



MILITARY OFFICERS CALL
Sun City Center Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
P. O. Box 5693, Sun City Center, FL. 33571



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JULY 2019



President's Message
Benny Blackshire, LTC USA (Ret)

WE DO NOT MEET IN JULY AND AUGUST. I think everyone knows we take July and August off and do not have a chapter meeting/luncheon. Our next chapter meeting and luncheon will be September 4, 2019. We will tell you about the guest speaker in next month's newsletter. YES, we will have a July and August Newsletter to keep you posted on the latest happenings.

We had a smaller turnout for our June meeting, which is normal going into the summer months. I reported to our members at the meeting that we had a great Memorial Day Ceremony to pay tribute to the 147 local veterans who had died since our last ceremony. It was a combined effort of the Sun City Center military associations and other organizations that made it a great success. I thank everyone that was present.

Being part of our local MOAA Chapter supports the efforts of MOAA National and they are working hard to fight for the benefits we were promised during our service to our country. MOAA was instrumental in gaining the largest pay raise in 10 years for our service personnel. The President's budget proposal calls for a 3.2% increase in military basic pay and that effects military retiree's pay as well. Military pay will remain a top priority for MOAA this year as they continue to lobby congress. TRICARE benefits continue to be under attack as we continue to see increases in what military families must pay. MOAA will continue to fight any increases in TRICARE fees.

In closing, I want to thank each of you for continuing to support our Sun City Center Chapter of MOAA. If you would like to become more involved by being a member of the board, a chapter officer, or on a committee, please drop me an email and we will find the right job for you. Have a great summer and we will see you back in September.

Benny

NO LUNCHEON
(Next luncheon Sept. 4th)

VA secretary's health care fight could affect the department for decades to come

By: Leo Shane III (Military Times)

"For the first time since the fall of Saigon, more than half of our veterans are under the age of 65," Wilkie told Military Times in an exclusive interview last week. "They have very different attitudes when it comes to care. They want care that's close to home. They want care that is quick. They're not from a world where they are comfortable sitting and waiting."

Under the VA Mission Act, passed by Congress last summer, the department is set for a sweeping expansion of its community care program, the rules governing when veterans can see a private health care provider at taxpayer expense.

"(Now) the veteran is at the center of his health care, not the institution," he said, repeating a line he has delivered to Congress multiple times in recent months. "And if there is something we cannot provide, he has the option of going to [the] private sector or waiting for us to provide it. That is a sea change in terms of the way we operate."

Those congressional appearances are part of a larger offensive by department officials against persistent charges that the upcoming changes will outsource too much of the department's responsibilities and resources — "privatization of VA," according to critics.

A coalition of congressional Democrats and veterans advocates are rallying against the looming changes, saying that pushing too many veterans into the private sector will hollow out the federal health care system.

The 56-year-old Wilkie — a longtime conservative operative who has held key leadership posts under presidents and members of Congress for three decades — is left in the middle, working to calm critics and turn the commander-in-chief's boasts into reality.

Already well-known and controversial in the veterans community, Wilkie is poised to see his public profile grow even larger — whether he wants it or not — as that June 6 deadline approaches.

For his part, the secretary calls this "the greatest transformative period in the history of our VA" and says that the changes will dramatically improve operations and public perception of the sprawling veterans bureaucracy, which employs more than 400,000 people and could see its budget swell to nearly \$220 billion next year.

Editor's Note: The battle pertaining to privatization is about to begin in earnest.

JUNE 5th LUNCHEON



CAPT. Richard Petrucci — LTC Benny Blackshire

Navy CAPT Richard Petrucci discusses Cuban Missile Crises with MOAA

Retired Navy Captain, Richard J. Petrucci was the featured speaker at the June 5th Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) luncheon held in the Florida Room at the North Side Atrium. CAPT Petrucci graduated from the Naval Academy in 1961 with a bachelor's degree in engineering. He was designated a Naval Aviator in 1963 and served in the Navy for 25 years.

His flying assignments included four tours of duty in Patrol Squadrons including command of Patrol Squadron 26 in Brunswick, ME. Dick also graduated from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA with a master's degree in Computer Science, and attended the Naval War College in Newport, RI.

During his career in the Navy he earned subspecialty designations in Computer Science, Computer Systems Management, Anti-Submarine Warfare Operations, and Weapons Systems Acquisition Management.

Dick retired from the Navy in 1986 with the rank of Captain and joined Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company in Marietta, GA as a senior engineer.

He retired in 1998 and moved to Tampa, Florida. In 2002 he joined the faculty at the Sarasota Military Academy (SMA), the country's first charter military high school, where he was Chairman of the Math & Science Department for three years. Dick also holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Civil Air Patrol where he served as Deputy Squadron Commander, Aviation Safety Officer, Aerospace Education Officer and Character Development Instructor for Cadets.

He has over 7,500 hours of pilot time. Dick is also the Vice President for Education and Director of Youth Programs for the Sarasota-Manatee Council of the Navy League,

Having entered the Navy at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Dick provided the members with a comprehensive review of the details surrounding that event. He described the chronological events that unfolded from the start of the Russian/Cuban missile crises to its successful conclusion. He also provided some information relative to the unsuccessful "Bay of Pigs."



CAPT. Richard J. Petrucci, USN (Ret)

MOAA ACTION SITE

I have created this box to direct members to the online MOAA 'Take Action' site in order to assist MOAA in achieving their legislative goals.

[Click here](#) and select the issue(s) you would like to have MOAA discuss with your representatives. Fill in the form and click submit. MOAA will send it to your representatives. You can add your own comments if you wish.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

The Membership Committee Chair is providing the following to update the Chapter membership regarding our Chapter LOE & MOAA rewards. Also, this article will list new Chapter members.

- 203 Chapter members
- 123 LIFE members
- 30 PREMIUM members
- 17 BASIC members
- 29 non-MOAA members

New Chapter member(s) last month:
COL Michael Shaw, USA Retired

REMINDER: The Chapter reimburses \$100 to members upgrading to LIFE when LIFE certificate is presented to the Treasurer.

