



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



Volume 33 Number 5 **MAY 2018**

MAY SPEAKER

Dr. Susan MacManus



President's Message
Benny Blackshire, LTC USA (Ret)
May 2018

Dear Colleagues :

We had a great turnout for our April luncheon and our guest speaker, Bob "Coach" Henriquez, the Hillsborough County Property Appraiser, did a good job of getting through his talk, even after our computer shut his Power Point Presentation down after the first few slides. Bob brought his Chief Administrative Officer, Al Noto, and his Director of Residential Properties, Fred Montes, with him to the meeting and they stayed to answer individual questions after the meeting.

Doris Glass presented Elda Miller her Auxiliary Pin. Elda had copies of her husband's book available for purchase. Contact Elda if you would like a copy. The price is \$30 for the hardback and \$20 for the paperback. This is about \$10 off the bookstore price.

The March 30 briefing on the new Riverview VA Clinic was a huge success. It was held at the South Community Hall and their was a capacity crowd. Joe Battle, director of the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, gave an excellent briefing and had key members of his staff present to answer personal questions/problems after the meeting. For those of you that missed the briefing, the clinic is under construction and scheduled for completion the end of 2018. It should be open in April/May of 2019. The clinic will have primary care and specialty care services. See page 9 for additional information.

Our May luncheon/meeting guest speaker will be Dr. Susan McManus - see the Bio on this page. This is always a very informative and interesting talk and I know you won't want to miss it. She will speak on the political climate in our area.

The Sun City Center Veterans Memorial is moving forward. Walt Cawein, Chairperson for the Memorial Committee, reported that 265 bricks had been ordered. Please consider purchasing a brick for yourself or a beloved veteran. Contact me if you need information on how to purchase your brick.

Finally, Memorial Day planning is well underway. At the meeting we had sign-ups for the flag bearers and ushers. If you want to sign up and missed the meeting, you need to contact me as soon as possible to get your name on the list. Only a limited number of volunteers can be used. Flag bearers have the best seats in the house.

I am looking forward to summer and seeing you at the May luncheon/meeting.



Dr. Susan MacManus will be the featured speaker at the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) monthly meeting on May 3rd, at 11:00. MacManus received her master's degree from the University of Michigan (1969) and her undergraduate (1968) and Ph.D. (1975) degrees from Florida State University. Born in Tampa, she is a

native of Pasco County. Dr. MacManus is a Distinguished University Professor of Public Administration and Political Science in the Department of Government and International Affairs at the University of South Florida. She is nationally renowned for her expert and incisive commentary on public opinion and intergenerational politics and has appeared on ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX, CNN, Fox News Channel, MSNBC, PBS, BBC, NHK (Tokyo), Australian Television, C-SPAN, National Public Radio, and in various print media. During the 2000 and 2004 election season, she has also served as the political analyst for WFLA News Channel 8, the Florida News Channel, and WFLA News Radio. Currently, she is the political analyst for ABC Action News in Tampa, Fl. Dr. MacManus is a Fulbright research scholar and has written numerous books. She co-authored, with mentor Thomas R. Dye, Politics in States and Communities, 11th ed. (Prentice-Hall, 2003), which is the nation's leading textbook on state and local politics. She has just recently released a new book entitled "Florida Minority Trail Blazer," that took her ten years to complete.

\$15.00 MAY LUNCHEON \$15.00 ♦

(813) 642-0497 ♦

Wednesday, May 2nd, 2018 (Florida Room)

Salad Bar & Fresh Fruit with Assorted Dressings

Roast Pork with Fuji Apples and Gravy

Chicken Piccata

Crab Stuffed Filet of Sole

Dessert Bar: Chef's selected desserts

Beverages: Decaf Coffee, Iced Tea, and Ice Water

April Luncheon



Bob Henriquez, Hillsborough County Property Appraiser



from left: Bob Henriquez, Benny Blackshire, President of local chapter MOAA

County Property Appraiser, Bob Henriquez, addresses MOAA

Bob Henriquez was the featured speaker at the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) luncheon on April 4th, in the Florida Room at the North Side Atrium Building.

A fifth-generation resident of Tampa, Bob was born and raised in that city and his great grandfather, Enrique Henriquez, was the last mayor of West Tampa before it was annexed into the City of Tampa in 1925. He achieved academic success at Tampa Catholic High and Princeton University. At both schools, Bob learned the importance of teamwork as a starting offensive lineman on the football squads.

Soon after graduating from Princeton, Bob went to work for Hillsborough County's Streets & Addresses department to help enhance its 9-1-1 program. Later, he joined the county's Planning Commission to assist in growth management.

He was elected and served four terms in the Florida Legislature. He was then appointed to head up the Pinellas and Pasco counties division of the Department of Children and Families. He served in that role for three years.

Bob served two stints as head coach at Tampa Catholic, from 1990-99 and again from 2005-2012. In 2007, TC reached the state championship game for the first time in school history and the Crusaders returned to that stage in 2009. After winning the election as Hillsborough County Property Appraiser in 2012, Bob made the decision to step down as head coach at TC to focus his energies on the constitutional responsibilities of his office.

He spoke to MOAA members about high residential growth in the county and how they determine the home values for tax purposes.

U. S. WORLD WAR 1 CENTENNIAL HIGHLIGHT

The Battle of Cantigny, fought May 28, 1918 was the first major American battle and offensive of World War I. The U.S. 1st Division, the most experienced of the five American divisions then in France and in reserve for the French Army near the village of Cantigny, was selected for the attack. The objective of the attack was both to reduce a small salient made by the German Army in the front lines but also to instill confidence among the French and British allies in the ability of the inexperienced American Expeditionary Force (AEF).

On May 28, 2008, the 90th anniversary of the Battle of Cantigny, the Association of the 28th Infantry Regiment dedicated the statue "The Lion of Cantigny," an original bronze work by Stephen Spears, depicting a doughboy of the regiment advancing through the village. The 28th Infantry was the assault regiment in the First Division's attack, the first major US battle of World War I. The regimental coat of arms is based on the lions in the heraldic arms of Picardy, where Cantigny is; the regiment's nickname is Black Lions. *(contributed by Jim Haney)*

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.

