynn Vogel – Lemon Bay High School
- Evan Espinosa – Venice High School

National Flight Academy (NFA) Recipients

- Mykhailo Brilisty – Young Marines, Imagine School at North Port
- Matthew Schriber – MCJROTC, Venice High School
- Sean Ballentine – MCJROTC, Venice High School (2025 Awardee)

These individuals exemplify the very best of our youth programs through their leadership, discipline, and commitment to excellence. We also extend our appreciation to all applicants— this year’s competition was exceptionally strong.

Now Join Us as We Honor Them in Person! We invite you to celebrate these outstanding cadets and Young Marines at our: Annual Youth Programs Award & Recognition Luncheon --

Date: April 9, 2026

Time: 11:00 AM

Location: Plantation Golf & Country Club
500 Rockley Blvd., Venice, FL

Guest Speaker: Ms. Teresa Caracciolo, Teacher, North Port High School

Luncheon Details • \$35 for Members • \$45 for Non-Members • A portion of proceeds helps defray meal costs for our awardees. Register Now Tickets are available online through the SMC Navy League website [Click Here](#). Please register by April 2, 2026. This is one of our most meaningful events of the year—where we recognize the future leaders of our sea services and celebrate the impact of your continued support.

THE NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES
SARASOTA - MANATEE COUNCIL

ANNUAL YOUTH PROGRAMS AWARD AND RECOGNITION LUNCHEON

Join Us as we celebrate our Sea Services groups from our Youth Programs of Sea Cadets, Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard JROTCs, and Young Marines.

Guest Speaker
Ms. Teresa Caracciolo
Teacher at Northport High School

April
9 | 11:00am
Plantation Golf and Country Club,
500 Rockley Blvd. Venice FL 34293

LUNCHEON BUFFET
\$35 FOR MEMBERS
\$45 FOR NON-MEMBERS (JOIN HERE)
* A PORTION HELPS DEFRAY THE COST OF MEALS FOR AWARDEES

Register now

On-line Tickets may be purchased at the
[SMC Navy League Website \(Click Here\)](#)
Please purchase by April 2nd, 2026

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Recent SMC Events

Honoring Excellence at Lemon Bay High School NJROTC

The Sarasota-Manatee Council-Navy League of the US was proud to attend the Lemon Bay High School NJROTC Awards Ceremony on March 25, 2026—celebrating the outstanding achievements of this year’s cadets. Board Members Matthew Wooddall and CDR. Steve Bartek, USN (Ret.) were in attendance, with CDR. Bartek having the honor of presenting six Sustained Superior Performance Medals to cadets who demonstrated exceptional dedication, leadership, and commitment throughout the year. The ceremony brought together cadets, families, and distinguished guests, including Principal Mr. Miller, who praised the unit for its strong impact and value within the school community. Prior to the ceremony, our board members toured the campus and met with cadets, learning more about the innovative programs led by CAPT Darrin Glaser—including SeaPerch underwater robotics and a competitive drone program utilizing virtual reality technology. With 72 cadets, the unit has had an incredibly successful year. As one of the schools we proudly support, we celebrate the continued excellence of the Lemon Bay High School NJROTC and look forward to seeing these cadets achieve even greater success in the future!



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Recent SMC Events

2026 SARASOTA COUNTY FAIR

The Sarasota–Manatee Council of the Navy League successfully completed its now-annual fundraising effort at the Sarasota County Fair, selling and collecting tickets at Gate 4 from March 13–22, 2026. Contributing to the success of this project—many by serving multiple shifts—were SMC members Matt Wooddall, Don and Margarete Roser, Joe and Venetia Hayden, Steve and Jeanette Bartek, Seneca Johns, Jared Sweetser, Jerry St. Germain, and Craig Harvey. Additional support came from five volunteers recruited by Matt Wooddall, along with Jennifer Blanchard, Adjutant of the Venice Middle School Young Marines. In total, more than 307 volunteer hours were contributed to this effort, generating approximately \$5,000 for the Council. These funds help offset annual administrative expenses, with the balance supporting general operating needs. Because of efforts such as this, the Council is able to assure donors that 100% of their direct contributions go toward supporting our U.S. Coast Guard units and nine youth groups.

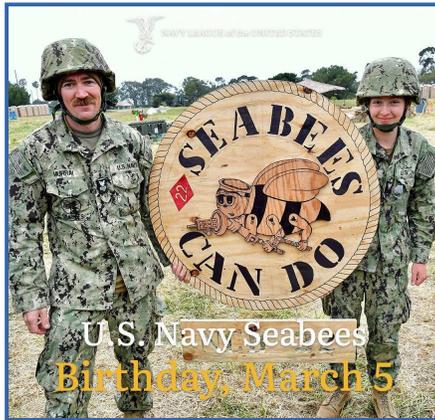


On March 9, Steve Bartek, Vice President for Youth Programs, visited the North Port High School NJROTC unit for several hours. North Port High School NJROTC is one of nine schools supported through our Youth Programs. During the visit, LCDR Dempsey Barnes, Senior Naval Science Instructor, hosted Mr. Bartek for a class observation and provided a tour of the facilities while discussing the unit's programs. The unit currently has approximately 135 cadets. One of the unit's notable focus areas is its drone program. Cadets actively train and compete using multiple types of drones in competitions that test maneuvering skills and mission-based tasks such as identifying and photographing specific vehicles. The cadets also participate in the NJROTC SeaPerch program, where they design, build, and program remotely operated underwater vehicles. During the visit, Cadet Ethan J. Fleming presented LCDR Barnes with his FAA Drone Exam results, having successfully passed the certification. He is the first NJROTC cadet in the area to achieve this distinction. LCDR Barnes presented Cadet Fleming with NJROTC Drone Wings, marking the first set awarded among units in the region. Kudos to Cadet

Fleming for this outstanding accomplishment and for setting a strong example for his fellow cadets. The unit is also preparing to host RADM Matt Pottenburgh, Commander of Naval Service Training Command, for a visit in early April.

