

Ombudsman Newsletter

USCGC Confidence
9235 Grouper Road
Cape Canaveral, FL. 32920

<http://www.uscg.mil/lantareg/cgcConfidence/default.asp>

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A Note From Your Ombudsman

Hello CONFIDENCE families,

For those that do not know me, my name is Brandi Ruffner and I am proud to serve as your command ombudsman. I just want to briefly share a little bit of information about myself. I have been a Coast Guard spouse for 14 years. We have two sons, ages 6 and 9. My family and I have been in this area for two years. We have fallen in love with the constant warmth and the beach. I hope you feel the same! Before moving here, we lived in VA (2x), ME, OH, and CA. Over the years, we have been at many types of units from stations to boats. This is our 3rd boat. Deployments are not new to me but that still doesn't make them any easier. I have discovered that the best way to get through deployments is to stay busy which is why I wanted to start creating newsletters. I wanted a way to share with other spouses the various activities and events going on in this area. I usually send out a newsletter for each month that the CONFIDENCE is underway. I realize that we still have a few weeks until the CONFIDENCE set sails again, but I wanted to use this newsletter to welcome all of the new families to the CONFIDENCE and to this area. If you have any questions about this area or the Coast Guard in general, please feel free to contact me. I am happy to help! If you are not familiar with the ombudsman program, I included in this newsletter my role as your command ombudsman. I also included a note from the CO and a list of events in the area for the month of October. This area has so much to offer and I hope all of you can find time to get out and to enjoy the area.

Brandi Ruffner
419-960-9180
confidenceombudsman@gmail.com

Family and Friends of CONFIDENCE,

What a great summer it has been for the crew of CONFIDENCE – a successful Tailored Ship’s Training Availability (TSTA) and much-needed dockside maintenance contract. As we roll into fall, there is much work to be done and the crew is consistently rising to the challenge. We continue to keep a watchful eye to the tropics and hope for the best for the rest of Hurricane Season (through 30 November).

The major summer transfer season is over and I trust that all the families and significant others have settled in here in the Cape Canaveral area. It’s no secret that my family and I call this place home and believe it’s one of the best-kept secrets in the Coast Guard. The quality of life, the cost of living, the great schools and the beaches make this area a terrific place to live and raise a family. I think I have met nearly every new spouse and family so far this summer transfer season and look forward to meeting those who have arrived in Cape Canaveral since August. I welcome you all to the CONFIDENCE family!

As we prepare for the next deployment, the families are always in our thoughts and are part of our planning process. Our schedule has us away from home for Thanksgiving this year, but home for Christmas and the New Year, which will be great! The ship’s Morale Committee has been busy planning our annual Holiday Party, which will be much closer to December 25th than last year’s “It’s Not Christmas, Christmas Party”. As those details unfold, you will get the news through our fantastic Ombudsman, Brandi.

Until then, just remember that we could never do what we do and be gone from home as often as we are without the tremendous family support we receive every day. The CONFIDENCE families are heroes to all of us. So, on behalf of the crew, thank you.

Fair winds and following seas,

CAPT Jim Passarelli
Commanding Officer

My husband has been in the Coast Guard for 14 years, and until I became the ombudsman a year ago, there were times that I was still confused as to what the actual role of an ombudsman is. I know if I was confused there has to be others out there, right? Well, when I was appointed as ombudsman for the CONFIDENCE, I figured it would be as good time as any to do some research on the role of an ombudsman. I found the following information on the USCG website.

In 1986, the Coast Guard formally instituted an Ombudsman Program to provide a link between the command and families. Morale and mission performance of Coast Guard personnel are closely related to the health and well-being of their families. It is important that members and their families be provided with information and assistance to minimize the disruptions of deployment and moving. The Ombudsman Program can help ease the sacrifices families must make which allow personnel to effectively carry out Coast Guard missions. Finally, the Ombudsman Program provides an opportunity for the Coast Guard to tap one of our greatest resources: the strength, courage, and deep concern for others held by Coast Guard spouses.

