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FEATURE ARTICLE

MEET VETREPRENEURS PAT & RICHARD GEER

400

Capt. Dale "Roadrunner" Raebel

DANGER

JET

INTAKE

- HONORING VETERANS OF THE FIRST GULF WAR
- OPERATION ENCORE: FROM SERVICE TO THE STAGE

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LIBERTY VOICES: LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



The celebration of the achievements of Black and African-American men and women began in 1926, with a single week in February. President Gerald Ford officially recognized February as Black History Month in 1976, and every president thereafter has done the same. Each year since 1928 has been dedicated to a specific theme. The theme of 2021 is "The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity."

What comes to mind when you consider the makeup and experiences of a Black family? Whatever image it is for you has been influenced by your own experiences, from your home life, to what media outlets and mediums you tend to enjoy, to the impressions your friends have shared with you. Your view is not right or wrong, nor is it all-encompassing; it's just a sliver of all the possibilities that make up the innumerable nuances of the Black family.

Some things to consider are original and current location, genetic ancestry, and how far and wide a family is spread in terms of where its members build their lives. It seems that more and more families these days don't live near one another, which can be both isolating and liberating on different levels.

Military service can add a dimension of stress while simultaneously being a point of pride for many families. But, is the military experience different for Black families than it is for families of other cultures or ethnicities?

When Black families have one or more members in military service, they become part of the larger military family: *our* family. The bond of serving our country is shared for life, and beyond. February presents a wonderful opportunity to join a national conversation of the celebration of members of our family who have too often been pushed out of the deserved limelight for unjust reasons.

Reuben Keith Green, author of "Black Officer, White Navy," has shared with us several inspiring examples of Black Servicemembers from today and yesterday, on page 17. One story I didn't know about and was particularly enamored with is that of Charles Jackson French. The Navy steward tied a life raft of wounded Sailors around his waist in WWII and swam for six hours through shark-infested waters to get those Sailors to safety.

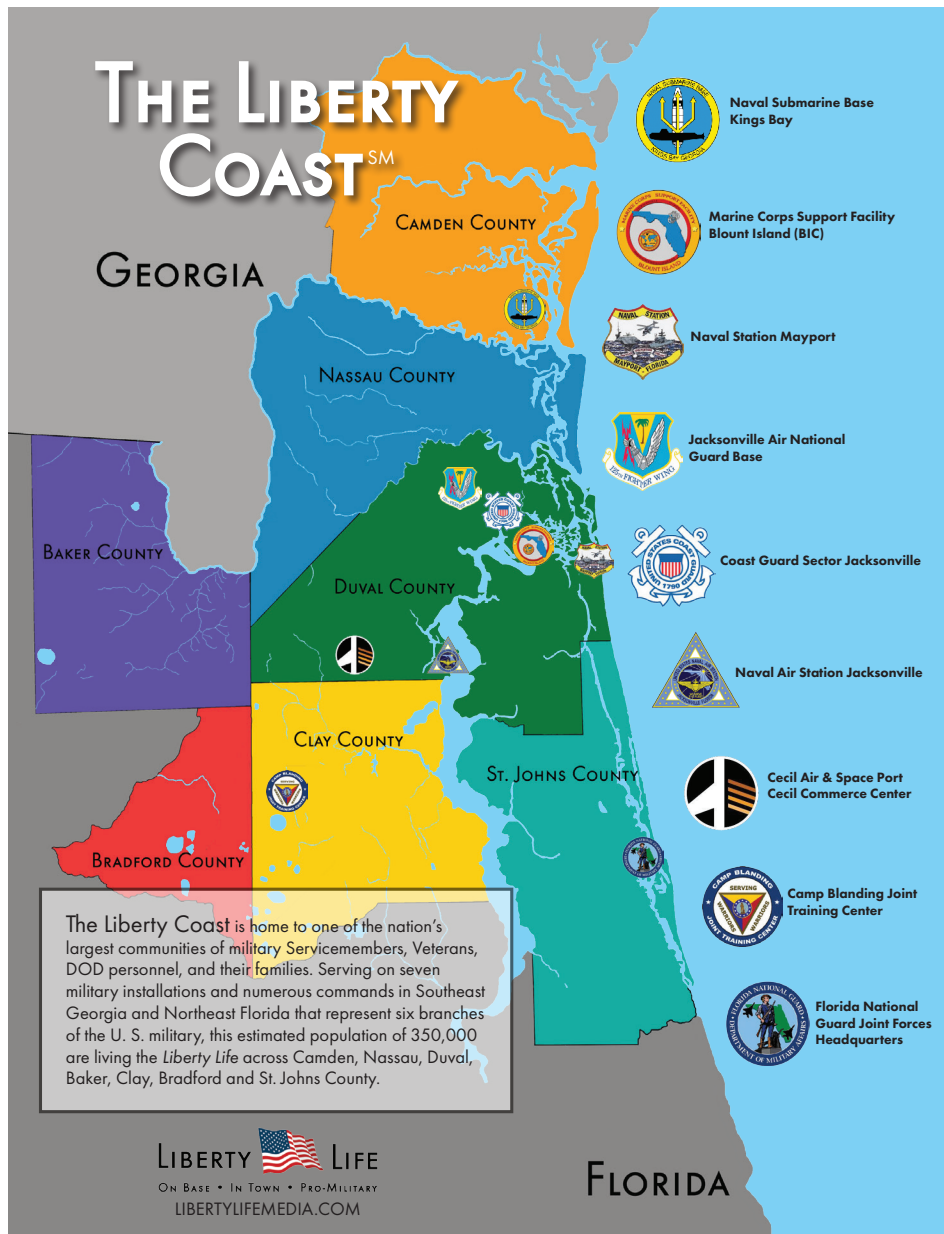
He sounds like a superhero right out of a movie! What an amazing example of a heroic human being for our children to learn about. I mean, who needs fictional superheroes when people like French exist? His story is only one of the thousands (and likely even more) that are stunning and powerful...and unnecessarily obscure.

But no more. Today you have learned about Charles Jackson French.

What stories do you know that your friends might not? Maybe you're not sure about the many fascinating members of our military family whose stories have, for one reason or another, fallen into the metaphorical dustbin of our society. Set aside an hour or more this month to check in on those family members. You may be humbled by what you learn.

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STEPHANIE THOMPSON
U. S. NAVY MUSTANG VETERAN
EDITOR | *LIBERTY LIFE MEDIA*



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Betty Chasteen,
MRP



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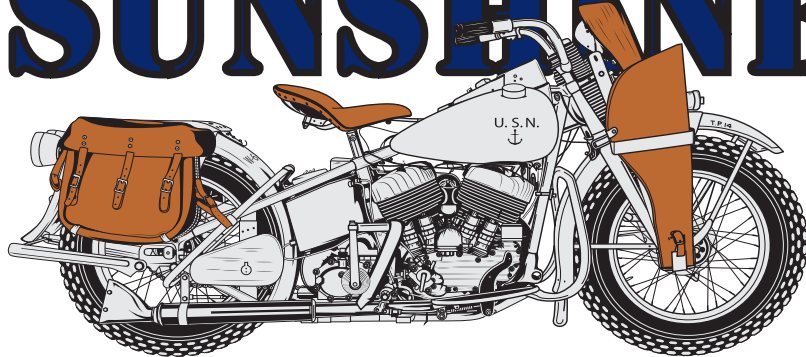
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CELEBRATING PRESIDENTS' DAY

Veterans who became Commander in Chief

BY STEPHANIE THOMPSON

Presidents' Day (February 15, 2021) started as a way to celebrate the birthday of our nation's first president: George Washington. It has since expanded to include all people who have held the title of U.S. president rather than just the notable first. But how does one celebrate this special day? *Liberty Life* has a couple of ideas.

THERE'S A FESTIVAL FOR THAT

The city of Eustis, Florida, goes all out in celebration of Presidents' Day in an annual event known as "Georgefest." This year will be no different, with activities planned (including a parade) February 26-28. For details, visit EustisGeorgeFest.org.

TAKE A BITE OF CHERRY PIE

Not able to make the two-hour drive south of Jacksonville to join the festivities? You can still honor our first president by eating cherry pie (who could forget the cherry tree?) with service buddies, family members, or friends, and perhaps playing a game of U.S. president trivia.

TRIVIA: COMMANDER IN CHIEF'S MILITARY SERVICE

The majority of U.S. presidents—31 to be exact—were Veterans of military service. Do you know which branch of service each of our former presidents served in? Here is a look at each Veteran Commander in Chief, their top rank achieved, and the branch they served in. A quick review and you could win the prize in your family trivia competition!

