



G. ROBERT MERRILEES

NASA PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS (RET) AND REAR ADMIRAL U. S. COAST GUARD RESERVE (RET)

Rear Admiral Merrilees is fortunate to have had a dual career with NASA and the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve. He started his civil service career in 1960 as a Budget Analyst with the Department of Agriculture and transferred to NASA in 1962 in Washington, D.C. also in the Budget arena. He and his wife Beverly, also a NASA Retiree, transferred to Kennedy Space Center, Florida in 1967.

He retired from NASA in January 1998 after thirty eight years primarily in Budgeting, the last several being in the Public Affairs Office in Guest Operations and as the Community Relations Officer, Kennedy Space Center. He continues to support the Public Affairs Office on a part-time volunteer basis and remains active in the Community.

He enlisted in the Coast Guard Reserve in 1961, became a Radioman Third Class, and then received a commission in 1964. He retired in 1994 as the Senior Reserve Officer, U.S. Coast Guard.

As a Flag Officer, Rear Admiral Merrilees served in both the Pacific Area and Atlantic Area from 1990 to 1994. Previously, he commanded several major organizations, including Coast Guard Reserve Group Miami, Coast Guard Reserve Group Jacksonville, Seventh Coast Guard District Reserve Inspection Team, and Coast Guard Reserve Unit Station Port Canaveral.

RADM Merrilees served as the Coast Guard member of the Reserve Forces Policy Board, which is a board consisting of Flag and General Officers created to offer independent advice to the Secretary of Defense and the Congress on matters relating to Reserve Component policies and programs. He still participates as an active alumnus attending meetings and functions. Membership on this Board provides networking with top-level military and civilian personnel from all services including National Guard and Coast Guard.

Rear Admiral Merrilees has been awarded the Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Medal, two Legions of Merit for exemplary service; the Meritorious Service Medal for conceiving, developing and implementing the Coast Guard Reserve's Space Shuttle Launch Support program; two Coast Guard Commendation Medals, and the Coast Guard Achievement Medal, among others.

As a result of his Coast Guard and NASA positions, he organized the Coast Guard Space Shuttle waterside launch security program, and commanded it for the first several years. This program started in 1981 and remained in place until the end of the Shuttle program.

Based on his Public Affairs experience with escorting NASA VIP groups, he was asked to be the lead escort of the wounded veterans from the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital in Tampa, FL, for the STS-117 and 118 Space Shuttle launches. The group consisted of the Veterans, their families, medical personnel, and the senior leadership of the hospital.

He was elected as the National President of the 75,000 member Reserve Officers Association, located on Capitol Hill, in 2003. This is an organization started by General Pershing in 1922 to support strong national security and a viable reserve program for all Services.

He was United States Vice President and Head of the U.S. Delegation of the Confederation of Interallied Reserve Officers (CIOR), which is an organization sanctioned by NATO since 1948 to assist and advise NATO on Reserve affairs. ROA is the U.S. member since it represents all Service Components. CIOR represents 1.3 million reservists in 34 NATO member countries and NATO affiliated countries.

A prominent member of his community, RADM Merrilees serves, or has served, on numerous boards of directors including Leadership Brevard (Chairman), Navy League, Community Services Council, Red Cross, Chamber of Commerce, Crisis Services, and Junior Achievement. He is also a member of the Brevard County Civilian/Military Council, a prestigious organization composed of community leaders.

RADM Merrilees is a graduate of American University in Washington, D.C. with a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration and a Masters Degree in Public Administration.

He and his wife Beverly reside in Merritt Island, Florida.