NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
ALVIN BROWN
MAYOR

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CITY OF JACKSONVILLE TO HOST "WEEK OF VALOR"

Series of events will honor veterans, educate the public, and celebrate the lives of veterans

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. ***Thursday, Oct. 4, 2012*** **—** Highlighting Jacksonville's commitment to the military and veterans, Mayor Alvin Brown and an array of community leaders announced a major weeklong series of events to honor and celebrate the contributions of current and former armed forces members and military families.

The *Week of Valor* in November serves as a way to come together as a community and honor those who serve, reflect on their sacrifices and celebrate their lives.

The *Week of Valor* kicks off Monday, Nov. 5, with a military appreciation luncheon sponsored by the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce. The national spotlight on the city's deep ties to the military and veteran communities will include two major sporting events.

The Jacksonville Jaguars will kick-off the NFL's "Salute to Service" weekend against the Indianapolis Colts on Thursday, Nov. 8. The next day, a concert will feature award-winning country artists Little Big Town at Naval Station Mayport as well as the Navy-Marine Corps Classic basketball game.

The game will be held aboard the USS Bataan, one of three representational Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) ships that will be stationed in Jacksonville by the end of 2013, at Naval Station Mayport for the game. The ships represent a three-ship ARG to be stationed in Jacksonville in 2013. The game, between the University of Florida and Georgetown University, will kick off the NCAA basketball season.

"It is my honor to participate in this salute to the brave men and women who have worked so hard and made such incredible sacrifices to preserve freedom for countless Americans," said Mayor Brown. "Jacksonville's expansive military and veterans community helps to define our city and fuel our economy. Our longstanding friendship with America's military is a tremendous point of pride that I am excited to celebrate."

"The city of Jacksonville has publicly declared itself as the most military friendly city in the nation. And from where I'm sitting, they back these words with action," said Rear Admiral John Scorby, Commander, Navy Region Southeast.

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Beside the Jaguars and the Chamber, the city is teaming with the UNF Military and Veteran Resource Council, and the Jacksonville Military and Veterans Coalition to support the weeklong series of events.

“We are privileged to live in a country where our freedoms are protected by millions of individuals who have served in the past or are currently serving in one of the branches of our country’s uniformed services,” said JAX Chamber Military Issues Chair and retired Rear Adm. James Stevenson. “The business community is honored to recognize those who have sacrificed and served – during the Week of Valor and throughout the year.”

“We’re excited to partner with the city in presenting and promoting the Week of Valor events and the Salute to Service,” Jaguars President Mark Lamping said. “The Jaguars are very proud of the men and women in uniform who serve our country every day, and we’re honored to help pay tribute to them throughout the year and in particular during this special week and these events and activities.”

On Wednesday, Nov. 7, the city will host active-duty military and veteran volunteers at Duval County Public Schools. DCPS students will have the opportunity to hear from veterans and learn about their sacrifices and commitment. The event will be followed by a veteran’s community summit which will help address the challenges facing local vets.

Thursday, Nov. 8 will consist of a media luncheon onboard the USS Bataan, before the NFL game begins at EverBank Field.

The City of Jacksonville’s Veterans Job Fair will start Friday morning, followed by the concert and basketball game.

“The Navy-Marine Corps Classic is proving to be an event that honors our military while highlighting two of the nation’s premiere college basketball teams,” said Alan Verlander, Director, Sports & Entertainment for the City of Jacksonville. “While the game will only take 40 minutes to decide, this event will create memories for all fans for a lifetime and will showcase Jacksonville to the nation.”

The *Week of Valor* will conclude with the City of Jacksonville’s Veterans Recognition Breakfast on Nov. 12, followed immediately by the celebration of the Veterans Day Parade in Downtown.

The City of Jacksonville has a longstanding relationship with the military, with more than 240,000 Jacksonville residents directly connected to the armed services, either as an active duty service member, guardsmen or reservist, retired military member or a veteran. Mayor Brown has made military affairs a top priority in his administration. Upon taking office, he elevated the Military Affairs Division to a department level and appointed Retired Adm. Victor Guillory as its director.

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"The Week of Valor is a terrific and very visible demonstration of the City of Jacksonville's enduring appreciation for the service and sacrifice of all those who have served, and for those who continue to serve, our great nation and the ideals near and dear to each of us", said Guillory.

"This week will showcase a wide range of impressive military and veterans related recognition events. The nearly one million citizens of our great city will have many opportunities during this week to share a common theme of respect and admiration to those who have, and those who continue to wear our nation's cloth."

The economic impact the military has on Jacksonville exceeds $12.2 billion dollars annually and Mayor Brown has worked closely with Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus and our Congressional leadership to deliver three additional ships to be homeported in Mayport. USS New York (LPD 21) will arrive in Mayport in the last quarter of calendar year 2013. USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) and USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) will follow in 2014. The arrival of the ships will bring 2,000 additional sailors and their families, and sustain the area's ship repair facilities, local ship maintenance expertise and industrial base.

WEEK OF VALOR

Monday, Nov. 5

Military Appreciation Luncheon
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Prime Osborn

Active Duty Military and Veteran School Visits
Monday – Friday

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Tuesday, Nov. 6

No Events. Election Day

Wednesday, Nov. 7

Veterans Summit
10 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., UNF University Center

Thursday, Nov. 8

Media Luncheon
11:30 a.m., USS Bataan, Naval Station Mayport

Jaguars vs. Colts NFL Thursday night military appreciation game
8:20 p.m., EverBank Field

Friday, Nov. 9

Veterans Jobs Fair
8:30 a.m., Prime Osborn Convention Center

Mayport Music Concert
4:30 p.m., Naval Station Mayport

Navy-Marine Corps Classic – Florida vs. Georgetown
9:00 p.m., Naval Station Mayport

Monday, Nov. 12

Veterans Recognition Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m., Times Union Center

Veterans Day Parade
11:01 a.m., Downtown

For more information please go to:

- www.coj.net/MilitaryAffairs
- http://www.facebook.com/WeekOfValor

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