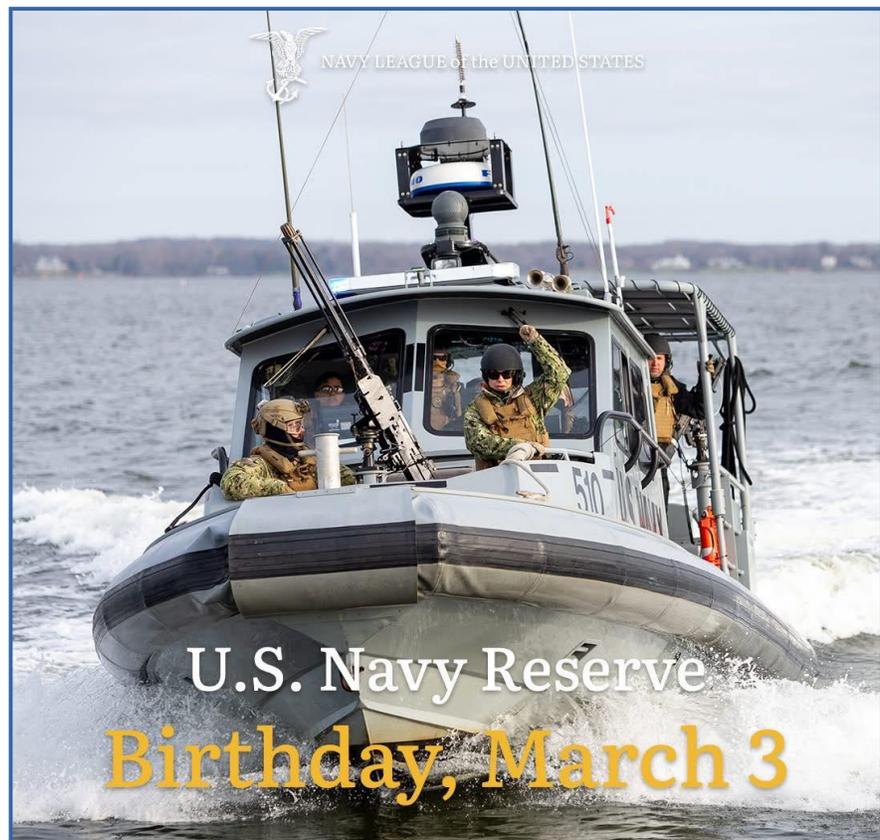
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Recent SMC Events



March 5th, Sarasota-Manatee Council-Navy League of the US wishes Happy Birthday to the U.S. Naval Construction Force! Since 1942, the Seabees have lived by their 'Can Do' motto, supporting our sea services across the globe. Thank you for your relentless hard work and dedication. With compassion, we build; with help, we fight.

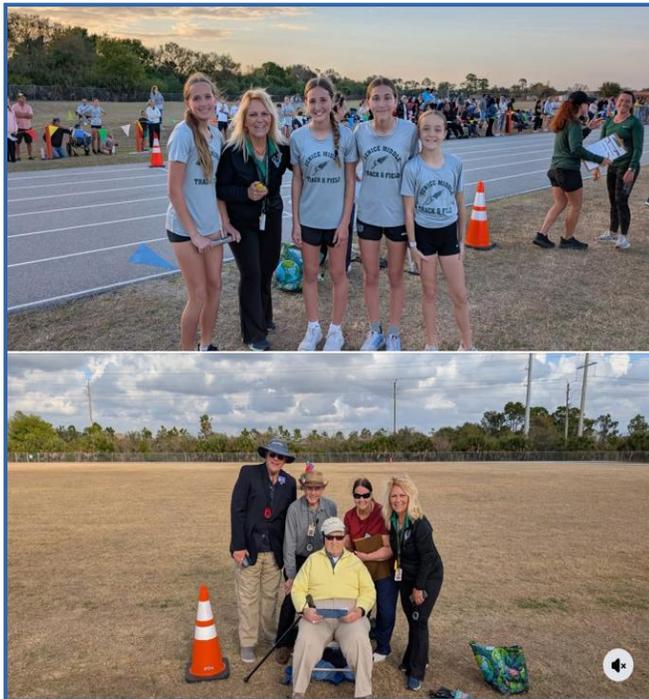
March 3rd, We honor the U.S. Navy Reserve on 111 years of dedicated service. Your role in augmenting our naval forces is vital to our maritime prosperity and national defense. We salute your readiness to answer the call, anytime and anywhere.



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Recent SMC Events

This evening's February Get Together hosted by the Sarasota-Manatee Council-Navy League of the US may have been smaller in turnout, but it was truly meaningful and impactful. The intimate setting allowed for deeper conversations, thoughtful exchanges, and genuine connection among members and guests alike. It was a great reminder that sometimes smaller gatherings create the most value, strengthening relationships and fostering the camaraderie that defines who we are as a Council. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us, and to our venue partner Oak & Stone for hosting a wonderful evening. We look forward to continuing these conversations and welcoming more friends at our upcoming events.