An Ombudsman is a volunteer spouse designated by and responsible to the command. The Ombudsman assists families by providing information about sources of assistance available to them, informing them about Coast Guard and command policies, and providing information about activities of interest. The Ombudsman also serves as an advisor to the Commanding Officer -- someone who can keep up with and understand the concerns of families. The Ombudsman will also forward ideas from the families to the appropriate CG command office. For those seeking guidance about particular problems, the Ombudsman attempts to find the best resources possible to assist the individual or the family.

<p>WHAT CAN AN OMBUDSMAN DO?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Ombudsman is a liaison between the families and the Command. • An Ombudsman can direct a grievance or a suggestion to the proper departments. • An Ombudsman can familiarize you with a variety of organizations. • When a crisis arises at home, an Ombudsman can refer you to the best possible place for direct help, or professional guidance. • An Ombudsman is a source of information and outreach. • An Ombudsman can pass along important information pertaining to military families. • An Ombudsman can keep you abreast of ship's movements when applicable. 	<p>WHAT IS NOT WITHIN THE ROLE OF AN OMBUDSMAN?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Ombudsman cannot address military problems between the member and the Command. • An Ombudsman is not a substitute for professional counselors. • An Ombudsman is not a convenience babysitter. • An Ombudsman does not run a community taxi service. • An Ombudsman is not a financial institution. • An Ombudsman is not all-powerful. They are military spouses, volunteering their time and effort for the benefit of everyone in the Coast Guard family
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Om Here is a poem which best describes the role of an ombudsman. ge 4

I AM AN OMBUDSMAN

I am not a crutch
But I can support you
I am not a counselor
But I know how to reach one
I am not a taxi driver
But I can steer you in the right direction
I am not a rescuer
But I can help save lives
I am not a baby sitter
But I can refer you to a caregiver
I am not a gossip
But I am a great listener
I am not an enabler
But I can provide tools to empower you
I am not a master of anything
But I know many experts who understand your needs
I am not a Recreation or Health Specialist
But I am concerned about your morale, well-being, and health
I am not a busybody as I've been called
But I am a Coast Guard Ombudsman
I am a Coast Guard Family Ombudsman
And I am of service to you—The Coast Guard Family



October 7 – 31: Pumpkin Patch @ Church of Viera / Open daily from 10:00am-8:00pm

October 11-13, 18-20, 25-27: Boo at the Zoo @ Brevard Zoo. Welcome to the Land of Boo. The Zoo's annual fall event is its most attended fundraising enterprise of the year. During this year's Boo at the Zoo, guests are invited to enjoy an evening of mystical wonderment as they travel throughout the Zoo. Enjoy a variety of fun Halloween activities, including trick or treating in a safe environment at treat stations sponsored by local businesses and organizations. Experience a mystical show each evening, make crafts and dance at the ball in the Mystical Mansion, ride the Mystical Train, explore Professor Wormwood's Mystical Garden and for those who dare, prepare for a scare on the Mystical Haunted Trail/ 5:30 to 9 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays / 5:30 to 8 p.m. Sundays - Last Admission is 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturday / 7 p.m. Sundays ***Cost varies depending on day and member/non-member**

Friday, October 11: Fall Festival @ Youth Center 5:30-9:00pm. Costume contests, pumpkin decorating, cupcake contest, games, prizes, good food and good people.

*** This event is only for military members and their families.**

October 12-31: Pumpkin Patch @ Wesley United Methodist Church / 2105 Meadowland Ave West Melbourne / Mon-Fri 12pm-dusk, Sat 10am-dusk, Sun 11am-dusk

Saturday, October 19:

- **Fall Festival @ First Baptist Church of Melbourne, 3301 Dairy Rd, Melbourne 3:00-6:00pm.** Call 321-733-7118 for more information.
- **The Royal Prince and Princess Ball @ Holiday Inn Melbourne-Viera Conference Center / Time: 5:30pm-9:30pm Ages: 3-12 years old. Registration required to attend. Visit us at: www.royalprinceandprincessball.com.** It's a Fairy Tale Come True. Your little prince and princesses will love to dress up in their finest suits and ball gowns Princess Ball for all the Princes and Princesses near and far to join us for a night of fun, dining and dancing. All proceeds will go towards local children charities here in Brevard County. Family and friends are invited to attend this fabulous evening as well. Dress Attire: Wear your Royal Best! (formal or favorite princess dresses) Special Visitors: Your favorite prince and princess characters Food and Beverages: Dinner will be served Buffet Style (kid and adult friendly) Photographs: Professional Photographs will be available. Cost: Visit above website for pricing and registration.