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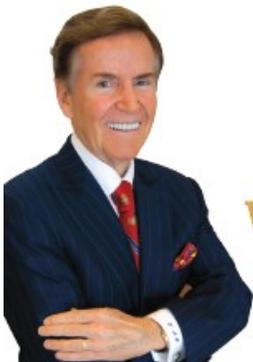


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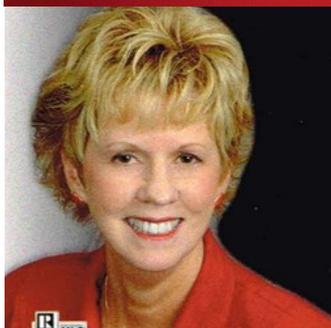
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- **Operation Warm Heart**, administered by the 1st Sergeants Group at MacDill AFB, who provide commissary vouchers for soldiers in need



- **Scholarships and Leadership Programs** for students from military families
- **Operation Helping Hand:** monthly support for military families of wounded servicemen and women at the James A. Haley VA Hospital in Tampa

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Here's why the Union Jack is back



The resurgent “great power competition” at sea now officially trumps the Global War on Terror — at least on U.S. Navy ships.

Starting with morning colors on June 4, the Navy will return to flying the “Union Jack,” a small blue flag emblazoned with the stars of the 50 states — identical to the top left corner of the national ensign — from their jackstuffs, small flagpoles mounted on the bows of all Navy vessels when in port or at anchor.

Announced in NavAdmin message 039/19 and a Navy press release, the policy change returns the “First Navy Jack” — and its “Don’t Tread on Me” rattlesnake slithering across thirteen red and white stripes — to its former role of signifying the oldest commissioned warship in the operational fleet. It currently flies from all Navy jackstuffs.

“The Union Jack is deeply connected to our heritage and our rise as a global nation with a global Navy,” said Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson in his released statement. “The Navy is a symbol that projects American values to the world. Just as the Navy embodies the values and principles that we hold dear, our very appearance in port and at anchor communicates important messages.”

The U.S. Navy’s Union Jack shouldn’t be confused with the United Kingdom’s national flag of the same name.

A Seabee on Iwo Jima: The men who drove cranes and cats also served

By: Jack Comwell, World War II Magazine



I found this article [Seabees on Iwo Jima](#) very interesting reading.

Bill would expand American Legion membership eligibility to more veterans



Sen. Kyrsten Sinema has filed a bill that could expand eligibility for American Legion membership to all veterans who served since World War II.

The Legion Act, co-sponsored by Republican Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina and filed last Friday, would expand Legion membership to include honorably discharged veterans who served during unrecognized times of war since World War II.

Laird says Enwetak veterans also have trouble accessing treatment.

“We’ve been battling (Veterans Affairs) for recognition and compensation for our health issues and cancers due to our service cleaning up after 43 nuclear bomb blasts — to no avail so far,” Laird said.

John Raughter, deputy director of the national American Legion headquarters, said the veterans organization has identified 1,600 service members killed or wounded since World War II during times not officially recognized as periods of war.

Editor’s note: This would seem to be a ‘no brainer.’

CDC reports high flu vaccine efficacy, low flu severity this season

The flu vaccine yielded 47% overall efficacy among all age groups this season and 61% overall efficacy among youths ages 6 months to 17 years, as well as 46% efficacy against the dominant strain, compared with 25% efficacy of last year’s vaccine against the dominant strain of the season, CDC researchers have reported.

Sun City Center MOAA Website

Don’t forget to visit our new website. The link to the website is: <http://moafl.org/chapters/SunCity/> You will find much membership information, photos, calendar of events, past newsletters and more. If you would like to suggest topics for inclusion contact Jim Haney at jghaney1@gmail.com

Publisher/Editor

CAPT Frank Kepley, USN (Ret)

We need your input about member activities associated with MOAA and articles of interest to the military community. Contact Frank at:

dkepley@tampabay.rr.com 813-642-0801



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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS Frank Kepley, CAPT USN (Ret)

TAKE ACTION: Tell Congress not to dismantle Military Medicine



The Defense Department's fiscal 2020 budget calls for the elimination of about 18,000 military medical positions. This is roughly 20% of the military's medical force. This reduction in medical capacity seems to have been developed absent

a medical readiness requirement analysis in support of combatant operational plans. Instead, they appear to be based on a market or network analysis in the vicinity of installations.

A 20% force reduction constitutes a qualitative change to the military health system, which will cause unintended consequences and may affect all of American medical care. These consequences will be felt in the areas of combat casualty care capabilities; recruitment and retention; and in the already taxed civilian health care sector. These changes will not only dramatically affect currently serving troops. Retirees could see, and many are already experiencing, reductions in care, including pharmacy services. Many TRICARE Prime enrollees are already being pushed into the civilian network for all of their care. This may be just the beginning.

Editor's note: [Click Here](#) to go to MOAA's Take Action and let your representative know you are against the reduction in MTF's.

Trump nominates Shanahan as next defense secretary



After months of expectations, Patrick Shanahan, an industry veteran who was thrust into the Pentagon's top spot after Jim Mattis resigned, is the president's official pick as the next secretary of defense.

In a statement, White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said Shanahan's nomination was "based on his outstanding service to the country and his demonstrated ability to lead" the Defense Department. He has served as acting Defense Secretary since Jan. 1.

Shanahan, 56, spent decades at Boeing before he was picked in April 2017 by Trump to serve as Mattis' deputy secretary of defense. The No. 2 position is essentially the Pentagon's top manager, responsible not only for its day-to-day priorities, but also for institutional reforms and restructuring sought by the administration.

The nomination comes just days after the conclusion of an Inspector General investigation into whether Shanahan violated his ethics agreement by pushing products made by his former employer. Shanahan consistently denied any wrongdoing, but the investigation is believed to have held up any potential nomination.

Across speeches and interviews over the months since becoming acting secretary, Shanahan has made it clear that if given the full job, he will largely stay the course with the policies and goals from the Mattis era.

Blue Water Navy Bill Passes House Via Unanimous Vote MOAA Newsletter



After a unanimous victory in the House legislation to grant benefits for Agent Orange exposure to Navy veterans who served in the waters off Vietnam will move to the Senate – where it failed to pass last year.

The bill passed 410-0. Last year, the House passed relief for Blue Water Navy veterans 382-0 before the measure failed in the Senate.

"This is an important hurdle to clear, but it's one we've cleared before," said MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret). "There is more work to be done for these veterans who have waited much, much too long to receive benefits they've earned. But we're not alone on this: Dozens of senators showed last year they were willing to get this bill to the finish line, and with their support, and that of other advocacy groups sharing this cause, MOAA remains committed to see this legislation clear all the hurdles and reach the President's desk."

An estimated 900,000 veterans have been exposed to Agent Orange. This legislation would extend disability benefits to about 90,000 veterans.