- 198 Chapter members as of 4 April, 2018
- 128 of LIFE
- 33 of PREMIUM
- 21 of BASIC
- 22 of non-MOAA members

New Chapter member(s) last month:
LTC Douglas Hawkins, USA Retired

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

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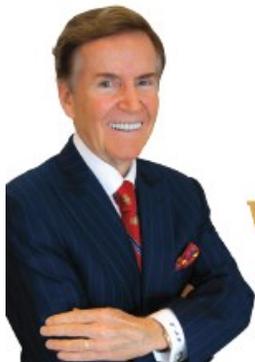


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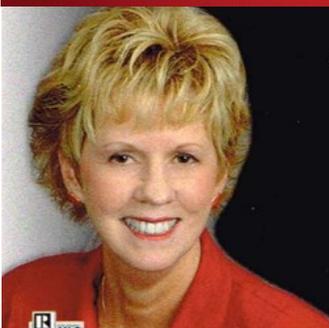
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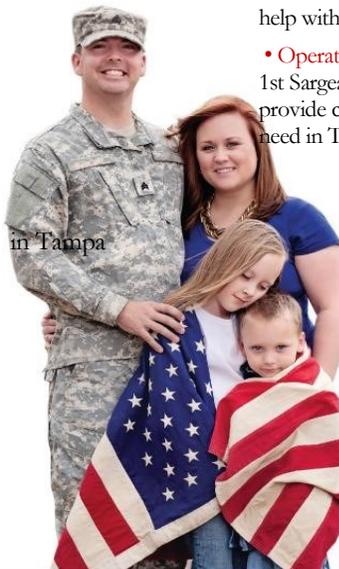


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- **Service Dogs** for veterans with PTSD and other traumatic injuries.
- **Homeless Prevention for Women Veterans:** help with rent, child care and licensing training.
- **Operation Warm Heart**, administered by the 1st Sergeants Group at MacDill AFB, who provide commissary vouchers for soldiers in need in Tampa.
- **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 .



**For more information, call
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Member of the Month

VADM David C. Nichols, U.S. Navy (Ret)



VADM Nichols retired October 1, 2007, after a 34-year career in the U.S. Navy. His last assignment was Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command. Central Command is responsible for all U.S. military activity in the Middle East, Southwest Asia, and the Horn of Africa.

Additional assignments as a Flag Officer included Commander, U.S. Fifth Fleet/Combined Naval Forces, U.S. Central Command; Deputy Commander,

Combined Air Forces, U.S. Central Command; Commander Carrier Group ONE; Commander, Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center; Deputy Commander, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia; and Deputy Director of Operations, U.S. Central Command.

Originally commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army through the ROTC program, VADM Nichols laterally transferred to Navy for training as a Naval Flight Officer. He is a graduate of Army Ranger School.

VADM Nichols commanded at sea at the squadron, air wing, carrier battle group, and fleet levels. Ashore, he commanded the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center. He flew more than 5,500 hours in various models of carrier-based aircraft.

VADM Nichols is a graduate of the University of Tennessee, the Naval War College, and the National Defense University Joint and Combined Staff Officer School.

VADM Nichols currently resides in Apollo Beach, Florida. He is a consultant on national security issues and a Senior Fellow at the Center for Naval Analyses in Washington, DC.

Mattis: Omnibus bill wards off continuing resolution



Pilots wouldn't fly, spare parts wouldn't be purchased and needed new service members wouldn't be accepted if Congress again funded the government through a continuing resolution, Mattis said.

Fortunately, the House passed a \$1.3 trillion fiscal 2018 omnibus appropriations bill, starting the process for averting a government shutdown and ending government funding by stopgap.

Hopefully, the military will now be able to maintain the ships at sea, with the proper balance between operations and time in port for maintenance; avoid grounding aircraft due to a lack of maintenance and spare parts; and avoid depleting the ammunition, training, and manpower required to deter war; and avoid delaying contracts for vital acquisition programs necessary to modernize the force."

Trump's 2019 budget calls for 2.6 percent pay raise, thousands more troops

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's fiscal 2019 budget would give service members a 2.6 percent pay raise and add 24,100 more troops to the services' end

strength, according to documents from the Pentagon.

The \$686 billion defense spending plan does not match exactly with the budget deal agreed upon by Congress, but gives an outline of the administration's military priorities looking ahead to next year. Lawmakers still have to finalize their fiscal 2018 spending plans before debating how the fiscal 2019 money should be allotted.

The 2.6 percent pay raise proposal would be the highest troops have seen since 2010.

"The department expects moderate and manageable increases in pay will continue in the near term and will match the growth in private sector wages," DoD said in the budget book accompanying the fiscal year 2019 request.

That's significant because Pentagon planners for the last several years have suggested trims to that pay raise formula, to create savings for other modernization and readiness priorities. Outside advocates have argued that practice hurts troops' morale and discourages potential recruits.

Editor's note: Finally, the troops will no longer have to finance their own training.

Despite skipping BRAC request, Pentagon should still cut infrastructure costs, says Reed

The Senate Armed Services Committee's top Democrat, Jack Reed, says the Pentagon must find ways to economize even though it did not ask for a new round of base closures in its FY19 budget request. Reed said base closures are still worth a conversation in Congress, even in an election year. But he added that talks would be hamstrung because Defense Secretary Jim Mattis did not ask for base closures in his FY19 budget request.

Sun City Center MOAA Website

Don't forget to visit our new website. The link to the website is: <http://moaaf.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 jhhaney1@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



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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Frank Kepley, CAPT USN (Ret)

Despite threat of a years-long wait, veterans slow to embrace new option on disability appeals



A new program designed to help clear the Department of Veterans Affairs' massive backlog of disability claims appeals has so far received little interest from veterans, despite promises it could trim years off their wait times.

Less than 3 percent of veterans invited into the program — about 330 individuals — have opted into the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program, launched in November and billed as a “more efficient” review process that could provide final decisions within a month.

The program was included as part of sweeping appeals reform legislation passed by Congress last year and was intended to help start to draw down some of the 340,000 cases languishing in the current case processing system. VA officials have promised full implementation of the reforms package by February 2019, but have also been optimistic they'll see significant progress before the end of the year.

The RAMP process allows veterans to fast-track decisions on their disability appeals if they agree to finalize evidence adjudicators can consider and withdraw their pending cases. Because many veterans have been waiting years for an answer on their disability cases, officials think some of the reluctance to opt-in to the new program may be fear of restarting a lengthy wait.

It has also drawn positive reviews from veterans service organizations as well. Officials from Disabled American Veterans labeled it “a great testing environment for the new (VA) appeals system.”

More than 133,000 vets may qualify for this tax refund windfall



More than 133,000 veterans may qualify for a refund of federal taxes they paid on disability severance pay dating back to 1991 — taxes that shouldn't have been collected in the

first place.

Within the next month, Defense Department officials will send notification letters to veterans that they may be eligible for the refund, said Army Lt. Col. David Dulaney, executive director of the Armed Forces Tax Council.

Eligible veterans will have a year after they receive the notice to file a claim for the refund.

