

The Bugle

Ocean Hills Village Vets

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Commander's Corner

Captain Bob Bechill, SC, USNR-R.

A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who made our Veterans Day Ceremony such a success! In total, more than 40 people helped bring it to life — many of whom worked tirelessly throughout the year to make it happen. Your dedication and support truly made the day special.

Up next: on December 12: our Annual Holiday Party! Once again, it will be catered by our friends at **The Village Kitchen and Pie Shoppe** and feature music from **The Music Station**. Thanks to **Ros Nesler, Patty Coffey, and Marta Welch**, we're looking forward to another unforgettable evening. Seats are still available as of this *Bugle*, but

we're expecting another sellout — so don't wait! We've also invited active-duty Coast Guardsmen (Coasties) and their families to join us. If you can't attend, please consider sponsoring a Coastie family to share in the holiday spirit.

While the **government shutdown** is finally winding down, it still impacts not only our military members and their families, but also friends and neighbors right here in our community. If you're able, please consider donating to the **North County Food Bank** or similar organizations. And while you're in the giving mood, remember our **four-legged friends** — local animal shelters could use our support too.

On a lighter note, member **Bob Whissel** wanted to spread the word about **Vet Tix** — a wonderful organization that provides free event tickets to veterans and service members. These experiences help reduce stress, strengthen family bonds, and keep our heroes connected to their communities. Learn more at www.vettix.org. It's pretty darn cool.

Wishing everyone a joyful **Thanksgiving**, and we'll see you on **December 12**.

The Army-Navy Viewing Party will be held in the Lanai on December 13? Festivities start at 11:30 AM. 12:30 game start. Sponsored by Vets member Rich Halkyard.

A VET IN OUR VILLAGE

Andrea Anderson

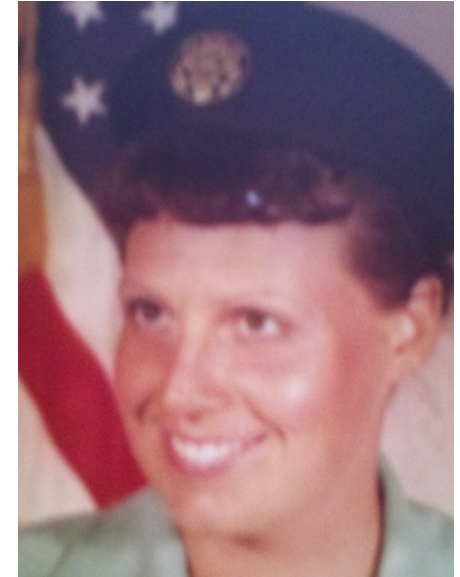


Photo courtesy Andrea

Andrea got her start in Calumet City, IL. While working at a Hertz Rent-a-Car place in California she got acquainted with some Army guys who worked in air traffic control. A little known fact is that the US Army has more aircraft than the Air Force, even today, but many of them are rotary wing. The guys showed off their control tower, and Andrea thought if she ever got the chance, she wanted to do that kind of work.

She studied math at Cal State Dominguez Hills and after a few years the chance arrived. She learned that the Army was launching a training program for air traffic controllers that required only a two year commitment. Andrea wonders

if the Army knew somehow that President Reagan was likely to fire the majority of FAA controllers, but in any event that's what he did, in August 1981. Andrea took the exams and did well, and went off to Fort Leonard Wood, MO, for basic. Hers was the first class where women trained alongside men. From there she went to Fort Rucker, AL, for aircraft controller training. She had to run five miles every day for exercise, and lived in some decrepit WWII-era barracks. Her training was all tower, not radar. One of her stations was at Fort Meade, MD, which had a small but busy VFR facility, used heavily by midshipmen from Annapolis and by a variety of reserves.

Andrea started as an E-3 due to her college background, and left as an E-4. She had qualified for officer training, but decided she didn't want to be career military. After joining the FAA, she went to ATC training at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center near the Oklahoma City airport. It is the only facility to train air traffic controllers to this day. At the time, the failure rate for this training was 50%. After completing training she was assigned to the Oakland Air Route Traffic Control Center, which had wide responsibility over the Pacific area, eighteen million square miles. She underwent training in radar controlling and became a Certified Professional Controller. Among her duties was work as an accident investigator, which spilled over to working with the Civil Air Patrol on search and rescue cases in

the Sierras. She was the first woman to work at the Oakland Center while pregnant.

Before leaving the FAA due to achieving mandatory retirement age, she was President of the Professional Women Controllers – Western Region. She was also the first woman ops manager at the Southern California TRACON, the largest approach and Control facility in the world.

She worked with Habitat for Humanity after leaving the FAA, helping to build housing in such far-flung places as Guatemala, Paraguay, India, Vietnam and Thailand. She worked in real estate to help support these efforts, and learned about OHCC through that grapevine. Andrea has two children, a son and daughter, and six grandchildren, all living nearby.

Military Recruitment Results

For fiscal year 2025, the U.S. military has generally met or exceeded recruiting goals across all branches, with the Army aiming for 61,000 recruits and the Navy for 40,000. This turnaround follows a period of shortfalls and is attributed to factors like increased pay and bonuses, a tougher economic climate, and relaxed recruiting standards, such as those for medical waivers, tattoos, and certain body fat restrictions. The military has also adjusted its recruiting strategies, focusing on a broader audience and re-emphasizing the value of service through new advertising and partnerships.

Branch-specific goals and performance

- **Army:** Goal of 61,000 recruits for FY2025, which it met ahead of schedule.
- **Navy:** Goal of 40,000 recruits for FY2025, which it met.
- **Marines:** Met its goals for FY2025.
- **Air Force:** Met its goal for FY2025, which it had increased by 11% from the previous year.
- **Space Force:** Met its goal for FY2025.
- **Coast Guard:** Met its goal for FY2025 for the first time in seven years.

U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial

I snapped this photo during a recent visit to Washington, D.C. The flag is at half-staff for former VP Cheney.