George W. Bush

First Lieutenant, Texas Air National Guard

George H. W. Bush

Lieutenant (junior grade), U.S. Navy

Ronald Reagan

Captain, U.S. Army

Jimmy Carter

Lieutenant, U.S. Navy

Gerald R. Ford, Jr.

Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Naval Reserve

Richard M. Nixon

Commander, U.S. Naval Reserve

Lyndon B. Johnson

Commander, U.S. Naval Reserve

John F. Kennedy

Lieutenant, U.S. Naval Reserve

Dwight D. Eisenhower

General of the Army, U.S. Army

Harry S. Truman

Colonel, Army Officer Reserve Corps

Theodore Roosevelt

Colonel, U.S. Army (Volunteers)

William McKinley

Brevet Major, U.S. Army (Volunteers)

Benjamin Harrison

Brevet Brigadier General,
U.S. Army (Volunteers)

Chester A. Arthur

Brigadier General, New York Militia

James A. Garfield

Major General, U.S. Army (Volunteers)

Rutherford B. Hayes

Major General, U.S. Army (Volunteers)

Andrew Johnson

Brigadier General, U.S. Army (Volunteers)

Abraham Lincoln

Captain, Illinois Militia

Ulysses S. Grant

General, U.S. Army

According to *History.com*, this president was born "Hiram Ulysses Grant." The congressman who appointed Grant (to West Point) mistakenly believed his first name was Ulysses and his middle name was Simpson (his mother's maiden name). Grant never amended the error and went on to accept Ulysses S. Grant as his real name.

James Buchanan

Private, Pennsylvania Militia

Franklin Pierce

Brigadier General, New Hampshire Militia

Millard Fillmore

Major, Union Continentals (home guard)

Zachary Taylor

Major General, U.S. Army

James K. Polk

Colonel, Tennessee Militia

John Tyler

Captain, Virginia Militia

William Henry Harrison

Major General, Kentucky Militia

Andrew Jackson

Major General, U.S. Army

James Monroe

Major, Continental Army

James Madison

Colonel, Virginia Militia

Thomas Jefferson

Colonel, Virginia Militia

George Washington

General and Commander in Chief,
Continental Army

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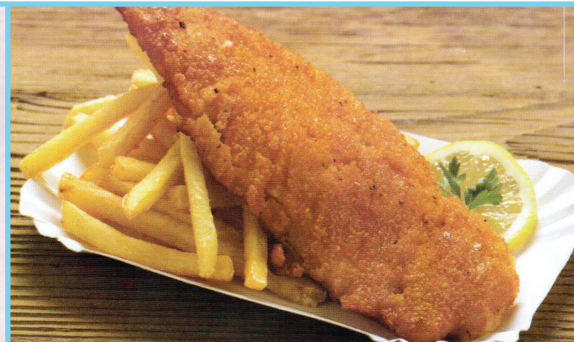


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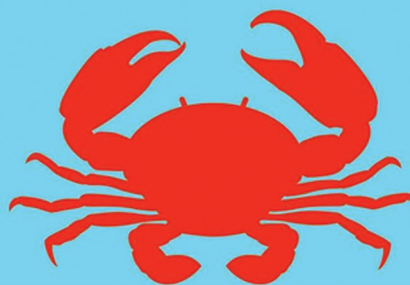
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LIBERTY FEATURE



IN SERVICE & IN LIFE

Journey of the father-son team that is Geer Services Inc.

BY COURTNEY STRINGFELLOW

You've seen their work for the National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum, Wreaths Across America at the Jacksonville National Cemetery, and the Navy Wives Clubs of America, among other prominent organizations. They're a silent force on The Liberty Coast, helping local businesses remain relevant, connecting Veterans with essential resources, and consistently showing up for their community.

Father-son team William "Pat" and Richard Geer started Geer Services Inc. somewhat fortuitously in the early 2000s, when Richard was still in the Air National Guard. But their story begins decades prior, when Pat's father moved their family from Corpus Christi, Texas, to Jacksonville, Florida, where he was stationed at Naval Air Station Jacksonville.

"[My father] was a SeaBee, so he had to go back and rebuild after the Pearl Harbor attack, my brother served in the Army, and my mother's brother served in the Army Air Corps back in the day," Pat said.



After graduating from Robert E. Lee High School in Riverside, Pat joined his father at NAS Jacksonville as an apprentice hydraulic mechanic. Pat went on to train at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, before returning to Jacksonville to work on the Navy's aircraft electronics equipment. He enlisted in the Florida Air National Guard in November 1967.

"Back in the day, there were times that the kids could come out, and [Richard] would go out with me during annual training, and he was around the aircraft

and just enjoyed it, and I think that got him interested in joining," Pat said.

If you noticed the year Pat enlisted, you'll recall that the United States was in the middle of the Vietnam War. It also happened to be the same year of the USS Forrestal fire in the Gulf of Tonkin. So when Pat returned home from training, he was working on equipment filled with bullet holes from Vietnam. And the aircraft that didn't sink during the USS Forrestal fire? They were also transported back to the U.S. for repairs.

During the '70s, when Richard was still a kid and the Cold War continued to consume the daily lives of Americans and Russians, Pat was activated for the Middle East conflict.

"I didn't know if I could go home or not. It ended up that it stopped pretty fast, so we didn't have to go anywhere," Pat said. "But the whole Cold War, you know, Russian bombers were flying off the coast, and our planes would go up and chase them down and track them 'til they left our air space, so those were the types of things we were involved in as a unit during the Cold War. But we didn't have to go anywhere, so that was fortunate."

Richard would later join his father in enlisting in the Air National Guard, where he served as a tactical aircraft maintenance specialist for his first 10 years before moving to the photography and graphic design side for another 10 years. During 12 of the 20 years that Richard was serving part-time for the Air Force's reserve component, he served

on active-duty for counterdrug missions and intelligence support.

Before Pat retired in 1999, they got to work together. Pat recalls times when they would both be on a flight line, Richard as a crew chief and Pat working on aircraft.

"Something that was really neat was we went through an operational readiness inspection, and both of us were flight line at that time, and the squadron did really well on the inspection," Pat said. "We got to work together quite a bit during that inspection, and both of us were picked as superior performers for that operational readiness inspection."

Although Pat and Richard both served in the Air National Guard, they ultimately retired from the Air Force. Toward the end of Richard's service, when he was involved in the counterdrug missions, he started getting requests to work on websites. "At night, [Richard] and I would work on different customers, and then I was getting close to where I could be eligible to retire [from Bellsouth]," Pat said. "So we did that for a few years just part-time, and then I decided that I either have to continue working at Bellsouth or retire, so I retired."

Pat and Richard moved their operations into the TIAA Bank Center in





small business together, especially as it relates to working with family. When they were in the military, Pat and Richard were usually assigned to different shops. Now, they see each other on a daily basis.

“Well the father-son thing is an issue, ‘cause see, he can read me like a book, and other people might not have an idea of what my temperament is at the time,” Pat said.

Richard added, “I’d be in meetings where we’d have the guys, and I could sense dad coming to a statement or something, and I can just kind of feel—yeah, it’s a little different being personal with your family, because you can just feel the, ‘Oh no, here it comes.’”

Another lesson Pat has learned through this journey is that corporate experiences can’t always be applied to small-businesses.

“When we set up bookkeeping, I made it way too complicated. Because there was something called accounts and areas at Bellsouth, and I just thought, ‘Well, I’ll follow that method and that will be good. Not so much,’” Pat said. “It was a mistake trying to think a small business operates the same as a corporation. It doesn’t. So that was a problem that I kind of caused when we started this.”

But there were also benefits to Pat’s corporate experience. For one, they trademarked key things, such as their logo and an expression that’s been in the family for generations: Geer built. And they had friends and family members who have supported and guided them along the way.

One concern that might come to mind for transitioning Servicemembers who are considering entrepreneurship is resources. Pat and Richard Geer recommend starting a business while maintaining a steady job to ensure you don’t run out of capital.

For the thousands of questions concerning where to begin or how to get support in areas you’re less knowledgeable about, they suggest connecting with business networks, such as your local chamber of commerce, Beaver Street Enterprise Center, the University of North Florida, and even other small businesses.

“If you don’t know anything, you’re going to get in a bunch of traps without some guidance, and those are good groups. Companies like ours always try to help Veterans get started, if they just need a little coaching,” Pat said. “So there’s a whole network of Veteran-owned businesses that have gone through different ways of getting to where they are, and having that resource of so many companies would be useful.”

Downtown Jacksonville in 2005 and started growing their business as Richard neared retirement from the Air Force. Early contracts with notable companies in the region pushed Geer Services Inc. to grow its team and further establish what they offer.