Members of the Sarasota-Manatee Council-Navy League of the US—including several board members—were proud to support Venice Middle School by serving as track officials during the school's home meet on February 26. Our volunteers jumped right into action: Jerry St Germain and Jeanette Bartek kept events running smoothly as timers, while Steve Bartek and Matthew Wooddall oversaw the shot put competition. Adding to the pride of the day, Navy League member Cindy Dickson, the home team's coach, led her athletes with enthusiasm—many of whom are also Young Marines and were thrilled to see our members on site. We were warmly welcomed by Assistant Principal Chuck Woods, reinforcing the strong partnership between the school and our council. The meet also featured teams from McIntosh and Brookside Middle Schools, with athletes competing across track and field events including long jump, discus, and shot put. It was a great day of competition and teamwork—highlighted by a first-place finish for the Venice girls' team and a strong showing by the boys, who narrowly missed second place. We're honored to support our local schools and youth whenever we can.

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Recent SMC Events

🇺🇸 A New Partnership Takes Flight ✈️

On January 20, 2026, the Navy League Sarasota-Manatee Council, alongside the Tampa Council, proudly formalized the adoption of U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater. This meaningful ceremony brought together representatives from both councils in support of the men and women who serve at this vital command.

Representing the Sarasota–Manatee Council were President Gene Moran, Ph.D., 1st Vice President Lorna N. Ow-Elroy, Secretary Jerry St. Germain, and Board Director Marsha Simerly Grogan. The adoption agreement was officially signed by our President Gene Moran, Jennifer Anderson, President of the Tampa Council, and Commanding Officer of Air Station Clearwater David McCown.

We are honored and excited to support Air Station Clearwater and look forward to building a strong and impactful partnership. As Air Station Clearwater celebrates its 50th Anniversary, we extend our deepest gratitude for five decades of unwavering service, dedication, and sacrifice in protecting our nation and communities.

Thank you to the outstanding Coast Guard professionals of Air Station Clearwater for all that you do. We are proud to stand with you and support your mission—today and for years to come. 🇺🇸🚢



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Recent SMC Events

46th Annual USCGC Blackthorn Memorial Service Jan 28. The Sarasota-Manatee Council-Navy League of the US in solemn remembrance at the 46th Annual USCGC Blackthorn Memorial Service in St. Petersburg, honoring the 23 Coast Guardsmen who made the ultimate sacrifice in the tragic loss of the Blackthorn on January 28, 1980. Representing our council were Lorna Ow-Elroy, 1st Vice President, and Marsha Simerly Grogan, Board Director and U.S. Coast Guard Liaison, who proudly attended on our behalf and participated in placing the memorial wreath — a tradition our council supports each year. The ceremony brought together members of the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, partner organizations, family members, and the community. It included heartfelt tributes such as the reading of names, laying of roses for each fallen crew member, wreath placement, and remarks from Rear Admiral Adam Chamie, Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Southeast District, serving as the guest speaker. His words about honoring and remembering those lost truly resonated with all in attendance. This annual service formally reported by the U.S. Coast Guard — not only honors those who gave their lives but also highlights the enduring impact of their legacy on the Coast Guard and its traditions. We pay our respects with profound gratitude to the fallen, their families, and the entire U.S. Coast Guard community who gather year after year to ensure these heroes are never forgotten. May we always remember. May we always honor. Fair winds and following seas.



What a fantastic way to kick off 2026! On January 13th, members and guests of the Sarasota-Manatee Council-Navy League of the US gathered at Agave Bandido in Lakewood Ranch for our January Get-Together. We were thrilled to see such a great turnout and truly enjoyed reconnecting with familiar faces while welcoming new guests. Your continued support and engagement make our community strong and vibrant. The Navy League of the United States (Sarasota-Manatee Council) sincerely appreciates everyone who joined us to celebrate the start of a new year and look forward to many more gatherings ahead!



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Member Spotlight Series | Navy League Sarasota-Manatee Council

We're excited to launch our new Member Spotlight Series, created to recognize and celebrate the incredible individuals who make up our Navy League community. Through this series, we'll be highlighting the service, stories, and commitment of members who embody our mission and values.

