



The Word



Winter 2025-2026

Beaufort, SC

President's Message



The New Year, 2026, has arrived in the Lowcountry! I hope you and your family enjoyed the Holidays and are now in full swing with the new year moving forward. We wish you a great Winter season of 2026!

Our chapter conducted a membership luncheon meeting at Bricks on Boundary Street followed by a tour of the St. Helena Anglican church graveyard on Tuesday, 28 October 2025. The luncheon was well-attended and we followed with a unique tour and interesting stories of the local Beaufort history going back to pre-Revolution times! Colonel Neil Baxley, Beaufort County Sheriff's Department and local historian conducted the tour. His stories and knowledge of the graveyard made for a most interesting afternoon. Everyone who attended really enjoyed this piece of local history! We were fortunate to have Neil Baxley as our tour guide!

The South Carolina Council of MOAA Chapters conducted the annual State Conference Saturday, 8 November, 2025 at Inn on the Square, Greenwood, SC. Your Chapter supported the conference

with 3 attendees and supported the agenda of "Building Blocks to Chapter Excellence" with keynote speaker Dena Kilgore, Director Chapters & Councils, National MOAA. This conference also was the swearing in of the 2026-2027 officers of the SC Council of Chapters. Lt Col Jim Alpert, USAF (Ret) assumed the presidency and accepted the gavel from the outgoing president, Capt. Linda Caldwell, USA (Former). We honored Linda for her outstanding service as president and gave our support to our new president as well as wishing him "good luck"! Lowcountry Chapter attendees were Mike Akey, Fred Channels and Brian Jezewski. A good conference and worth the time and travel to Greenwood!

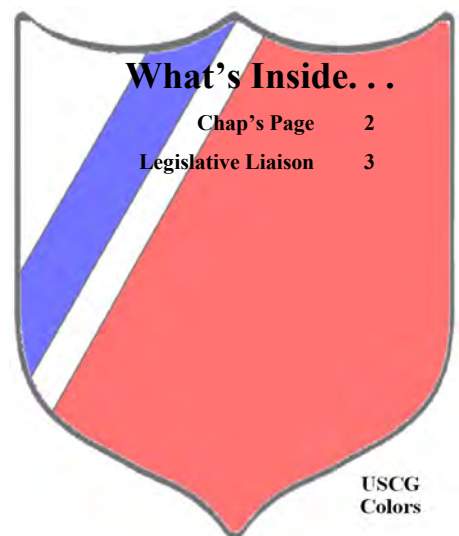
Veterans Day 2025 was a huge success! Rich Baker had his "Big Red Truck" all decked with our with our chapter flags and banners! We were very prominent at the front end of the parade and passed out approximately 600 flags. We expected more people along the parade route but it was unusually cold...still a great local crowd on this most patriotic day and parade! We are a military/patriotic community and the support for all Veterans is very strong and sincere in Beaufort!

Senator Graham's office relies on MOAA members to conduct military academies interviews for perspective candidates to be appointed. These interviews take place throughout the state by MOAA members under the auspices of Sen. Graham's office. We participated

in Beaufort 15 Nov 25 and 9 Jan 26 in Hilton Head. We conducted these structured interviews and provide evaluations of the applicants for Senator Graham's office as they continue the appointment process. It is very enlightening meeting and talking to young people who are motivated and interested in attending the academies. We will be participating in this most important activity again next year and will put out information on dates, times and places to our membership and sign-up participants. It is worth the time and effort and you don't have to be a service academy graduate. Stay tuned for next Fall's iteration.

We are celebrating several Service's 250th birthdays in 2025! The United States Army celebrated 250 years on 14 Jun 2025. Happy Birthday Army! The United States Navy celebrated its 250th anniversary on 13 October 2025! Happy Birthday, Navy! The United States Marine Corps celebrated 250 years on 10 November! Semper Fidelis!

(Message; continued on page 5, column3)



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Peace and Grace,
Steve Keeler
Padre



HAPPY SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL!

Bob Freeman, Legislative Liason

America's 250th Anniversary is just as sweet by any other name, and a quarter of a millennium ago, January was pivotal for the American Revolution.

