



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



**Volume 35 Number 11** **NOVEMBER 2019**



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

**Greetings**

As required by our chapter bylaws, this is the **Annual Meeting Notice**, which will be held November 6, 2019 at our regular meeting time and place. During this meeting we will hold our election of chapter officers and board members for 2020. The slate of officers and directors that was presented in previous newsletters will be present on each table as well as the minutes of the last Annual Meeting. There will be a free MOAA gift for everyone at the meeting, so I encourage everyone to attend. After the business meeting will be our guest speaker, Mr. Gary Carlson, who will be speaking on Suicide Prevention. His picture and bio are on the adjacent column.

On page 14 of this newsletter is the **Dues Notice** for 2020. You can pay your dues by check or cash at the Nov. or Dec. meetings or mail it in to the address shown in the dues notice. I sincerely thank those members, who cannot attend the meetings, but continue to support MOAA by keeping their membership current in our local chapter. Of course they receive our 5 star award-winning newsletters that goes out to all our membership. If you missed our excellent speaker at the October meeting you can read about it on page 2 in the newsletter.

Looking ahead to December will be the installation of the new officers and directors for 2020 and a guest from the Florida Council of Chapters will be present. We have probably all heard at one time or another, that TIME sure seems to pass faster the older we get. This last year has certainly passed quickly for me. Soon we'll be looking forward to the New Year.

Thank each of you for your continued support of the Sun City Center chapter of MOAA by helping to keep our chapter strong.

Benny

**NOVEMBER SPEAKER**

**Gary Carlson**



**Profession:**

- Licensed Professional Mental Health Counselor

**Current Position:**

—Suicide Prevention Coordinator, River-view Out Patient Clinic, Riverview FL, with the James A Haley VA Hospital

**Past Experience:**

- (Aug 2011-Dec 2013) Program Manager, Command and Control Training and Education Center of Excellence, Quantico, VA
- Program Manager/Plan of Instruction Manager for Theater Battle Management Core System (TBMCS) Force Level, for the United States Marine Corp (USMC).
- (Jan 2007-Aug 2011) Program Manager/Training Manager, SAIC Site Lead, Elmendorf Air Force Base, AK
  - o Program Manager for Theater Battle Management Core System (TBMCS) and Unit Level Unit Command and Control (UL-UC2), providing overall situational awareness and situation management to the Commanders Action Team or Emergency Operations Center.
- 1982-2007, United States Air Force (retired Chief Master Sergeant, Superintendent Mission Support Group)

**Current Certifications:**

- Licensed Mental Health Counselor
- National Certified Counselor
- Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor

**Education:**

- Masters of Science: Counseling and Psychology
- Bachelors of Science: Criminal Justice

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## OCTOBER LUNCHEON



**RADM Wallace Guthrie, USN (Ret)  
LTC Benny Blackshire, USA (Ret)**

### **RADM Wallace Guthrie presents history of the navy submarine to MOAA**

Wallace N. Guthrie, RADM USN (Ret) was the featured speaker at the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) monthly meeting, held in the Florida Room at the Sun City Center, North Side Atrium Building on October 2nd, 2019.

Admiral Guthrie served in the Navy for more than 38-years both on full-time active duty and in the Navy Reserve.

He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and earned advanced degrees in Management and Education at Rollins College, Winter Park, FL.

His Navy career specialty was Submarine Warfare. He served on both conventional and nuclear-powered submarines at duty stations in San Diego, CA and Holy Loch, Scotland. His last at-sea assignment was on the nuclear-powered, Fleet Ballistic Missile submarine USS Fort Meade, MD... retiring again in 1997.

ADM Guthrie provided a non-technical overview of our submarine force. His presentation traced submarine development since the Civil War and described the types and capabilities of a modern nuclear submarine. A generous use of visuals provided an insight into the role of the submarine in our national defense.

He noted that the first submarines were actually surface ships capable of submerging. In 1944 the invention of radar, the periscope and the snorkel allowed the submarine to submerge. Nuclear powered submarines

#### **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.

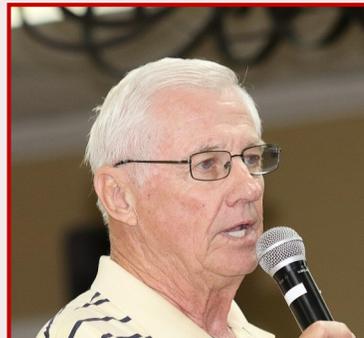
[Click here](#) and select the issue(s) you would like to have MOAA discuss with your representatives. Fill in the form and click submit. MOAA will send it to your representatives. You can add your own comments if you wish.



**Jane Keegan—Benny Blackshire**

came on the scene in 1955 and completely changed their ability to wage war.

Prior to the admiral's presentation, Jane Keegan, Executive Director of the Military Family Support Trust (MFST) was presented a certificate designating her an Honorary Member of MOAA.



**RADM WALLACE N. GUTHERIE USN (Ret)**

### **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.

- 175 Chapter members
- 118 LIFE members
- 27 PREMIUM members
- 15 BASIC members
- 11 non-MOAA members
- 4 Honorary members

New Chapter member(s) last month:

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

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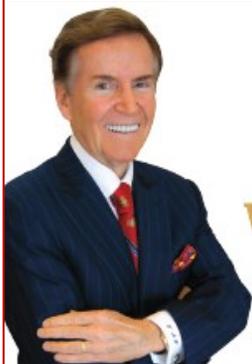
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## The Many Ways MFST and YOU Help Military Families

- Financial Assistance in critical times of need
- PAWS for Patriots through Southeastern Guide Dogs: MFST supports three blind veterans per year at a cost of \$5,000 per veteran
- Service Dogs for veterans with PTSD and other traumatic injuries



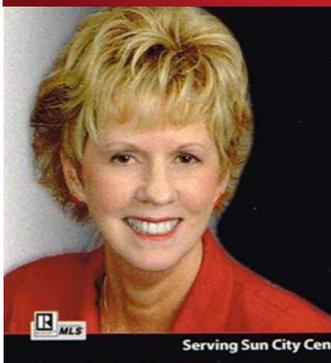
- Homeless Prevention for Women Veterans: help with rent, child care and licensing training

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

- 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

For more information, call  
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## Ranger School graduates include first woman in Air Force to earn tab, 7-foot former NBA player



A 7-foot-tall former NBA player graduated from Ranger School this week

alongside the first woman in the Air Force to complete the grueling Army small unit tactics and leadership course.

