



For Immediate Release



Mobile Veterans Honor Local Coast Guard as 2016 Patriots of the Year

On Friday, Nov. 11, Mobile's Veterans Day Parade will step off from the Mobile Civic Center at 10 am. This parade will travel along Canal Street to Broad Street and return by way of Dauphin, Washington and Government Streets. Following the downtown parade, the Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission will host a luncheon at Fort Whiting. The program will begin at noon with the doors opening at 11:30 a.m. The featured speaker is Admiral Charles Michel, Vice Commandant of the U. S. Coast Guard. He will speak on behalf of the Mobile Area Coast Guard units who, jointly, are the 2016 national Patriots of the Year.

Three major commands of the U. S. Coast Guard are located in Mobile. The Aviation Training Center, Sector Mobile and Gulf Strike Team, with each contributing to the safety on the seas and national security. Since 1819, when Alabama was admitted as a state, the Coast Guard has been a part of Mobile's history. Beginning as the home port for cutters and lighthouse tenders, Sector Mobile continues to stand ready to respond to maritime hazards, perform search and rescue operations, and maintain safe navigation of rivers and coastal waters of the Gulf Coast. Each year, over 600 search and rescue missions are conducted while maintaining nearly 3,000 aids to navigation. Sector Mobile's responsibility includes the ports of Mobile, Panama City, Pensacola, Gulfport and Pascagoula.

One of the Coast Guard's largest units, Aviation Training Center Mobile is responsible of training all Coast Guard pilots and producing aircrews for the full range of Coast Guard missions. It has been located in Mobile since 1966. Flying the Jayhawk and Dolphin helicopters and the Ocean Sentry Maritime Patrol airplane, ATC-Mobile is also a operational air station, responding to hundreds of search and rescue missions and patrolling tens of thousands of square miles in the Gulf each year.

Organized in Mobile in 1985, the elite Gulf Strike Team is a 75-person unit that provides a quick reaction capability for events as wide-ranging as the earthquake in Haiti and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. One of only three such teams, provides support for Coast Guard and EPA missions not only along the Gulf Coast, but missions in South and Central America and the Caribbean.

Individual tickets are \$18 and reservations for the luncheon should be made by Monday, Nov. 7 by contacting Nicole Funderburk at 251-431-8621 or nfunderburk@mobilechamber.com.

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News outlets may contact the following for additional information about Mobile Veterans Day events:

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