Of the 300,000 veterans who received the disability severance payment, DoD has identified 133,000 who may qualify for refunds.

The notification letters will provide information to veterans on how they can apply for the refund. Defense officials have

been working with Internal Revenue Service officials to clarify the process.

The amount of tax refund will vary by veteran, as the amount of the disability severance varies based on rank and years of service. But it's worth the time to file the claim.

VA promises faster action on unpaid bills from outside health providers



As their stack of unpaid bills continues to grow, Veterans Affairs officials are promising a host of reforms in coming months to more quickly pay community providers for care they deliver to veterans.

The new moves, include creating new “rapid response teams” to settle the largest outstanding bills within 90 days and awarding at least four new contracts this year to provide faster payments in the future.

In a statement, VA Secretary David Shulkin called the reforms “vital to the health of our network of providers” and to veterans' health.

“Our outside providers are an essential part of our network, and we need to improve our system of payments for their services,” he said.

The issue of community provider payments has taken on extra importance in recent months as administration officials have expanded their emphasis on health care options outside the Veterans Health Administration.

Along with resolving issues of eligibility and access to medical appointments for those community care programs, lawmakers and VA officials have pushed for streamlining the payment system for those private-sector visits, following complaints from their financial departments about the current process.

Some offices taking in veterans as patients have seen unpaid bills swell into the tens of thousands of dollars, with no clear payment date.

Editor's note: Halleluiah! This has been a major problem since the Choice program began. It has caused community providers to turn away from the program and veterans to be harassed by bill collectors — affecting their credit rating.

Health care reform bill for veterans blocked

The Caring for Our Veterans Act has been blocked from inclusion in the budget compromise by Democrats who say it wouldn't ease wait times and would lessen oversight of the VA. The measure seeks to give veterans more access to health care at for-profit facilities, paid for by taxpayer funds, and the move against it is seen as a blow to President Donald Trump's agenda for veterans.

It's unclear what will become of the Caring for our Veterans Act, which appeared to be headed into the budget with a compromise plan supported by the White House and eight major veterans advocacy groups.

S. 2193 would increase the use of community health care and long-term care by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) by broadening eligibility for such care and allowing VA to enter into agreements with health care providers in the private sector without complying with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). It would also include expanding the caregivers program, increasing pay for employees, and reimbursing medical staff for professional training.

Lawmakers nearly passed three major VA reform bills. Now that plan is dead.



The Omnibus spending bill does not include 3 major important VA reform bills.

The package circulated among lawmakers and outside advocates called for an overhaul of VA community care programs — the White House's top legislative priority for the department this year — along with an expansion of veteran caregiver benefits and a review of the VA system's national footprint.

The community care changes are part of the department's efforts to phase out the controversial VA Choice program, which allows veterans who meet certain criteria to receive care from private sector doctors at taxpayer expense.

VA physicians would remain the coordinator of veterans care, but individuals who face significant wait times, travel distances or hardships to reach VA facilities would be eligible to seek care outside the department's system.

VA officials would also more easily be able to enter into partnerships with community health care providers to create a broader network of options for veterans. Veterans who have used VA care within the previous two years would also have two walk-in visits at any private-sector practice without a co-pay, even without prior approval from the department.

"We're starting to hear that facilities are starting to run out of choice funds," he said. "Veterans are starting to get impacted. We need to get something done and stop punting."

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., said he was also disappointed to miss out on including the reforms in the omnibus, but said he thinks the work done will have a positive result in coming weeks.

The Caring for Our Veterans Act closely follows legislation proposed by VA officials earlier this fall. It would gradually sunset disparate outside care programs within the VA and replace them with a single community care program with fewer restrictions on which veterans can seek private-sector care. (passed by senate)

Neither House nor Senate committee officials have announced a timetable for bringing their measures to the chamber floors.

Sen Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), who was part of a bipartisan effort to negotiate a compromise, while disappointed, said he intends to bring up the issue again in April when Congress returns from its break. And he said he was still optimistic about getting it through.

Pelosi and other Democrats are concerned that the bill would diminish congressional oversight of the Department of Veterans Affairs, that it would go too far in outsourcing care and end up diluting funding to a system riven by scandals and long wait times.

Tucking the Caring for Our Veterans Act into the president's larger omnibus bill would make it easier to pass. Now it will become a separate bill that could take months to pass. And the choice program is rapidly running out of funds.

Editor's note: For the time being at least, all of these reforms are dead. That's the down side. The up side is our military is finally going to be funded to bring it up to speed.

Cost of EHR modernization project at VA jumps 60%



The cost of the Department of Veterans Affairs' Cerner EHR implementation contract increased from \$10 billion to \$16 billion, Rep. Debbie Wasserman

Schultz, D-Fla., a House Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies subcommittee ranking member, said during a House Appropriations subcommittee hearing. VA Secretary David Shulkin, who neither disputed the contract cost nor stated where the additional funding will come from, outlined the agency's plans to reduce information blocking and ensure interoperability between the VA, private health systems and the Department of Defense.

Trump taps his doctor to replace Shulkin at VA (Washington Post)



President Trump fired his embattled Veterans Affairs secretary and tapped as his replacement atop the agency his personal physician.

The ouster of Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin, who has been mired in scandal

over his charging taxpayers for luxury travel expenses and the infighting among his senior aides, had been widely expected.

Trump said he would nominate Ronny L. Jackson, 50, an active-duty rear admiral in the Navy who has served for the past three administrations as a White House physician.

Shulkin did not go quietly. He offered some parting shots in an opinion piece for the New York Times, claiming that the VA has "become entangled in a brutal power struggle" among Trump administration officials and others over proposals such as privatizing some aspects of veterans' care.

"They saw me as an obstacle to privatization who had to be removed," Shulkin wrote. "That is because I am convinced that privatization is a political issue aimed at rewarding select people and companies with profits, even if it undermines care for veterans."

"As I prepare to leave government, I am struck by a recurring thought: It should not be this hard to serve your country," he wrote.

His successor, a career military officer, has been apolitical, and Jackson's views on a range of hot-button issues affecting VA — including proposals to privatize care — are not publicly known.

Editor's note: Shulkin made many needed changes and I am sorry to see him go. I just hope that this change will not result in a change in direction toward a major increase in privatization. Veterans have many medical conditions, secondary to their military experience, that private doctors are not equipped to treat. And the cost will be astronomical. They need the VA hospitals that are staffed with experienced doctors that are not profit oriented. Most veterans organizations have been backing Shulkin.

New Medicare ID cards come to mid-Atlantic states first



The CMS has revealed which states will be the first in the nation to receive new Medicare identification cards that don't contain Social Security numbers.