Widows Tax Repeal Gains Even More Support in Senate and House (MOAA Newsletter)



MOAA joined other veteran services organizations to continue the fight to repeal the "widows tax," which deducts annuity benefits paid to surviving spouses as an offset to a VA benefit for survivors.

James Naughton, MOAA's associate director for government relations, joined surviving spouses, four senators – Sens. Doug Jones (D-Ala.), Susan Collins (R-Maine), Jon Tester (D-Mont.), and Jim Risch (R-Idaho) – and representatives from other military and veteran advocacy groups on Capitol Hill for a press conference where they urged passage of the Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act of 2019, which would repeal the offset. The event is part of a congressional engagement effort led by Veterans of Foreign Wars; the topic was one of MOAA's hallmark advocacy issues during its 2019 Storming the Hill event in April, when more than 150 MOAA members from across the country met with federal lawmakers.

MOAA joined service organizations and spouses again to urge passage of a similar bill, but in the House: the Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act, which now has a whopping 312 co-sponsors and was introduced by Rep. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.).

Jim Risch (R-Idaho), called the widows tax "unfair" and "outrageous" to military families. He said he believes this will be the year when the offset is finally repealed.

Defense Department pushing ahead to merge commissary and exchange systems



Defense officials are a step closer to merging the three military exchange systems and the commissary system into one “defense resale enterprise.”

In a memo signed March 1, Lisa Hershman, acting DoD chief management officer, approved the business case for the merger.

The merger will require the approval of Congress and nothing is yet final. Current law requires the Defense Department to operate separate commissary and exchange systems, so that law would have to be repealed. Another law prohibits DoD from using any taxpayer dollars to implement consolidation of resale entities until Oct. 1, as lawmakers evaluate the proposal.

In the meantime, a task force will continue with planning efforts for a consolidated organization, stated Hershman, who is in the position that ranks third in the DoD hierarchy. The consolidation of the commissary and exchange systems also must be approved by acting deputy secretary of defense David Norquist. A source said he is expected to approve the proposal within days; a report and legislative proposals will then be sent to Congress.

Officials have said that the first step would be to merge the exchange systems — Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), Navy Exchange Service Command and Marine Corps Exchange.

A coalition of 27 military and veteran organizations asked leaders of the House and Senate armed services committees for more study and congressional oversight before allowing DoD to merge the commissary and exchange systems.

“We are very concerned that proposals to merge the various elements of the defense resale system may post a threat to its continued viability,” stated a March 8 letter signed by leaders of the 27 groups in The Military Coalition, representing 5.5 million service members, veterans, their families and survivors.

Editor’s note: This one has a long way to go.

DoD wants to sharply cut commissary budget as overall defense budget increases



The commissary budget will take a 21 percent cut in fiscal 2020, if the Defense Department’s budget request is approved by Congress.

Defense officials are asking for \$995 million in taxpayer funding to operate the 236 commissary stores worldwide, down from \$1.27 billion in fiscal 2019, according to DoD budget documents released Tuesday.

Gleason said the Defense Commissary Agency doesn’t expect the cut to have any impact on customers.

Part of the reduction is due to an 11 percent decrease in the commissary work force. Those work force cuts in the Defense Commissary Agency started in fiscal 2019 and will

carry forward into fiscal 2020 — going from 14,000 employees worldwide to 12,500.

The budget cut comes as the Defense Department is moving toward merging the three military exchange systems and the commissary system into one “defense resale enterprise,” in efforts to save money.

Editor’s note: See previous article.

Senate Bill Would Change How VA Recovers Overpayments

MOAA Newsletter



A limit to how much VA can deduct from disability pay to cover erroneous overpayments, and to how long the department can wait to bill beneficiaries, are among measures proposed to protect veterans as part of a new Senate bill.

ate bill.

The VA Debt Fairness Act, S. 805, was introduced by Sens. Jon Tester (D-Mont.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), and Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.). It would shield veterans from repaying costs connected to VA accounting mistakes. Currently, funds are recouped by withholding some or all of a veteran’s monthly disability payments, which can cause financial hardships for veterans and families.

“Punishing disabled veterans for the VA’s accounting mistakes is a cruel way to serve those who have sacrificed the most for our country,” said Tester, ranking member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. “Veterans rely on their VA disability benefits to pay for their homes or medical care. This bill will protect veterans their families from unnecessary financial difficulty when the VA has sloppily managed its books.”

The bill would:

- Only allow the VA to collect debts that occur as a result of an error or fraud on the part of the veteran or their beneficiary.
- Limit the VA’s deduction from a veteran’s monthly payment to 25 percent in order to recoup overpayment or debt.
- Prevent the VA from billing veterans for debts incurred more than five years prior.
- Require the VA to provide veterans with a way to update their dependency information on their own, eliminating a key processing delay for veterans, which frequently contributes to the VA making overpayments.

Overpayments from the VA have increased since 2013, according to a VICE news report. In one recent year, the VA sent about 200,000 overpayment notices to veterans.

JOIN TODAY

Not a member of MOAA? When you join MOAA, you become part of the strongest advocate for our military’s personnel and their families. The stronger our membership is, the stronger our voice becomes. Consider joining today because every voice counts.

Navy drops all criminal charges against commander, junior officer in Fitzgerald collision cases



The Navy is expected to drop criminal charges against the commanding officer of the warship Fitzgerald and another officer who were facing court-martial trials tied to the fatal 2017 collision with a merchant vessel, according to Navy officials and the family of one of the fallen sailors.

"The cases are being dismissed for legal reasons that impede the continued prosecution of either officer," the message states. Instead, Navy Secretary Richard Spencer will issue letters of censure to both officers, the message stated.

A prepared statement from the Pentagon emailed to Navy Times revealed that Spencer made his decision following a recommendation from the CNO.

"The comprehensive program to improve Navy readiness and training, to do everything possible to ensure that accidents like this will not recur, remains on track. The Navy continues to strive to achieve and maintain a climate of operational excellence.

In the aftermath of the Fitzgerald collision, months of legal fury end in a whimper (Navy Times)



Nearly two years after the guided-missile destroyer Fitzgerald's fatal collision with a merchant vessel, the Navy's journey to justice fizzled out late Wednesday with an unsigned Navy press release announcing charges were being dropped.