In January 1776, the American colonies were moving inexorably toward independence. George Washington had been commander-in-chief of the Continental Army for over six months. There was sporadic fighting throughout the colonies. In the South Carolina Lowcountry, priorities were defense of Charleston and fending off British foraging parties. On the first of the month, the British Navy and Crown Loyalists burned Norfolk, Virginia to destroy resources for the Continental Army.

That literally inflamed anti-British sentiment. Thomas Paine's pro-independence pamphlet, *Common Sense*, was published January 10th. It became a bestseller and strongly influenced discontent against Great Britain. Only a month earlier, several thousand Patriot militiamen marched against loyalist recruiting centers in South Carolina. Called the "Snow Campaign" in winter weather at the colony's uplands' higher elevations, this early fighting in the Carolinas included forces from Georgia and North Carolina.

A Loyalist seizure of gunpowder and ammunition led to a major engagement when Loyalists besieged Patriots at Ninety-Six, South Carolina, but Patriots were largely able to drive out those loyal to the crown.

The Boston Tea Party in mid-December 1773, and other protests,

prompted the British to send 4,000 troops to occupy Boston under General Gage. When British forces attempted to seize colonists' arms and ammunition at Lexington and Concord in April 1775, local militias fought and chased them back to Boston, causing heavy casualties.

All the New England colonies raised militias in response, organizing them under General George Washington. Patriots seized key terrain and surrounded British forces at Boston. On January 1st, 1776, Washington reorganized the Continental Army per congressional resolution, to form a more disciplined, professional and permanent force.

That day, George Washington raised the Grand Union flag above his base near Boston, where it could be seen by occupying British troops. It was a symbol of his Army's defiance and resolve, and perhaps the first unofficial national flag.

Meanwhile, in New York's upstate, Ethan Allen and Colonel Benedict Arnold boldly led a small force of Green Mountain Boys on a raid of Fort Ticonderoga's British garrison, capturing the fort and a quantity of arms. George Washington dispatched Colonel Henry Knox to transport the artillery to Boston.

It was a brilliant logistical feat in the dead of winter. Using sleds and teams of oxen and horses, Knox hauled 60 tons of ordnance over 300 miles in 55 days, arriving late in January 1776. Washington deployed the cannon to Dorchester Heights, threatening British ships in Boston Harbor and forcing the British to abandon Boston.

As 1776 progressed, there were significant victories over British forces. "Up the road," American forces repulsed a major British naval and ground assault at Sullivan's Island's Fort Moultrie guarding the entrance to Charleston Harbor on June 28, just as the Declaration of Independence was being presented in the Continental Congress! Saving Charleston, it was the first decisive Patriot victory over the British Royal Navy.

It boosted morale and stymied British "southern strategy" for years—at least until the largest American defeat four years later, when British forces besieged and captured Charleston! The hero of the Sullivan's Island fight, William Moultrie who became SC governor, would later lead a victory over British forces in the Lowcountry Battle of Port Royal Island.

You can learn a lot more about the American Revolution and Semiquincentennial activities, especially about over 200 Revolutionary War battles that took place right here in South Carolina at

[<www.southcarolina250.com>](http://www.southcarolina250.com) and [<www.scbattlegroundtrust.org/liberty-trail>](http://www.scbattlegroundtrust.org/liberty-trail).

FULL LIST OF VA GRANTS PROVIDING \$77M TO STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES

By Nick Mordowanec
Military.com
January 07, 2026

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that it awarded more than \$77 million in grants during fiscal year 2025 for the expansion and improvement of 20 state veterans cemeteries nationwide, including an establishment grant for Alaska's first such state cemetery.

The grants routinely fund the construction of pre-placed crypts, columbaria, and improvements required to continue interments and operations. They are supported by the VA's National Cemetery Administration, which reimburses states for the cost of building, improving or expanding state-run veterans cemeteries.

VA grant-funded cemeteries interred more than 43,705 veterans and eligible family members during FY 2025, which ran from Oct. 1, 2024, to Sept. 30, 2025. That amounts to approximately 25% of the 174,705 total annual interments in all national and VA grant-funded veterans cemeteries.

"Veterans cemeteries keep the memories of America's heroes alive," VA Secretary Doug Collins said in a statement. "Under President Trump, VA is committed to ensuring America's veterans cemeteries have the resources they need to provide excellent memorial benefits and services to our nation's veterans and their families, and these grants underscore that fact."

