



Minnreg Veterans
Association

AMERICA

250TM

1776 ★ 2026

HONORING OUR PAST.
INSPIRING OUR FUTURE.

★ 250 YEARS OF FREEDOM,
UNITY & OPPORTUNITY ★

TO ALL WHO HAVE SERVED,

★ THANK YOU. ★

YOUR SERVICE. OUR FREEDOM. FOREVER GRATEFUL.



President's Message

It was 25 years ago when terrorists crashed commercial airliners into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. It was 25 years ago when Americans came together in a way not seen any other time in my life.

Patriotism ceased to be corny or outdated. Love of Country was evident everywhere. From t-shirts to bumper stickers, Americans rallied around the flag in an unabashed demonstration of pride.

It was 250 years ago that a group of rag-tag farmers thought they could take on the most powerful army in the history of the world - and prevail. As historians look back on this momentous event, they are unanimous in their belief that this could have been a terrible mistake. And yet...

Here we are today with celebrations across this great land marking this remarkable country's 250th year of freedom. A government of, by and for the people has not perished from the earth. In fact, it lives on despite being deeply divided on so many issues I lost count years ago.

Despite all its faults and shortcomings, I believe we live in the greatest country in the history of the world. We are that golden city on a hill that shines brightly and offers freedom and prosperity to the rest of the earth. When I visited Kenya on a missions trip in 2022, the poverty and corruption were suffocating. We saw abandoned children in the streets of horrible ghettos, playing with sticks and stones - and picking through garbage for something to eat. And yet, the ruling class lived like royalty in compounds separated from the streets by high stone walls with concertina wire.

I asked our MVA members to send me their reasons for loving this great country. Many of those are included in this edition. These words give me great confidence that this country will live on and prosper as the lessons and accomplishments of the past will provide a clear roadmap of the American future.



Family Support Services
PASCO AND PINELLAS COUNTIES

MVA in the Community School Supplies



Our friends at the Family Support Services agency are collecting school supplies for children in the foster care system for the upcoming school year. We want to fill up at least two tables with items from the list below. This is a great opportunity for MVA members to get personally involved in directly helping these children. Please bring your items to the July 15 luncheon. Remember, cash donations are also welcome if shopping is not one of your favorite things.

Back to School School Supply Drive Supply List

Family Support Services is seeking community donations of Back-to-School items to support children in foster care and preventive programs in our area for the 2026-2027 school year.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Backpacks
(boys/girls, all colors) | ☐ Index cards (3x5 inch) |
| ☐ Binders, 1" 3-ring | ☐ Loose-leaf paper
(wide- and college-ruled) |
| ☐ Calculators (4-Function) | ☐ Notebook dividers |
| ☐ Colored pencils | ☐ Pencil box (5x8 inch) |
| ☐ Composition notebooks
(wide, college, graph) | ☐ Pencils (No. 2) |
| ☐ Crayola crayons
(16- or 24-count) | ☐ Pens (blue and black ink) |
| ☐ Earbuds/Headphones | ☐ Pocket folders (3-prongs) |
| ☐ Glue sticks | ☐ Rubber erasers |
| ☐ Hand-held pencil sharpener | ☐ Rulers (inch/cm. markings) |
| ☐ Highlighters | ☐ Scissors (blunt/pointed) |
| | ☐ Spiral notebooks (wide) |
| | ☐ Zippered pencil pouch |

*Somewhere in the luncheon photo section, we identified the horse that was pictured on the backdrop.
Be the first to send the name of the horse to info@minnregs.com to win a prize.*



Sounds of Soul

Saturday, July 19, 7 pm



July 18, 2026 7:00 PM
Doors Open: 6:00 PM

A Pinellas Park Performing Arts Center favorite, The Sounds of Soul returns with their fantastic Motown and Beyond show! Get ready to relive the hits of Motown and beyond, as this exciting, high-energy group unleashes superior vocals and slick dance moves powered by pure soul! The group is composed of six seasoned performers, backed by a 6-piece band, who have excelled as outstanding singers, dancers, and songwriters.