“We started working almost full-time for CSX, so the programmer who worked for me at Bellsouth left Bellsouth and came to work for us, and he worked full-time as a consultant to CSX from our company,” Pat said. “And then Richard ended up doing the graphic design part of a lot of the online systems that CSX built over the years, so that was sort of the linchpin to say, ‘Hey, let’s go do this.’”

Although the two served together while in the Air National Guard, nothing could prepare them for growing and running a successful

Another thing to consider is asking yourself, “Should something that happened during the military be connected to how I register my business?” When Pat and Richard Geer retired from the military, they couldn’t answer that question easily. But after researching resources with the City of Jacksonville, they found a group that could help. Because of that guidance, they were able to register Geer Services Inc. as a service-disabled Veteran-owned small business, and now they’re passing that knowledge along to the public in the form of a Veteran resource web page.

“We’ve listed things we’ve learned at the top from the Veterans support and there’s a lot of business tools. Big thing too is just don’t be afraid,” Richard said. “A very small percentage of everybody in the military that retires uses the VA. And I think maybe even knowing that, trying to get with them and get assistance can always help. You’d be surprised what kind of benefits you might be getting and other aspects of business help.”

At the beginning of this article, you were told that the Geers care about their community. But what exactly does that mean?



“There’s a friend of ours, he’s a retired three-star admiral, and we met him because there was a gala, and they had a silent auction, and I put a bid on his swift boat. So he was in Vietnam driving a swift boat down the rivers getting shot at as a lieutenant in the Navy,” Pat said. “He comes to visit us regularly, and we actually got him on the board of the POW/MIA Memorial, but he asked us a question one day. He said, ‘Why do you do this?’”

Richard compares his reason to the movie Taking Chance. A true story, the movie follows Lt. Colonel Michael Strobl, a Marine who was assigned a desk job at Marine Corps Base Quantico while the Marines he served with during the Gulf War were deployed to Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“I had friends in the Army who went to Grenada and the combat missions since then. I really never deployed, and in learning about the people who got injured or were missing or were killed in action, it feels like I didn’t do enough in the military,” Richard said. “Even though I wasn’t actually in the trenches with these guys, and they go through a lot, it feels good to kind of almost be the visual face of helping them with their brand and then hopefully they’ll bring a lot more awareness to the MIAs and POWs with this huge monument.”

For more information on Geer Services Inc., to add to the Veteran resource page, or to connect with Pat or Richard, visit GeerServices.com.

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9 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday-Sunday, Feb. 19-21, Reynold’s Industrial Park, U.S. Hwy. 16 at Bunker Ave., Green Cove Springs. Vendors and info call (904) 219-7998 or NB1337@Comcast.net. MVPA.org/Events.



PLANNING FOR THE “BIG DAY”

MAYPORT WEDDING EXPO

Meet with vendors, sample food, and enter drawings for prizes. A free tote bag with goodies will be provided while supplies last. Civilians can attend by requesting base access by Tuesday, Feb. 9.

1-4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, Ocean Breeze Conference & Catering Center, 243 Baltimore St., NS Mayport, NavyMWRMayport.com/Events, free, must have base access.



30 YEARS LATER

OPERATION DESERT SHIELD/STORM COMMEMORATION

As we approach the 30th anniversary of the end of the first Gulf War, the National POW/MIA Memorial recognizes and honors those who served from local units, among other unveilings. More details on page 18.

10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27, Chapel of the High-Speed Pass, 6112 POW-MIA Pkwy., Cecil Commerce Center, POWMIAMemorial.org/Events/Commemorating-The-30th-Anniversary-of-Desert-Shield-Storm/, free to attend, \$10 for BBQ lunch.

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OPERATION ENCORE: Showcasing your musical talents during and after military service

BY STEPHANIE THOMPSON

Your military uniform is put away until Monday morning, and it's time to decompress. You leave the house for a night you have been waiting for. The weather is perfect: calm and cool.

You step onto the edge of the stage. You're amped up, ready to play your heart out. You and your bandmates walk out onto the stage and in view of the masses. The crowd erupts. Hands fly into the air, hoots and hollers in anticipation of the night ahead.

Have you ever dreamed of being a professional musician, writing songs and performing them for an audience, but unsure if this path was still an option, since you decided to join the military?

The above example is not a mere daydream, but it represents the experience of Jerry Maniscalco, U.S. Navy Veteran and one of Operation Encore's first participants.

"The first time playing my own music with an actual band was with the Operation Encore release show in the Phoenix area in 2014, on Veterans Day," said Maniscalco, who was active duty at the time.

Operation Encore helps Servicemembers develop their professional musical portfolio while in the military, or after service.

"We only bring on musicians with current musical talent, taking them to the next level," Operation Encore co-founder Erik Brine said.

Brine and fellow co-founder Rob Raymond, a talented musician, were both Air Force pilots and in Washington, D.C., together in 2014. They recognized a gap in the talent of Servicemembers and their ability to showcase that talent while serving in the military.

"Musicians missed the early years [of performing on the road] to serve their country, so we wanted to find a way to give them an opportunity, plus use their personal stories of what it means to serve to a broader audience," Brine said.

How does an aspiring musician make up for the loss of such career-defining moments? Operation Encore fills that void by providing resources for Servicemembers and Veterans. They create compilation albums with a selection of singles from multiple artists to ensure each one has an example of a professionally produced song they can add to their portfolio. For more established artists, they assist in producing full EPs.

"We can get [them] in a professional studio that can fill in all the other aspects outside of [their] piece to really fill out [their] song (drums, etc.)," Brine said.

The non-profit also provides opportunities to perform in live concerts. If you're still in the military, your gigs will be close to home, though the organization absolutely can and will arrange for you to play in bigger venues, if you're open to it.

Operation Encore organizes multiple concerts, where each participant might play four to six songs as part of the larger show. According to Brine, the organization pays to fly musicians to the venue, get them set up, and fly them home.

Maniscalco, our concert-giving musician from the introduction, moved to Jacksonville in 2009 as a naval helicopter pilot. That's where his music career truly began.

"A buddy got me involved in songwriting, and we would go to open mics and play three or four songs, which is how I got my feet wet playing guitar in front of other people," Maniscalco said.

He began writing his own music while on his three deployments from Jacksonville. In 2014, while serving instructor duty in Milton, Fla., Maniscalco heard of Operation Encore.

"When I started writing music, I didn't tell people I was a Veteran. A lot of stuff I was writing was about experiences I had in the military, but I didn't think people would relate to that, so I didn't explicitly say it," Maniscalco said. "Operation Encore helped me. It's okay to tell your story specifically. People will relate to it because they are human beings, not because they were in the military."

Maniscalco was featured in Operation Encore's first and second compilation CDs. Since then, he has recorded in the studio and released two EPs.

If you were in Jacksonville from 2017-2018, you may have seen Maniscalco perform live.

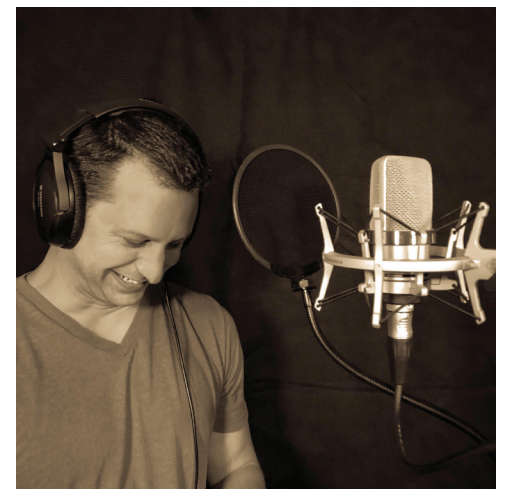
"In 2017, I got out of the Navy. I took a year off between that and doing my MBA and was a professional musician in Jax into the spring and summer of 2018," Maniscalco said. "I played over 100 gigs in the Jax area. During that time, I recorded a second EP that was supported by Operation Encore, but it was just my music, called 'Bold Enough to Try' on Spotify."

In 2018, he performed at Sliders during Dancing in the Streets, an annual festival at Atlantic Beach. He also performed at Whiskey Jax every Sunday between the summer of 2017 and the spring of 2018.

Prospective participants of Operation Encore must first apply, as the resources available to each musician are limited. The submission window reopens in the fall of 2021. In the meantime, you can connect with Operation Encore on social media and discover fellow musicians.