List of Impacted Cemeteries

The following is a list of all the states' veterans cemeteries, dollars received through grant funds, and how many veterans and eligible family members are served:

- \$16.7 million for the establishment of the Interior Alaska Veterans Cemetery in Fairbanks, which will serve more than 12,000 veterans and their eligible family members as part of the state's first veterans cemetery.
- \$804,117 for the expansion of Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery at Marana that serves more than 122,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$2.1 million for the expansion of Southern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Sierra Vista, while the VA will also reimburse the state \$450,000 for the cost of fabrication and delivery of pre-placed crypts. The cemetery serves more than 105,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$5.2 million for the expansion of the Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery at North Little Rock. The VA will also reimburse the state \$2.3 million for the cost of fabrication and delivery of outer burial receptacles used for the project. The cemetery serves more than 93,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$929,477 for the expansion of the Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Winfield. The VA will also reimburse the state \$427,000 for the cost of fabrication and delivery

of outer burial receptacles. The cemetery serves more than 58,000 veterans and eligible family members.

- \$999,300 for the expansion of the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central in Radcliff. The cemetery serves more than 156,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$1.02 million for expansion of Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West in Hopkinsville. The cemetery serves more than 171,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$2.3 million for the expansion of Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Agawam. The cemetery serves more than 360,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$1.7 million for the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Winchendon. The cemetery serves more than 397,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$1.5 million for the expansion of the Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery in Missoula. VA will also reimburse the state \$274,006 for the cost of fabrication and delivery of outer burial receptacles. The cemetery serves more than 17,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$1.3 million for the expansion of the Fort Stanton State Veterans Cemetery in New Mexico.

The cemetery serves more than 12,000 veterans and eligible family members.

- \$5.9 million for the expansion of the Angel Fire State Veterans Cemetery in New Mexico. This cemetery serves more than 18,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$657,855 for the expansion of Eastern Carolina State Veterans Cemetery in North Carolina. The cemetery serves more than 290,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$811,353 for the expansion of Coastal Carolina State Veterans Cemetery in North Carolina. The cemetery serves more than 134,000 Veterans and their eligible family members.
- \$3,393,863 for the expansion of Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery in North Carolina. VA will also reimburse the state \$1.8 million for the cost of fabrication and delivery of outer burial receptacles used for the project. The cemetery serves more than 257,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$7.3 million for the expansion of East Tennessee Veterans Cemetery at Governor John Sevier Highway. VA will also reimburse the state \$3.3 million for the cost of fabrication and delivery of outer burial receptacles used for the project. The cemetery serves more than 155,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$982,859 for the expansion of M.J. "Dolly" Cooper Veterans Cemetery in South Carolina.

The cemetery serves more than 187,000 veterans and eligible family members.

- \$12.8 million for the expansion of Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery. The VA will reimburse the state \$3.7 million for the cost of fabrication and delivery of outer burial receptacles used for the project. The cemetery serves more than 221,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$8.3 million for the expansion of the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Virginia. The VA will also reimburse the state \$5.8 million for the cost of fabrication and delivery of outer burial receptacles used for the project. The cemetery serves more than 321,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$982,675 for the expansion of Central Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery. The cemetery serves more than 95,000 veterans and eligible family members.
- \$931,500 for the improvement of Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery, which serves more than 420,000 veterans and eligible family members.

The VA allows family and friends to preserve veterans' legacies if they are interred in VA-grant funded cemeteries by posting tributes, uploading images and sharing memories through the VA's Veterans Legacy Memorial website. For more information visit this link.



(Message; continued from page 1)

And, of course, we will celebrate our Nation's 250th Anniversary on 4 July 2026! Great Services serving and protecting our Great Nation!!!

We are putting together a new slate of officers for our chapter. We need new officers with new ideas to step up and continue for the Lowcountry Chapter, MOAA. We have accomplished a lot during the past several years and need to continue supporting our Veterans, JROTC programs and our community. Our motto, "Never Stop Serving" is real and we have lived up to doing that. I will be stepping down as your President after serving 5 years! LTC Brian Jezewski, USAR (Ret) will be taking the gavel and will be our Lowcountry Chapter President. He is well qualified and I ask you to give him the support that was given to me over the last 5 years. I will remain active in the chapter. We still need other positions filled and I ask that you please consider serving as an officer in our chapter.