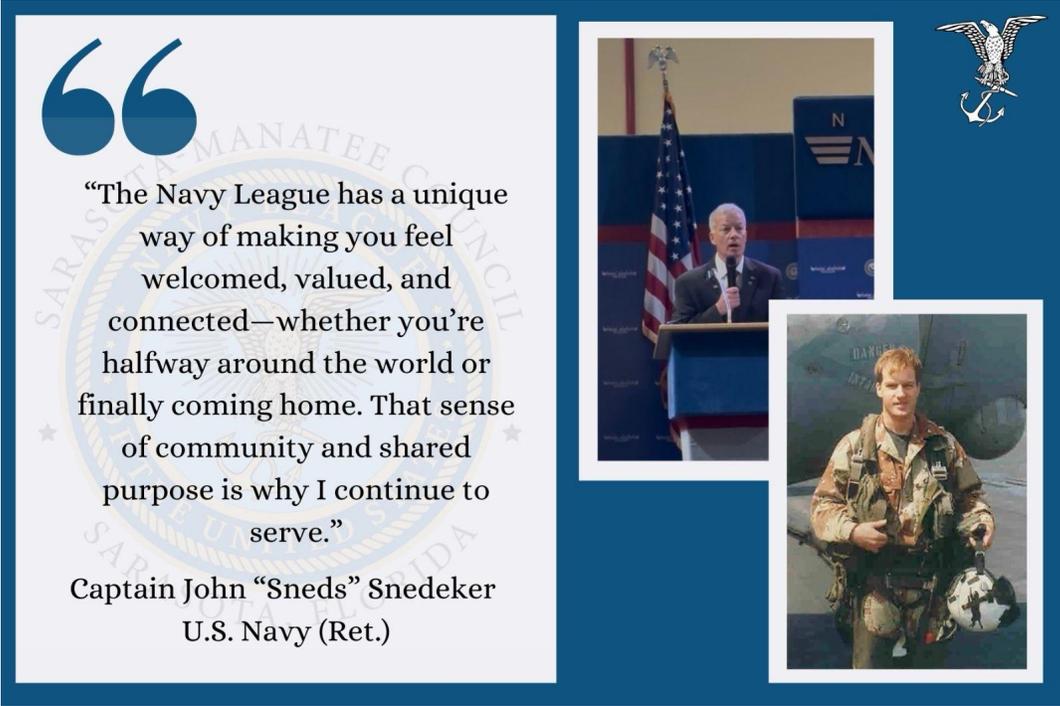
We are proud to begin by recognizing John Snedeker "Sned", Captain, U.S. Navy (Ret.), a dedicated leader, patriot, and valued member of the Navy League Sarasota-Manatee Council.

John recently served as Master of Ceremonies for the VA-35 Desert Storm 35th Anniversary Reunion at NAS Pensacola—a powerful gathering honoring the legacy, camaraderie, and sacrifice of the "RAYGUNS." A Desert Storm combat veteran, John flew the A-6 Intruder on the first night strike of the war, later going on to an extraordinary 30-year naval career that included command tours, test pilot duty, and continued service beyond retirement.

John's journey with the Navy League began in unforgettable fashion—from a Fourth of July celebration aboard USS John F. Kennedy in Cannes, to national-level engagement, and finally finding his home with the Sarasota-Manatee Council. His story reflects what the Navy League does best: connecting people, strengthening community, and supporting those who serve—past, present, and future.

Thank you, John, for your lifetime of service and for all you do to support our Sea Services and our local council. We are honored to have you as part of the Sarasota-Manatee Council Navy League family.  

Stay tuned as we continue to spotlight the incredible members who make our council strong!



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“The Navy League has a unique way of making you feel welcomed, valued, and connected—whether you're halfway around the world or finally coming home. That sense of community and shared purpose is why I continue to serve.”

Captain John “Sned” Snedeker
U.S. Navy (Ret.)



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OUR SUPPORTED SEA SERVICES

USCG Sector St. Petersburg



USCG Sector St Petersburg is looking for anyone who may have information on an unmanned and adrift kayak that was located approximately 2.5 miles west of the Clearwater pass. The vessel shows recent signs that it may have been used for fishing. If you have any information on this vessel please call 727-322-4180

The Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary and partner agencies are enforcing a safety zone for the Gasparilla Parade in Tampa Bay from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mariners are advised to be aware of a developing weather situation that will create hazardous boating conditions, especially for smaller vessels. The National Weather Service forecasts deteriorating marine conditions with winds of 23 to 29 mph, gusts up to 35 mph, and very rough bay waters. These conditions can pose significant risk to the boating public. Given the forecast, all boaters, and especially those with smaller vessels and limited experience, are urged to evaluate their plans and prioritize safety of their passengers.



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OUR SUPPORTED SEA SERVICES

USCG Sector St. Petersburg

Jan 19 The Coast Guard suspended the search for a missing kayaker at 6:45 p.m., Monday, near Honeymoon Island State Park, pending the development of new information. Missing is 18-year-old Elías Guillermo Lara Vargas. Coast Guard crews searched by air and sea covering approximately 290 square miles. On-scene weather conditions during the search were approximately 10 to 15 mph winds and 3 to 4-foot seas. “We extend our deepest condolences to Mr. Vargas’ loved ones during this difficult time,” said Lt. Vincente Garcia, a Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg search and rescue mission coordinator. “Suspending a search is never a decision taken lightly. We are thankful to our crews and partner agencies for their unwavering commitment and tireless efforts.”



U.S. Coast Guard aircrews are searching for Robert Luca, 44, reported missing at 10:30 a.m., Monday, approximately 82 miles west of Anclote. A crew member aboard the fishing vessel Bearcat notified watchstanders.

UPDATE-The Coast Guard suspended the search for a missing boater at approximately 11 a.m., Tuesday, approximately 80 miles off Anclote, pending the development of new information. Missing is 44-year-old Robert Luca.

Coast Guard crews searched by air covering approximately 1,400 square miles, about the size of Rhode Island. On-scene weather conditions during the search were approximately 17 mph winds and 2 to 3-foot seas.

“Our deepest sympathies are with Mr. Luca’s loved ones during this difficult time,” said Cmdr. Fredrick Pugh, a Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg search and rescue mission coordinator. “Suspending a search is never a decision taken lightly. We are grateful for the dedication and professionalism of all crews who worked tirelessly throughout this case.”

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[OUR SUPPORTED SEA SERVICES](#)

[USCG Air Station Clearwater](#)

Not every landing is easy. That's why we train.