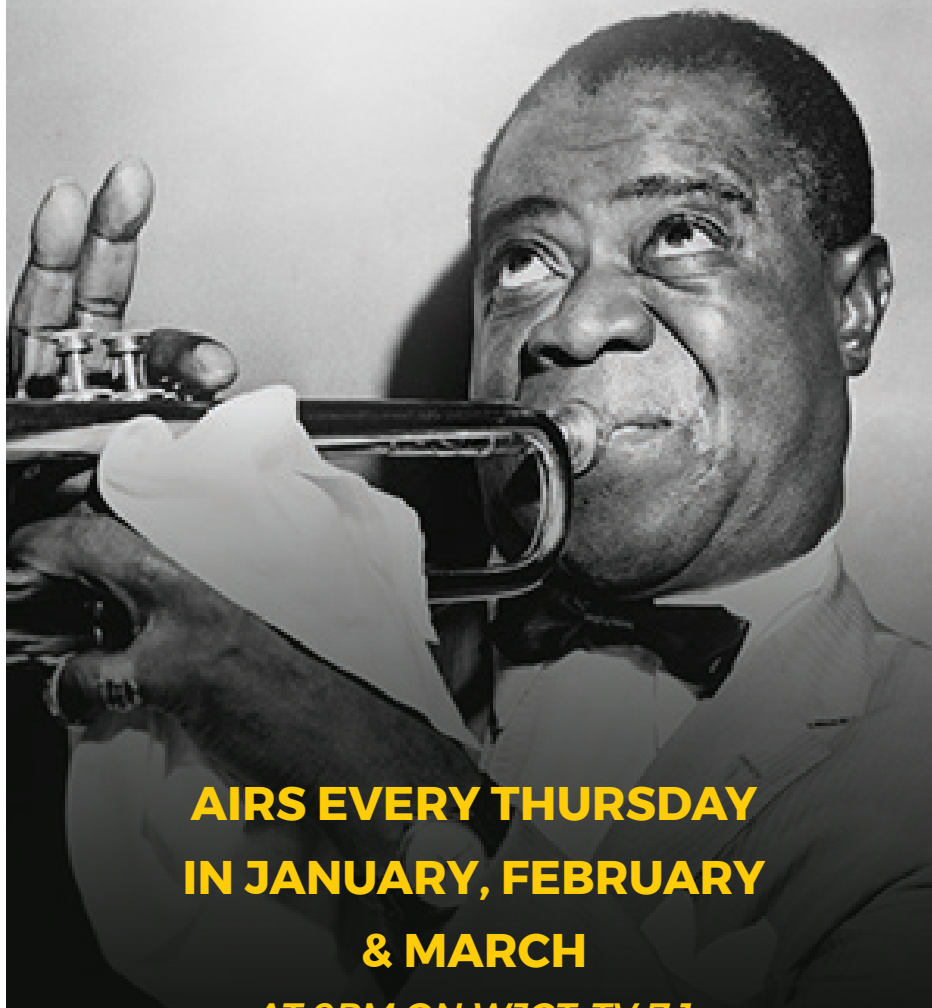
"Listen to the music and read the lyrics and understand the stories behind these songs," Brine said. "A lot of Veterans we work with are tremendous songwriters and storytellers. They have incredible experiences."

You can find links to individual artists' music, as well as more information about the program, on OperationEncore.org.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ART WALKS & MARKETS

FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK 5-9 p.m. Friday, Feb. 5, Downtown St. Augustine, ArtGalleriesOfStAugustine.com.

FERNANDINA BEACH FARMERS MARKET 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays, Amelia Island Market Place, N. Seventh St., Fernandina Beach, FernandinaBeachMarketPlace.com. **RIVERSIDE ARTS MARKET** Online 8 a.m.-3 p.m.; in person 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturdays, 715 Riverside Ave., Riverside, RiversideAvondale.org.

ST. MARYS COMMUNITY MARKET 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays, Pavilion, 100 Osborne St., Downtown St. Marys, Facebook.com, search "St. Marys Community Market."

ATLANTIC BEACH ARTS MARKET 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, 1805 Mayport Rd., Atlantic Beach, AtlanticBeachArtsMarket.com.

ORANGE PARK FARMERS MARKET 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 7 & 21, Town Hall Park, 2042 Park Ave., Orange Park, OrangeParkMarket.com.

IN TOWN/ONLINE

EXPEDITIONARY WARFARE CONFERENCE Explore the operations and acquisition processes that support the expeditionary warfare community. Tuesday & Wednesday, Feb. 2 & 3, NDIA.org/Events, \$50-\$400.

JACKSONVILLE RV MEGASHOW Explore accessories, discover campgrounds, or even find a new RV to call home. Tickets are half-off for seniors on February 11 and Servicemembers and first responders every day. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday-Sunday, Feb. 11-14, Jacksonville Equestrian Center, 13611 Normandy Blvd., Westside, FRVTA.org, \$8.

MILITARY VEHICLE PRESERVATION SOCIETY Featuring WWII armor and The Army Aviation Heritage Foundation and Flying Museum. Call Frank Cashman at (904) 219-7998 or email NB1337@Comcast.net. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday-Sunday, Feb. 19-21, Reynold's Industrial Park, U.S. Hwy. 16 at Bunker Ave., Green Cove Springs, MVPA.org/Events.

PROTECT the CONSTITUTION CRASH COURSE Get the facts on the U.S. Constitution, framers' intentions, and best practices for defending it. 10 a.m.-1:15 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, The Salem Centre, 7235 Bonneval Rd., Southside, WeCanBeHeroesFoundation.org, (904) 373-8817, \$35.

NEFL SCOTTISH GAMES Come rain or shine, the annual festival returns with more Scottish bagpipes, animals, games and food. 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27, Clay County Fairgrounds, 2497 S.R. 16 W., Green Cove Springs, NEFLGames.com, \$12/\$15

SERVICEMEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

JIM FURYK MEET & GREET Join the pro golfer during Buckets and Brews. Call the Pro Shop at (904) 270-5380 to register. 4-6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, Windy Harbor Golf Club, 1981 Main St., NS Mayport, NavyMWRMayport.com, free, base access required.

VALENTINE'S CRAFTS Bring the kids (ages 2-12) for this themed craft day. Event is parent-led. February 2-13,

The Crab, 940 USS James Madison Rd., Bldg. 1066, Facebook.com/MWRKingsBay, \$2, base access required.

DRIVE-THRU CIRCUS Enjoy free goodie bags, music, performers, and a photo booth. 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, Feb. 6, behind River Cove Catering and Conference Center, Bldg. 10, NAS Jacksonville, NavyMWRJacksonville.com, free, base access required.

VIRTUAL PAINTING CLASS: THE LOVE TREE Must register by Friday, Feb. 5. Materials will be available for pick-up at Tickets and Travel on Feb. 8. The link to the class will be emailed on the day of. Tuesday, Feb. 9, NavyMWRKingsBay.com, \$25, base access required for supplies.

DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL CHOICE Meet one-on-one with a representative Duval County Public Schools in the Tortuga room. Call (904) 219-3984 or email Sharon.Kasica@Navy.mil to register. Tuesdays in February, The Beacon, 245 Baltimore St., NS Mayport, NavyMWRMayport.com, free, base access required.

VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

HERTOTALWELLNES COHORT 18 This six-week program is designed to empower women Veterans and their daughters on the path to self-sufficiency. For questions or to register, email HTW@ForWomenVets.org. Classes begin Tuesday, Feb. 2, ForWomenVets.org, free.

FOUR CHAPLAINS INTERFAITH MEMORIAL SERVICE Celebrate "The Unique Legacy of Brotherhood." This year's guest speaker is Dr. Manuel A. Cordero, the senior director for U.S. Chaplaincy Ministries for The General Council of the Assemblies of God. 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3, Chapel of the High-Speed Pass, 6112 POW-MIA Pkwy., Cecil Commerce Center, Facebook.com/POWMIAMemorial, free.

MILITARY SUPPORT RETREAT Post-9/11 combat Veterans are invited to strengthen and restore connections, gain critical coping skills, and make peace with their past so they can begin planning for their new mission at home. Thursday-Sunday, Feb. 4-7, Amelia Island, GratitudeAmerica.org/Retreats, free.

VISION BOARD BRUNCH Make 2021 your year, and build your goals with fellow female Veterans and milspouses. Email ARitter@Hope4Veterans.org to register. Noon-4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 6, Murabella, 101 W. Positano Ave., St. Augustine, Facebook.com/Hope4Sister, free.

NATCON 2021 Join thousands of student Veterans in exchanging ideas and best practices for topics such as thriving in a virtual world and growing a local SVA chapter. Friday & Saturday, Feb. 19 & 20, StudentVeterans.org/Programs-Events/National-Conference, students: free, general: \$200.

