



# The Council Communiqué

Florida Council of Chapters  
Military Officers Association of America

June 2021

Issue 164



## President's Message

COL Mike Borders, USA., Ret.

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One year ago, we conducted our annual convention by Zoom. We held elections, swore in new officers, and conducted a business meeting, using technology we used to see on the Jetson's cartoon. It was effective and got the job done. But human beings are social animals. COVID clearly interrupted that aspect of our nature, and we were forced to adjust accordingly. But as the dark cloud of COVID lifts, our decision to go forward with an in-person convention proved to be the right one. Though some of our more cautious members opted not to participate (we respect their decision), over 150 elected to go to the Sarasota convention. And not only did we do all the things we normally do in our convention, but we had a great time doing it. Those in attendance were for the most part fully vaccinated, so masks were optional. It was so nice to see everyone in person, as we move into a more normal way of life. I appreciate the great work of Troy and Elke Scott, Len and Christa

Friedlander, and the entire Sarasota Chapter team. They pulled together to deliver a great convention. Look elsewhere in the Communiqué for a feature article and photos.

During the convention, Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, President & CEO of MOAA National presented the Colonel Marvin J. Harris Communications awards for websites and newsletters. Florida led the way with 25 chapters and the FCoC receiving a total of 48 awards. No other state came close. Congratulations to you all for your fine work on these important communications products. We were also able to announce to the group that 12 of our Florida chapters garnered MOAA Foundation grants in the current cycle. MOAA awarded a total of 33 of the grants—we received 12. Both the Communications awards and the Grant program are testimony to the caliber of our chapters and the great work they are doing around the state. As they say in the Navy, Bravo Zulu.

Submit Input to:  
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*continued on next page...*

As we move into the second half of the year, Diana and I look forward to visiting many of you around the state. Let me know when you will host luncheons and dinners. We will make every effort to make it to one of them.

Cheers,  
Mike



## Vice President's Message

CDR Patrick R (Pat) Kluever, USN, Ret.

Congratulations and Bravo Zulu to our awesome convention team from Sarasota Chapter led by Troy Scott and Len Friedlander, and to all those members who attended the convention in Sarasota; you were awesome, and what a great time. We were all inspired to be together again in person as we celebrated our freedom. Our comrades who chose not to attend due to personal vulnerabilities chose wisely, but missed a great event.

What a hotel - that roof-top pool and eatery were over-the-top and awesome - the hotel shuttle hauled us anywhere we wanted to go within three miles, and convention spaces and the service were outstanding.

What a convention - I even met a British officer formerly in the mounted infantry with a red coat and gold spurs. I asked him if he had trouble with the spurs and he said only when coming down stairs "you've got to step out or take a tumble".

There were a few FOX-2 (missile up the tailpipe) events to liven up the briefings (e.g., "Does he have to be dead before he is cremated") and of course people stacked on afterward.

Several hundred 8-sided MOAA medals for ROTC / JROTC were provided to Chapters by the Council this year - and one was presented to LtGen Atkins during the convention. That was a major diving catch, mainly by Mike Borders FCoC President to get those medals to your Chapters in time for Spring awards ceremonies. Well done to Mike Borders and Marc Oliveri who worked as a team to pull that off!

Despite COVID, Florida Council and Chapters had a great year with more coordination than ever via Zoom. All blocks were checked and the organization is solid. Some Chapters have been adversely effected the COVID shutdown and last years hurricanes, and the Council is engaged and ready to help as needed.

With a very successful convention behind us, our attention turns to an in-person Leadership and Training Seminar in Orlando at the Rosen Center 7-8 January 2022. We look forward to learning about MOAA's new IT infrastructure and Committee Module and how we can use these tools to better coordinate with HQ. This one should be a block buster of training opportunities, I hope everyone will send Chapter reps to learn and be part of that conversation.

Marc Oliveri briefed attendees at the annual business meeting about the Convention in 2022. That event is booked 9-12 June 2022 at the Palm Beach Marriott. That convention is focused on fun and includes tours, shopping, various eateries, and a casino night (prepare to lose but have fun) and a mystery dinner - wear your "service-dress gangster" to dinner (black shirt and white tie are authorized) - who knows who will get knocked off? - Could be you!