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USCG Station Cortez

On January 23, 2026, the Navy League Sarasota-Manatee Council was honored to attend a promotion ceremony at U.S. Coast Guard Station Cortez, where BMC Derek Waters was pinned as Senior Chief following his promotion from Chief.

The ceremony was led by CAPT Courtney (Corrie) Sergent, Sector Commander and Captain of the Port, USCG Sector St. Petersburg, Florida. With this promotion, Station Cortez is now designated as a Senior-level facility, marking an important milestone.

Accompanying CAPT Sergent were CDR Charles "Ben" Stanley and MCPO Keith Nader. Distinguished guests included Martin Goodwin, Commodore, and Murray Price, Chief of Staff, both representing the Southeast District, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, along with multiple USCG Station Chiefs, Station Cortez Coast Guard personnel, and USCG Auxiliarists.

Representing the Council were 1st Vice President Lorna N. Ow-Elroy and Marsha Simerly Grogan Board of Director, USCG Liaison. USCG Station Cortez is one of our five adopted Coast Guard units, and we are proud to support both Station Cortez and USCG Sector St. Petersburg.

Congratulations to Senior Chief Waters on this well-deserved achievement!



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USCG Cutter Resolute

JAN 2026 - Another year is in the books...and what an exciting one it's been! The crew of CGC Resolute traveled more than 22,000 nautical miles, visiting five countries across the Americas. From the aquamarine waters of the Caribbean to the dynamic seas of the Eastern Pacific, Resolute patrolled in support of both counter-narcotic and alien migrant interdiction missions, transiting the Panama Canal and even crossing the Equator along the way. Through their efforts, the crew helped prevent more than 12,000 pounds of cocaine from reaching American communities. While in port, the crew also completed the biennial CART-TSTA inspection cycle, proving their mettle across every area of seamanship. The Engineering team also took full advantage of the downtime to conduct much needed maintenance and improvements to Resolute's auxiliary and propulsion systems. While navigating a demanding operational schedule, the crew found meaningful ways to stay connected...from group workouts and holiday celebrations at sea to taking advantage of incredible fishing opportunities. It was a year marked not only by mission success, but by camaraderie, teamwork, and the enduring spirit of the Resolute crew. On December 8th, Resolute celebrated its 59th birthday and is ready to make Year 60 the best one yet. Bring on 2026!



USCGC Resolute recently earned the 2025 Hopley Yeaton Cutter Excellence Award for superior performance as a medium-endurance cutter. The award, one of the most prestigious in the afloat community, highlights Team Resolute's dedication towards accomplishing the mission in the most challenging conditions. From being the first cutter offshore Tampa Bay maintaining search and rescue continuity after Hurricane Milton, to working alongside interagency partners in Guantanamo Bay to build-out Joint Task Force Southern Guard, to interdicting over 12,000 pounds of cocaine in the Eastern Pacific, the crew executed a diverse set of missions with incredible professionalism. The hard-working men and women on board met every challenge with the industry and intensity required for performance at the highest level.

CAPT Hopley Yeaton, the legendary namesake of this award, was the first commissioned officer of the Coast Guard (then Revenue Cutter Service) in 1791. CAPT Hopley Yeaton's sea-going legacy lives on as cutters receive yearly recognition for their superior spirit and action in the maritime domain.

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USCG Cutter Resolute

Members of the Sarasota-Manatee Council-Navy League of the US and our US Naval Sea Cadets Maritime Eagles Division unit were invited to tour the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Resolute on 16 February 2026. Representing the Navy League Board were Steve Bartek , Matthew Wooddall, and members Mark and Nancy Sobolewski. The group was warmly welcomed by LT(jg) Michael J. Deflorio III, who conducted an informative and engaging tour of the cutter. Despite the ship operating on a three-section duty rotation and the visit falling on a holiday, the tour was a resounding success for both Navy League members and Sea Cadets. LCDR Tina Brown, Commanding Officer of the Eagles Sea Cadets, also joined the visit, along with several parents of the cadets, making it a meaningful experience for all involved. At the time of the visit, Resolute was in the process of loading supplies in preparation for an upcoming patrol scheduled to depart in the coming weeks. The cutter is expected to transfer to a new homeport in the Chesapeake Bay area later this summer. Overall, it was a great event and a memorable experience for everyone involved. The Navy League Sarasota–Manatee Council and the Eagles Sea Cadets extend their sincere thanks to the crew of Resolute for their hospitality and for providing such an outstanding and informative tour.



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USCG Cutter Venturous

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The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Venturous (WMEC 625) returned to their home port in St. Petersburg following a 40-day patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean that involved counter-drug missions in the Coast Guard Eleventh District's area of responsibility. The Coast Guard Eleventh District is now known as the Southwest District. This district was renamed as part of the Coast Guard's Force Design 2028 initiative, which aims to improve the service's effectiveness and responsiveness. The Southwest District encompasses the states of California, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona, and is responsible for a wide range of operations, including:

- **Counter-Drug Missions:** Enforcing federal drug laws on navigable waters and international waters near Central and South America.
- **Migrant Smuggling Interdiction:** Working to prevent and respond to migrant smuggling activities in the region.
- **Maritime Safety:** Ensuring the safety of the boating community and responding to emergencies in the district's waters, which extend over a thousand miles offshore.
- **Area of Responsibility:** The district's area of responsibility includes the Pacific coast of the United States, as well as international waters near Central America.

The district is headquartered in Alameda, California, and works closely with other law enforcement agencies and partners to achieve its mission.