I think we are continuing to be a functional, viable organization and it is exciting. Always be on the lookout for prospective members because they are our life's blood and bring new ideas to our chapter. We can make those good ideas come to fruition with active members who want to do things. And there is always plenty to do! I'm proud to be a member of the Lowcountry Chapter as well as being your president! Show your pride and bring in a new member to share our pride!

NEVER STOP SERVING!

Fred Channels

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Seminole Warriors Fought the US Military to a Stalemate in the Florida Swamps

By Allen Frazier
Military.com
January 02, 2026

On the morning of Dec. 28, 1835, a single gunshot rang out in the central Florida wilderness. Chief Micanopy fired the initial shot before one hundred eighty Seminole warriors hidden in the shrubs opened up on 110 unsuspecting U.S. soldiers.

Soon after, 108 soldiers were dead. The Second Seminole War had begun.

Fewer than 2,000 Seminole warriors would find themselves facing an overwhelming army of 30,000 Americans. It became the longest, costliest and deadliest conflict the United States fought against any Native American tribe. Although the Seminoles suffered heavy losses and many were forced from their ancestral home, they never surrendered.

The Road to War

The United States and the Seminoles had already fought once before. Between 1817 and 1818, General Andrew Jackson led troops into Spanish Florida during the First Seminole War. His forces attacked Seminole villages and Black Seminole settlements as they pursued escaped slaves from Georgia and other states.

Unable to defend the territory, Spain ceded Florida to the United States in 1819. The U.S. took formal possession in 1821.

White settlers soon flooded into Florida. They wanted the fertile lands occupied by roughly 5,000 Seminoles in northern and central Florida. The Seminole nation had coalesced over the previous decades from Creek, Hitchiti and Miccosukee peoples who migrated south.



The Second Seminole War (1835–42) took place in Florida between the U.S. military and the Seminole people. (Dade Battle by Ken Hughes 1974/Miami History Center)

Florida sheltered hundreds of escaped slaves. Some lived in Black Seminole communities near Native towns. Others had intermarried into Seminole families. Many had been born free in Florida. By the 1830s, Black Seminoles numbered several hundred. They would form a crucial part of the resistance.

In 1823, the U.S. government forced Seminole leaders to sign the Treaty of Moultrie Creek. The treaty confined them to a four-million-acre reservation in central Florida. The government promised money and supplies to ensure their sovereignty. In return, white settlers could build roads through the reservation and hunt for escaped slaves.

The treaty was violated almost immediately. The government delivered supplies late or not at all. White settlers stole Seminole cattle. They encroached on reservation lands constantly. Slave hunters outright raided Seminole villages.

President Andrew Jackson then signed the Indian Removal Act in 1830. The law mandated the relocation of all eastern tribes, to be moved west of the Mississippi River. In 1832, U.S. negotiators met Seminole leaders at Payne's Landing. They demanded the Seminoles abandon Florida entirely. The Treaty of Payne's Landing gave them three years to move to Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma.

Many Seminoles refused. Osceola, a young Creek warrior, became the most vocal opponent. At one meeting, he stabbed his knife into the treaty document. "My skin is dark, but not black!" he said. "I am an Indian, a Seminole. The white man shall not make me black. I will make the white man red with blood."

The treaty stated that Black Seminoles would remain in Florida. That meant slave hunters could reclaim them. For Osceola and many others, that was un-

(Seminoles; continued on page 7)

(Seminoles; continued from page 6)

acceptable. By late 1835, war was inevitable.

The Dade Massacre

Major Francis Langhorne Dade led 110 soldiers north from Fort Brooke near Tampa on Dec. 23, 1835. His command included troops from the 2nd and 3rd Artillery and 4th Infantry. They marched toward Fort King near present-day Ocala to reinforce the garrison as tensions escalated.

Seminole scouts shadowed every step. Dade knew enemy warriors were watching. He expected an ambush at each river crossing or in the thick woods. After five quiet days, he stopped posting flankers to watch the column's sides.

Just before 8 a.m. on Dec. 28, Chief Micanopy fired. His bullet killed Dade instantly. One hundred eighty warriors opened fire from the palmettos and trees. The first volley killed or wounded half of the American force.