Medicare beneficiaries in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland,

Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia are among the states that were the first to get the new cards.

Beneficiaries in Alaska, American Samoa, California, Guam, Hawaii, the Northern Mariana Islands and Oregon also got the cards.

Since the beginning of the Medicare program, Social Security numbers have been used as the beneficiary identifier for administering services. The Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act required the CMS to remove the numbers from Medicare cards because of identity theft and fraud risks.

Starting this April, the CMS will begin to issue Medicare cards with new ID numbers. Approximately 60 million beneficiaries will receive the new cards by April 2019.

Providers have been worried because they haven't received the guidance they've needed on the change.

Without clear instructions on how to prepare for the change, physicians risk losing their ability to bill Medicare. Claims with the old numbers won't be accepted starting in 2020. Practices also need to update their electronic health record systems to accept the new ID numbers.

Providers had been pushing the CMS to make the change via a rulemaking process, giving the agency a chance to lay out a substantive rollout plan and letting clinicians weigh in.

Telehealth Gives Senior Centers a Gateway to Patient Engagement



Senior centers across the country are deploying a wide range of telehealth and mHealth technologies to keep their residents active and engaged.

One such example is Front Porch, a Glendale, Calif.-based non-profit comprising 10 full-service retirement communities in southern California and two adult living

facilities, one in Louisiana and one in Florida. Through the Front Porch Center for WellBeing, the agency has been using wearables, telehealth platforms, computer-aided "exergames" and even a robotic seal called PARO to promote physical and mental well-being.

"It does an amazing world of difference in our operations and in the general caregiving environment," says Davis Park, FPCIW's director. "We're making meaningful connections."

The program, in use in more than 2,000 senior living facilities across the country, features a 70-inch smartboard with interactive applications. Through the smartboard – and more, recently, through a tablet – residents at Sunny View's skilled nursing care center and memory care neighborhood were able to play games, surf the Internet and communicate with relatives and friends (one even live-streamed a grandson's graduation from a New York college).

In healthcare circles, some mHealth and telehealth programs have been shown to help seniors improve physical

and mental acuity, reduce healthcare costs and adverse events and even cut down on medication use.

After A False Start, The VA's Vet ID System Finally Works



Late last year, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it would officially launch the veteran ID card program Nov. 29. Gone would be the days of stuffing a laminated DD-214 into your back pocket before scoring hardware discounts at Home Depot discounts or free grub from Applebees on Veterans Day. Finally, there'd be proof of one's service in the form of a glossy white ID card.

Instead, the Nov. 29 rollout of the program was fraught with problems. Many applicants reported broken links or error messages. Though the Veteran ID card application page has remained online since it launched, vets who were unable to complete the process were asked to leave their email address with the department, which would get back to the applicants at a later time. More than 136,000 Veterans provided their emails and 1,145 submitted help-desk tickets due to errors, Curt Cashour, the press secretary for the Department of Veterans Affairs said.

As of Jan. 29, Veterans can once again submit applications online, and this time — the applications actually go through.

All veterans with an honorable or general discharge can request the new ID cards. Keep in mind, they don't replace VA medical cards or defense retiree cards, nor are they official government-issued forms of identification — so you can't use it to board a plane, or buy booze. But, they are handy for when you're in a checkout line and spot a "10% off for veterans" discount sign.

Trump congratulates former sailor after pardon: Go 'have the life you deserve!'



President Trump congratulated a former Navy sailor he pardoned a day earlier, telling him to "go out and have the life you deserve."

Trump issued a pardon for a former Navy sailor, Kristian Saucier, who had recently been released from prison. He served 12 months for mishandling classified information by taking pictures onboard a nuclear submarine.

When Saucier was on trial in 2016, his lawyers invoked former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who was also accused of mishandling classified information. Trump has frequently compared the two cases as evidence of inequality within the Department of Justice.

The FBI declined to charge Clinton in 2016 after an investigation into her use of a private email server during her tenure as secretary of State.

Petty Officer First Class Kristian Saucier pleaded guilty in May 2016 to two felony counts, one for unlawful retention of national defense information and another for obstruction of justice, for taking cellphone pictures inside the Navy vessel and later destroying his own equipment upon learning he was under investigation.

Editor's note: I served on 3 Navy ships and took photos on all three. One was nuclear powered carrier. I cannot believe this man served 12 months in prison for taking photos.

Marine feeding kitten in famous Korean War photograph dies at 90



A Marine photographed feeding an orphaned kitten on the front lines in Korea died Jan. 10 at 90 years old. Frank Praytor, who served as a combat correspondent in the 1st Marine Division from 1951-52, “weaned ‘Miss Hap’ on meat out of ‘C’ ration cans” after her mother had been shot.

The picture, which circulated in more than 1,700 newspapers, brought a “moment of humanity” to the war, according to USNI News.

Later, the cat saved Praytor — from the brig. Praytor had violated a WWII combat photographer regulation by freelancing a combat photo. But when the commandant got the court-martial papers, he tore them up.

“I’m certain ‘that cat’ played a silent-but-significant role in my being excused from brig time.” Praytor wrote in *The Greybeards* in 2009. “After all, I had become a celebrity of sorts and the prize-winning photo made a positive rather than negative impact on the Marine Corps’ image.”

Air Force suspends solo T-6 trainer flights over hypoxia fears



The 19th Air Force has indefinitely suspended all solo flights in T-6 Texan trainer aircraft — both for students and instructor pilots — over concerns about hypoxia and other so-called unexplained physiological events.

A screenshot of a message posted early Wednesday on the unofficial Facebook page Air Force amn/nco/snco also said that Maj. Gen. Patrick Doherty, commander of the 19th Air Force, has authorized all T-6 instructor and student pilots to fly with their masks down — that is, with one bayonet, or connector, unlatched. This is so they can breathe cockpit air to lessen the risk against hypoxia and related problems, and will be allowed both on the ground and in flight.

“Due to the nature of T-6 Unexplained Physiological Events (UPE) symptoms and ability to recognize the situation, all solo sorties (both student and IP) are suspended until further notice,”

The entire fleet of T-6A Texans at the 71st Flying Training Wing at Vance Air Force Base in Oklahoma was grounded last November after five pilots in four different flights experienced hypoxia-like symptoms.

Editor’s note: it is hard to believe that a country that has sent men to the moon, cannot solve a failed oxygen delivery system in their aircraft.

VA Expands Programs To Target Suicide Prevention



The Veterans Health Administration has tried a number of ideas to drive down the suicide rate among veterans.