For months, the Washington Navy Yard had been preparing for a courtroom showdown between military prosecutors and attorneys defending the Fitz's commanding officer, Cmdr. Bryce Benson, and one of his junior subordinates, Lt. Natalie Combs

Both cases had been plagued by a series of military missteps by Richardson, his top aide and nominated replacement Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Bill Moran, as well as other senior leaders that damaged the cases against the two defendants and ultimately made trying them in a Navy courtroom a challenge.

Dubbed the "mortal enemy of military justice," UCI occurs when superiors utter words or take actions that coerce the outcome of courts-martial, jeopardize the appellate process or undermine public confidence in the armed forces by appearing to tip the scales of justice.

The military judge in Benson's trial ruled in December that statements by Richardson and Moran constituted apparent UCI.

Combs' attorneys eagerly awaited a similar finding in the junior officer's trial.

A Navy official said Thursday night that the UCI motions in the cases did not affect leadership's decision to dismiss the charges.

"It's just really troubling," said Lawrence Brennan, a retired Navy captain, military attorney and law school instructor. "Somebody needed to go in and give the lecture to the CNO and the Vice Chief to say, 'Thou shalt not open your mouth about this case.'"

Editor's note: You'd think that as many years as it takes to earn 4 stars, one would fully understand the ramifications of 'unlawful command influence.'

Lt. Col. Richard Cole, Last of the Doolittle Raiders, Dies at 103

MOAA Staff



Richard Cole, who served as Lt. Col. James "Jimmy" Doolittle's copilot on the famed 1942 Tokyo Raid and was the last surviving member of the Doolittle Raiders, died Tuesday in San Antonio, according to multiple media reports. He was 103.

Cole, a Life Member of MOAA, retired from the Air Force as a lieutenant colonel. He joined the Army Air Corps in 1940 and was in Augusta, Ga., for a training exercise when he heard the news that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor, Cole said in a 2016 interview with Military History magazine.

Later, he volunteered for what would become known as the Tokyo Raid, in which 80 men flew 16 modified B-25 bombers off the USS Hornet (CV-8) in the Pacific Ocean toward the island of Japan.

"The raid was designed for two reasons," Cole told Gary Sinise at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, during an interview that was part of a 2017 PBS Memorial Day special. "One was to prove to the Japanese that their island could be struck by air, and to prove to the Japanese people that their higher-ups weren't being truthful.

"The other reason was to be a morale booster to the United States and the Allies. We did that, and we were proud of that."

There are 12 big changes veterans caregivers will see in the next year

(Military Times)



Tens of thousands of family caregivers across the country provide daily assistance to wounded veterans, but advocates say the federal government is just now on the verge of fully embracing their role in veterans' medical care.

Late last month, Veterans Affairs officials agreed to a set of 12 recommendations offered by a special advisory group of veterans advocates and community activists, the culmination of 18 months of work by the panel.

Supporters say the ideas will help codify caregivers into the VA system: guaranteeing their inclusion in medical check-ups, creating new training and support services and expanding research into their challenges. The results, they hope, will not only improve VA offerings but also the civilian health care community nationwide.

VA officials said the changes will be put in place over the next year. Recently, Military Times sat down with Elizabeth Dole, chair of the commission (and herself a caregiver to former U.S. Senate majority leader Bob Dole, a wounded World War II veteran), and Steve Schwab, CEO of the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, to break what the new recommendations mean.

Editor's note: [Click here](#) to see the 12 recommendations.

Want to buy beer or wine at your commissary? You may have to wait for the libation deliberation



Commissary officials will likely change, expand and test the assortments of beer and wine in the first 12 stores that currently sell it, before making any decisions about which stores will see the libations

next.

But while there might be more of a selection, that doesn't mean the amounts will dramatically increase. As one industry source put it, there's only so much shelf space available in commissary stores, and they're not going to take out baby food and diapers to make room for beer and wine.

No decisions have yet been made about which stores will sell the libations next, according to Rick Brink, a spokesman for the Defense Commissary Agency.

So far, the commissary introduction of beer and wine isn't bringing a massive increase in sales. Cumulative beer and wine sales for the 12 commissaries from the start on July 23 through April 6 were \$717,005, according to Brink. That includes \$329,419 worth of beer and \$387,586 worth of wine.

The selections have been purposely kept small at the 12 stores, and are being culled and changed, said one industry source. Beer and wine sales are expected to be rolled out slowly to other stores, he said, as officials evaluate the initial sales, and remain sensitive to the needs of customers, and the military services' desires to deglamorize alcohol. As commissaries have started selling beer and wine, they were implementing measures that promote the responsible use of alcohol.

A Tennessee clinic swindled the military out of \$65M. This is how it got caught

A former Marine helped recruit service members for a scheme to bilk the Department of Defense for cash by purchasing tubes of scar cream that did nothing to treat scars for insane prices, according to a remarkable investigation by the Nashville Tennessean.

- Two doctors and a nurse at the Tennessee clinic have already pleaded guilty to defrauding Tricare to the tune of \$65 million, while several other suspects, including the former Marine and employees at a Utah-based pharmacy, have already admitted to their role in the scheme.
- The scam itself was simple, according to the Tennessean: "The Marine was being paid to get medicine he didn't need. A Tennessee doctor he had never met wrote him a medicinal cream prescription, which was being filled by a pharmacy in Utah. The military covered the bill and the Marine got a cash kickback from somebody."
- The medicine Mederma, supposedly used to treat pain and scars, runs for about \$30 a tube on Amazon; according to the investigation, the Tennessee pharmacy was prescribing the stuff to Marines at \$14,500 a tube as far back as 2015.

Marines were paid about \$300 in illegal kickbacks each month," according to the investigation.

Vern Buchanan: VA Needs to Examine How Veterans Are Treated in Nursing Homes



With media reports finding veterans being harmed at VA run nursing homes around the country, U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Fla., is calling for answers.

This week, Buchanan pointed to recent reports in USA Today and other outlets that veterans were being harmed at VA nursing homes in more than 20 states.

"The report cited veterans moaning for lack of adequate medication to a dementia patient whose foot was stuck in his wheelchair for hours as staff walked by without offering any assistance," the congressman's office noted. "Some of the most disturbing revelations found that many facilities failed to prevent and control infections, that two out of three nursing homes didn't follow simple protocols such as wearing gloves and gowns when treating patients as well as exposing veterans to hazardous conditions at dozens of VA nursing homes."

With almost 90,000 veterans in his district, Buchanan wrote U.S. VA Sec. Robert Wilkie on the matter.

Voice analysis software may help diagnose PTSD in veterans

Voice analysis software can help detect post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in veterans based on their speech, a study suggests.