First Lt. Chelsey Hibsich, an Air Force security forces officer, graduated from the two-month course Friday in a ceremony at Fort Benning, Ga., overlooking Victory Pond. Second Lt. Marshall Plumlee, a member of Duke University's 2015 NCAA Championship basketball team and former New York Knicks player, was "baptized" later in that pond after having a Ranger tab pinned on.

"From the NBA to leading the way!" wrote Gen. David Hodne, head of the Army's Infantry School at Benning, in a tweet accompanying a photo of himself with Plumlee at the school's rappel tower. "Proud of today's Ranger School graduates including 2LT Marshall Plumlee."

Plumlee's mother, who played college basketball at Purdue, pinned his tab on him. On Instagram, he thanked her as his biggest supporter in his transition "going from the NBA to the active duty Army and now Ranger School."

## Top Navy SEAL admiral fires entire leadership team of SEAL Team 7



The top admiral in charge of Naval Special Warfare has fired the entire leadership team of SEAL Team 7 over a "breakdown of good order and discipline," a spokeswoman for Naval Special Warfare Command told Task & Purpose on Friday.

Cmdr. Edward Mason, the commanding officer of ST7; Lt. Cmdr. Luke Im, the executive officer; and Command Master Chief Hugh Spangler were all relieved of their leadership posts on Friday, said Cmdr. Tamara Lawrence.

The "two subordinate units" are likely references to ST7 Alpha and Foxtrot Platoon, though Lawrence declined to name them when asked by Task & Purpose.

SEAL Team 7 Alpha Platoon made national news after SEAL Chief Eddie Gallagher was accused of war crimes during a 2017 deployment to Mosul, Iraq. Despite his acquittal on murder charges in early July, his court-martial revealed that members of the platoon had constructed their own rooftop bar in Iraq and engaged in other alleged misconduct on deployment.

More recently, the entirety of SEAL Team 7 Foxtrot Platoon was pulled out of Iraq last month amid allegations of a boozy Fourth of July party and an allegation of sexual assault.

## Sun City Center MOAA Website

Don't forget to visit our new **5-star website**. The link to the website is: <http://moaafi.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](mailto:jghaney1@gmail.com) Click here for [SCC MOAA Website](#)

## 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](mailto:dkepley@tampabay.rr.com) 813-642-0801



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## LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

**Frank Kepley, CAPT USN (Ret)**

### MOAA Board Member: Medical Cuts Would Break Promise to Military Families



Slashing the military's medical force would dismantle military medicine and jeopardize force readiness, according to an opinion piece authored by a MOAA board member in the Capital Gazette this month.

"When individuals agree to serve in the military, there is a promise made to provide medical for them and their families," writes Rear Adm. Tom Jurkowsky, USN (Ret). "However, we see this commitment, and others, being nibbled at."

About 18,000 billets could be eliminated through cuts made to the Defense Department's budget. **TAKE ACTION:** [Tell Your Representative Not to Dismantle Military Medicine](#)

MOAA has sought intervention from Congress to delay the proposed cuts until a thorough review of military medical manpower requirements could be conducted. The House version of the National Defense Authorization Act would provide such a provision, and MOAA is calling on the Senate to include the same. *See below article.*

### Services Turn Focus to Warfighters as DHA Takes Over Military Hospitals



The head of the Defense Health Agency and the services' surgeons general outlined their approaches to realigning the military health system, including changes that will have civilians providing the majority of care to beneficiaries and a slimmed-down uniform staff focusing primarily on operational medicine.

Testifying before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, Vice Adm. Raquel Bono, director of the Defense Health Agency, said that after assessing the operational medical needs of the military forces, the Defense Department will reduce uniformed medical positions and explore civilian options for providing care for 8 million non-military beneficiaries.

The exact number of uniformed jobs that will be eliminated was not shared, but reports say between 15,000 and 17,000 positions, including doctors, dentists, nurses, technicians, medics and corpsmen, are on the chopping block.

Bono said the DHA, which also manages the Tricare program, is weighing options for replacing that care, including hiring civilians, using contract staff, entering into "military-civilian partnerships" or using existing Tricare networks.

*Editor's Note:* Again [Click here](#) to voice your opposition.

### Trump Administration cancels student debt for 25,000 disabled veterans

President Trump visited Louisville, Kentucky, to attend the American Veterans 75th National Convention. Before a crowd of thousands of veterans, the President announced new executive action that will ensure 25,000 of America's wounded warriors receive the education benefits they've rightfully earned.

The newly signed Presidential Memorandum will "eliminate every penny of federal student loan debt owed by American veterans who are completely and permanently disabled," President Trump said.

Of the some 50,000 disabled veterans qualified to have these loans discharged, only about half have received their benefit. Now, the burdensome process to obtain this hard-earned assistance will be simplified, setting the stage to wipe out an average of \$30,000 in debt for the 25,000 remaining eligible veterans.