MVA has purchased 20 tickets for this stellar event - so be among the first to register. As always, we will create a wait list for those who register after 20. If you do receive tickets and are unable to attend, please notify member@minnregs.com so someone else can use the tickets.

<https://form.jotform.com/261726358980165>



**4951 78th Ave N,
Pinellas Park, FL**





Why I Love the USA



We asked our members to tell us why they love the USA. And many of you did. They range from one-word answers to multiple paragraphs. We will celebrate these and more love stories at the July luncheon. Enjoy!

*I am proud of my Grandfather that served in WWI, my Dad that served in WWII, my uncle that served in the Korean War, and my brother that served during the Vietnam War.
I love the USA! Best country in our World!*

Faith Krahmer



The other day our Rotarian President spoke about his recent experience of jumping out of a plane in Normandy. Every year on the anniversary of the D-Day invasion June 6, 1944 the townspeople welcome the returning of American Soldiers who came to liberate them. They understand how fragile the loss of Freedom can be and that many have made the ultimate sacrifice to obtain this precious gift.

I am forever grateful that I live in a land that allows me the freedoms all people deserve. We may not always agree but we live in a country that allows us our differences. Bottom line is we are all Americans

Al Shields



I love the United States for the individual freedom it guarantees. The freedom that's allowed me — and so many others — to achieve success based on merit and hard work, no matter where we started.

Larry Trefz



FREEDOM!

PJ Clayton





Why I Love the USA



The freedoms we are born with in the USA shape how we live every day. They allow us to choose our careers, practice our faith, speak our minds, live where we choose, and pursue the life and happiness we want. Glad I chose Honeywell after my college and military service time!

Howard Howe



...in 2014 Teri & I decided to move back to her 'stomping' ground and retire in a familiar place. I've been made very welcome here by Honeywell retirees at the socials, luncheons and the rough and tumble Mexican Dominoes on a Monday. Its ironic that my wife knows more about British royalty than I but I certainly know more about UK & US politics. There is no one thing that stands out for me living permanently in the USA for the past 12 years and half of them as a US citizen as the complete package has been very satisfying in all respects.

A big thank you to all who have helped me integrate but I'll never shake my Brit accent, I'm too old for that.

Mike Godfrey



*If you work hard here and stay out of trouble you can be successful regardless of background .
When our country has occasionally strayed from its founding principles, we typically course correct.
Most importantly we have citizens wiling to risk their lives for our freedoms . God Bless our Vets .*

Jeff Ring



Great history, good people, wonderful varied landscape!

Roger Block





Why I Love the USA



Individual freedom. It's commonly mentioned, but really comes home with personal experiences of it. Freedom to not conform and to not be chastised for it, to be yourself, is the great freedom in the USA.

Jack Freeman



One of the many reasons, why I love the USA, is because of its beautiful National Parks. Many years ago we visited Great Smoky Mountains National Park. As it turned out, this was just the beginning. We visited many others from Acadia in Maine, to Olympic in Washington State, Haleakala in Maui, Hawaii, and Denali in Alaska. We climbed many mountains, including Mt. LeConte in the Smokies, with bears in tow & hiked to the bottom of the Grand Canyon. My best memories of my late husband, Lawrence C. Lynch, the Honeywell Retiree, are in these parks.

Marge Lynch



My Dad was in the US Army so throughout my childhood/teens years we traveled all over the US & also spent 3 years in Germany after WWII [where my Dad had been a POW] and 3 years in the Panama Canal. Living on Army bases the majority of the time enabled us to meet & become friends with people of all nationalities – an experience I've always treasured.

But it really wasn't until we moved to Panama in the 1950's that I learned what our freedom meant. Not only were 2 Panamanian Presidents murdered during that time but traveling around Panama on one of my dad's frequent weekend family trips, I got to see what poverty really looked like mostly on the hilly countrysides in Panama. When we returned by ship to America we sailed past the Statue of Liberty – at that moment my heart filled with overwhelming joy because I knew I was 'home' and safe again. because I

Jean Miller





First Tuesday Social June 2



We welcomed in the Florida heat at Eddie's on June 2. 86 MVA members and guests enjoyed the fellowship, food, fun and the many prizes that Al and Bea team up to give away. The next social in on Tuesday, July 7. In a calendar quirk, the July luncheon is set for Wednesday, the 15th. Please remember that there is no social in August, but we will start right up again on September 1st.