Doctors have long understood that people with psychiatric disorders may speak differently than individuals who do not have mental health problems, researchers note in Depression and Anxiety. While some previous research points to the potential for distinct speech patterns among people with PTSD, it's been unclear whether depression that often accompanies PTSD might explain the unique voice characteristics.

In the current study, voice analysis software detected which veterans had PTSD and which ones did not with 89 percent accuracy.

"Those with the PTSD talked more slowly (slower tongue movement), were more monotonous with fewer bursts of vocalization, were less animated and energetic (lifeless) in their speech, and had longer hesitations and a flatter tone," said lead study author Dr. Charles Marmar, chair of psychiatry at NYU School of Medicine in New York City.

Trump in Atlanta Vows to Fight Opioid Abuse Epidemic-The Atlanta Journal-Constitution



President Donald J. Trump and First Lady Melania Trump addressed thousands of addiction experts, counselors, and law-enforcement officers at the Rx Drug Abuse & Heroin Summit in Atlanta. In addition to discussing

the need for border security to cut off the illicit drug supply, the President also made clear that no bad actors would be off the hook. "We are holding Big Pharma accountable," he said to applause.

Editor's note: Fighting 'Big Pharma' lobbyists is probably more difficult than fighting ISIS.

A robot battled the Notre Dame blaze



The fire at Notre Dame on Monday was followed by stories about pledges to rebuild the historic cathedral. One of the lesser-known stories is about how a robot was called upon to battle the inferno. "Colossus" is a special robot designed to fight fires in situations that are too dangerous for human firefighters. The robot can even carry victims to safety if needed.

There are a lot of stories these days about the march of robots and how machines are replacing humans in all manner of jobs. This isn't one of those stories. This is about a robot being used to do the kind of work that even the bravest firefighters couldn't do safely.

A last salute to a Raider: Air Force bids farewell to Lt. Col. Dick Cole



Lt. Col. Richard "Dick" Cole, in a service that included tributes from his son, the service's top leaders, and flyovers of modern and vintage aircraft from World War II.

Cole, who died April 9 at the age of 103, was the last living link to the Doolittle Raiders — 80 U.S. Army Air Forces airmen who flew 16 modified B-25B Mitchell bombers off of an aircraft carrier to strike mainland Japan, a few months after Pearl Harbor. Their mission took place on April 18, 1942 — 77 years to the day before Cole's memorial service was held.

Cole, then a second lieutenant, was the co-pilot to Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle, who planned and led the audacious, unprecedented raid. Though the mission caused only minor damage to its targets, it sent a message that America was ready to fight back, and buoyed spirits on the homefront.

Editors note: See article on page 8.

Washington Nationals partner with Air Force to teach new commanders about leadership



It turns out that Major League Baseball executives and Air Force leadership have more in common than you might think.

That was the most prominent theme coming out of the second-annual Nats on Base: Leadership Exchange event at Nationals Park, which involved the Washington Nationals' higher-ups and Air Force personnel exploring the similarities and differences between running an MLB franchise and being a military commander.

The event was a part of the 2019 Air Force District of Washington's Squadron Command and Spouse Orientation Course, where 40 new commanders and their spouses discussed leadership techniques with representatives from other industries, including the Nationals and Washington Redskins.

To kick off the panel, the Nationals brought out Mark Lerner, the team's principal owner, and Mike Rizzo, the team's general manager and president of baseball operations, to give opening remarks.

Chelsea Manning will have to stay in jail for contempt, appeals court says



A federal appeals court rejected a bid by former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning to be released from jail for refusing to testify to a grand jury investigating Wikileaks. The three-paragraph, unanimous decision from a three-judge panel of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond rejects both Manning's argument that she was erroneously found in civil contempt of court and her request for bail while the contempt decision is litigated.

Manning served seven years in a military prison for leaking a trove of military and diplomatic documents to Wikileaks before then-President Barack Obama commuted the remainder of her 35-year sentence. Under the terms of the judge's contempt finding, Manning will remain jailed until she agrees to testify or until the grand jury's term is concluded. That date is unknown.

New legislation would recognize nine more diseases caused by Agent Orange



A group of lawmakers introduced legislation that would add nine more diseases to a list of conditions presumed to be caused by the chemical herbicide Agent Orange, giving veterans who suffer from

them a fast-track to Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation and health care.

The Keeping Our Promises Act, introduced last week, adds prostate cancer, bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, hypertension, stroke, early-onset peripheral neuropathy, AL amyloidosis, ischemic heart disease and Parkinson-like syndromes to a list of diseases presumed to be caused by Agent Orange exposure during the Vietnam War.

Researchers with the National Academy of Medicine released findings in November that there was "suggestive" evidence that eight of the diseases could be caused by Agent Orange. For hypertension, researchers found that "sufficient" evidence exists.

Blue Angels begin the shift to Super Hornets



PENSACOLA, Fla. — As the 2019 Blue Angels delight fans at air shows nationwide this year, two former Blue Angels have been busy laying the groundwork for one of the biggest

changes in the team's nearly 75-year history.

Capt. Ryan Bernacchi, commander of the 2016-2017 Blue Angels, and Cmdr. Frank Weisser, who flew with the team from 2008-2010 and again in 2016 and 2017, recently oversaw a team of experts helping the Blue Angels change airplanes for the first time in more than 30 years.

The Blue Angels are tentatively scheduled to start flying the The F/A-18E Super Hornet in 2021, the team's 75th anniversary season. The move to the Super Hornet will mark the first time the elite Navy and Marine fighter jet demonstration team has changed aircraft since it moved from the A-4F Skyhawk II to the F/A-18 Hornet back in 1986.

Coast Guard: US Must Work to Prevent a Fight in the Arctic



The Arctic's changing climate and the growing Russian and Chinese presence in the region signal a greater need for the U.S. to assert its role as an Arctic nation, with the Coast Guard contributing significantly to keeping the area "conflict-free," according to a new strategic outlook published Monday by the service.

To ensure that the U.S. maintains its leadership in the Arctic, the Coast Guard must work with the U.S. Navy and collaborate with Arctic nation partners and alliances, notes the strategy, the U.S. Coast Guard's Vision for the Arctic Region.

The service also needs to build out its fleet of icebreakers, aircraft and communications systems to ensure the safety and security of the Arctic "even as our aspiring ... competitors maneuver for strategic advantage in the area," the report states.

The strategic outlook is the first new policy paper by the service since 2013. According to Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Karl Schultz, it "reaffirms the Coast Guard's commitment to American leadership in the region through partnership, unity of effort, and continuous innovation."