The VA is about to start automatically enrolling most new veterans in mental health care, starting in March. People who work with veterans say the program, mandated by an executive order from the White House, is a great idea, but they worry about an already strained system.

The year after a veteran returns to civilian life is a vulnerable time. Veterans describe the experience of leaving the service like losing a family. Veterans in this first year have a higher suicide rate than the overall veteran population.

James Haley director presents Town Hall on new Riverview outpatient VA clinic



Mr. Joe Battle, Director of the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital, gave a presentation on the new Riverview VA Outpatient Clinic at a Town Hall meeting in Sun City Center on March 30, 2018. The meeting was held in the Community Hall and was attended by a large crowd of interested veterans.

Additional seats had to be set up to accommodate the large number of attendees. The meeting was rescheduled as the first meeting, held at the Trinity Baptist church, did not provide sufficient information regarding what services were going to be provided and how the veterans would transfer their care to the new clinic. Mr. Battle provided the information the veterans were seeking. After the presentation, he answered all of the questions posed by the attendees.

The clinic will provide 50,000 square feet of clinic space; 65,000 with parking. The estimated completion date is 2019 and the clinic will serve an estimated 10,000 veterans. There will be two Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT). The planned specialty clinics are Women’s Primary Care, Home Based Primary Care, Mental Health, Audiology, Radiology (MRI, CT Ultrasound, X-ray) Specialty Care services will include, Physical Therapy, Pharmacy and Lab.

Any Veteran can use the clinic if it’s more convenient for them; it’s not limited to a geographic area. If they wish to receive their care at the new clinic, they will need to get assigned to one of the clinic’s PACTs. Veterans will only receive beneficiary travel reimbursement to the nearest VA facility to their address on file.

Existing patients should advise their primary care provider of their desire to be treated at the new clinic.

New Patients: Go to <https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/> to enroll and request South Hillsborough as their clinic.

VA sees big savings in expanding caregiver stipends, but lawmakers still worry about costs

Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin insists a limited expansion of his department’s caregivers stipend program could save the federal government around \$2.5 billion annually.

The House Veterans’ Affairs Committee renewed debate on the issue of VA’s caregiver program, which awards living stipends — totaling up to several thousands of dollars a month — to the families of veterans who require around-the-clock home care.

When lawmakers created the program in 2011, it only covered veterans of the post-Sept. 11 era. For much of the last year, Shulkin has advocated (along with veterans groups) that the program should include other generations of veterans as well, especially as they age and require new medical care.

Shulkin acknowledged that a simple expansion of the existing program to all veterans would likely swell the participants and cost sevenfold, to more than 180,000 caregivers. He is supporting expanding the program to only the most severely injured and incapacitated veterans, which would add around 40,000 new stipends.

That move, could save the department \$2.5 billion a year by the late 2020s, through reduced nursing home and medical assistance costs. Current recipients would be grandfathered in.

High School Teacher Sparks Outrage Over Disparaging Comments About Military Members



A California high school teacher is facing severe criticism after a video posted to social media recorded him making offensive comments toward a student wearing a Marine Corps sweatshirt.

Officials at the school confirmed the voice in the video is of Gregory Salcido, a teacher at El Rancho High School out of Pico Rivera, California, The Orange County Register reported on Saturday.

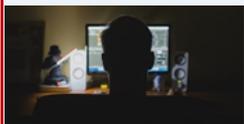
“Don’t you ever freaking bring the freaking military into this classroom,” Salcido can be heard saying in the video. “I don’t understand why we let the freaking military guys come over here and recruit you at school. We don’t have pimps come into school.”

The teacher also questions the motives students have for joining the service, claiming they’ve merely wasted 13 years of education and that they, “have no other options.”

The statements made by this teacher do not reflect the values and beliefs of the El Rancho Unified School District,” Aurora R. Villon, a member of the school board, told Marine Corps Times.

Editor’s note: This is what they have turned loose in our classrooms. A couple of marines might be able to help him see the error in his thinking. Should hang him from his heels and use him as a piñata. He was recently fired.

Former VA Employee Charged With Trying To Sell Veterans Personal Info For \$100,000



A former Department of Veterans Affairs employee has been charged with hatching a scheme to steal and then sell the personal information of veterans and VA employees, according to a Jan. 25 Justice Department statement.

An indictment unsealed on Jan. 26 revealed that Phillip Hill — a 32-year-old from Benton, Arkansas, and a former VA database manager — stands accused of aggravated identity theft, attempting to traffic social security numbers, and possessing “device-making equipment.”

Hill offered to sell the personal information of veterans, their dependents, and VA employees for \$100,000 to a confidential source, according to investigators, but that source happened to be working with law enforcement. Though Hill was fired from the VA on Dec. 6, after his termination, he “could still access the information remotely with a VA computer in his possession,” or by, you know, stealing a VA server — and that’s how he got caught.

Before Hill could make good on the alleged plan, law-enforcement officers picked him up on Dec. 17, 2017, at a secure area housing the VA data he was reportedly looking to loot. Following his arrest, officers found a VA computer at Hill’s home, in addition to “illegally possessed blank identification cards,” according to the statement.

Hill’s case is the latest in a number of would-be fraudsters outed by law enforcement and the VA Office of the Inspector General, the department’s watchdog. There’s Russel Ware, who hatched a scheme to reroute some \$66,000 in disability benefits from veterans to himself and an accomplice; a veteran who faked blindness to bilk the government out of half a million dollars; and a bribery plot involving a parking-lot operator and a VA employee tasked with overseeing the account. Plus, a couple who probably watched too much Breaking Bad and decided to start a drug ring by boosting oxy from the VA with the intent to sell it.

Lawmakers ask Park Service to stop harassing vets visiting war memorials



Lawmakers want promises from the National Park Service that veterans can take pictures at war memorials without getting harassed over permit issues.

In a letter to service officials, a pair of House Veterans’ Affairs Committee members — Rep. Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., and Mike Bost, R-Ill. — asked for clarification of parks rules and handling of past complaints from veterans groups over conflicts with parks personnel.

“We both agree that no veteran deserves to be treated with disrespect while visiting a memorial dedicated to the memory of the men and women who died for their country. These veterans are simply trying to pay their respects to our fallen heroes, their comrades, and to feel that their own service to our nation is appreciated.”

The complaints stem from last fall, during a legislative hearing before the committee’s memorial affairs panel, which Bost chairs. Veterans of Foreign Wars said they have received several reports of large groups of Honor Flight veterans being asked for event permits by national parks personnel when they gather for tours of the war monuments along the National Mall.