Commander Pat Kluever, USN (Ret)  
Naval Aviator (1320) - Navy Test Pilot School Graduate (Class-71)

#### Planned Events - 12+ Month Horizon

13-16 October 2021 - Georgia State MOAA Convention, Ft. Benning, Georgia  
15-16 October 2021 - MOAA National Convention, Arlington, VA  
23 October 2021 - Virtual Fall FCoC Board Meeting (Approve Final 2022 Budget)  
7-8 January 2022 - Rosen Center Orlando - Leadership Training Seminar  
9-12 June 2021 - Florida State MOAA Convention, West Palm Beach Marriott

## WHAT YOUR FLORIDA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS DOES

Florida Council of Chapters and its Chapters are chartered by and affiliates of The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).

MOAA and the FCOC are non-partisan, non-profit 501c(19) organizations, and exist to improve the awareness, life style, and overall environment of its affiliate member chapters; support and serve member chapters; influence the political process in matters pertaining to active duty, retired and former military personnel; and enhance the image of America's uniformed services in our local communities.

The Council serves its affiliated Chapters by means of Council officers' in-person and virtual visits, a Council newsletter, a website with Chapter support and training, quarterly Board meetings, annual Leadership Seminar, and annual Convention.

#### SIGNIFICANT DATES FOR JUNE:

*June 6th - D-Day Invasion Anniversary*  
*June 14<sup>th</sup> - U.S. Flag Day*  
*June 13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> - National Flag Week*  
*June 20<sup>th</sup> - Father's Day*  
*June 23<sup>rd</sup> - U.S. Army Birthday (founded on June 14<sup>th</sup> 1775)*  
*June 27<sup>th</sup> - USCG Auxiliary Birthday (Established in 1939)*  
*June 27<sup>th</sup> - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Awareness Day*

#### SIGNIFICANT DATES FOR JULY:

*July 4<sup>th</sup> - Independence Day*  
*July 21st - Department of Veterans Administration Created*  
*July 27th - National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day*  
*July 29th - Anniversary of the Army Chaplain Corps*



## Chaplain's Message

By LCDR Terry Robertson, USN, Ret. [terryrobertson49@gmail.com](mailto:terryrobertson49@gmail.com)

### Terry's Treasure

#### Best Poem In The World

I was shocked, confused, bewildered  
As I entered Heaven's door,  
Not by the beauty of it all,  
Nor the lights or its décor.

But it was the folks in Heaven  
Who made me sputter and gasp—  
The thieves, the liars, the sinners,  
The alcoholics and the trash.

There stood the kid from seventh grade  
Who swiped my lunch money twice!  
Next to him was my old neighbor  
Who never said anything nice.

Herb, who I always thought  
Was rotting away in hell,  
Was sitting pretty on cloud nine,  
Looking incredibly well.

I nudged Jesus, "What's the deal?  
I would love to hear your take.  
How'd all these sinners get up here?  
God must have made a mistake.

And why's everyone so quiet,  
So somber – give me a clue."  
"Hush, child," He said, "They're all in shock.  
No one thought they'd be seeing you."

A couple of things to keep in mind:

- Every saint has a PAST...every sinner has a FUTURE!
- Sitting in church doesn't make you a believer any more than standing in your garage makes you a car.

This is my last article as your chaplain. My replacement will be Col. Tony Clark. May God watch over all of you forever.



## Membership Chairman

COL Steve Bond, USA (Ret)

At the Annual Convention in Sarasota, Mike Borders asked me to give a presentation on Membership Operations. As the President of the Cape Canaveral Chapter and a previous Chapter Membership Chair, my chapter has had good success over the years in recruiting new members—We are one of the largest chapters in MOAA with over 1200 members strong, we were the #1 recruiting chapter in MOAA for 2018, the #2 recruiting chapter in MOAA for 2019 and 2020, and are currently holding the #2 position in MOAA for 2021. At the subsequent FCOC Board meeting, I was reminded of the adage that “no good deed goes unpunished” and appointed the Membership Chairman of the Council! My new job will be to work with the Area Vice Presidents and Chapters to grow our numbers and make an even larger impact in our communities and across the State as we go about our important work of Legislative Advocacy, Community Support and Philanthropy, while we socialize with other like-minded MOAA members.