Is Poor Scam Awareness Among Seniors A Harbinger Of Alzheimer Dementia?

America's elderly are being robbed to the tune of \$37 billion per year. The problem has an added dimension of urgency, as older adults hold most of the nation's household wealth.

People who fall prey to scam artists do not all have dementia. However, researchers have long been aware that a slight, but noticeable and measurable decline in cognitive abilities, including memory and thinking skills, could place a person at increased risk of Alzheimer's or another dementia. Patricia Boyle, PhD, of Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center in Chicago, and colleagues hypothesized that low scam awareness was one of the subtle signs associated with incident mild cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's dementia.

"When a con artist approaches an older person, they're looking for a social vulnerability -- someone who is open to having a conversation with a complete stranger," said Boyle to the press. Then the older person must interpret that stranger's intentions and emotions, with little else to go on, in deciding whether to believe what they're peddling, she explained.

Guantanamo Is Becoming a Nursing Home for Its Aging Terror Suspects



GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba — The oldest man still held in military detention here is 71 years old. Many others are in their 50s.

It's not entirely clear how the U.S. government plans to care for them in their old age.

The 40 remaining prisoners at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base have the same physical ailments of any aging popu-

lation. They need hip replacements, eye surgeries, treatment for sleep apnea, mental health disorders and, one day, probably cancer and dementia. As the military commissions designed by the Bush administration lurch unevenly towards convictions — a federal appeals court recently tossed aside three years of litigation in the USS Cole case — it appears increasingly likely that many of these men will grow old and die on the U.S. taxpayer's dime.

The United States has committed to providing the same health care to the remaining detainees that it provides to its own troops, as required by the Geneva Conventions. But the secure medical facilities built to treat the detainees can't cope with every kind of surgery geriatric patients typically need, and weren't built to last forever. Congress has prohibited the transfer of detainees to the continental United States, which means any treatment they receive will have to take place at a remote outpost on the tip of Cuba.

Sailors from every active fleet responded to a ProPublica callout, noting a continued lack of training, widespread exhaustion and an acute sense of vulnerability



The responses by the sailors — consistent, repeated — can be jarring to read:

Are you getting enough sleep? "No."

Do you feel well-trained to do your job? "No."

Have there been scenarios in which you or your bosses had concerns about the safety of the ship and crew but felt they could not say no to new tasking? "Yes."

Please rate your confidence in Navy leadership in the Pentagon. "I am not confident."

On Feb. 26, ProPublica published a callout aimed primarily at active-duty men and women in the U.S. Navy. We had published two stories about neglect, exhaustion and deadly mishaps in the 7th Fleet, the largest armada anywhere and once the Navy's crown jewel. Now, we wanted to take a measure of the confidence in the many reforms the Navy had announced in assuring the nation that it was addressing the systemic shortcomings laid bare after two fatal accidents in the Pacific in 2017.

Editor's note: Hard to believe that the troops are not receiving, or think they aren't receiving, any improvements in training and sleep time, nor do they perceive any improvements in the effectiveness of their leaders.

Change That Took Effect This Year



Stolen Valor

The penalty for wearing unauthorized medals of valor has increased from 6 months to a maximum of one-year confinement along with forfeiture of pay and a bad-conduct discharge, the Army said. This includes wearing an unauthorized Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Purple Heart, or valor device. The

maximum penalty for wearing any other unauthorized medal is still six months.

Editor's note: I have seen some 4-star generals that do not have that many ribbons (on the wrong side as well).

Military, Vets' Groups Want Scrutiny of Commissary-Exchange Merger Proposal

MOAA Newsletter



Military and veterans' organizations have asked Congress to increase oversight of a Pentagon proposal to merge the commissary and exchange systems, asking for a review by government auditors and congressional hearings.

Military Coalition members said they aren't opposed to the idea but urged caution in implementing changes to what they described as a "fragile military community ecosystem that may impact other important programs."

"We are very concerned that proposals to merge the various elements of the defense resale system may pose a threat to its continued viability and request further study and oversight by Congress," stated The Military Coalition letter, signed by the organizations' chiefs.

The group wants the Government Accountability Office to review the proposal and called for hearings so that interested parties could "express their concerns."

Earlier this year, a task force drafted a business case analysis supporting that the Army and Air Force Exchange System, Navy Exchange and Marine Corps Exchange consolidate to streamline store operations.

The report concluded that the merger would cost \$500 million in implementation, but would save an estimated \$700 million to \$1.3 billion in the first five years.

VA comes out against bills on medical marijuana for veterans



The Department of Veterans Affairs opposes three legislative proposals that would expand research on medical marijuana at the VA and give veterans access to the drug in states where it is legal.

During a hearing VA health-related bills under consideration by Congress, VA officials told House lawmakers that as long as marijuana is illegal under federal law, the department cannot support legislation that promotes its role at the VA.

Three of the bills before the House Veterans Affairs health subcommittee relate to medical marijuana. One, the Veterans Equal Access Act, H.R. 1647, sponsored by Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Oregon, would allow VA health providers to recommend medical marijuana to their veteran patients and fill out the necessary paperwork for them to enroll in state marijuana programs.

Blumenauer, who has introduced the bill in every Congress since 2014, said that, for some veterans, marijuana and cannabis derivatives are lifesavers that keep them from using addictive medications such as opioids to treat post-traumatic stress disorder, chronic pain, seizures and glaucoma. Yet VA health care providers are not allowed to recommend it.

Editor's note: This ruling will probably change in time. Congress will continue to push for the research.

Defense Department to make sexual harassment a crime

Defense Department officials will make sexual harassment a criminal offense amid new reports of increasing bad behavior among service members.

In a statement Thursday morning, acting Defense Secretary Pat-

rick Shanahan called the move a necessary step to combat the "scourge" of sexual assault and abuse in the ranks.

A new report from the department's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response office shows the number of reported cases of sexual assault in the ranks rose from nearly 4,800 in fiscal 2016 to more than 6,050 in fiscal 2018.

During testimony on Capitol Hill, Shanahan promised new action to deal with issues of harassment and retaliation against victims of those assaults. Defense officials said they hope to have new criminal penalties in place by this October, including "steps to seek a stand-alone military crime of sexual harassment."

Combating sexual harassment and assault has been a focus of military leaders in recent years, but lawmakers have expressed frustration with the lack of progress on the topic.