John Towles, deputy director of the VFW’s national legislative service, said the interactions left the veterans involved feeling disrespected and pressured into getting permits for future photo-ops. *Editor’s note: This one is hard to believe! War memorials are built to honor veterans, not charge them for taking photos of them.*

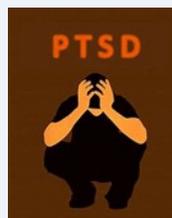
Medical device firm settles Tricare fraud allegations for \$7.6M



DJO Global agreed to pay \$7.6 million to resolve accusations that its now-defunct subsidiary Empi submitted fraudulent claims to Tricare for transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation electrodes that were not medically necessary. Empi’s sales representatives were accused of using “assumptive selling” to encourage Tricare beneficiaries to order unnecessary TENS electrodes from 2010 to 2015, the Justice Department said.

Empi sold devices for transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) therapy, in which electric current is applied to the body to relieve pain in the back, shoulders, knees and other areas. The TENS electrodes need to be replaced over time as the device is used.

Quality of VA mental health services for OEF/OIF/OND Veterans



A report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine provides information about the quality of mental health care services for Veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as assessment of access to services and barriers to utilization of services.

Analysis revealed that VA mental health services for OEF (Operation Enduring Freedom); OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom) and OND (Operation New Dawn) are superior or comparable to those in non-VA settings.

Kick out non-deployables, but first fix fitness & body standards



It's been almost two years since defense health officials began trying to rewrite the rules. Ever since then, there's been talk of killing the tape test and finding better ways to measure fitness.

But despite efforts in the right direction, we are still months away from anything concrete.

The current policy on the books dates back to 2002. Since then, there's been a significant rise in obesity. In today's force, it poses risks to readiness and raises health care costs.

At the same time, some top military officials have suggested relaxing some fitness and body fat standards to help recruit more people with non-traditional, but vital, skills like cyber.

The need to separate troops who cannot deploy or whose questionable fitness makes them a liability to their unit is certainly valid, but there will always be exceptions. The ability to retain combat-tested wounded warriors with unique skill sets, for example, is important. These men and women could and should still have a place in uniform.

Navy training overhaul faces threat



The Navy's own investigations into the collisions of the destroyers McCain and Fitzgerald identified enlisted training deficiencies resulting in sailors not possessing basic skills to operate critical equipment, a contributing factor in the fatal mishaps.

Onboard the McCain, the investigation identified that bridge watch standers lacked the basic understanding of the function of the high-tech helm.

On the Fitzgerald, sailors lacked basic understanding of the operation and capabilities of radars, leading to ineffective use.

In both cases, lack of effective training at multiple levels led to the erosion of proficiency in individual and team skills, as well as onboard qualification programs.

Started in 2001, the Revolution in Training slashed schoolhouse training for junior sailors and forced sailors to learn on the job in the fleet, resulting in overworked sailors and a gradual decline in proficiency.

It was initially touted as an overhaul of the Navy's schoolhouse-centric system, one that would transition the service to a "lifelong-learning continuum," relying on training technologies the Navy didn't have fully on hand and would need to develop.

But that training reform effort ended in failure in 2009 because its upfront costs were not sufficiently funded and the "continuum" of learning never began.

The computer-based training was never fully implemented, and improvement funds were redirected to other programs.

The Navy's recent strategic review, widely lauded as a thorough and painfully honest assessment of the Navy's many woes, said the Navy is failing to properly fund the effort, and it drew specific comparisons to the Navy's pre-

vious training reform launched in 2001 - one that ended in failure.

Passing Combat Endurance Test is no longer required for infantry officers



In a slight change to the grueling initial stage of the 13-week Infantry Officer Course, Marines will no longer be required to pass the Combat Endurance Test to move on.

The Corps has come under criticism for what some have claimed to be unnecessarily high standards to graduate from the course. To date, only one unnamed female Marine has successfully completed the entire course.

But Marine officials at Training Command contend the changes are not an effort to water down standards

Previously it was scored as a simple pass or fail, but now the test will no longer be used to weed Marines out. The officers will continue to take a Combat Evaluation Test, but their score will be just one of many components of the course considered for a student's overall evaluation.

The largest spike in attrition from the test occurred in 2015 — with roughly 6 percent, or 22 Marines washing out of the infantry course for failure to pass the Combat Endurance Test. In 2017, less than 1 percent — roughly four Marines — failed the test. According to the infantry manual, a Marine infantry officer must be able to lead a forced march of 15 kilometers with 105 lbs., or approach-march load, in under three hours.

Editor's note: HmMMM!

Changes are coming to Retiree Dental provided by TRICARE

Retirees who currently have TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) coverage need to know that the TRDP will end on Dec. 31, 2018. However, anyone who was in TRDP this year or would have been eligible for the plan will be able to choose a dental plan from among 10 dental carriers in the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). Retirees may begin reviewing program options now at www.opm.gov/fedvip. Enrollment in FEDVIP will be available during the 2018 Federal Benefits Open Season, which runs from Nov. 12 to Dec. 10. Coverage will begin on Jan. 1, 2019.

Previously, FEDVIP wasn't available to Department of Defense beneficiaries, but it will now be available to those who would have been eligible for TRDP.

Florida Council of Chapters Communiqué April, 2018 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.moaafi.org/communiqué

Editor—Polly Parks. Send articles and photos to:

Polly Parks pparks@igc.org

Battlefield acupuncture? Yes, it exists, and the military is using it to fight troops' pain



The U.S. military has added the ancient holistic therapy of acupuncture to its arsenal for fighting opioid abuse in the ranks.

The practice, which first originated in China about 8,000 years ago, provides immediate relief for acute and chronic pain, and, without the risk of addiction, can be used without any restrictions.

One of the most popular forms used in the military has been dubbed 'battlefield acupuncture,' or BFA, because it's simple to administer and easily transportable, according to Dr. Richard Niemtow, who developed BFA in 2001. With BFA, service members can continue to participate, unimpaired, in work and life.

Air Force 2019 budget will grow pilot training pipeline as service fights severe shortage



The Air Force's proposed budget for fiscal 2019 will allow it to increase the number of new pilots it trains from 1,200 each year to 1,400, Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson said Tuesday.

But the Air Force remains about 2,000 pilots short, and needs to continue working on retaining experienced pilots, Wilson said in a gaggle with reporters at the Pentagon.

That means the shortfall remains about where it was last November, when Wilson and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Dave Goldfein delivered stark warnings about the pressures the service was under, especially in the pilot ranks.

The budget also will continue funding expanded bonus programs for pilots that are already in place, Secretary Wilson said.

Editor's note: Military officials said the Marine Corps' aviators have increased their monthly flight hours per pilot, and are now flying substantially more than Air Force pilots.