VETS ON TAP NETWORKING Whether you're a Veteran or a person who cares about Veterans, this is your opportunity to connect with like-minded community members for good conversation. 6-9 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23, Legacy Ale Works, 14965 Old St. Augustine Rd., Ste. 129, Mandarin, Facebook.com/VetsOnTap, free.

AIRBORNE HAZARDS & BURN PITS Learn how to identify airborne hazards, understand the clinical effects of airborne hazards, and sign up for the Burn Pit Registry. 1:30-3 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25, https://rb.gy/pyjftz, free.

VETERAN ART Duval County residents are invited to address their mental well-being through this therapeutic art session. Supplies will be provided. Mondays, Tuesdays, Saturdays, HelpingThroughTheArts.org, free.

LIVE MUSIC

AMELIA ISLAND, FERNANDINA

The SANDBAR & KITCHEN, 2910 Atlantic Ave., Fernandina Beach Early McCall Feb. 11; Davis Turner Feb. 20

The SURF, 3199 S. Fletcher Ave. Shawn Layne Feb. 6; Soundwavez Feb. 20

THE BEACHES

(All venues in Jax Beach unless otherwise noted)

BLUE JAY LISTENING ROOM, 2457 S. Third St. Remedy Tree Feb. 5; Sam Burchfield Feb. 7; Taylor Roberts Feb. 20

GUSTO, 1266 Beach Blvd. Cloud 9 Band Feb. 4; Baba Caiman, Caribe Groove Feb. 6; VOX Feb. 19

WHISKEY JAX, 950 Marsh Landing Pkwy. The Remains Feb. 6; Mississippi Blues Band Feb. 9; Pink Paisleys Feb. 19

DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE

FLORIDA THEATRE, 128 E. Forsyth St. Rodney Carrington Feb. 6; Easton Corbin Feb. 11; The Wailers & Julian Marley Feb. 20

VYSTAR VETERANS ARENA, 300 A. Philip Randolph Blvd. TobyMac Feb. 11.

FLEMING ISLAND, GREEN COVE

WHITEY'S FISH CAMP, 2032 C.R. 220 Travis Harden Feb. 7; Highway Jones Feb. 12; Spanky Feb. 13; Big Engine Feb. 20; Eric Alabiso Feb. 25; Roger That Feb. 26; Julia Gulia Feb. 27

INTRACOASTAL, ARLINGTON

CLIFF'S, 3033 Monument Rd. Blistur Feb. 12 & 13

JERRY'S, 13170-22 Atlantic Blvd. Don't Call Me Shirley Feb. 12; Sutton Duo Feb. 26

MANDARIN

IGGY'S, 104 Bartram Oaks Walk, Ste. 101 Wes Cobb Feb. 3; Pink Paisleys Feb. 5; Jason Evans Band Feb. 6; Vegas Gray Feb. 13; Yancy Clegg Feb. 24

PONTE VEDRA

PONTE VEDRA CONCERT HALL, 1050 A1A N. Los Lobos Feb. 21

RIVERSIDE, WESTSIDE

MURRAY HILL THEATRE, 932 Edgewood Ave.

Myles Brandon, Seagate Feb. 5; DJ Will, Shayne the Prophet Feb. 27

THRASHER-HORNE CENTER, 283 College Dr. Atlanta Rhythm Section, The Pat Travers Band Feb. 6

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The AMP, 1340C A1A S. The Allman Betts Band Feb. 6

PROHIBITION KITCHEN, 119 S. George St.

Sam Pacetti Feb. 1 & 15; Let's Ride Brass Band Feb. 5; Colton McKenna Feb. 9; Chillula Feb. 12; Firewater Tent Revival Feb. 13

SAN MARCO, SOUTHBANK

JACK RABBITS, 1528 Hendricks Ave. Bryce Alastair Band, Jackie Stranger Feb. 12; Shadow the Earth Feb. 20

SOUTHSIDE, BAYMEADOWS

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Western Way, Ste. 104 The Bald Eagles Feb. 12; Shawn Layne Feb. 26

WHISKEY JAX, 10915 Baymeadows Rd., Ste. 135 North of 40 Feb. 6; Dustin Monk & the Hustle Feb. 12

SPRINGFIELD, NORTHSIDE

PALMS FISH CAMP, 6359 Heckscher Dr. Pat Rose Feb. 5, 19, 20, 27; Tony Mikus Feb. 6, 21, 27; Kelli & Ken Feb. 12; Scott Elley Feb. 13

THE UNTOLD STORIES OF BLACK VETERANS

A few words about Black History Month and American History

By REUBEN KEITH GREEN

In this column, I tend to stay away from that topic where telling the truth can get you into more trouble than telling a lie: politics. I'm making an exception today, however, as I listen to the presidential inauguration speech of President Joseph R. Biden.

Politics and Black history are especially intertwined today, January 20. Not only is Vice President Kamala Harris the first female vice president, but she is also the first of Black/Asian descent. Biden's calls for unity and respect towards each other are a call to live up to the ideals of this nation, which have been sorely strained in these trying last few months.

Black Americans have always answered the call to defend this nation, and I'm going to tell you about a few who are not well known.

Navy Captain Gail Harris showed the value of diversity during an important war game to test our national defense. Using outside-the-



box thinking and creative use of military assets, she defeated the American defenses, causing consternation and hand-wringing throughout the Pentagon and beyond. Despite being a legend in the military intelligence community, she has had her share of challenges facing racism, sexism and discrimination. She told her story in her memoir "A Woman's War."

Not as well known as The Golden Thirteen, who were the first Black Naval officers commissioned during World War I, The Golden Fourteen are nevertheless significant. During World War I, and the resulting manpower shortage, fourteen Black women were allowed to enlist as administrative workers in the Muster Roll Personnel Division. They were led by a Black Seaman named John T. Risher, who recruited his cousin for the effort. The Golden Fourteen made sure that the records of returning Veterans were handled properly, ensuring that the Veterans received the benefits they deserved. Mustered out after the war, many of these women returned to or went on to lead successful careers in civilian life. They answered the call.



During a battle in World War II, following the nighttime sinking of his ship by Japanese forces, a young man who was a powerful swimmer tied a rope around his waist and quietly slipped into the water, which was teeming with sharks. As the predators circled around and tested him, he swam away from the shoreline for six hours, because certain death awaited him had he been captured

by the Japanese forces ashore. He wasn't just swimming for himself. At the end of that rope around his waist was a life raft filled with his wounded and exhausted shipmates who had also survived the sinking. After they were rescued by American forces and taken ashore, the men in that raft came to life and began to raise so much hell with the Military Police (MP) giving them orders that the MPs decided the men were crazy and left them alone. Those Sailors were raising hell because the MPs were trying to separate them from their savior.

Charles Jackson French, the swimmer, was a Navy steward, and unlike the other men, he was Black. The Sailors weren't having it. He had answered the call, and then some. Many of the descendants of the men he saved that night have never heard of him, but you now have. Tell somebody!

Gen. Charles "CQ" Brown made history last year, and you should know his name. He became the first Black chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force (USAF), and his electrifying video discussing his experiences as a Black officer and fighter pilot in the Air Force was widely viewed. He made the video in response to the homicide of George Floyd, which prompted a worldwide response and led to soul searching in living rooms, board rooms, and the halls of government.



Universally recognized as an outstanding officer, where only two percent of USAF fighter pilots are Black, it is clear that Brown more than deserves the trust that the political leadership has placed in him. He has stated his commitment to improving diversity and inclusion in the Air Force.

Another Black Veteran poised to make history is retired Army Gen. Lloyd Austin.

At the time of writing, he has been nominated to become the first Black secretary of defense. Respected and accomplished, he has stated his commitment to wiping out extremism in the ranks, referencing his time as a lieutenant colonel at Fort Bragg in North Carolina, where a significant number of white supremacists were assigned to the base.



The Department of Defense has begun the process of removing confederates' names from military facilities (Bragg is one of them), and I'm sure that, if confirmed, Austin will follow through. He has also pledged to double down on the efforts to eliminate sexual harassment and assault in the military.

I'm not sure how much you know about Black history, but February is a good time to increase your knowledge. When I wrote my memoir, "Black Officer, White Navy," I was trying to fill in the gap that exists in the literature where the stories of Black Veterans should be.

Black history is American history. Take some time to learn more of it.

Reuben Keith Green is a Veteran and author of the story of his career in "Black Officer, White Navy." Green shares the stories of the military, Veterans, and their families on The Liberty Coast.

If you have a story or know of someone whose story should be shared, submit it to LibertyLifeMedia.com/Submit-Stories.

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30 YEARS LATER

Remembering Operation Desert Shield & Desert Storm

By LIBERTY LIFE STAFF



On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait, a move unsupported by dozens of world leaders. The result, five days later, was the commencement of Operation Desert Shield and a U.S.-led coalition of 35 nations, with the goal being to liberate Kuwait. With the start of the air war on January 17 of the following year, the operation evolved and became Operation Desert Storm.

