



Central Alabama Marines-Council
A Registered 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Corporation



The Situation Report: Semper Fi Summer Adventures

Issue 1 | July 4, 2025



Group photo after an art immersion class with Lov3Art Gall3y LLC

Summer Camp Kickoff

Our Chairman and President, Shawn Springer, officially launched this year's summer camp with a discussion on the history, design, evolution, and etiquette of the American flag.

Each morning since, a

different camper proudly volunteers to lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. During the summer months, we believe it's important for our campers to recite the Pledge of Allegiance before beginning their daily adventures.

Following the opening ceremony, each camper

was assigned to a learning cohort: Team United, Team States, & Team America.



Featured Articles

Visual Expression & Color Recognition Classes

Thanks to our wonderful partnership with Lov3Art Gall3y LLC, campers had a chance to explore their artistic side in a vibrant, supportive space.

Owner and Birmingham-based self-taught artist, Sed Sands, brought not only creativity but also life lessons about precision and the power of attention to detail. Campers selected their own themes, which Sed stenciled for them, allowing each child to bring their ideas to life as personal masterpieces

As a military and veteran spouse, Sed's journey reminds us that talent can thrive and travel wherever life takes us.

Students will continue working on their canvases independently and will host an art gallery for their parents at the end of Week 3



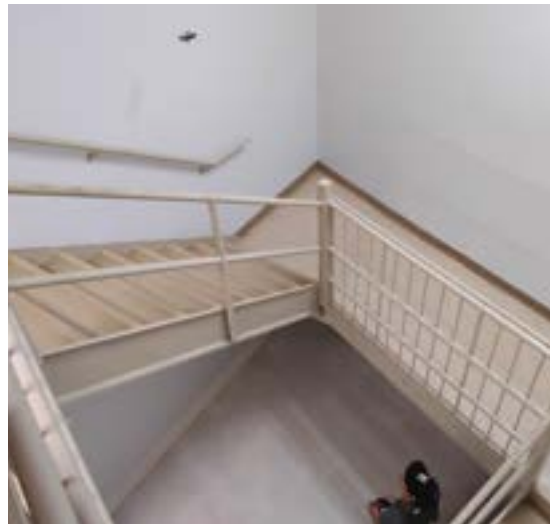
Featured Articles

STEM Learning: Youth Drone Missions

In partnership with NextWave STEM, our young aviators dove into the exciting world of drone operations. They learned drone mechanics, safety protocols, and real-world applications in both commercial and government sectors.

Campers had the opportunity to log up to seven hours of flight time this week, gaining confidence and skill in both solo and team flight experiences.

Next week, campers will showcase their skills while navigating a custom-designed indoor obstacle course. This competition course will determine the top drone operator in each group.



Featured Articles

Sports & Endurance Activities

Our campers continued to sharpen skills obtained in The Smartplay's program last month. Our staff has focused on sportsmanship, inclusion, and endurance. From soccer to baseball, campers have demonstrated growth in agility, confidence, and collaboration.

We agree with The SmartPlay's previous assessment that "physical activity plays a key role in supporting cognitive development." These outdoor sessions aren't just about getting active—they're helping campers focus, be more resilient, and develop healthy habits that support their growth in and out of the classroom.



Featured Articles

Flying High: Special Guests Bring Aviation and Drone Skills to Camp

We were honored to host two incredible special guests:

- Dr. Bruce Bright, who is a retired Marine F-18 pilot and owner of On Target Leading - Leadership & Wellness Coaching.
- Mr. Aaron Miller, former U.S. Navy Corpsman and retired Army National Guard Soldier. Mr. Miller is currently a commercial drone pilot with Alabama Power.

Their visit inspired our campers with real-world stories of perseverance, service, and success. They fielded dozens of thoughtful questions from our campers, showing how Unmanned Aircraft Systems and military aviation careers can unlock exciting career paths for our next generation.

Afterwards, they joined our campers for their first opportunity to fly through the custom-designed drone obstacle course. Each camper had a chance to navigate the course and get a feel for the mission profile ahead of next week's competition race.

Thanks again to Amerson Events for sponsoring and helping bring our obstacle course to life!



Featured Articles

Camp Instructor Highlight: Mr. Marcell McKenzie

Meet Marcell McKenzie, one of our outstanding instructors who is a senior music education major at The University of Alabama. Hailing from Irondale, AL, Mr. McKenzie is a dedicated musician and educator whose passion shines in every session.

This summer, he launched our camp's first-ever music component! Campers received personal recorders and are now learning how to read and play music. His custom-built curriculum ensures each child gets individualized, high-quality instruction, culminating in a planned end-of-camp performance.

"Much like starting a school music program from scratch, I've built and tailored this curriculum from the ground up. Every student deserves access to meaningful musical instruction."

–Marcell McKenzie

Thank you, Mr. McKenzie, for turning musical dreams into reality for our campers!



Final Thoughts

Wrapping Up Week One – Onward to New Adventures!

This was a fantastic week of camper engagement, filled with learning, creativity, and teamwork. We are so proud of everything our campers accomplished and look forward to building on this momentum next week!

Coming up, we're excited to:

- Step up the cadence with equine-assisted learning in partnership with Bondfire Ranch.
- Dive into history and civics instruction in collaboration with American Village.
- Reignite our focus on reading and math literacy, sustaining the academic growth built during June by leveraging The SmartPlay's BASIC curriculum.

We want to finish by thanking our partners and sponsors who have supported us and made this summer camp possible for our campers. Your generosity and commitment are helping shape the leaders of tomorrow, and we're very grateful.

We can't wait to welcome everyone back for another powerful week of purpose, learning, and progress. **We wish you a safe and joyful Independence Day!**