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OUR SUPPORTED YOUTH GROUPS UPDATES

- NJROTC North Port High School
- CGJROTC Pinellas Park High School
- US Naval Sea Cadets Maritime Eagles-
Manatee School for the Arts Palmetto
- Young Marines Venice Middle School
- Young Marines Imagine School North Port
- NJROTC Lemon Bay High School
- NJROTC Port Charlotte High School
- NJROTC Charlotte High School
- Venice High School Marine Corps JROTC



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SMC Youth Groups News Items

JANUARY 2026

North Port High School (NPHS) NJROTC

- Jan 3 – Color Guard, Florida Everblades Hockey Game
- January – Orienteering competitions at Alafia and Lake Louisa; weekly competitions in Tampa
- Jan 24 – Academic Teams competed in State Brain Brawl (Palm Bay)
- Feb 7 (Planned) – Hosting Orienteering Competition

Venice High School (VHS) MCJROTC

- Jan 9, 13, 16 – Cannon Crew supported Soccer Games
- Jan 13 – Color Guard, USAF Band Performance
- Jan 17 – Ed Radice Orienteering Competition
- Jan 21 – Promotions
- Jan 24 – Orienteering, SOAR at Farragut Academy
- Jan 24 – Color Guard, Venice Yacht Club
- Jan 31 – Pelican Point Garage Sale (American Cancer Society Fundraiser)

Charlotte High School (CHS) NJROTC

- Jan 9 – Golden Apple Awards Color Guard
- Jan 19 – MLK Parade
- Jan 24 – Brain Brawl State Competition
- Jan 28 – Isles Yacht Club Change of Command Color Guard
 - Jan 31 – Battle of the Bulls Field Meet

Venice Middle School (VMS) Young Marines

- Multiple Color Guards for basketball games and NJHS induction
- Jan 31 – Casino Night Fundraiser
- Began Archery Training Program
- Outreach visits to former elementary schools

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JANUARY 2026 (CONTINUED)

Sea Cadets

Jan 10 – Drill, First Aid Training

Supported USCGC Resolute Visit

FEBRUARY 2026

Program Updates

- VMS Young Marines CO injured; temporary leadership in place
- ISNP Young Marines operating without permanent CO
- Scholarship Activity:
 - 1 Cash Scholarship Application
 - 1 National Flight Academy (NFA) Award
 - 1 Additional NFA Application Pending

Venice High School (VHS) MCJROTC

- Feb 6 – Cannon support for Soccer
- Feb 7 – Orienteering, North Port
- Feb 15 – Venice Yacht Club Charity Bike Ride (Support)
- Feb 18 – Challenger Basketball (Support)
- Feb 21 – Challenger Baseball (Support)

Charlotte High School (CHS) NJROTC

- Feb 5 – Leadership Day (Community Outreach)
- Feb 7 – Orienteering, North Port
- Feb 7 – Color Guard, Punta Gorda History Center
- Feb 21 – Lake Howell Field Meet

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FEBRUARY 2026 (CONTINUED)

Lemon Bay High School (LBHS) NJROTC

STEM Expansion Initiatives:

SeaPerch Program launched

Drone simulation and virtual racing introduced

Key Events:

Jan 17 – Orienteering (Ed Radice)

Jan 24 – AFA Orienteering

Jan 27 – Drone Virtual Race

Feb 7 – Orienteering (North Port)

Feb 21 – Drone Race vs. Port Charlotte

Feb 24 – Color Guard, Tampa Bay Rays

North Port High School (NPHS) NJROTC

Hosted Orienteering Competition (260+ participants)

State Rankings Achieved:

#1 Cadet – Yellow Course

#2 Cadet – Orange Course

#4 Cadet – Green Course

Academic Teams competed at State level

Fundraiser Campaign launched

SeaPerch Team initiated

STEM Trip planned to Kennedy Space Center

Continued Color Guard and community volunteer support

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FEBRUARY 2026 (CONTINUED)

Venice Middle School (VMS) Young Marines

- Multiple Color Guards supporting baseball season and county events
- Preparing for School Employee of the Year events
- Planning Laser Tag Leadership Event
- Leadership curriculum focused on Choosing Courage

Sea Cadets

- Feb 16 – USCGC Resolute Visit
- Mar 7 (Planned) – MSA Inspection Drill

MARCH 2026

Program Updates

- CAPT Thompson returned to duty (VMS Young Marines)
- ISNP Young Marines new acting CO: CSM Santos Feliciano
- Scholarship Activity:
 - 4 Cash Scholarship Applications
 - 2 NFA Scholarship Applications
- Expansion:
 - New MCJROTC Unit Approved – Wellen Park High School (2026–2027)
 - Initial NDCC (self-funded phase)

Pinellas Park High School (PPHS) CGJROTC

- Passed Annual Inspection with Honors
- On track for Distinguished Unit designation (3rd consecutive year)

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MARCH 2026 (CONTINUED)

Venice High School (VHS) MCJROTC

- Feb 23–28 – Career Week (All Military Branches Engagement)
- Feb 28 – Mar 4 – Multiple Color Guards and ceremonial events
- Mar 3 – Physics and Student Government Event Support
- Mar 7–8 – Megalodon Parking Support (30 Cadets)
- Mar 12 – Career Day Parking Support
- Mar 28 – Hosting Orienteering Competition (Oscar Scherer Park)

Wellen Park High School (WPHS) MCJROTC (New Unit)