A mere 42 days later, on February 28, 1991, coalition forces retook Kuwait City, successfully liberating the country. Hostilities ended when then-President George H.W. Bush declared a cease-fire.

According to the National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum's website, the participation of The Liberty Coast military community during the first Gulf War included at least 27 military aircraft squadrons, 14 naval and Military Sealift Command ships, and many Sailors, naval aviators, support personnel, staff, and medical detachments.

The impact of the war was immediately felt locally, as the first reported casualty was a Jacksonville resident and FSU graduate: Michael "Scott" Speicher. Then Navy Lt. Cmdr. Speicher's F/A-18 was shot down during his mission to suppress enemy radars in advance of air raids. His true fate and impactful odyssey were not known until 2009 when his remains were located and returned to Jacksonville. *Liberty Life* will share that intricate story in a later issue.

As we approach the 30th anniversary of the end of Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial is hosting a remembrance ceremony on Saturday, Feb. 27. The ceremony will be held at Cecil Commerce Center in the Chapel of the High-Speed Pass.

Thanks to the Navy and generous support of Jacksonville-based, pro-military companies, a highlight of the tribute will be the organization's first display aircraft: an A-7 Corsair II, a "light attack" bomber flown from aircraft carriers.

Landstar System, an international transportation company headquartered in Jacksonville, Fla., retrieved the A-7 from Arkansas. The folks at Flightstar Aircraft Services transformed the very weathered aircraft into a shiny, restored warplane. She will wear the markings of VA-174, which was the longest-serving squadron at Cecil Field.

The tribute will include the dedication of the new Aircrewman Memorial and the Gold Star Families Memorial, providing a place for families, shipmates and visitors to remember and honor those who did not come home.

The volunteers and supporters of the tribute have adapted to the realities of the pandemic and instituted the recommended precautions. For complete tribute details, including the BBQ luncheon, visit POWMIAMemorial.org/Events/Commemorating-the-30th-Anniversary-of-Desert-Shield-Storm/



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BRIDGING YOUR GAPS

Acquiring the right skills before transition

By BRIAN BILSKI



In the last issue we discussed where to start your transition and the resources available to assist you in identifying and deciding potential career paths.

Every Servicemember is unique and no two career paths or transition plans are the same. There are, however, three pathways for the majority of transitioning Servicemembers: employment, education and entrepreneurship. Today we are focusing on the employment pathway, specifically on identifying required skills and potential gaps in experience.

I'm the first to advise that you choose something you're passionate about doing, although passion alone does not pay the bills; you must also ensure your career path has future growth potential. There are many resources, both government and private, including your base career counselor. There is also "My Next Move, for Veterans" (MyNextMove.org/Vets) that searches—based on your interests, skills or occupational specialty—future career paths and their forecasted growth, as well as hot technologies and green careers.

Once you have selected a potential career to pursue, assess your skills and experience against those required for that career. There are multiple ways to identify required skills: ONet, CareerOneStop for Veterans, researching industry associations, and connecting with those currently in the field (more on LinkedIn networking later), among others. As a recruiter, I highly suggest reading the current position descriptions (PD) for companies hiring for that career as another way to assess needed skill sets. Why? Most PD's are written by the hiring manager who makes the actual hiring decision.

After your skills assessment, develop a plan to bridge as many gaps as you can before transition. You will find that civilian positions often require industry recognized credentials or certifications. Some are required by law, contracts with the government, etc. These requirements are designed to ensure candidate skills are on par with industry standards.

To help you close the gaps, each military service branch has created a "Credentialing Opportunities On-line" or COOL program. The COOL program assists you in translating your training into civilian credentials, as well as identifying certifying organizations and resources to complete training and certifications.

There are also multiple private resources that provide free Information Technology (IT), Project Management and other industry training and certifications, such as Onward to Opportunity (O2O). Many industries also have Veteran-specific programs that are free or reduced rate for transitioning Servicemembers.

Often, you already have the experience and need only focus on obtaining industry recognized certification. This action will increase your starting salary and, in many cases, make or break the final hiring decision.

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ZZ21160B

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L0224027

2018 HYUNDAI ELANTRA SE
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\$12,490



P2879A

2018 TOYOTA CAMRY LE

\$14,900



LR190248A

2016 HONDA PILOT ELITE
LEATHER!

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F015419A

2015 HONDA CR-V TOURING
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\$16,988



P2815A

2015 CHEVROLET CAMARO LT
LOW MILES, LOADED!

\$18,488



MF056365A

2018 HONDA CIVIC EX-L
25K MILES!

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F008308A

2018 ACURA RDX
TECHNOLOGY PACKAGE, LOW MILES!

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2015 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE HIGH ALTITUDE
29K MILES!

\$27,900



P2897A

2017 MERCEDES-BENZ C 300
LOADED, LOW MILES!

\$28,990



M0119319A

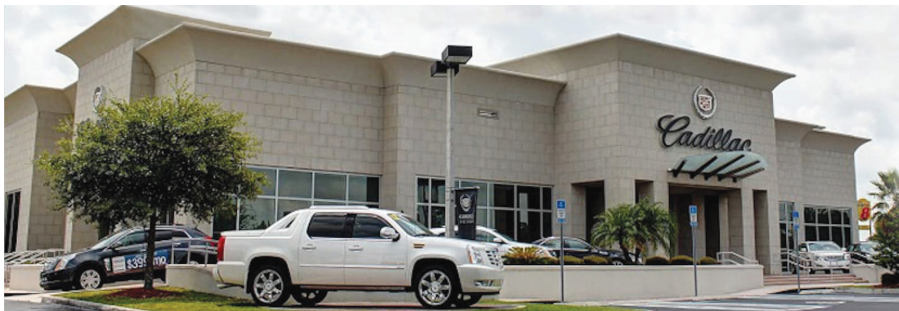
2015 FORD MUSTANG GT PREMIUM
ONLY 15K MILES!

\$30,988

FIELDS CADILLAC JACKSONVILLE
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2013 LINCOLN MKX
LOADED, LOW MILES!

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L0154363B

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\$17,210



PR2856

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ONLY 14K MILES!

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PR2794A

2016 CADILLAC ATS
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\$18,051



PR2838A

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LF017654A

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P2851

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LZ177672A

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COMMUNITY PICKS



SEE YOU ON THE ICE

GUNS 'N' HOSES CHARITY HOCKEY GAME

Local firefighters, law enforcement officers, EMTs, paramedics, and military personnel compete in this annual event to benefit the Jacksonville Fire Fighter Charity and FOP Foundation. Price includes tickets to the Guns 'n' Hoses game as well as the Jacksonville Icemen game.

Guns 'n' Hoses at 3 p.m.; Icemen at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena, 300 A. Philip Randolph Blvd., Sports Complex, GunsAndHosesHockeyJax.com, from \$15 to \$45.



NASHVILLE IN NORTH FLORIDA

FIRST COAST OPRY & COUNTRY AWARDS

Grammy-award winning country artist Linda Davis presents the North Florida Music Awards for male/female artist of the year. Attendees can anticipate performances from Katie O, Mac Gano, Teagan Hill, Stephen Quinn, and Kian Sanchez, as well as a joint performance from Davis and husband Lang Scott.

3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 21, Thrasher-Horne Center, 283 College Dr., Lakeside, THCenter.org, \$29.



THE WORLD AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

WORLD OF NATIONS CELEBRATION

The City of Jacksonville and several local multicultural groups bring the world to you through the cuisine, artistry and customs of lands near and far. Ticket information will be available on the website below, as the event approaches. The first two hours on Friday will be sensory friendly.

9 a.m.-7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26

10 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27

10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 28

Tailgaters Parking, 225 Talleyrand Ave., Sports Complex, JaxWorldOfNations.com.

USO of Greater Jacksonville

Celebrating 80 years of service

By STEPHANIE THOMPSON

This is an ongoing series about the many military and Veteran organizations that make up The Liberty Coast. The common denominator is their physical location in the region, each playing a role in defining the culture of this pro-military and Veteran-friendly community. For previous snapshots, visit LibertyLifeMedia.com/Archives.

The United Service Organizations Inc.—USO—was established on February 4, 1941, and is dedicated to keeping military members connected to their family, home and country while they serve to keep citizens safe and free. The nonprofit has done very well on that mission for decades, but in the year leading up to its 80th anniversary, by necessity, the organization shifted its approach.