Navy Vet Lawmaker Introduces Measure to Repeal Tax Hike for Gold Star Families

MOAA Newsletter



Elaine Luria, D-Virginia, introduced the legislation, the Gold Star Family Tax Relief Act, or H.R. 2481, which would classify survivor benefits as earned income, reducing the tax burden of the payments. A retired Navy commander and graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, she said

Gold Star families have "already paid the ultimate price" and shouldn't have to suffer.

"It broke my heart when a surviving spouse from coastal Virginia alerted me to this injustice," Luria said in a release. "I knew I had to fight for her in Congress to fix a broken system that should be working for her and her family."

"This is yet another consequence of the widows tax. Ending the financial penalty would ensure military survivors receive the full amounts of their DoD provided Survivor Benefit P and BA-earned Dependency and Indemnity Compensation without offset. If Congress eliminated the widows tax, survivors wouldn't be forced to transfer their benefits to their children, a short-term solution with long-term financial ramifications to military families."

— James F. Naughton Jr., Associate of Government Relations

Lawmakers urged to expand veterans' access to telehealth

A Federal Communications Commission report found that veterans are failing to take advantage of critical telemedicine services and suggests Congress should find ways to connect more of them to broadband networks. The report advocates for "veteran-specific outreach and education about broadband."

Editor's note: The new Riverview clinic will have telehealth.

Florida Council of Chapters Communiqué

June 2019 Issue

See what the other Chapters are doing. The *Florida Council of Chapter's* newsletter, the "Communiqué" can be accessed by clicking on the link below. After you click the link and then click *Allow*, it may take a minute or so for the newsletter to pop up. It is worth the wait.

Apr2014.pdfhttp:www.moaafl.org/communique

Editor—Polly Parks. Send articles and photos to:

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NEW MEMBER COL John A. Otis, USA (Ret)



Colonel John A. Otis retired from the Army in 1996 with 30 years of service. He subsequently worked as an Army contractor and Senior Logistician for Battelle in support of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics and Readiness, Headquarters, Army Materiel Com-

mand, Fort Belvoir, Virginia when he retired in 2010.

His Army assignments included duty as Service Platoon Commander, 175th Assault Helicopter Company in Viet Nam in 1969; Company Commander 591st Transportation Company (Acft DS) in USAREUR in 1971; Company Commander 42nd Heavy Equipment Maintenance (HEM) in USAREUR in 1972; Battalion Commander 5th Transportation Battalion (AVIM), 101st ABN Div (Air Assault) 1983-1985; Division G4 101st ABN Div 1986; Division Support Command (DISCOM) commander 6th Infantry Division 1988-1989; Chief Supply Policy Division, DA DCSLOG, Pentagon 1991-1992; and Chief of Staff Headquarters United States Army Military District of Washington 1993-1996.

His military education and training included the Armor Officer Basic Course, Fixed Wing Aviation Course, Rotary Wing Qualification Course, Aircraft Maintenance Officer Course, Transportation Officer Advanced Course, Armed Forces Staff College, Air Assault School, and the Army War College.

Colonel Otis graduated from Norwich University in 1966 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education and he graduated from the University of Georgia in 1977 with a Master's in Business Administration (MBA).

Among his military awards and decorations are the Legion of Merit (3), Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (2), Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal (2), Vietnam Service Medal (3) and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. His badges include the Senior Army Aviator Badge, Air Assault Badge, and Army Staff Identification Badge.

Colonel Otis and his wife, Dianna reside in Valencia Lakes in the winter and Montpelier, Vermont in the summer. They have 3 daughters. Two live and work in the Tampa area and the third lives in Maryland.

Sweden almost ran out of energy



Sweden's push to shutter its nuclear power plants and move to renewable energy sources has outpaced its efforts to modernize the country's energy grid. The result is not enough power in all the places that need it. The grid up-

grade is expected to take so long that contingency plans are already being put in place for when Sweden hosts the Olympic Games in 2026.

The dire situation stems from the closing of the nation's oldest reactors and a shift to wind at a time when the grid is already struggling to keep up with demand in major cities. The shortage, which impacts the nation's main urban areas, is threatening everything from the rollout of a 5G network in the capital to investments in giant data halls and new subway lines. It could even derail Stockholm's bid for the 2026 Winter Olympics.

It's a stark change from the decades of cheap, surplus electricity that propelled the Nordic region's biggest economy into one of the richest and most industrialized nations in the world. Now, electricity supplies in urban areas can't keep up and that could exacerbate a slowdown already impacted by global uncertainty and Brexit.

Soldier climbs over safety railing and falls into active volcano



One common ingredient of every liberty brief is a senior enlisted service member, standing center stage in front of junior personnel in a sit-kneel-stand circle, bellowing warnings about do's and don'ts so outlandish they are inevitably met with scoffs of those in attend-

ance. "You know the only reason I bring this up is because it's been done before," the top would say, no matter the perceived insanity of the scenario.

One 32-year-old soldier provided even more obscure material for lengthy liberty brief orators Wednesday when he climbed over a safety railing near an active volcano to get a closer look — and promptly tumbled from the 300-foot cliff and into the Kilauea caldera after losing his footing.

The soldier, who survived the fall, was located a little over two hours later on a ledge 70 feet below the cliff edge, according to a statement from the National Park Service.

"Visitors should never cross safety barriers, especially around dangerous and destabilized cliff edges," said Chief Ranger and common sense aficionado John Broward.

"Crossing safety barriers and entering closed areas can result in serious injuries and death."

A rescue crew, accompanied by rangers from Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, rigged a litter and attached it to a military helicopter to pull the seriously injured man from the Kilauea caldera, a volcano not currently erupting, according to the National Park Service, but one that destroyed more than 700 homes in 2018.

The soldier, who is based at the Pohakuloa Training Area on Hawai'i's Big Island, is being treated at Hawai'i's Hilo Medical Center.

Editor's Note: The phrase 'boggles the mind' seems a fitting response to this story.


IN MEMORIAM

Naomi Socha, spouse of CDR Ed Socha, USN (Ret) passed away on May 13, 2019. Ed, a Pearl Harbor survivor and Charter Chapter Member in 1990, was President of the SCC TROA Chapter in 1994. He and Naomi were married 70 yrs.

Monthly Member and Board Meetings

**Board Meeting: No board meeting in July
No Membership Committee Mtg. in July**

NEW RIVERVIEW FL VA CLINIC OPENS



James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house for the new South Hillsborough Outpatient Clinic on Tuesday, May 14 at 12920 Summerfield Crossing Blvd. in Riverview.