First Tuesday Social June 2



Bryan Martinez



Wendy Hugar



Hendrik Gelderloos



PJ Clayton



Larry Harper



Faith Krahmer



Sam Janofsky



Julie Donat



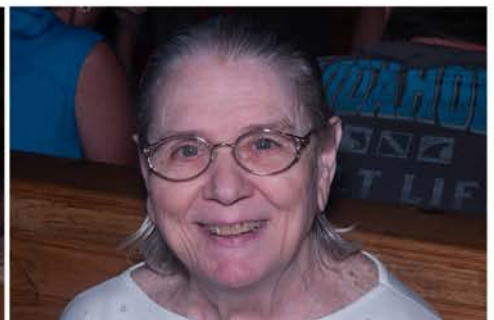
Al Olsen



Leslie Tuck



Al Parisi



Stephanie Puffer



First Tuesday Social June 2



Mary & Richard Reffelt



Deb Dupper, Mike Godfrey



Jane & Dennis Willis



Sherry & Andrew Rasmussen



Harry Blackiston, Robin Lewis



Roddy & Betsy King



Brian & Katrina Pershing



Mary Reffelt, Vivian O'Dell



Teri Godfrey, Thom Dupper



Paul Krahmer, Jo Ketring



Mike & Martha Ross





First Tuesday Social June 2



Carol Janney



George Hafer



Jean Miller



Clive Bailey



Betty Held



Al Shields



Wanda Beasley



Richard Reffelt



Teresa Mickiewicz



John Bowers



Carol Bailey



Tom Conner



First Tuesday Social June 2



Jack Freeman



Genevieve Urbanski



Artie Martin



Gail Olsen



Jack Ptacek



Pat Keegan



Jerry Dangler



Bonnie Williams



Greg Nikles



Martha Ross



Dan Trepanier



Sandy Janofsky



First Tuesday Social June 2



Marge Lynch



Howard Howe



Donna Seibel



David Hadsock



Shirley Bowers



Mike Seibel



Shirley Murphy



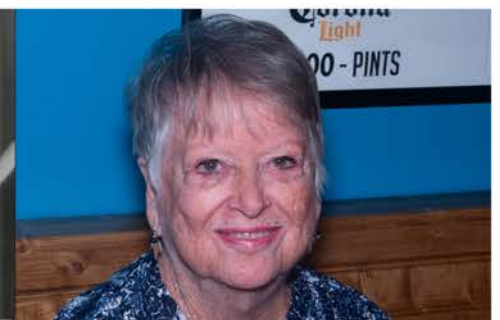
John Schiffgen



Loni Wellington



Teri Godfrey



Bea Conner



Texas Rangers v. Tampa Bay Rays



Thursday, July 30, 1 pm

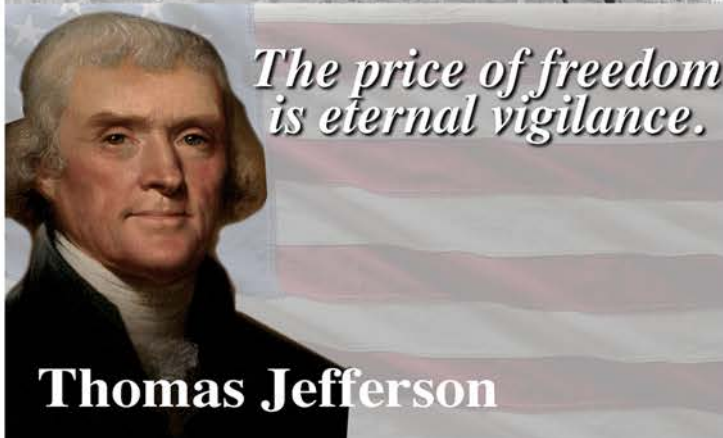
What a great opportunity to spend times with your MVA peeps while visiting the newly re-opened Tropicana Field. MVA has purchased 20 tickets for the afternoon game against the Texas Rangers on Thursday, July 30.