### Same-Day Healthcare Services And Other Options At VA Facilities

When Veterans request care right away, VA will assess the level of urgency and respond with any of the following steps: providing an in-person visit, providing a telehealth or video care visit, responding and sharing information by secure email, or scheduling a future appointment. **\*For more information, other options for care, and how wait times are calculated click here.**

### Military Coalition's NDAA Priorities Include Ending Widows Tax, Stopping Medical Billet Cuts

From MOAA Newsletter



A letter sent to key legislators by a group of more than 30 military and veterans organizations stressed the importance of repealing the "widows tax" and protecting military medicine from planned staff cuts – issues at the heart of

MOAA's Summer Storm advocacy efforts – among priorities for this year's defense bill.

**[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmaker to Support These Defense Bill Provisions](#)]**

**[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmaker to End the Widows Tax](#)]**

**[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmaker to Protect Military Medicine](#)]**

The letter also addressed another kind of uncertainty facing servicemembers, retirees, and their families: One that comes as 20% of existing military medical billets face potential elimination. Such a move "presents significant risk to service member medical readiness, uniformed medical provider readiness, beneficiary care, and the military medical education training pipeline," per the letter.

The coalition also expressed disappointment that neither the House nor the Senate version of the NDAA included expansion of concurrent receipt, which has been among MOAA's [top legislative priorities](#) Learn more about concurrent receipt [here](#)

## Plans for a new base closing round may be running out of time: Report



The next few months could decide whether the Defense Department gets another base closing round in the next decade, according to a new analysis from a conservative think tank warning military officials not to dismiss the potential looming impact on budgets and readiness.

Officials from the Heritage Foundation, whose policy priorities have helped influence President Donald Trump's administration, have in the past supported a new base closing round to cut back on excess military infrastructure and more efficiently spend annual defense funding.

In the analysis released this week, author Frederico Bartels — policy analyst for defense budgeting at the foundation — said a Pentagon report on the issue being compiled now represents “the best chance for the Department of Defense to make the case for a new round of BRAC” in years, and perhaps the last realistic chance to advance the idea for the near future.

The military convened six base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commissions between 1988 and 2005, shutting down dozens of military installations and turning over that land to state and local municipalities.

The process has always been fraught with political turmoil, as lawmakers protest any loss of jobs, military personnel and resulting economic benefits in their districts. But the 2005 BRAC round was particularly controversial, as defense officials consolidated numerous service locations into joint bases and massively rearranged force structure in an attempt to modernize the military.

## Should VA move ahead with a BRAC-style commission to shutter some hospitals?



A pair of senators want to end the Department of Veterans Affairs facility closing commission before it even gets started.

Sens. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., and Mike Rounds, R-S.D., introduced legislation to cancel the mandated VA Asset and Infrastructure Review scheduled for 2022. The pair argued the idea — based on the military's controversial base closing process — could be detrimental to rural veterans' medical options.

“Although I am very supportive of reducing waste and other inefficiencies in the VA system, I am against bureaucrats in Washington cutting vital health care access to veterans in rural areas,” Manchin said in a statement.

“At a time when the VA is investing heavily in community care through their new access standards, we have to be especially sure that our existing infrastructure needs are met in rural states like West Virginia.”

VA officials have said they have nearly 1,000 non-vacant but underused facilities spread across the country, creating a significant drain on department resources. Closing many of them would require an act of Congress.

In February, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie suggested lawmakers consider moving up the timeline for the commission. The two senators — both members of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee — want it dumped instead.

## VA opens launch pad for health care apps

The Department of Veterans Affairs introduced a central portal called VA Launchpad where veterans and their caregivers can access a variety of apps using a single, secure login. The apps enable veterans to review and share their electronic health records, schedule appointments, get prescriptions refilled, communicate with VA health care providers and perform other tasks.

The Launchpad app, which can be used on phones and tablets, may be downloaded to a device from the Apple App Store and Google Play—and, is available for iOS version 11 or higher and Android version 4.0 or higher.

Additional information about Launchpad, including a User Manual and Quick Start Guide, can be found [here](#).

## Millions more will soon be allowed to shop on military bases. But some veterans wonder how they'll get access.



As defense officials get ready for 3 million more people who will be able to shop at military stores on base, some veterans are wondering whether they'll be able to use their new benefits.

Some veterans have contacted Military Times to say that they are eligible for the new benefit that takes effect Jan. 1, but are concerned they won't have access to the stores. That's because they don't have the specific credential required — the Veteran Health Identification Card, or VHIC, issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Based on responses to Military Times queries, there are no answers yet for these veterans. Information was not immediately available about how many veterans could be affected.

Under a 2018 law, Purple Heart recipients; former prisoners of war; veterans with a service-connected disability from 0 to 90 percent as documented by the Department of Veterans Affairs; and certain primary veteran caregivers will be newly eligible to shop at commissaries and exchanges. It applies to all military bases, including Coast Guard.

The departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense and Homeland Security have been working together for months on plans for how the program will be implemented. A crucial part of that is the credential required to get onto the base and to shop at the stores, because most veterans who aren't retired don't have access to installations.

This newly eligible population will also be able to use certain morale, welfare and recreational, or MWR, facilities such as golf courses, movie theaters, clubs and certain other programs and facilities that are self-sufficient, generating enough revenue through fees and/or sales to pay their operating costs.

### 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.**

## New report blames Big Navy for fatal collision



Long before the guided-missile destroyer John S. McCain collided with a commercial vessel near Singapore on Aug. 21, 2017, the Navy had failed a crew that was overworked, poorly trained and exhausted, a new report reveals.

Released, the investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board is the latest review into why 10 sailors on the board the warship died after it veered into the path of the Liberian-flagged tanker MC Alnic.

"The Navy failed to provide effective oversight of the John S. McCain in the areas of bridge operating procedures, crew training, and fatigue mitigation," the report states.

"The probable cause of the collision between the destroyer John S. McCain and the tanker Alnic MC was a lack of effective operational oversight of the destroyer by the US Navy, which resulted in insufficient training and inadequate bridge operating procedures."

NTSB found many on the bridge didn't even realize a collision was imminent until moments before the Alnic struck.