Captain George Gardiner took command. The survivors built a log breastwork. They managed to hold for hours. Then the Seminoles launched a final assault in the afternoon.

By the end of the engagement, 108 of the 110 soldiers were dead or dying. Private Ransom Clarke and Private Joseph Sprague survived with severe wounds. A third man escaped but died the next day.

Halpatter Tustenuggee helped plan the ambush. "We had been preparing for this more than a year," he later said. "Just as the day was breaking, we moved out of the swamp into the pinebarren. I counted, by direction of Jumper, one hundred and eighty warriors."

On the same day, Osceola's warriors attacked Fort King. They killed Indian Agent Wiley Thompson and six others.

Thompson had been enforcing Seminole removal. News of massacres spread across the nation. Americans demanded military action.

Guerrilla War in the Swamps

Seminoles and Black Seminoles struck back hard in early 1836. War parties raided plantations along Florida's east coast and St. John's River. By February, they had attacked 21 plantations. Sugar mills burned. Enslaved people fled to join the resistance. White settlers were slaughtered.

Chief Micanopy led the overall resistance. Osceola became a powerful war leader. Jumper, Alligator and Coacoochee commanded their own warrior bands. Sam Jones, also called Arpeika, led his forces from deep in the Everglades. Halleck Tustenuggee directed operations in central Florida. Black Seminole leaders John Caesar and John Horse commanded an estimated 300 to 400 Black fighters.

American numbers built up steadily throughout the year. Meanwhile, a young Lieutenant with orders to report directly to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Archibald Henderson, in Washington D.C. found a note pinned to his door. The note read, "Gone to Florida to fight the Indians. Will be back when the war is over."

General Thomas Jesup took command of all U.S. forces in late 1836. He noted the overall racial undertones of the campaign. "This is a negro, not an Indian war," he warned. "If it be not speedily put down, the south will feel the effects of it on their slave population."

Fewer than 2,000 Seminole warriors faced a U.S. force that grew to 30,000 troops. The numbers meant little. Florida's terrain gave the defenders the advantage. Swamps, sawgrass prairies and dense hammocks made conventional military operations nearly impossible. Summer heat and disease

killed more soldiers than combat. Malaria and yellow fever probably caused most of the 1,500 American deaths during the war.

The Seminoles hid their families on remote islands in the Everglades. Warriors struck American troops in unsuspecting ambushes. They disappeared into the terrain where the American soldiers couldn't follow. They used feigned retreats to draw the pursuers into kill zones. They positioned themselves in dense tree islands surrounded by sawgrass and mud, forcing U.S. forces to advance across exposed ground.

Multiple American commanders failed. General Duncan Clinch achieved little and resigned. General Winfield Scott tried coordinated columns, but his forces couldn't navigate the swamps or find the enemy.

Jesup changed tactics. He built forts and supply depots across Florida. His troops conducted raids to destroy Seminole villages, crops and cattle. They confiscated roughly 15,000 cattle from the Alachua region alone. They burned corn fields and food stores. The strategy aimed to starve the Seminoles into surrender.

Major Ethan Allen Hitchcock served under Jesup. In February 1836, Hitchcock found the remains of Dade's command.

In his journal, he wrote, "The government is in the wrong, and this is the chief cause of the persevering opposition of the Indians, who have nobly defended their country against our attempt to enforce a fraudulent treaty."

The war ground on through ambushes and small skirmishes. The Seminoles besieged many of the forts for weeks. In July 1836, warriors trapped American soldiers in a Withlacoochee River blockhouse for 48 days. The soldiers

(Seminoles; continued on page 8)

(Seminoles; continued from page 7)

endured brutal heat, disease and the constant threat of death.

Capture Through Treachery

In September 1837, American soldiers captured King Philip. Jesup had Philip send a message to his son Coacoochee to arrange a meeting. When Coacoochee arrived under a flag of truce, Jesup detained him. Coacoochee, also called Wildcat, was a rising war leader and one of the most prominent leaders the U.S. sought to capture.

In October 1837, Osceola and another chief requested a meeting with Jesup to discuss peace. When they arrived under a white flag, Jesup's troops seized them. The American public condemned the violations. Jesup transferred Osceola to Fort Moultrie prison in South Carolina. Osceola refused to accept any removal agreement.