<https://form.jotform.com/261725556745163>

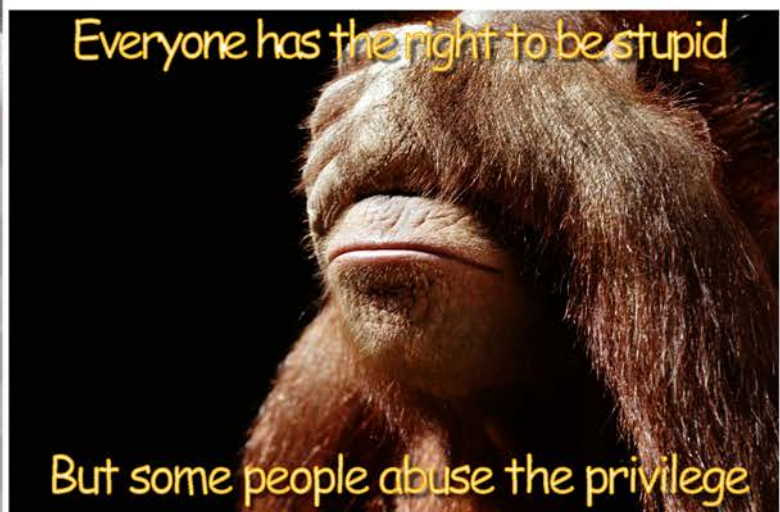
As in the past, tickets will be distributed to the first 20 members to submit the form. Reservations beyond 20 will be placed on a waiting list for any cancellations.

Tropicana field is cashless, so members must download the MLB Ballpark App. Your game ticket will be transferred to the App. Any purchases must be made through the Ballpark App as well. MVA provides the game admission ticket. Members are on their own for parking, refreshments and all other purchases.

As always, if you are awarded a game ticket and CANNOT attend the game for any reason, you must notify member@minnregs.com



Thomas Jefferson





A Blast from the Past



6

December 1977

Children's Christmas Carnival

By KAREN BECRAFT

On Friday, December 16th, with a little bit of Christmas magic and a lot of help from our friends, Honeywell held their annual Children's Christmas Party. Twelve hundred youngsters from six Pinellas Exceptional Children's Educational Centers were treated to a day of holiday spirit, mixed in with rides, a bag of candy, a Lifesaver doll, and the merry antics of the Honeywell Clowns. The dolls were made by Destiny Products, one of the Junior Achievement companies that Honeywell sponsors.

This is the fourth year Honeywell has adopted these six schools' children for a day. Some of the friends that kept things running smoothly were 100 Dixie Hollins Junior Civitan Club members. Area high schools have provided volunteers for the past three years.

The money to produce the party was earned through the Company's sale of used keypunch cards and scrap computer paper.

Saturday, Honeywell grounds welcomed their own and ECI's families and children. Volunteers served the 9,500 hotdogs and 20,000 drinks of Peosi, while patiently explaining which color ticket was needed.

Parents gathered around the rides that were too fast or too high up for their personal sense of well-being, and watched as their offspring scrambled aboard.

With painted faces and animals and apples disguised as balloons, the Honeywell Clowns were in abundance, making tiny people's smiles a little wider.

Santa was present, surrounded by his admirers. He arrived Friday, choosing to ride in a yellow school bus with the exceptional children rather than his traditional red sleigh.

The children had a red ticket for a hotdog, two green tickets for drinks, and a yellow ticket for candy and a McDonald's Calendar, which included \$7.50 worth of gift certificates. The only prerequisite for the 15 rides was waiting in line.

Toward the end of the afternoon, as parents began to tire, there was a constant chant of, "Just one more ride, please." But the little ones were reassured with a smile that there would be another Christmas Party next year. The promise of next year, coupled with the yellow ticket for candy on the way out usually brought the day to a close.

So, from 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. on Friday, and 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on Saturday, Honeywell made an estimated 5,000 children's Christmas a little more special.