The first thing I want to highlight about membership is we live in a “Target Rich Environment” for recruiting. Here are some demographics to consider:

Florida is the #3 State in the Nation for veterans--over 1.5 million live here. There are also another 60,000 serving military in the State. A rough estimate is 10% of those are Active, Former, or Retired Officers and Warrant Officers, meaning there are around 160,000 potential MOAA members living here, not counting spouses!

FCOC is MOAA's Second Largest State Council with just over 5,000-members in chapters. While we are doing well in comparison to other States, that number is low when compared to the number of potential members living here. Being #2 means “We Try Harder”!

Those 160,000 potential chapter members are our neighbors. We work and go to church with them. We see them in grocery stores proudly sporting hats and shirts with their military affiliation. Have you talked to them about MOAA and asked them to join your chapter?

The membership briefing that I gave at the conference is located [here on the FCOC website](#). I recommend all Chapter Presidents and Membership Chairpersons review it. Let's share ideas. Each chapter is unique, has different challenges and demographics. Every one of us is key to growing our numbers. Recruiting and Retaining members is a total chapter effort. We will use this space in The Council Communiqué to discuss recruiting and retaining chapter members to help our numbers grow across the Council and make an even larger impact in our communities, across the State, and with MOAA at the National level.

What recruiting techniques worked or did not work in your area? Contact me at [President@MOAAC.org](mailto:President@MOAAC.org).



## WHY JOIN A LOCAL MOAA CHAPTER?

You know the value of belonging to MOAA and your chapter. But when you are talking to a potential new chapter member, it's important to remember that many officers might have only limited knowledge of MOAA's chapter system. Creating a dialogue and asking open-ended questions is the best way to find out if and how a chapter membership could help a prospective member. Find out as much as you can about their priorities to tailor a response that is more likely to resonate with them personally. Here are some aspects of membership that may appeal to them.

1. Make yourself heard. MOAA's chapters provide critical grassroots support for MOAA's national legislative agenda. Chapter members let their legislators know what's on their minds and open doors for MOAA's legislative team in Washington, D.C.
2. Give back to the community. Chapter members are MOAA's ambassadors in their communities, supporting countless programs that make a difference in the lives of others. These members continue to serve and are giving back in the truest sense.
3. Value added to chapter members' lives. MOAA chapters sponsor interesting programs and opportunities to interact with civic, political, military, and business leaders on issues important to members.
4. Networking with fellow officers. Chapters include second-career members in the work force and retired service members who have contacts in their communities that can be valuable to transitioning officers.
5. Stay informed. Chapter newsletters, websites, and meetings provide you with the latest information on local, state, and national issues and changes to military benefits.
6. Influencing state legislation. Most states have a council of chapters that unites chapters in the state. These councils, and independent chapters in states without a council, often lobby for and pass state-level legislation that affects military members and their families, such as exempting military retired pay from state income tax or increasing funding for state veterans' programs.
7. Camaraderie with a purpose. MOAA chapters unite active duty, former, and retired officers from every branch of service, including National Guard and Reserve, as well as surviving spouses, offering the opportunity to connect with others with similar backgrounds and interest and develop close and lasting friendships.



## Legislative Affairs

Lt Col Bob Bienvenue, USAF, Ret., Legislative Chair



### MOAA's *Advocacy in Action* Campaign – Status Update



#### Virtual Meetings with Florida's Congressional Delegation and/or Staff

Our FCoC ***Advocacy in Action*** team members have scheduled meetings with assigned congressional offices continuing thru the end of May. Much of the feedback is similar to this statement that I posted on the MOAA reporting tool: *"I spoke with Jessica Thompson (telephonically) from Congressman Webster's Washington office on May 14<sup>th</sup>. She was appreciative of my out-reach and was personally understanding of the unfair situation MOAA is advocating to correct with regard to the three issues that I provided talking points on prior to our scheduled call.. My request was for our Congressman to show his support for the military community, and especially family members by co-sponsoring the bills that have been introduced in the House to address the inequities service members and families face."*

#### MOAA Legislative Update:

Read about the latest MOAA Advocacy News and Calls-to-Action [here](#).