In a written statement, Navy officials said the sea service "is grateful for NTSB's efforts to improve maritime safety."

Some crew members later conceded that even if they had processed the information correctly, they "were unfamiliar with or had an incorrect understanding of the steering system."

*Editor's Note: Well, I guess that's that. "over worked, poorly trained and exhausted."*

## Hackers just found serious vulnerabilities in F-15 fighter jet



In a Cosmopolitan hotel suite 16 stories above the Def Con cybersecurity conference, a team of highly vetted hackers tried to sabotage a vital flight system for a U.S. military fighter jet. And they succeeded.

It was the first-time outside researchers were allowed physical access to the critical F-15 system to search for weaknesses. And after two long days, the seven hackers found a mother lode of vulnerabilities that — if exploited in real life — could have completely shut down the Trusted Aircraft Information Download Station, which collects reams of data from video cameras and sensors while the jet is in flight.

"They were able to get back in through the back doors they already knew were open," Will Roper, the Air Force's top acquisition official, said in an exclusive briefing of the results.

They even found bugs that the Air Force had tried but failed to fix after the same group of hackers performed similar tests in November without actually touching the device.

The hackers lobbed a variety of attacks — including in-

jecting the system with malware and even going at it with pliers and screwdrivers.

The Air Force is convinced that unless it allows America's best hackers to search out all the digital vulnerabilities in its planes and weapons systems, then the best hackers from adversaries such as Russia, Iran and North Korea will find and exploit those vulnerabilities first.

## New Hampshire veterans seek to intervene in POW Bible lawsuit

CONCORD, N.H. (Tribune News Service) — The veterans group that sponsors the oldest continuing POW-MIA vigil in the country is asking a federal court to allow it to intervene in a case that centers on whether a former POW's Bible can be featured in a lobby display at the Manchester VA hospital.

The Northeast POW/MIA Network is seeking intervenor status in the case, filed by a veteran against the V.A. Medical Center in US District Court, that claims the presence of the Bible in the display is unconstitutional.

Last year, New Hampshire members of the network sought and received permission to place a "Missing Man Table" in the lobby of the VA Medical Center in Manchester. Such displays are meant as a remembrance of service members who were POWs or MIAs.

The Manchester display includes a Bible donated by Herman "Herk" Streitburger, a Bedford man who served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War II and was captured and held as a German POW before managing to escape. Streitburger, who is now 100 years old, was featured in a recent New Hampshire Sunday News article.

But the display soon drew controversy. The Military Religious Freedom Foundation, based in New Mexico, filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of veteran James Chamberlain, the named plaintiff, claiming the Bible's display violates the Constitution.

Texas-based First Liberty Institute is representing the Northeast POW/MIA Network in its motion to intervene in the case. In court papers filed Thursday, lawyers described the tradition of the Missing Man Table as dating to the Vietnam War and noted such displays have become permanent features at public forums across the nation, including at a public library in Athol, Mass., and a VA hospital in Wilmington, Del.

## Congressman: Space Command's initial home will be Colorado



A Colorado congressman says the initial headquarters for the Pentagon's new Space Command will be in his home state.

Republican Rep. Doug Lamborn said the command will officially start operations at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs next month. Lamborn says he hopes the Pentagon will chose Peterson for the command's permanent headquarters.

President Donald Trump formally launched Space Command in December. It's designed to improve the organization of the military's vast space operations amid growing concerns that China and Russia are working on ways to disrupt or destroy U.S. satellites.

## Meet the first female Marine assigned to fly the F-35C



Erie, Pennsylvania native 1st Lt. Catherine Stark earned her wings Friday at a ceremony in Kingsville, Texas, and in doing so became the first female Marine to be assigned to the U.S. Navy's F-35C

fleet replacement squadron.

The F-35 Lightning II, designed and built by Lockheed Martin, is a fifth-generation fighter designed to replace the F-18 in the Navy and Marine Corps and the F-22 in the U.S. Air Force. Of the three models, the F-35C is designed specifically to take off and land on aircraft carriers.

"Up until now they were only taking F-18 pilots that were already out in the fleet, someone with a lot of experience, and they were sending them back to school for six months and then transitioning them to the F-35," she said Tuesday during a telephone interview. "But recently, they've been picking people right out of flight school (for the F-35). That's been the special thing. Up until now, people fresh out of flight school with no fleet experience — like myself; I haven't been to a squadron yet because I just finished flight school — we didn't have the opportunity to select the F-35."

## Stolen Valor Will Now Get You Up To A Year In The Slammer, And Other Major UCMJ Changes That Took Effect This Year



Domestic violence, recruiters having sex with recruits and committing adultery with someone of the same sex are now crimes in the military.

Congress passed its most sweeping reforms to the Uniform Code of Military Justice in decades in 2016, but it didn't take effect until Jan. 1 of this year. Other changes to the military process and offenses, such as domestic violence, were included in the recently passed 2019 National Defense Authorization Act.

Patricia Babb, a spokeswoman for the Office of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy, said she is unaware of anyone who has already been charged with any new crimes so far this year because they're so new. She said the Navy has spent a lot of time educating its attorneys and other officers who can administer punishment about the updates. All new recruits also are taught about the UCMJ once they enter the service. [Click here](#) for a look at some of the new laws and how the military says they differ from previous practices.

## This is where the Coast Guard Museum will be built



NEW LONDON, Conn. — Construction of the planned National Coast Guard Museum is expected to begin early next year in New London.

Members of the museum's board tell The Day of New London that a request for proposals for the first phase of construction is expected to go

out on Sept. 1.

The final design, which was approved earlier this year by the board calls for an 80,000-square-foot, five-story, interactive, environmentally friendly museum on the city's waterfront.

Plans call for the Coast Guard's tall ship, the Barque Eagle, to be docked near the museum at a renovated City Pier when the ship is in New London.