- Approved for 2026–2027 School Year
- Initial funding needs identified (uniforms, rifles, equipment)
 - Navy League partnership support anticipated

Charlotte High School (CHS) NJROTC

- Mar 5 – Tampa Bay Rays Color Guard
- Mar 7 – Taste of Punta Gorda Community Service Event
- Mar 10 – Merchant Marine Guest Speaker
- Mar 14 – Botanical Gardens Community Service
- Mar 16–20 – Spring Break
- Mar 29 – Vietnam Veterans Memorial Color Guard

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MARCH 2026 (CONTINUED)

Lemon Bay High School (LBHS) NJROTC

- Continued STEM Expansion:
 - SeaPerch and Drone Racing Programs
- Activities:
 - Academic Postal Competition
 - SWFL Drone Regional Competition
 - Multiple Tampa Bay Rays Color Guards
 - Challenger Baseball Support
 - Celebration of Life Ceremony (Color Guard)

North Port High School (NPHS) NJROTC

- Continued Academic Postal Competitions
- Continued SeaPerch Development
- Ongoing Community Service
- STEM Trip Preparation
- End-of-Year Awards Preparation

Young Marines & Sea Cadets VMS Young Marines

- Preparing Laser Tag Leadership Event
- Archery and Air Rifle Training
- Spring Garden Project
- Leadership reflection on Medal of Honor studies

ISNP Young Marines

- New Acting CO: CSM Santos Feliciano
- Engaged with SMC Awards Program

Sea Cadets

- Feb 16 – USCGC Resolute Visit
 - Mar 7 – MSA Inspection Drill

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SMC Youth Groups Posts



We love seeing this! The Imagine School Young Marines are one of the youth programs we are proud to support, and moments like these truly reflect what the program is all about—leadership, respect, service, and heart. Well done, Young Marines—you represented yourselves, your school, and your values with pride.

March 6th, at drill, the Imagine School North Port Young Marines proudly welcomed six new recruits to the program! Our new recruits began learning the basics and the expectations of what it means to become a Young Marine. Corporal Randy Gomez and Lance Corporal Leah Denisulk did a great job stepping into leadership roles and helping guide the new recruits through their first lessons. It's always great to see our experienced Young Marines mentoring the next generation and setting the example of leadership, teamwork, and commitment. We are excited to watch these new recruits begin their journey with the program! recruits begin their journey with the program.



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We invite you to partner with the Navy League Sarasota-Manatee Council in supporting its vital mission to advocate for the Sea Services, Youth Groups and promote the welfare of our nation's maritime forces. We accept all major credit cards, Zelle, Venmo, and Bank Checks. [Click Here to Connect to Our Partnership Web Page](#)

Invitation to Partner with Us

We invite you to partner with the Navy League Sarasota-Manatee Council in supporting its vital mission to advocate for the Sea Services and promote the welfare of our nation's maritime forces. By aligning with the Council, you will have the opportunity to contribute to programs that honor and benefit active-duty military personnel, veterans, and their families, as well as foster maritime education and youth development through initiatives like Naval Sea Cadet programs and JROTC scholarships. Your partnership will help ensure that our maritime community remains strong, connected, and prepared for the future. Together, we can make a meaningful impact in honoring and supporting those who serve.

Partner with Us
Let's Make a Difference Together



NLSMCPartnerships@gmail.com
<https://www.navyleague-sarasota-manatee.org/>



THE NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES
(SARASOTA - MANATEE COUNCIL)

Partnership Tiers

Admiral's Club **Annual Partnership** *\$5000 and Above*

Benefits:

- Two (2) Memberships to Sarasota - Manatee Council
- Complimentary registration (s) for up to two (2) at all Sarasota - Manatee Council events
- Premium onsite event branding (Table Display) at selected events
- Navy League Admiral's Club Partner Name Tag
- Two (2) Navy League Lapel Pins
- Ten (10) Free Challenge Coins
- Named Scholarship

Acknowledgment for the time of your partnership:

- Main Web Page on the Sarasota - Manatee Council Website
- Anchor Line (Newsletter)
- Emails to membership
- Social media platform (Facebook / LinkedIn)
- Verbal recognition at all events

(Payment plan options available)

Captain's Club **Annual Partnership** *\$1000*

Benefits:

- One (1) Membership to Sarasota - Manatee Council
- Complimentary registration for one (1) at all Sarasota - Manatee Council events
- Premium onsite event branding (Table Display) at selected events
- Navy League Captain's Partners Name Tag
- One (1) Navy League Lapel Pin
- Five (5) Free Challenge Coins

Acknowledgment for the time of your partnership:

- Main Web Page on the Sarasota - Manatee Council Website
- Anchor Line (Newsletter)
- Social media platform (Facebook / LinkedIn)
- Verbal recognition at all events

Blue and Gold Club **Annual Partnership** *\$500*

Benefits:

- Navy League Blue and Gold Club Partner Name Tag
- One (1) Navy League Lapel Pin
- Two (2) Free Challenge Coins

Acknowledgment for the time of your partnership:

- Website on the Sarasota - Manatee Council Website
- Anchor Line (Newsletter)
- Social media platform (Facebook / LinkedIn)
- Verbal recognition at all events

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SMC Partnership Engagement Group Elevating Our Fund Raising and Out Reach to Record Levels

The SMC Board Engagement Team continues actively working through our outreach program to connect with local corporations, associations, businesses, and individual partners for funding support. We're excited to share that in 2025, we've welcomed new partners led by an annual \$10,000 contribution from the Smith Gift Fund. We also have signed on more new monthly Shipmate Partnerships.