On Jan. 30, 1838, he died at age 34 from throat inflammation. The attending physician beheaded his corpse.

Coacoochee was imprisoned at Fort Marion in St. Augustine. The fort was considered escape-proof with five-foot-thick walls and an old Spanish moat. But Coacoochee and 19 other prisoners squeezed through a narrow window in their cell.

He later recalled, "With much difficulty I succeeded in getting my head through; for the sharp stones took the skin off my breast and back." They descended by rope to freedom before daybreak.

Coacoochee's escape energized the resistance. He became the Seminoles' most important remaining leader. His band included hundreds of Seminole and Black Seminole warriors. U.S. military records noted that when American soldiers learned Coacoochee was in an area, they stopped their operations. His reputation as a fierce warrior leader weighed heavily on the soldiers' minds.

Christmas Day at Lake Okeechobee

Colonel Zachary Taylor led 800 troops against Seminole and Miccosukee warriors on Christmas Day 1837. Between 380 and 480 warriors camped on Lake Okeechobee's northeast shore. They positioned themselves in an area surrounded by saw-

grass and mud. Coacoochee, Sam Jones and Alligator led the Seminole forces.

Taylor ordered a frontal assault. Missouri volunteers went in first. The warriors opened fire. The volunteers broke and fled. Colonel Richard Gentry fell mortally wounded.

Taylor sent in the 6th Infantry. Five companies took devastating casualties in the sawgrass. Every officer but one died or was wounded. Most noncommissioned officers fell. Only four men from those companies survived unharmed.

The 4th Infantry finally pushed the warriors from their position. They escaped across the lake that night. Taylor lost 28 killed and 112 wounded. The Seminoles left 12 dead. Later accounts from Native participants indicated another 11 were wounded.

The American press called it a great victory. Following this and his later service in the Mexican American War, Taylor became a national hero and eventually president. Though he had suffered severe casualties while killing relatively few enemies in Florida. The Seminoles escaped deeper into the Everglades and kept fighting.

The War Drags On

In March 1837, Chief Micanopy had agreed to stop fighting. Hundreds of Seminoles gathered near Fort Brooke to await transport west. But on June 2, warriors led by Sam Jones attacked and managed to free them. They disappeared into the wilderness.

This would go on for years. Groups of Seminoles would surrender and gather before being transported west. Then they would escape and rejoin the fight. Others were hunted down. Their villages were destroyed.

Coacoochee fought on until 1841. When he finally faced capture again, he said, "I was in hopes I would be killed in battle, but a bullet never reached me."

Before his forced removal to Oklahoma, he delivered a speech that captured what he believed the war had been about. "I have said I am the enemy to the white man," he said. "I could live in peace with them, but they first steal our cattle and horses, cheat us, and take our lands. The white men are as thick as the leaves in the hammock; they come upon us thicker

every year. They may shoot us, drive our women and children night and day; they may chain our hands and feet, but the red man's heart will be always free."

War Ends

By 1842, the United States had spent more than \$20 million fighting the Seminoles. That represented roughly 10 percent of the federal budget. More than 1,500 soldiers had died, mostly from disease. Hundreds of civilians also died. The government forcibly removed 3,000 Seminoles to Indian Territory in Oklahoma.

The nation was appalled at the outcome.

But several hundred Seminoles remained on remote Everglades islands. The military never defeated them. On Aug. 14, 1842, the government declared the war was over. No peace treaty was ever signed.

A third conflict erupted in 1855. The final Seminole War lasted until 1858. Constant military patrols and bounties reduced Florida's Seminole population to roughly 200 individuals. The Seminoles who stayed never surrendered. They survived on land that white settlers considered worthless.

Their descendants formed the Seminole Tribe of Florida, which today numbers more than 4,000 members.

Soldiers killed in the Dade Massacre and the subsequent battles rest beneath three coquina pyramids at St. Augustine National Cemetery. More than 1,300 soldiers are buried there. The cemetery dedication occurred on Aug. 14, 1842, the day the government declared the war was over.

The Dade Battlefield Historic State Site near Bushnell preserves where Dade and his men died. Annual reenactments mark the anniversary. The site commemorates America's longest and deadliest war against the Native Americans. It was a seven-year conflict the United States never truly won.