The Navy's stealth destroyers to get new weapons and a new mission: killing ships



The Navy has a new vision for what its enormous high-tech destroyers will do: Killing enemy warships at extended ranges.

The Navy is asking Congress to fund a conversion of its 600-foot stealth destroyers from primarily a land attack ship to an anti-surface, offensive strike platform, according to budget documents released Feb. 12.

The service's 2019 budget request includes a request for \$89.7 million to transform its Zumwalt-class destroyers by integrating Raytheon's long-range SM-6 missile, which can dual hat as both an anti-air and anti-surface missile, as well as its Maritime Strike variant of the Tomahawk missile.

It answers the bell for U.S. Pacific Command, which has been pushing for the Navy to add longer range weapons to offset the increasing threat from Chinese long-range missile technology.

Former Naval Surface Force Pacific Commander Vice

Adm. Thomas Rowden, argued that surface ships can and should be used in an offensive capacity, not just be relegated to the defense of the aircraft carrier.

After a comprehensive review of Zumwalt class requirements, Navy decided in November 2017 to refocus the primary mission of the Zumwalt Class Destroyers from Land Attack to Offensive Surface Strike.

Trump nominates former Army captain as new top benefits official for VA



After a nearly two-and-a-half-year wait, the Veterans Benefits Administration is poised to get a new permanent leader.

President Donald Trump on Wednesday nominated Army veteran Paul Lawrence as the next under secretary of Veterans Affairs for benefits, a post that has been manned by a series of acting officials since Allison Hickey stepped down from the job in October 2015.

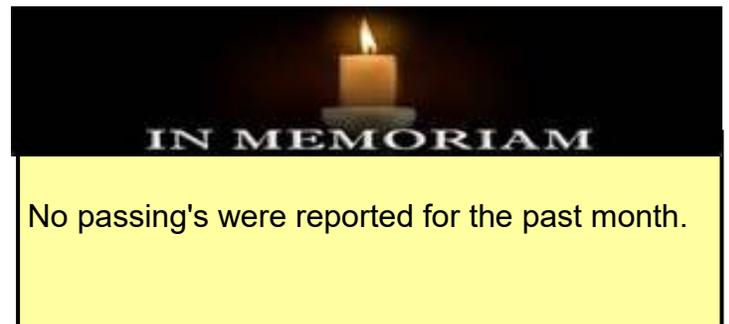
Lawrence is currently a vice president at Kaiser Associates, an international consulting firm, where he specializes in organizational efficiency. For the last three decades he has worked in a variety of accounting firms in roles focused on federal government practices and effectiveness.

He is also an Army Airborne School graduate who left the service at the rank of captain.

Lawrence's nomination was hinted at by VA Secretary David Shulkin last month during congressional testimony, when asked about high-profile positions vacant in his administration.

If confirmed, he'll take over responsibility for an agency of nearly 30,000 employees charged with handling an array of veterans benefits, including disability payouts and education funds.

The nomination comes amid scandal and turmoil at VA, following the release of a critical inspector general's report alleging multiple improprieties related to an overseas trip last July. Since then, Shulkin has been fired and replaced by Ronny L. Jackson, M.D., Trump's personal physician.



Monthly Member and Board Meetings

Luncheon: Wednesday May 2nd, 2018 11:00 am
Florida Room

Board Meeting: Wednesday May 30th, 2018 10:00 am
Trinity Baptist Church

Membership Committee Mtg. Club Renaissance
3rd Wednesday May 16th, 2018

Study shows negative effects of EHR adoption on physicians



Physicians are more likely to leave the profession or reduce their hours if they are not comfortable with using electronic health records, according to a study in Mayo Clinic Proceedings. Researchers found that although EHR use has the potential to improve quality of care and enhance

clinical coordination, it also increases physician burnout risk, reduces efficiency and increases clerical burden.

Editor's note: To say nothing of the patient's concern about being ignored while data is interred into the computer.

2018 Adult ACIP Schedule Highlights New Shingles Vaccine



The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued its 2018 Recommended Immunization Schedule for Adults Aged 19 or Older.

Following the US Food and Drug Administration's October 2017 approval of recombinant zoster vaccine (RZV; Shingrix, GlaxoSmithKline) to prevent shingles in adults age 50 years and older, the ACIP now recommends RZV as follows:

- Give two doses of RZV 2 to 6 months apart to adults age 50 years and older with competent immune systems regardless of a history of herpes zoster or receipt of the zoster vaccine live (ZVL; Zostavax, Merck & Co).
- Give two doses of RZV 2 to 6 months apart to previous recipients of ZVL at least 2 months after ZVL.
- For persons age 60 years and older, administer RZV or ZVL, with RZV the preferred option.

"RZV is an excellent new vaccine providing excellent protection," David Kim, MD, the CDC's deputy director for adult immunization, told Medscape Medical News. "It has long duration and does not wane, and because of its longer protection we incorporated the recommendation for those age 50 and older instead of just the age 60 and older group."

Report: Health care accounted for 26.7% of data breaches in Jan.



The medical and health care sector suffered 26.7% of the total data breaches in January, accounting for 31 of the 116 incidents reported during the month, according to the Identity Theft Resource Center. The business sector and government and military sector accounted for 53.4% and 7.8% of the

total breaches, respectively, while the educational and banking, credit and financial sectors each experienced 6%.

The single largest incident involved a Jason's Deli restaurant in Texas, where a RAM-scraping malware attack was launched on its point-of-sale terminals at various corporate-owned locations. Nearly 2 million records were compromised in the attack, which began June 8, 2017.

Editor's note: This is a really worrisome statistic..

Senators urge new rule to combat opioid crisis in rural areas



The Drug Enforcement Administration should authorize certain health care providers to use telemedicine tools to offer opioid addiction treatment in rural areas, according to a letter from Sens. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., Lisa Murkowski,

R-Alaska, and Dan Sullivan, R-Alaska. "The bar on telemedicine prescribing of anti-addiction medication will continue to impact rural Americans, who often live far from dedicated treatment centers and mental health professionals," the lawmakers wrote.

Under current law, doctors can't prescribe medication for an opioid addiction without an in-person medical evaluation.

"The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), however, has yet to authorize a special registration process for the prescribing of controlled substances via telemedicine," the senators wrote.

Fla. medical practice sues Allscripts over ransomware attack

A ransomware attack that affected 1,500 clients of Allscripts prompted Surfside Non-Surgical Orthopedics in Boynton Beach, Fla., to file a class-action complaint alleging that the EHR vendor's "wanton, willful, and reckless disregard" of known system deficiencies resulted in disruption of services, affecting patient care at multiple health care facilities. The complaint alleges that Allscripts violated state laws and committed unjust enrichment, negligence and breach of contract, and it calls for compensatory damages and unspecified restitution for all affected clients.