Thank you to all our partners. Your generous contributions directly support the funding of scholarships, provide opportunities for National Flight Academy recipients, strengthen our NINE Youth Programs, and assist our dedicated USCG Units and members.

Together, we are making a meaningful difference!

Thank You To our Annual Partners



THE NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES
(SARASOTA-MANATEE COUNCIL)

ADMIRAL'S CLUB

Smith Gift Fund 

CAPTAIN'S CLUB

CAPT. Tim Rocklein, USN (Ret.) CDR. Nel Rocklein, USN (Ret.)	VADM. Doug Crowder, USN (Ret.) Mrs. Susan Crowder	 NORTH STAR WEALTH ADVISORS OF RAYMOND JAMES <small>Chan Swartzel, CFP®, MBA Jared Swartzel, MBA www.NSWA-FL.com</small>
Judge S. Jay Plager	CDR. Steve Bartek, USN (Ret.)	CAPT. Roger Betts, USN (Ret.)
Mdm. Marsha Grogan	Mr. Pete Elroy Mrs. Lorna Ow-Elroy	Mr. James Orr

BLUE & GOLD'S CLUB

 PREMIER DRONE PRODUCTIONS	Mr. Gerard St. Germain Mrs. Frances St. Germain	Mr. Andy Morabe Mrs. Diana Morabe
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MALONEY
LEGAL FLORIDA

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SMC Fund Raising Initiatives Update

We invite you to partner with the Navy League Sarasota-Manatee Council in supporting its vital mission to advocate for the Sea Services, Youth Groups and promote the welfare of our nation's maritime forces. We accept all major credit cards, Zelle, Venmo, and Bank Checks. [Click Here to Connect to Our Shipmate Partnership Web Page](#)

Join the \$25 for 2026: Small Gift, Big Change!

The Shipmate Partnership is a philanthropic initiative created to provide ongoing support for both our active-duty sea services personnel and the youth programs that help develop future leaders. This program invites individuals to become monthly donors by contributing \$25. The goal is to build a dependable stream of funding that supports the unique needs of active-duty sailors in the Sarasota-Manatee region, as well as the families of those who serve. Additionally, contributions will support youth organizations like the Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Junior ROTC, and Young Marines—programs that teach young people about the values and responsibilities of our nation's maritime services.

The Navy League of the United States is committed to supporting our nation's sea services, including the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine. The Sarasota-Manatee Council plays a critical role in this mission, particularly with several active-duty Coast Guard units stationed in our region. The Shipmate Partnership unites supporters who value patriotism, community service, and maritime strength, ensuring our active-duty personnel, their families, and the next generation of service members are supported in both their professional and personal growth.

Your monthly donation, whether \$10 or \$25, will help make a significant impact on those who serve and their families, as well as provide life-changing opportunities for the next generation of maritime leaders.

Join us in making 2026 a year of gratitude and generosity.
Together, we can make a real difference!



NLSMCPartnerships@gmail.com
<https://www.navyleague-sarasota-manatee.org/>

THE NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES
(SARASOTA - MANATEE COUNCIL)

Shipmate Partnership

Monthly Contribution
\$10 or \$25

Sign up once and sustain the giving throughout the year.
Donors have the flexibility to cancel or adjust their participation at any time.

Benefits for Donors:

- **Recognition:** Your name will be prominently featured on our website, showing your commitment to supporting our U.S. Coast Guard and maritime youth programs.
- **Navy League e-Membership:** One-year e-membership with exclusive content and updates.
- **Personalized Navy League Name Tag:** A name tag to proudly display your support for those who serve.

Your contributions have already made a significant impact, funding projects such as:

- **Enhanced Communication for Deployed Personnel:** Providing sailors with access to entertainment and communication while deployed, such as network interfaces for personal devices, helping to maintain morale and connections with loved ones.
- **MWR (Morale, Welfare, and Recreation) Items:** Supplying much-needed resources for ships and Station Cortez.
- **Recognition of Outstanding Service:** Celebrating excellence through certificates for shipwide accomplishments, special dinners for on-duty sailors, and gift cards for exceptional personnel like Sailors of the Quarter.
- **Expanded Programs:** Programs provide young men and women with the opportunity to learn about teamwork, leadership, and service to their country, while also offering valuable skills that will serve them in both their personal and professional lives.

How to Join:

- Visit: Navigate to the Sarasota-Manatee Council's partnership portal.
- Select: Choose the Shipmate Partnership option.
- Subscribe: Set up a recurring \$10 or \$25 monthly payment.
- Connect: Enjoy the rewards of being a dedicated supporter and stay engaged with our activities and community.

Together, we can make a real difference in the lives of our active-duty personnel and the next generation of maritime leaders. Support our sea services and their communities today!

THANK YOU TO OUR MONTHLY DONORS

THE NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES
(SARASOTA-MANATEE COUNCIL)

SHIPMATE PARTNERSHIP

MR. BOB MCCHESENEY
MR. AL BURDA
MR. MATTHEW WOODDALL
MR. ALEX CARDOZ
MR. DON ROSER
MR. JAMES BLASKO
MRS. LORNA OW-ELROY



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<mailto:NL.Sarasota@gmail.com>

Stayed tuned for our next events

<https://www.navyleague-sarasota-manatee.org/>

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