## SOCOM boss calls for another ethics review



After a rough couple of months for special operations scandals in the news, the head of U.S. Special Operations Command is opening up a review into the entire command's culture and ethics, according to a memo released Monday.

The review began immediately and will conclude some time in the fall, Army Gen. Richard Clarke wrote.

"Recent incidents have called our ethics and culture into question and threaten the trust placed in us," he said.

Most recently, Naval Special Warfare has been under scrutiny, as an entire SEAL Team 7 platoon was sent home from Iraq in July after a debaucherously July 4. That same month, a Navy Times report revealed that SEAL Team 10 had been investigated for cocaine use and fraudulent urinalyses.

And though he was acquitted of murder charges, Chief Special Warfare Operator Eddie Gallagher was convicted in July of posing for a photo with the corpse of an ISIS fighter and stripped of his trident.

"Some of our subordinate formations have failed to maintain good order and discipline and as a result and for good reason, our NSW culture is being questioned," Rear Adm. Collin Green, the Navy's top SEAL, wrote in a July 25 letter to his command. "I don't know yet if we have a culture problem, I do know that we have a good order and discipline problem that must be addressed immediately."

Clarke is the second SOCOM chief to call his command's ethics and professionalism into question in less than a year.

## First woman on the moon could be a soldier



Lt. Col. Anne McClain is one of 12 female astronauts who could become the first woman on the moon by 2024, a NASA list shows. She's also the only one of the 12 who's in the Army.

After President Donald Trump directed NASA in late 2017 to return to the moon, the space agency said it would make putting the first woman on the lunar surface one of its key objectives.

But the Army, which most people associate with earth-bound, ground warfare rather than space travel, may appear to be an unusual pool from which to draw astronauts.

McClain, who joined NASA in 2013, is nevertheless a seasoned astronaut, and has 2,000 flight hours in 20 different aircraft under her belt, including the Black Hawk helicopter and C-12 Huron transport plane.

Experience in the Army has taught her to work in austere environments with few amenities, and the value of teamwork, leaving her well-suited for space missions.

## Navy to Sailors: Stay Away From CBD



CBD may be everywhere, but the Navy is warning sailors and Marines not to indulge.

The 2018 Farm Bill loosened restrictions on hemp cultivation that have led to the proliferation of cannabidiol-based products, which some advocates claim relieve a host of ailments, including chronic pain, anxiety, and inflammation, as well as helping people sleep.

However, those claims about over-the-counter CBD products have yet to be proven. Those products are mostly not regulated or tested by the Food and Drug Administration, the Navy said in a service-wide message earlier this week. As a result, ingredients may be unknown and some products could contain higher concentrations of THC, or tetrahydrocannabinol, which produces a high.

And that can lead to positive urinalysis. "It can be impossible to determine where a CBD or hemp product was manufactured and what level of THC it may contain," the Navy said in a news release. "Even trace amounts of THC can accumulate in the body and be detected in a urinalysis screening."

Hemp plants contain CBD and THC. In order to be considered hemp, the plant may contain no more than 0.3% THC.

Navy policy restricting the use of hemp and marijuana products has not changed, but in light of recent federal legislation and a patchwork of state laws that have legalized various uses for civilians, the service is reminding personnel of its zero-tolerance, Chief of Naval Personnel spokesman Lt. j.g. Stuart Phillips said.

## Stem Cell Clinics: Cutting-Edge Treatments or Cash Grab?



Stem cells are cells with the potential to differentiate into a variety of other cells or tissues. And to date, the FDA has approved their use in a number of hematologic malignancies and hematologic genetic conditions—and that's it.

Stem cells are not FDA-approved for joint pain, cataracts, depression, autism, dementia, or heart disease, and yet hundreds of stem cell clinics around the country are offering them for these very conditions, as shown in a study appearing in Stem Cell Reports, which documented the activities of 169 stem cell businesses in the United States.

These for-profit companies charge patients thousands of dollars for unproven treatments. Patients bear the brunt of the costs, as most insurance companies won't cover the therapies.

Up until recently, this was basically unregulated, though the FDA has started to change that.

The Stem Cell Reports study characterized 169 stem cell clinics in the Southwestern United States to systematically measure just what they are selling and who is running them.

Who's running these places? The majority are run by MDs, though there is a smattering of other individuals who provide the therapy.

In many of the clinics the training of the provider doesn't

match up with the services offered. It's one thing for an orthopedic surgeon to offer stem cell injections into arthritic knees, but the authors of the above noted study documented clinics run by cosmetic surgeons offering treatment for lung disease and autism.

Are these clinicians providing cutting-edge treatments or is it a shameless cash grab? Maybe both?

These treatments are not entirely benign. In 2017, several patients went blind after their own adipose-derived stem cells were injected into their eyes.

Infection remains a risk as well, as the cells are removed from the body, processed, and reinjected.

That's not to say stem cell therapies are modern-day snake oil. They really may work. But we don't know if they work and we don't fully understand the risks.

*Editor's Note: There are many anecdotal claims that they do work, but until the FDA approves a broader use than is noted above, it is a buyer beware treatment.*

## Prescribing older generics could've saved Medicare \$17.7B, study finds



Between 2011 and 2017, Medicare could have saved \$17.7 billion if generic versions of older medicines were prescribed instead of updated brand-name drugs launched by drugmakers to replace their older off-patent pills, according to a new study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine.

In one instance, researchers found that between 2011 and 2017 Medicare spent \$13.4 billion on Nexium, an acid reflux pill manufactured by AstraZeneca. However, Medicare could have saved \$12.7 billion if physicians instead prescribed a generic version of AstraZeneca's older acid reflux pill called Prilosec. The drugmaker launched Nexium after the patent expired on Prilosec. While they are chemically similar drugs, Nexium is considered a new compound protected by patent.

As patents expire on older medicines, drugmakers often use this tactic known as chiral switching to preserve sales of a drug.