Friday, October 25 – Sunday, October 27: Viera Fall Festival and Oktoberfest @ Property adjacent to the Brevard County School Board facility. Parking will be available. Times vary. Free. The festival will showcase the best of the best in art and crafts, a pumpkin-carving contest, hay rides, German food and beers, German music and a German "Hoffbrauhaus" tent. There will also be a Wizard of Oz-themed costume contest! This new fall event will become a Viera tradition.

<http://www.viera.com/ResidentInformation/Events/ViewEvent/tabid/136/Article/606/vieras-fall-festival-and-oktoberfest.aspx>

Saturday, October 26:

- **Boo-licious** @ Melbourne Square Mall / 1:00pm. We're having a 'Boo-licious' event to celebrate Halloween. Be prepared for spooky activities, witchy crafts and delicious snacks.
- **St. Mary's Fall Festival** @ St. Mary's School, 1152 Seminole Dr, Rockledge 3:00-9:00pm. No admission fee; price for individual activities varies. A pumpkin patch, haunted house, hay rides and lots of old-fashioned games are back for St. Mary's seventh annual Fall Festival. New this year -- a petting zoo. This year the school also is collecting new toys or clothing for children, which will benefit the Healthy Start Coalition of Brevard. For more information call the school at 321-636-4208.
- **Fall Fun Festival** @ Lipscomb Street Community Center, Melbourne FL 6:00-9:00pm. Join us for festival activities such as: face painting, balloon art, tattoos, carnival games, costume contest for kids and adults (prizes will be given). Cost: \$3. Call 321-674-5725 for more information.

Sunday, October 27:

- **Calvary Chapel Melbourne's Fall Fest** @ Melbourne & Sebastian Campuses 4:00-7:00pm. A FREE family friendly Halloween alternative filled with activities for the entire family! Come enjoy Candy, Bounce Houses, Free Food, Music, Face Painting, and more! Fall Fest is great for the community, allowing families to have a night filled with FUN in a safe environment. Who Can Come? Everyone is invited and yes, you can come in costume! Please remember this is a family friendly event. What Do I Need To Bring? You, your kids, friends and neighbors, all ready to have some FUN!
- **5th Annual Halloween in the Village** @ Historic Cocoa Village/Riverfront Park 4:00-9:00pm. Kids will be able to visit merchants for treats and stroll the park for fun family activities and entertainment. Don't miss out on the spooktacular PET COSTUME contest and a KIDS COSTUME contest! The movie, Hotel Transylvania, will be playing on the big screen beginning at 7:15pm. To participate in all of the kid's activities including the bounce houses, slides, kids area games, hay rides, pumpkin decorating and much more there is a \$5.00 activity band fee for children 13 years and younger. Trick or treating, stage entertainment, costume contests and the movie are always FREE. This is a safe and fun event for kids of all ages!

HALLOWEEN (Thursday, October 31):

- **Mall-o-ween** @ Melbourne Square Mall / details to come
- **Costume Contest** @ Pelican Coast Welcome Center / 4:00-5:00pm
- **Fall Harvest Festival** @ South Patrick Chapel 5:00-7:00pm
- **Crackerjacks Halloween Party** @ 2 A Max Brewer Causeway Titusville Florida 6:00pm – 1:00am. Free. Trunk or Treat 6PM (Bring your trunk and treats) Please participate in this for all the little ones! Bring your car and candy and help make our little ones night! Pumpkin carving contest, kids costume contest at 7pm, pet costume contest at 8pm, adult costume contest at 10pm. Kids area open from 6-9pm