Monthly Luncheon June 17



99 hearty MVA souls braved the intense June heat to share a meal and some interesting conversations at the June luncheon. We heard the harrowing story of how local church members were able to escape the middle east war as it interrupted their Holy Land pilgrimage. We played some wild, wild west trivia, gave away some Father's Day coozies, enjoyed a fine picnic-style lunch, and as always, lots of vibrant conversations all over the hall.





Monthly Luncheon June 17





Monthly Luncheon June 17



*The Duppers - Deb & Thom,
June Speaker Angela Minzer*



*The Carters - Emilie & Ben, Larry Harper,
Genevieve Urbanski, The Baileys - Carol & Clive,
Shirley Murphy, Howard Howe*



*The Peltiers - Maureen & Michael,
the Zajdels - Julie & Greg*



Jo Ketring, John Schiffgen, Loni Wellington



Evelyn Hall, the Cuttings - Donna & Fred



Cheryl McAvoy, the Kloses - Karyn & Jerry



*Artie Martin, Jo Ketring,
John Schiffgen, Loni Wellington*



Deb Dupper, the Willises - Dennis & Jane



PJ Clayton, the Conners - Tom & Bea



Marge Lynch, Bonnie Williams, Pat Keegan



The Baileys - Clive & Carol



The Reffelts - Mary & Richard



Monthly Luncheon June 17



The Pershings - Katrina & Brian



Mary Reffelt, Secretariat, Deb Dupper



The Krahmers - Paul & Faith



*Mary Reffelt, Deb Dupper, Betty Held,
Carol Bailey*



The Schreiners - Anne & Claude



The Friends - Bob & Jan



Gayle Smith, John Voissem



The Bowers - John & Shirley



The Shirleys - Bowers and Murphy



The Janofskis - Sandy & Sam



The Simmons - Margaret & Steve



The Samsons - Kathleen & John



Monthly Luncheon June 17



Dick Malzahn, Jim McCormick



Mary Reffelt, Deb Dupper



Paul Krahmer, Loni Wellington



The Carters - Ben & Emilie



The Friends - Fran & Bob



The Dupperes - Thom & Deb



Dave Donnelly



Bobbie Smith



Carol Janney, Mary Reffelt



Katrina Pershing



Artie Martin



Patty Marchand



Monthly Luncheon June 17



Bob Canistraro



Katrina Pershing



Frank Easton



Betsy King



Larry Piper



Martha Ross



Mike Ross



Argie Easton



Brian Pershing



Lorraine Wert



Jeff Ring



Bonnie Williams



Monthly Luncheon June 17



John Samson



Gloria Whitfield



Michael Godfrey



Vivian O'Dell



Howard Howe



Mary Reffelt



Darrell Schreiber



Loni Wellington



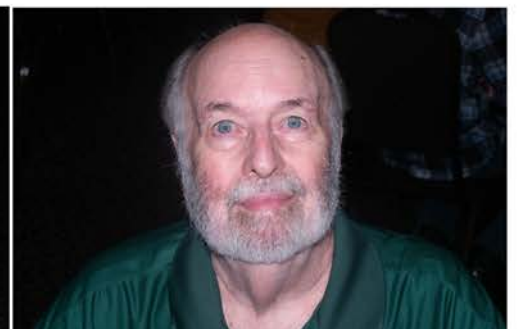
Larry Harper



Kathleen Samson



Artie Martin



George Sulther



Monthly Luncheon June 17



John Schiffgen



Genevieve Urbanski



Brian Martinez



Teri Godfrey



John Bowers



Jacqueline Morgan



Michael Webb





Happy Birthday from MVA!



Ronald Mason	7/4
Kathleen Samson	7/4
Wilford Poe	7/5
David Donnelly	7/6
Genevieve Urbanski	7/6
Danielle Rasmussen	7/12
Patsy Rohrs	7/12
Andrea Shields	7/12
Donald Trepanier	7/12
Shawn Cotton	7/16
Sharon Coogan	7/17



Donna Siebel	7/17
Terri Beamer	7/19
Shirley Bowers	7/19
Carl Baum	7/20
Emilie Carter	7/21
Gerry Sturm	7/31