*Editor's Note: Now you know why Tricare uses generic drugs. Another drug rip-off.*

**LUNCHEON**  
**Wednesday Nov. 6th, 2019**

**◆Call 642-0497◆**

**Florida Room, Atrium**  
**North Campus SCC**

**Reservations no later than 6 p.m.**  
**Sunday, 3rd, 2019**

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

## 'We are dropping like flies': Ex-fighter pilots push for earlier cancer screening



Former Air Force and Navy fighter pilots are calling on the military to begin cancer screenings for aviators as young as 30 because of an increase in deaths from the disease that they suspect may be tied to radiation emitted in the cockpit.

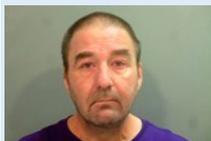
"We are dropping like flies in our 50s from aggressive cancers," said retired Air Force Col. Eric Nelson, a former F-15E Strike Eagle weapons officer. He cited prostate and esophageal cancers, lymphoma, and glioblastomas that have struck fellow pilots he knew, commanded or flew with.

Last month McClatchy reported on a new Air Force study that reviewed the risk for prostate cancers among its fighter pilots and new Veterans Health Administration data showing that the rate of reported cases of prostate cancers per year among veterans using the VA health care system across all services has risen almost 16% since fiscal year 2000.

The Air Force study also looked at cockpit exposure, finding that "pilots have greater environmental exposure to ultraviolet and ionizing radiation ... (fighter pilots) have unique intra-cockpit exposures to non-ionizing radiation."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that exposure to some types of radiation can cause cancer, however to date there has been no link established between the specific radiation emitted from radars on these advanced jets and the illnesses pilots are now seeing.

## Former VA pathologist charged with deaths of three veterans



A former VA pathologist has been charged with the deaths of three veterans and a scheme to cover up years of drug and alcohol use on the job that caused him to misread thousands of fluid and tissue samples of ill patients.

Robert Morris Levy was indicted on three counts of involuntary manslaughter and 28 counts of mail fraud, wire fraud and false statements to law enforcement officials. The Department of Veterans Affairs has told members of Congress and investigators that Levy's misdiagnoses, which amounted to more than 3,000 cases, were responsible for at least 15 deaths and the inappropriate treatment of many other patients.

His addiction and attempts to cover it up with lies and dangerous practices - even after the VA paid for a lengthy inpatient treatment program led to deaths and other life-threatening trauma for veterans, they said.

VA Inspector General Michael Missal, whose office in 2018 began an investigation of Levy's actions and of agency missteps in overseeing and addressing his behavior, said Levy betrayed veterans' most basic trust.

Levy routinely took a substance called 2-methyl-2-butanol (known as 2M2B) to mask the alcohol level in his blood. The substance, not approved for individual use, cannot be detected in routine tests for drugs and alcohol. And it can be lethal if too much is taken, Kees said.

Levy, an Air Force veteran whose VA salary was

\$225,000 a year, was fired from the VA last year.

*Editor's Note: I spent 26 years in naval hospitals and 15 years in VA hospitals never encountered anything to match this case.*

## Man gets his first haircut in 15 years when he enlists in the Army



Before he can ship out, he needed to get a shape up haircut.

Reynaldo Arroyo, 23, received his first haircut in 15 years when he enlisted in the Army, according to a Facebook video from the Salt Lake City Army

Recruiting Battalion.

Arroyo, who enlisted in Missoula, Montana, as an infantryman, said he was donating his hair to Locks of Love, a nonprofit organization that makes wigs for children with illnesses that cause hair loss.

"Hopefully some little girl's gonna get it," he said.

*Editor's Note: Atta boy!*

## Trump proclaims controversial new drug has 'incredible' potential to prevent veteran suicide

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie announced after its approval that the agency would be making Spravato available for veterans with depression who were resistant to other types of treatment. Spravato is the brand name for esketamine, a variation of ketamine.

Veterans would use the nasal spray under supervision from VA doctors, who would monitor for adverse outcomes for at least two hours after receiving the dose, the agency said at the time. Because of the potential for dissociation and misuse, Spravato would not be dispensed to veterans to take home.

Spravato was fast-tracked through the FDA, prompting concern from some experts and lawmakers. The Guardian reported in June that the VA also rushed its use of the drug, prompted by Trump's enthusiasm for it.

Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., the chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, said at the time that he was "incredibly alarmed" Spravato was rushed through the review process.

*Editor's note: Rep. Takano's concern is well founded. Ketamine is one of the drugs that has been abused and has resulted in a number of deaths.*

## He received a Medal of Honor, 2 Silver Stars, 6 Bronze Stars, and 8 Purple Hearts in route to 115 confirmed kills

Below is a link to a remarkable MOH winner's combat achievements. Absolutely unbelievable. Beats any MOH achievements I have ever read about.

Enjoy, or better yet, marvel. [Click Here](#)

## SECNAV orders comprehensive review of Navy, Marine Corps JAGs



Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer expanded an ongoing Navy probe into its Judge Advocate General Corps to include Marine JAGs.

SECNAV's order came 20 days after then-CNO Adm. John Richardson directed Vice Chief of Naval Operations Bob Burke to investigate "the leadership and performance" of the Navy's JAGs.

Richardson had been mulling the move since the July 2 verdict in the war crimes court-martial trial of Special Warfare Operator Chief Edward "Eddie" Gallagher, a SEAL who had been accused of murdering an Islamic State prisoner of war in Iraq in 2017, obstructing justice and other crimes.

But a panel of his peers mostly composed of combat-tested Marines tossed all the specifications except for a minor charge of posing with the dead detainee's body, something Gallagher never denied doing.

At the heart of the scandal was a warrantless surveillance program featuring Czaplak that was cooked up with Naval Criminal Investigative Service agents to track emails sent by defense attorneys and Navy Times, allegedly to uncover leaks after questions emerged that military officials were hiding evidence that could clear Gallagher.