Ninety percent of what the USO does helps support young enlisted Servicemembers and their families. Before COVID-19, the USO of Greater Jacksonville regularly fed an average of 300 people with its No Dough Dinners program. Now that the dinners are to go, they feed thousands.

Another service offered by the USO on The Liberty Coast is the Healthy Military Families Initiative, which provides \$200-\$250 worth of fresh fruits, vegetables, lean meats, dried goods, and other foods for young enlisted Servicemembers and their families. In the past, families entered the USO to receive these goods, but COVID-19 precautions have turned this initiative into a drive-by service.

The USO staff and volunteers can fill the trunks of four family vehicles every 15 minutes with fresh food, and recipients never have to step out of their cars. This has been a huge help, as many military families became one-income households overnight.

The USO of Greater Jacksonville will celebrate the organization's history on the upcoming anniversary by thanking the 80 years of staff and volunteers. USO of Greater Jacksonville Executive Director Mike O'Brien noted that, with only six full-time employees, volunteers are a critical component of offering help to military families, clocking in more than 20,000 man-hours in 2020.

"We will focus on where the USO is going, how we're going to touch smaller groups of the military with our USO to-go programs," O'Brien said. "Looking forward to a whole new message to the military. USO is still by their side throughout the world."

There are three USO locations on The Liberty Coast:

1. Jacksonville International Airport Welcome Center (closed due to COVID-19; re-opening has not yet been determined)
2. Mayport Center, 2560 Mayport Rd., Atlantic Beach, (904) 246-3481
3. Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Building 1050, (904) 778-2821

Many USO events and programs have been moved online and can be found at Jax.USO.org. The virtual birthday celebration will be available on the same website as we approach February 4.

If you know or are part of an organization on The Liberty Coast that others should know about, let us know! We want to share your story and introduce you to the community. Visit LibertyLifeMedia.com/Submit-Stories or email Editor@LibertyLifeMedia.com to learn more.



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MM0500674A

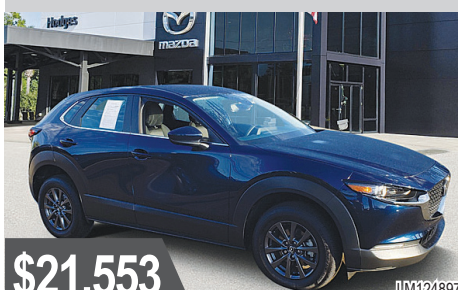
2020 MAZDA6 SPORT



\$21,431

ML1521548

2020 MAZDA CX-30 AWD



\$21,553

LM124897

2018 MAZDA CX-5 GRAND TOURING



\$23,050

MMM225632A

2020 MAZDA CX-5 SPORT



\$23,427

ML0724362

2017 MAZDA CX-9 GRAND TOURING
ALL WHEEL DRIVE



\$24,031

MPH0140595

2020 MAZDA CX-30 PREMIUM



\$24,138

MM1311330A

2018 MAZDA CX-5 GRAND TOURING



\$24,149

MM0348591A

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NEWS & INFO

VA Home Loans for National Guard Members

When this year's Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act becomes law, National Guard members who have served at least 90 days of qualifying Title 32 active-duty service, including at least one consecutive stint of 30 days, will be newly eligible for a VA home loan. The expanded eligibility is also applied retroactively.



Most of 2020's National Guard COVID-19 response has been under Title 32 502(f) orders, with tens of thousands of troops surpassing the 90-day threshold necessary to qualify under the new legislation, and thousands more logging at least 31 days.

VA's website will update eligibility information once the legislation is enacted. Visit [VA.gov/Housing-Assistance/Home-Loans/Eligibility](https://www.va.gov/Housing-Assistance/Home-Loans/Eligibility)

Four Chaplains Day

On February 3, 1943, while transporting troops to Greenland, an Army transport was sunk by a German torpedo, killing 672 of 902 people. Many of the survivors owe their lives to the four chaplains on board that day.

According to the American Legion, "As soldiers rushed to lifeboats, Reverend George Fox (Methodist), Jewish Rabbi Alexander Goode, Reverend Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed) and Father John Washington (Roman Catholic) comforted the wounded and directed others to safety. The chaplains distributed life jackets, and when they ran out, they removed theirs and gave them to four young passengers. As the ship sank, the chaplains were seen linked arm in arm, praying."



You are invited to the Four Chaplains Interfaith Memorial Service: 10 a.m., February 3, Chapel of The High-Speed Pass, 6112 POW-MIA Memorial Pkwy. More at POWMIAMemorial.org.

Marine Corps books 966 rooms at Hyatt Regency Downtown

The U.S. Marine Corps has booked out one of Jacksonville's largest riverfront hotels until July 26. The Hyatt Regency Hotel will be used as a pandemic quarantine and preliminary training venue prior to relocating the future Marines to basic training at Parris Island, SC.



Homeless Veterans Stand Down Support Services, Food, Clothing & Job Fair



All military Veterans are invited to get needed supplies, services, referrals and support during this two-day event. Attendees can anticipate learning more about housing and shelter options, employment opportunities,

medical and dental services, access to food and clothing, and more. COVID-19 precautions in place.

VOLUNTEERS needed Saturday at 8:30 a.m.

JOB FAIR and SUPPORT SERVICES DAY, Friday, Jan. 29, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Shelter and housing support, employment, medical and dental services.

HOMELESS VETERANS STAND DOWN, Saturday, Jan. 30, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Food and clothing give-aways, hygiene kits, VA services, The Vet Center, behavioral and mental health services.

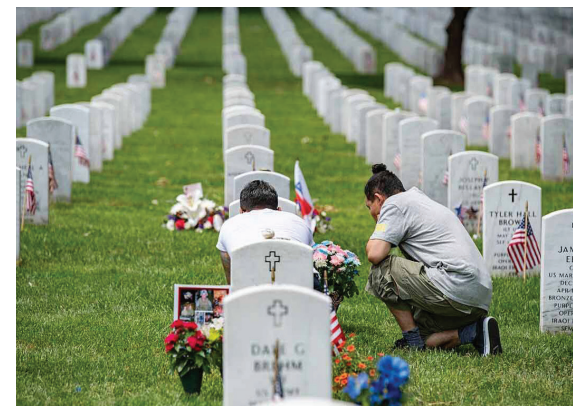
Jacksonville Fairgrounds, 510 Fairgrounds Pl., Downtown Jacksonville, 904.255.5550, JacksonvilleFair.com/Events, free.

The 'Widow's Tax' is going away

The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) offset, otherwise known as the "widow's tax," will begin a planned phaseout in January 2021.

Previously, surviving spouses who qualified for both SBP and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments only received a partial SBP payment, one reduced by the amount of the DIC. Congress is now allowing surviving spouses to receive both at the same time.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) has sent all affected surviving spouses letters explaining their new payment amounts. If you believe you should have received such a letter but didn't, contact DFAS.Mil.



Duval County high school represented Florida during presidential inauguration



The Andrew Jackson High School Air Force Junior ROTC Flying Lady Tigers Drill Team performed in the "Parade Across America," the virtual portion of the presidential inauguration, representing Florida after earning the spot through a competition with other state schools.

The parade included groups or individuals from all 56 U.S. states and territories, the very first time such a vast representation has taken place during an inaugural parade.

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7740632A

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G371795A

\$3,991

1999 VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE GLS



7771990A

\$3,991

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O619988A

\$5,991

2010 HONDA CIVIC LX



7172636A

\$5,991

2010 GMC ACADIA SLT-2



G147991A

\$7,991

2009 NISSAN XTERRA S



7768858A

\$7,991

2014 FORD EXPLORER XLT



G151313A

\$9,991

2015 HONDA CIVIC LX



E171072A

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2019 HYUNDAI ELANTRA VALUE EDITION



