**Ocean Ridge Veteran’s Association Member Serves as Keynote Speaker at Memorial Day Service**

Ocean Ridge Veteran’s Association (ORVA) member, Herb Kaler, Rear Admiral, USN (ret), served as the keynote speaker during the annual Memorial Day service held by Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7288 in Calabash.

The ceremony, attended by more than 100 veterans, family members and friends, honored and remembered those service members who have sacrificed their lives in battle or from wounds received in combat.

In a display of great patriotism, the West Brunswick High School JROTC Color Guard began the ceremony by posting the national colors while those gathered rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

In his keynote address, Herb stressed the importance of supporting veterans. While acknowledging and praising those who attended the ceremony to remember our nation’s fallen heroes, Herb stressed the imperative for surviving veterans who returned from combat to honor those who have not. “Let us be more than determined to see to it, that no man or woman who has served is homeless, unemployed, or sick. If we truly want to honor the dead, then we must help the living.”

Herb, a resident of Ocean Ridge Plantation since 2016, served 32 years in the Navy. He earned his commission through the NROTC Program upon graduation from the University of Notre Dame and started his career as a Surface Warfare Officer. He served on the USS Enterprise (CVN-65) during a Vietnam deployment to the Seventh Fleet. Herb rose through the ranks and commanded the USS Exploit (MSO-440) and USS Thorn (DD-988). After his command tour, he continued to serve in acquisition positions as Battle Force Tactical Training and Tomahawk Program Manager, before culminating his career as the Director, Joint Theater Air and Missile Defense Organization on the Joint Staff and retiring as a Rear Admiral in 2000.

As a member of ORVA, Herb assists in fostering camaraderie among ORP veterans and gives assistance to veterans in need via local veteran support organizations, primarily in Brunswick County.

ORVA is an ORP organization established by military veterans who are residents or property owners of the Ocean Ridge Plantation community. The association is open to all such veterans who, regardless of length of service, have been honorably discharged from the active-duty, Reserve or National Guard ranks of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, Space Force, or Merchant Marines, as well as current active-duty residents.

ORVA meets on the second Monday of each month at the Plantation Club. If you are interested in joining ORVA, please contact Kevin Jefferson at kjjpmj3@gmail.com.

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Caption for Picture:

RADM Herb Kaler, Retired, prepares to give his keynote address during VFW Post 7288’s Memorial Day service.