Prosecutors and NCIS agents were accused of manipulating witness statements; using immunity grants and a bogus "target letter" in a crude attempt to keep pro-Gallagher witnesses from testifying; illegally leaking documents to the media to taint the military jury pool; and then trying to cover it all up when they got caught.

Richardson retired and was relieved by Adm. Michael M. Gilday, who now will determine whether Gallagher gets busted down to the lowest pay grade, remains a chief or is demoted to petty officer first class.

## Congress wants more answers about VA campus suicides



In response to the rising number of suicides in public places at Veterans Affairs medical facilities, lawmakers are considering legislation to mandate the department better track not only those deaths but also all suicide attempts on VA properties in an effort to better prevent them.

On Thursday Rep. Max Rose, D-N.Y., an Army veteran who served in Afghanistan, announced plans for a new bill mandating VA officials provide Congress with the medical, financial and housing situation of any veteran who dies by suicide at a department facility, giving lawmakers more insight into what may have preceded the death.

In the last 18 months, at least 23 veterans have died by suicide at VA medical centers. The most recent was in Austin, Texas, earlier this month, when a veteran shot himself in front of a crowd of witnesses in the lobby of a department outpatient clinic.

Two other veterans died at separate VA locations in Georgia earlier in the month. Last December, a retired Marine colonel shot himself in the parking lot at the Bay Pines Veterans Affairs complex, the fifth time since 2013 a veteran suicide has occurred there.

According to department statistics, the number of in-hospital suicides has dropped dramatically in recent years, from more than four per 100,000 admissions to less than one. In addition, VA health officials have said they have interrupted at least 240 suicide attempts on VA campuses in the last two years.

## Is DoD moving too quickly to merge commissaries and exchanges?



Deputy Secretary of Defense David L. Norquist has given the green light to consolidation of military commissaries and exchanges — pending changes in law that would allow that consolidation.

"The department's intent is to improve community services for our service members and families, improve support to commanders, and fulfill its fiduciary responsibility" concerning taxpayer dollars and morale, welfare and recreation funds, stated Norquist.

But advocates, long concerned that this consolidation may pose a threat to the stores' future, are concerned that DoD is moving too quickly.

"This is a bold document," said Kelly Hruska, government relations director for the National Military Family Association. "We are concerned that DoD is moving forward much too quickly with their recommendations. We don't think they're considering the risks to the defense resale system as a whole."

A provision in the House version of the bill would delay any military store consolidation until the Government Accountability Office has conducted a review of DoD's business case analysis. That GAO report would include information such as implications for the financial viability of the military exchanges and commissaries if they are consolidated; and the ability of exchanges and commissaries to provide earnings to support morale, welfare and recreation programs under a consolidated model.

"I have more questions than I have answers," said Hruska. "We think DoD should hold off on consolidation until a GAO study is complete."

## 'Terribly moving': USS Arizona Memorial reopens



A dock dedication and a blessing ceremony were held aboard the USS Arizona Memorial on Saturday, Aug. 31, 2019. The USS Arizona Memorial has been closed for 14 months due to dock repairs and renovations.

[Click Here](#) for USS Arizona article

## Sen. Johnny Isakson, chairman of veterans' affairs committee, to resign at end of 2019



Sen. Johnny Isakson, a Republican from Georgia and chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, announced Wednesday that he will resign at the end of the year because of ongoing health problems.

Isakson's resignation will take effect Dec. 31.

The longtime senator, 74, was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2013. He was hospitalized in July after he fell in his Washington apartment, suffering four fractured ribs and a torn rotator cuff. On Monday, he underwent surgery in Marietta, Ga., to remove a carcinoma from one of his kidneys, according to a statement from his office.

Isakson was first elected to the Senate in 2004 and was re-elected to a third term in 2016. He took over the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee in 2015, succeeding Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt.

During that time, he's helped garner bipartisan support for several pieces of Department of Veterans Affairs reform legislation, including the VA Mission Act, which expands the number of veterans who are eligible to receive private-sector health care.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., described Isakson as the "gold standard" for a U.S. senator.

*Editor's Note: a big loss for veterans.*

## Ex-Officer: Army I Joined in Obama's 1st Term Was Nothing Like Army I Left at End of His 2nd Term



Afghanistan War veteran James Hasson said that the previous administration lowered the standards in military schools in order to allow more female soldiers to be eligible.

Hasson said in his newly published book that "After the first female soldiers graduated from Army Ranger school, a significant number of whistleblowers contacted Congressman Steve Russell

from the House Armed Services Committee and told him that they had been pressured to pass the first candidates and that standards hadn't been followed.

DoD stonewalled Russell for months, refused to meet with him, and then told him that the documents that he had been requesting had mostly been shredded."

Hasson was able to obtain some of the documents and they proved the whistleblowers had been telling the truth about Ranger school standards being lowered.

Currently, the military seems to have moved away from complete surrender to political correctness.

The DoD announced in March it would no longer allow those seeking to transition to the opposite gender (or those who have already done so) to enlist. Additionally, those currently serving in the military will be barred from taking hormones or getting transition surgery, the Military Times reported.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals allowed the Pentagon's policy change to stand in June.

Hasson has authored a new book, "Stand Down: How Social Justice Warriors Are Sabotaging America's Military," detailing his concerns.

*Editor's Note: The administration should make it a top priority to remove every politically correct rule adopted that in any way impedes the military's ability to wage and win wars.*

## Opening Date Announced for National Museum of the U.S. Army



The National Museum of the United States Army, the first museum dedicated to the entirety of the Army's 244-year history, will open its doors June 4, 2020, according to an Aug. 28 Army news

release.