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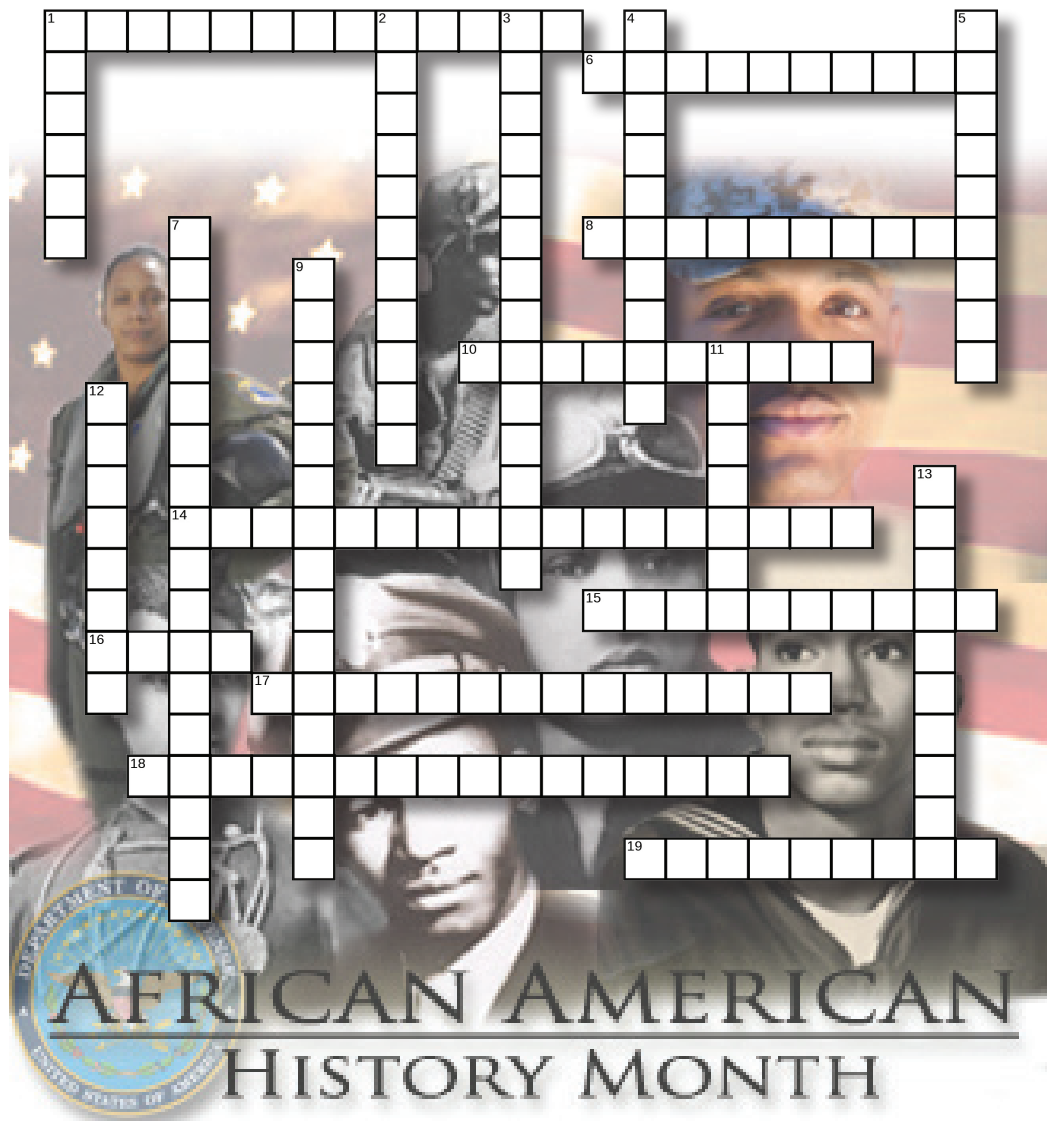
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LIBERTY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

JANUARY 27, 2020

Need a hint? You can find the answers to many of these items in the pages of Liberty Life (current and previous). To reference back issues, head to LibertyLifeMedia.com/Archives. Happy hunting!



Across

1. After a German submarine fired at the USS Dorchester, this group of men spread out, calmed the soldiers aboard, and sacrificed their lives to save others

6. For more than 100 years, the City of Eustis, Florida, has been going all out to celebrate President's Day and George Washington's birthday during this annual festival

8. This president officially recognized Black History Month in the '70s to encourage Americans to honor the often-neglected accomplishments of Black Americans

10. After the 9/11 attacks, Pat Geer considered training to become this types of officer, but he had passed the age limit of 35

14. Initially established as a civilian reserve operation in the '30s, this branch officially celebrates 80 years of service on February 19, 2021.

15. Annual hockey game benefitting the Jacksonville Fire Fighters Charity and the FOP Foundation

16. (abbrev.) This program assists Servicemembers in translating their training into civilian credentials and connects them with certifying organizations and resources to complete training and certifications

17. Group of Black women who, during WWI, made sure that the records of returning Veterans were handled properly, ensuring that the Veterans received the benefits they deserved

18. This local Air Force JROTC drill team performed during the virtual portion of the presidential inauguration, "Parade Across America"

19. Nickname for Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) offset, which will begin phasing out in January 2021

Down

1. February got its name from this Roman purification festival, not a Roman god (the god Februus also got its name from the festival)

2. Retired Army general who became the first Black defense secretary on January 22, 2021

3. USO of Greater Jacksonville program offering free meals to Servicemembers and their families ahead of pay day

4. February isn't just about candy hearts; the first Friday of American Heart Month is dedicated to raising awareness of heart disease in women (hint: involves clothing)

5. This type of event provides homeless Veterans with a safe space to receive and connect with essential services

7. Before it expanded to include the entire month, the second week of February was designated as Black History Week, in large part because the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and this prominent abolitionist movement activist fell during that week

9. First Black chief of staff of the Air Force

11. Live music venue and Atlantic Beach restaurant that Operation Encore's Jerry Maniscalco performed at during *Dancing in the Streets* in 2018

12. Although father-son duo Pat and Richard Geer enlisted in the National Guard, they ultimately retired from this branch

13. While some historians believe Valentine's Day is celebrated in the middle of February to align with Saint Valentine's death/burial, others claim the day is an offshoot of this ancient Roman celebration

WIDOWSTAX
WEARREDDAY
STANDDOWN
SLIDERS
NODOUGHINNERS

GERALDFORD
GOLDENFOURTEEN
GUNSNGHOSES
SLOYDAUSTIN
LUPERCALIA

FEBRUARY
FLYING LADY TIGERS
FOUR CHAPLAINS
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A man in a military uniform, wearing a camouflage jacket and a cap, is shouting into a large, golden megaphone. He is pointing his right index finger towards the right. The background is a solid dark grey.

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you think!**

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about your thoughts on
what you've read here to
Editor@LibertyLifeMedia.com.**




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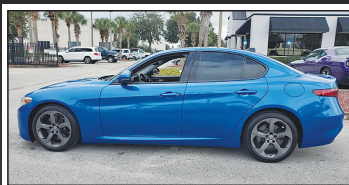
Boar's Head



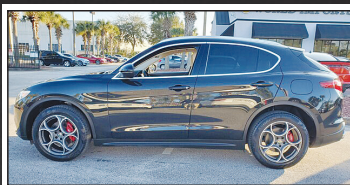


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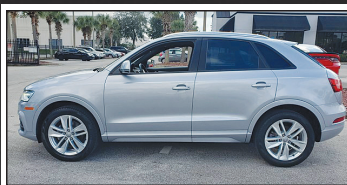
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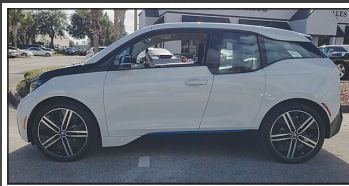
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LEATHER
\$18,999



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LEATHER, LOADED
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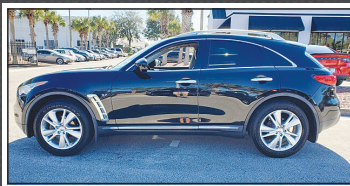
2017 FIAT 500E HATCH - PLUG AND SAVE
LEATHER
\$9,499



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LEATHER, SUNROOF
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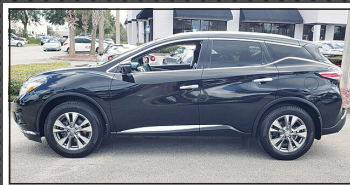
2018 MERCEDES-BENZ E300 SPORT
NEW \$60,635.00, LEATHER, SUNROOF
\$36,998



2018 MERCEDES-BENZ GLC 300 SPORT
LEATHER, SUNROOF
\$31,999



2019 NISSAN ARMADA 4X2 SL
LEATHER, SUNROOF
\$33,998



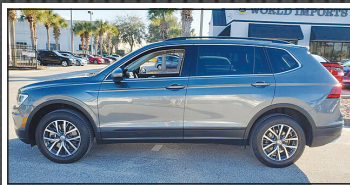
2015 NISSAN MURANO AWD SL
LEATHER, LOW MILES
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2018 NISSAN ROGUE SPORT
TECHNOLOGY
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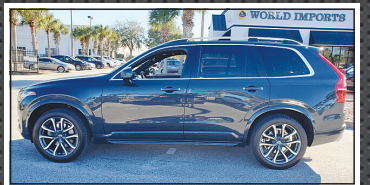
2019 VOLKSWAGEN TIGUAN 2.0T SE
LEATHER
\$18,999



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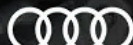


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