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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler County hosts Memorial Day service featuring retired USMC Col. Mark Thieme, Executive Director of the Florida State Guard

May 20, 2024 – Join Flagler County at its Memorial Day Ceremony at 10 a.m. Monday, May 27, featuring special guest speaker retired United States Marine Corps Col. Mark Thieme. He was appointed in 2023 by Governor Ron DeSantis to the position of executive director of the Florida State Guard.

“Flagler County has a very strong community of veterans,” said Veterans Service Officer David Lydon. “It is a privilege and an honor to have a distinguished veteran like Col. Mark Thieme help us pay tribute to those who lost their lives in service to our country.”

Thieme, whose military honors include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, and the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, among numerous other awards, also holds two master’s degrees: one in Business Administration from Tulane University, and a second in Strategic Studies from the Marine Corps University. He also holds a bachelor’s degree in Finance from the University of South Carolina.

Thieme enlisted in the Marines in 1987. He earned his commission as an infantry officer in 1994.

The ceremony will be at 10 a.m. in front of the Government Services Building, 1769 E. Moody Blvd., Bunnell.

Local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts will lead attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Melanie DeMartino will sing the National Anthem. Later “God Bless America” will be sung by all who are in attendance. Vince Cautero will once again lead the singing of “God Bless the USA.”

“We will also recognize the loss of Army Cpl. Owen Niel Garnet gave his life in defense of our country and our way of life in Bien Hoa on January 31, 1968,” Lydon said. “We recognize his ultimate sacrifice and that of his family, which includes his sister Julia V. Moore who is the mother of Flagler County Court Judge Melissa Distler.”

Andy Dance
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Leann Pennington
District 4

Donald O’Brien, Jr.
District 5

The Memorial Day event is sponsored by the Flagler County Board of County Commissioners and the Flagler County Veterans Advisory Council. Veterans and support groups to participate include the following: American Legion Post 115, Boy Scouts of America, Combat Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans Chapter 86, Flagler County FireFlight, Flagler County Veterans Service Office, Flagler Woman's Club, Girl Scouts of America, the Knights of Columbus 2810 Color Corps, Marine Corps League 876, Matanzas High School JROTC, Military Officers Association of America-Flagler Chapter, and Veterans of Foreign War Post 8696.

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