Thousands face military separation for missed immunizations, appointments

Active-duty service members who have missed medical or dental appointments, are not up-to-date on vaccinations or who received medical waivers when they joined the military face forced separation under a new policy to force out service members who are ineligible for deployment. Pregnant service members and some wounded troops will be exempt.

LUNCHEON
Wednesday May 2nd, 2018

◆Call 642-0497◆

Florida Room, Atrium
North Campus SCC

Reservations no later than 6 p.m.
Sunday, Apr 29th, 2018

Please give full names of members and guests, total number attending. Cost is \$15.00 payable at the door in cash or check. Social hour begins at 11:00 a.m. Business meeting at 11:15 followed by lunch and a speaker.

Remember, if you make a reservation and do not attend, you are expected to pay. Bring payment to next meeting or send check to:

Military Officers Association of America
Post Office Box 5693
Sun City Center, FL 33571-5693

Health Care Options at Age 65

MOAA Newsletter 3-1-2018

At age 65, it's decision time: employer health plan and/or Medicare/TRICARE known as TRICARE For Life (TFL)? At age 65, TRICARE converts to a Medicare supplement plan and TRICARE Prime and Select are not available.

TFL requires Medicare Parts A&B. Younger spouses continue under your employer health plan, stay under TRICARE Prime/Select, or stay with both until age 65.

Here are your options:

- A) You keep your employer plan while working and delay Medicare/TFL. You're allowed to delay Part B while working and covered by an employer's health plan. You temporarily lose TFL benefits until you enroll in Part B.
- B) Go with both the employer plan and Medicare/TFL. Enroll in Parts A/B Medicare, get your TFL benefits and have your employer's plan. You'll pay for all programs and you might be over insured.
- C) Go Medicare/TFL only. Check to see whether you can suspend your employer's plan before you cancel it. Enroll in Medicare Parts A/B up to three months prior to age 65.

As long as you are working and covered by your employer's plan, the employer's plan pays first, Medicare second, and TRICARE third.

Once you stop working, the payment order is: Medicare pays first, then your employer's plan, and finally TRICARE.

If you have TFL only, Medicare is the first payer, then TRICARE.

It's best not to enroll in another drug plan. Another drug plan has to pay first, and you'll be filing manual claims with TRICARE. In addition, another drug plan disqualifies you from the TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery program.

VA to state Veterans directors: We're advancing technology to improve access, services to Veterans

On Feb. 26, Scott R. Blackburn, the executive in charge of VA's Office of Information and Technology spoke to the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs about advancing technology to improve access and services to Veterans during the organization's mid-winter conference.

"We are on an ambitious journey to become the No. 1 customer service agency within the federal government," said Blackburn who was presented the 2018 NASDVA Advocate of the Year Award during the conference. "New and emerging IT solutions—such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and self-service tools—are revolutionizing the way Veterans receive care, benefits, and services. We must stay abreast of new solutions and cutting-edge technology if we want to deliver the world-class experience that our Veterans deserve."

The use of technology is vital to the department's key initiatives and vision for modernizing VA systems by better managing data, migrating information to the cloud, improving cybersecurity, digitizing business processes and decommissioning legacy systems.

"We are streamlining our approach to take advantage of new technology and industry best practices in order to rapidly improve the ways we deliver care, benefits and services to Veterans," Blackburn said. "We are embracing change and refocusing on why and how we serve Veterans."

"VA is not only my place of work, but it's where I choose to receive my health care and benefits," he said. "Throughout my adult life, I have used a combination of DoD, VA and private health care. After I sustained a service-related injury, I received care from DoD. Once I was discharged, I received private health care. Now, I get my care from VA. We want all Veterans to choose VA like I have, not because it might be their only choice, but because we are the best at what we do."

VA is making major efforts to shift its culture from information silos and bureaucratic processes to collaboration and principles-based decision on actual Veteran outcomes. These steps, while not fully implemented VA-wide have made great strides in improving the Veteran experience and winning back their trust, which stood at a low 47 percent in January 2016, but has since improved to 70 percent.



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

Study: Private sector may not be ready for new veteran patients



Lawmakers appear poised to send tens of thousands of veterans in the private sector for health care in an effort to provide quicker, more convenient appointments for an array of medical needs. But a new study casts doubt on whether private care providers can do that.

Researchers from the Rand Corp. released a new study of New York state medical providers that noted the majority of physicians working outside Veterans Affairs programs “know little about the military or veterans, are not routinely screening for conditions common among veterans, and are unfamiliar with VA.”

Though restricted to one state, the findings echo concerns among critics of the White House push to send more veterans outside the VA’s medical system to receive care: that easing access for veterans appointments may bring with it a host of other, unintended problems.

House and Senate lawmakers are currently crafting separate but similar measures which would ease access for veterans to receive health care from doctors in their communities at the federal government’s expense.

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MOAA Take Action link: http://www.moaa.org/Main_Menu/Take_Action/Take_Action.html

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PRESERVE YOUR MILITARY HISTORY .



A PROGRAM OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

This program captures through a video interview, firsthand account of Veterans who served in any branch of the US military in any capacity, from World War I through the present, and are no longer serving. Civilians who served in support of a US war effort in a professional capacity are also welcome to participate.

3rd Friday of Each Month
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
By Appointment Only

If you are a Veteran or know Veterans that would like to share their stories, schedule your appointment now.

To schedule your recorded interview at Sun Towers Retirement Community call 813-634-3347.



American Red Cross

SUN TOWERS

A RETIREMENT & REHABILITATION COMMUNITY

Independent Living • Assisted Living • Skilled Nursing • Memory Care

101 TRINITY LAKES DRIVE • SUN CITY CENTER, FL

813-634-3347

Memorial Day Ceremony **Monday May 28th**



**Formalities start at 10:00 a.m.
in the Kings Point
Veterans Theater,
North Club House,
1900 Clubhouse Dr. SCC**

A Public Tribute to Greater Sun City Center Deceased Military Veterans

*A Roll Call of Veterans who died during the past year will
be held concurrently with our traditional Living Flag Tribute.*

***Guest Speaker:
Judge Michael Scionti***

**A Musical Interlude will be presented by the
Trinity Singers**

**Colors will be presented by
the Hillsborough Co. Sheriff's Office Color Guard**

Doors will open at 9:00 a.m. Free entry. The public is invited.

Guests are requested to be seated by 9:45 A.M.

Sponsored by the Combined Military Veterans Organizations of Sun City Center