KNOW YOUR NAVY

EXPEDITIONARY SEA BASE (ESB)

Naval Sea Systems Command
Office of Corporate Communication (SEA 00D)
Washington, D. C. 20376
21 March, 2025

DESCRIPTION

The Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) ship class is a highly flexible platform used across various military operations. ESB ships are mobile sea-based assets and are a part of the critical access infrastructure that supports the deployment of forces, equipment, supplies, and warfighting capability.



The ships were initially called the Mobile Landing Platform (MLP) and the MLP Afloat Forward Staging Base (AFSB), respectively. In September 2015, the Secretary of the Navy re-designated these hulls to conform to traditional three-letter ship designations. The design of these ships is based on the Alaska-class crude oil carrier built by General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (NASSCO). Leveraging commercial designs ensures design stability and lowers development costs.

The USS Lewis B. Puller (ESB 3), USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4), USS Miguel Keith (ESB 5), USS John L. Canley (ESB 6),

USNS (future USS) Robert E. Simanek (ESB 7), and follow-on ship Hector A. Cafferata Jr. (ESB 8) support a variety of maritime based missions, including Special Operations Forces (SOF) and Airborne Mine Counter Measures (AMCM). ESBs have a four-spot flight deck, mission deck, and hangar, designed around four core capabilities: aviation facilities, berthing, equipment staging support, and command and control assets.

In August 2017, upon arrival in the U.S. 5th Fleet Area of Responsibility, ESB 3 was re-designated from USNS and commissioned as a USS. As a commissioned Navy ship, USS Lewis B. Puller (ESB 3) is commanded by a Navy O-6 with a permanently embarked military crew. In September 2019, the Secretary of the Navy approved the change in ship classification for all ESBs from auxiliary (USNS) ships to warships (USS). This re-designation allows combatant commanders greater operational flexibility in employing the ship.

BACKGROUND

The Navy awarded NASSCO a fixed-price incentive fee type contract for the Detail Design and Construction (DD&C) of T-ESD 1 and T-ESD 2 in May 2011. A DD&C was awarded to NASSCO for T-ESD 3 in February 2012. After receiving JROC approval, the ship configuration was subsequently changed to ESB 3 during construction via an engineering change proposal in March 2014. A DD&C contract for ESB 4 was awarded in

December 2014, and the DD&C for ESB 5 was awarded in December 2016. In August 2019, NASSCO was awarded a DD&C contract for ESB 6 and 7. The DD&C for ESB 8 was awarded in August 2022. Fleet deliveries include T-ESD 1, T-ESD 2, ESB 3, ESB 4, ESB 5, ESB 6, and ESB 7. ESB 8, the last ship in this class, started construction in August 2023 and is slated to deliver in 2026.



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS, EXPEDITIONARY SEA BASE (ESB):

- Builder: NASSCO
- Propulsion: Commercial Diesel Electric Propulsion
- Length: 239.3 Meters (785 feet)
- Beam: 50 Meters (164 feet)
- Displacement: 90,000 tons (fully loaded)
- Draft: 10.5 Meters (fully loaded); 12 Meters (load line)
- Speed: 15 knots
- Range: 9,500 nautical miles
- Crew: 44 Military Sealift Command personnel
- Military Crew: 101 military (Accommodations for 250-350)

*Your mission, should
You choose to accept it....*



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<https://www.kroger.com/account/communityrewards>

WELCOME TO THE LOWCOUNTRY MOAA CHAPTER

No new members this period.



To sustain and expand the excellence of LCMOAA, and to advertise our chapters activities, we need more members to ***step up to help*** us on the Board. Most importantly, to participate in the selection of future topics, the identification of speakers, to serve on the LCMOAA BOD or committee and recruitment of new members.

We need ***increased participation from the membership*** to build upon Chapter momentum and potential. Areas to serve include assistant committee positions (legislative, personal affairs, event project officer, communications, Quartermaster.....)

Please contact President Fred Channels at (540) 226-2001 or oldfred44@hotmail.com to inquire about the opportunities to share some

of the load and make our Chapter all it can be.

Never Stop Serving



TAPS

Lowcountry Chapter Officers/Advisory Board

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