Attendees included congressional representatives and other dignitaries. The ribbon-cutting ceremony took place at 10 a.m. and was by invitation only. The open house was from 1 to 3 p.m. and available for anyone to attend.

The 65,000-square-foot facility will serve more than 10,000 veterans living in the Riverview, Ruskin, Sun City Center, Wimauma, Gibsonton and Apollo Beach communities.

It will provide primary care (including women's primary care and home-based primary care), mental health, radiology (including MRI, CT, ultrasound and X-ray), audiology, dietary, laboratory, pharmacy, physical medicine and rehabilitation, respiratory therapy, social work, prosthetics, telehealth and podiatry.

U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan, and Hospital Director Joe Battle were among the guest speakers and the MC of the event was William Hodges, DTM, Host, Veteran's Corner, Sun Radio WSCQ FM 96.3

Following a tour of the facility, a lunch consisting of sandwiches and desert was served.



**James A Haley Director,
Joe Battle**



Joe Battle—Bill Hodges



Vern Buchanan



Invited Attendees

Memorial Day May 27, 2019



Benny Blackshire, COL USA



**DJ Reyes, COL, USA (Ret)
Guest Speaker**



**Grand Marshall Procession
James Glass**



HCSO COLOR GUARD



Bagpiper Jason Marchand



Trinity Baptist Church Choir



Veterans organization leaders



Crowd—large as usual



Jim Haney, Maj. USMC (Ret)

Sun City Center veterans organizations pay tribute to departed comrades.

The Military Veterans Organization of Sun City Center, organized by MOAA, sponsored a Memorial Day Tribute to deceased veterans on Monday Morning May 27th at 10:00 am at the Kings Point Veterans Theater. The guest speaker was Colonel DJ Reyes, USA (Ret). COL. Reyes retired from the Army with over 33 years' service. He earned his Bachelors, Masters, and Juris Doctor degrees from the University of Notre Dame, the US Naval War College, and Temple University School of Law.

As a community Advocate for Veterans issues at the local, state and national levels, DJ recently served as a DoD contractor in assisting Gulf Coast region veterans, Guard and Reserve with meaningful employment and useful Career Counselling.

DJ continues his community service role as the Senior Military Advisor/Mentor to the 13th Judicial Circuit's Veterans Treatment Court (VTC). As a result of his efforts, FDVA Director Denny Burgess appointed DJ on the Legal Sub-Committee, "Forward March" Campaign, which is a state-wide Commission charged with reviewing and improving all FL veteran support programs and services. He received a standing ovation for his presentation.

Subsequent to the indoors tribute, a wreath, donated by the Sun City Center Funeral Home, was placed outside by the flagpole. It was placed by Sgt Glass, USMC who was assisted by members of the Boy Scout Troop 661.



Chapter 5–Star
Level of Excellence Award



Newsletter 5-Star
Communications Award

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

MOAA: The SCC Chapter of The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) membership is granted to Army; Navy; Marines; Air Force; Coast Guard; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Public Health; the National; Guard or Reserve components both active or retired; and former officers and Warrant Officers who were separated under acceptable conditions.

MISSION: The mission of Sun City Center FL chapter shall be to promote the purposes and objectives of the Military Officers Association of America; foster fraternal relation among retired, active duty and former officers of active duty, retired and reserve components personnel of the uniformed services and their dependents and survivors; provide useful services for members and their dependents and survivors and serve the community and the nation.

MEETINGS: A meeting is held monthly (except July/August) in the Atrium building in the Florida room at 11:00 a.m. and includes lunch and a guest speaker.

ACTIVITIES: Coordinate and sponsor Annual Memorial Day ceremony; provide awards and honorariums to outstanding JROTC Cadets; contributed to Operation Warm Heart and Helping Hand; contribute to My Warriors Place; provide funds for MOAA scholarships and participate in numerous community activities.

Additional information can be obtained by calling 813-642-0801 or e-mailing dkepley@tampabay.rr.com. You can also contact us by mail at Frank Kepley, 815 Freedom Plaza Circle, Apt 104 Sun City Center Fl. 33573.



Sun City Center Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
P.O. Box 5693
Sun City Center, FL. 33571-5693

Place Stamp
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Or Current Resident

Military exchanges sorting out how tariff hikes on Chinese imports will affect customers

On May 10, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer announced that the administration has increased the level of tariffs from 10 percent to 25 percent on about \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports. The tariffs are being used to turn up the heat in the U.S. trade negotiations with China.

According to the Associated Press, the new tariff increases will affect thousands of items, such as seafood, furniture, bicycles, luggage, backpacks and handbags; businesses will pay more for things like telecom equipment, plastics and chemicals; car companies will pay more for auto parts.

"Thus far, there has been no impact to Army and Air Force Exchange Service stores. It is too early to forecast future impacts," said Chris Ward, spokesman for AAFES.

House panel withholds funds for replacing uniformed medical personnel

The House Appropriations Committee's fiscal 2020 defense budget keeps back \$250 million from the Defense Health Agency to pay for civilian instead of uniformed physicians, nurses, dentists, medics, corpsmen and health facility administrative staff, as the committee requested more information on plans to close health care facilities or cut services at some hospitals and clinics. The positions in question are under individual services' medical commands, rather than DHA's, an agency spokesman said.

According to the report accompanying the proposed bill, the Pentagon plans to eliminate all the uniformed positions in 2020, as opposed to a phased reduction, leaving the committee "displeased that medical readiness [of active-duty troops] appears to have been the only consideration ... and key [DoD] leaders are either unable or unprepared to articulate a comprehensive plan." See page 6, first article. [Click Here](#) to complain to representatives.

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**THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE WORLD WARS (MOWW)
INVITES YOU TO OUR 12TH ANNUAL**



**SUN CITY CENTER
VETERANS DAY BALL**

PROCEEDS TO FURTHER OUR YOUTH PATRIOTIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9th, 2019

5:00 P.M. UNTIL 9 P.M.

(4:30 PM to 6:30 PM complementary photos)

The Ball will feature a patriotic program; hors d'oeuvres; champagne toast; a four (4) entrée Grand Buffet Dinner including prime rib, with multiple serving lines; plated garden salad with rolls at your table; multiple choice dessert station; and coffee/tea station catered by Banquet Masters.

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ENTERTAINMENT AND DANCING
BYOB (GLASSES AND ICE PROVIDED)**

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1910 S. PEBBLE BEACH BLVD.**

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