The museum, under construction since 2016 near the gates of Fort Belvoir, Va., will be free to the public, though visitors will need timed-entry tickets to manage crowds. Learn more about the process, and sign up to receive an update when tickets become available, [here](#)

The museum will feature artifacts, documents, images, and selections from the Army Art Collection that tell the Army story in a 185,000-square-foot building. The museum will emphasize the theme of "service and sacrifice" throughout its exhibits.

The three main attractions will be the Soldiers' Stories Gallery, Army and Society Gallery, and Fighting for the Nation Gallery. In one gallery, a series of chronological exhibits will show visitors what it means to be a soldier during times of war and peace.

## SecDef Says He'll Work with VA on Veterans' Environmental Health Concerns



In his first press conference as defense secretary, Mark Esper said Aug. 28 he wants to work with Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie to ensure that service members who are ill as a result of military environmental exposures get the support and care they

need.

Responding to a question on the health risks, including various cancers, of military environmental exposures, Esper said the VA "has the lead" on determining whether an illness is presumed to be related to military service — a decision that accelerates benefits awards.

But, he added, as secretary, he wants to "make sure [DoD] is doing everything we can to assist soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines as they transition out of service."

## Florida Council of Chapters Communiqué

### October 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.moaafi.org/communiqué](http://www.moaafi.org/communiqué)

Editor—Polly Parks. Send articles and photos to:

Polly Parks [pparks@igc.org](mailto:pparks@igc.org)

**The Following are *appointed* Chapter positions which were not on the *elected* Officers slate that was presented to the membership in October**

Luncheon Registrar - Jane Foppe (replaces Doris Glass)  
(Will have a new number to call for reservations starting Jan. 2020)

Luncheon Check in - Jane Foppe & Janet Blackshire

JROTC coordinator - Jim Warchol

50/50 RAFFLE - Jerry Brockmeier

Chaplain - Sam Roer also Personal Affairs Officer

1st VP will be the coordinator for speakers

2nd VP will be the membership chair

Director Frank Kepley also Legislative Affairs, Public Affairs, Newsletter editor/publisher and Web Master

Director Jane Foppe also Surviving Spouse Coordinator

**Postal Service started selling new Purple Heart stamps on Oct. 4**



The U.S. Postal Service announced that a new Purple Heart Medal Forever stamp was dedicated and went on sale nationwide Oct. 4.

According to the Military Order of the Purple Heart, an organization for combat-wounded veterans, the medal is "the oldest military decoration in the world in present use and the first award made available to a common soldier."

The Purple Heart Medal 2019 stamp is being issued as a Forever stamp in self-adhesive sheets of 20. Customers may purchase stamps and other philatelic products through The Postal Store at [usps.com/shop](https://usps.com/shop), by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724), by mail through USA Philatelic or at Post Office locations nationwide.

**No passing's reported last month**

**Monthly Member and Board Meetings**

**Luncheon: Wednesday Nov 6th, 2019 11:00 am**  
Florida Room

**Board Meeting: Wednesday Nov 13, 2019**  
10:00 am—Trinity Baptist Church

**Membership Committee Mtg. Club Renaissance**  
3rd Wednesday Nov 20, 2019

**DUES NOTICE!**

**DUES NOTICE!**

**DUES NOTICE!**



It is that time of year again.

**Time to pay your dues for 2020**



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Chapter 5-Star  
Level of Excellence Award



Newsletters 5-Star  
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## 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](mailto: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  
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Sun City Center, FL. 33571-5693

Place Stamp  
Here.

Or Current Resident

**MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY**  
**NOVEMBER 10, 1775 244 YEARS OLD**

The collage features several celebratory images for the Marine Corps 244th birthday. At the top center is a banner with the text 'UNITED STATES MARINES 1775 2019 244 YEARS' and the Marine Corps emblem. To the left, a Marine in uniform is shown holding a slice of yellow cake. To the right, there is a card with an eagle and the text 'Happy USMC DAY!'. The Marine Corps emblem is also shown in a close-up at the bottom center.

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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.**

**FORMAL DRESS ENCOURAGED**

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**ENTERTAINMENT AND DANCING**

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**SUN CITY CENTER COMMUNITY HALL**

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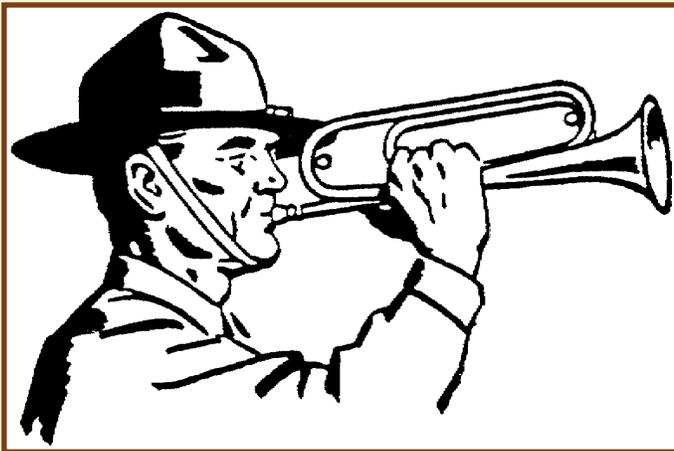
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# *Veterans Day*

## **Ceremony**

### **Monday November 11<sup>th</sup>**



**Formalities at  
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## **A Public Tribute to All Military Veterans**

**Major Robert Ura, Commander,  
District 4, HCSO, will be guest speaker**

**A Musical Interlude will be presented by the  
Trinity Singers directed by Rev. James Feist**

**Presentation of Colors will be conducted by the  
Lennard High School Army JROTC Color Guard**

**Guests are requested to be seated by 9:45 AM**

**Sponsored by the Combined Military Veterans Organizations of Sun City Center**



# VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

## PRESERVE YOUR MILITARY HISTORY .



### A PROGRAM OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

**T**his 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.

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