<https://takeaction.moaa.org/>

As of May 24<sup>th</sup>, the tabulation of actual co-sponsors from FL who have signed on as co-sponsors to the MOAA supported legislation is very low. We strongly encourage MOAA members in Florida to take the action detailed below to add your grassroots weight to the **AiA** teams asks. Sending repeat messages is effective in showing the level of constituent support.

#### Bipartisan Bill Introduced in the Senate to Support Military Families Struggling with Hunger

U.S. Senator and combat Veteran Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Chair of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) Airland Subcommittee, and U.S. Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) introduced bipartisan legislation to support active military families experiencing food insecurity and help ensure no one willing to serve this nation in uniform struggles to feed their families. **S-1488., The Military Hunger Prevention Act** would create a basic needs allowance to help low-income military families put food on the table. The companion Bill in the House is HR 2339. [Ask Your Lawmaker to Help Young Military Families](#)

***Neither of our two Senators is a co-sponsor of this Bill.***

#### Tricare Young Adult Parity

Read the latest from MOAA on **HR 475 The Health Care Fairness for Military Families Act** introduced by Cong Mike Waltz, (R; FL-06) [Momentum Builds Toward TRICARE Young Adult Coverage Fix](#) .

***Military families have every right to expect TRICARE to match coverage benchmarks established by high quality commercial plans – they are surprised and disappointed when they learn this isn't the case when it comes to young adult coverage.***

Please engage in this advocacy mission by contacting your elected officials today and [urging them to co-sponsor H.R. 475](#)

### Toxic Exposure Reforms

The Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees hosted back-to-back legislative hearings April 28 and May 5, respectively -- the Committee leaders in both chambers made it clear *they are ready to move quickly on a comprehensive bill* integrating several bills from both houses that have been previously introduced. MOAA supports these cornerstone principles in the reform legislation:

- (1) fixing the presumptive process,
- (2) expanding health care eligibility,
- (3) conceding exposure, and
- (4) increase reporting.

While MOAA's headquarters is working the toxic exposure issues through the House and Senate committees and continuing to engage with the VA, *our grassroots advocates are virtually visiting with lawmakers through the Advocacy in Action campaign during the month of May on this same issue.*

Our military and veteran communities have been waiting far too long for the illnesses that are presumptive from Toxic Exposure to be recognized by the VA.

***Stand-by for an urgent Call-to-Action from MOAA when the comprehensive Bill is introduced.***

### OTHER Topics that MOAA is Requesting our Continued Grass-roots Support

#### Arlington Cemetery Eligibility Could Change Soon

The new eligibility regulations for Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) could be published later this year, but there's still time for Congress to step in and take much-needed corrective action.

The Army has said that the final regulations are expected to be approved and published in the Federal Register this fall. The proposed eligibility changes would dramatically reduce internment eligibility to only those who earned a Silver Star or Purple Heart and above, which would force many 20-year retirees to change their end-of-life plans.

MOAA's three priorities for ANC eligibility and expansion moving forward:

Ensure 20-year retirees now eligible for ANC should be grandfathered in regardless of eligibility changes.

Provide full consideration of noncontiguous expansion for ANC, which was directed by Congress in Public Law 114-158 (approved May 20, 2016)

Set a clear path forward for the next national cemetery: ANC will run out of room no matter what, and designating the next cemetery that affords full military honors is a matter of national conscience.

MOAA will continue to engage Congress on Arlington National Cemetery, and we need your voice as constituents. [Reach out to your lawmakers](#) and ask them to include language in the FY 22 NDAA that would require DoD to designate the next national cemetery.



## MOAA Remains Focused on Planned Military Health System Reforms

Dr. Terry Adirim, acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, testified on May 12<sup>th</sup> to the SASC sub-committee on Personnel. He reported that DoD has ended its COVID-triggered “**strategic pause**” on moving control of military treatment facilities (MTFs) from the services to the Defense Health Agency (DHA) and the previously announced “rightsizing” of dozens of MTF locations. Sec’y Adirim along with the service Surgeons General further testified to the House Appropriations Committee on the same matters on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

Here are links to his prepared testimony:

[Adirim.5.12.21](#) Senate Hearing Testimony

[HHRG-117-AP02-Wstate-AdirimT-20210525.pdf](#) House hearing Testimony

MOAA successfully fought for language in the FY 2021 NDAA requiring DoD officials to reassess its pre-COVID analysis and to certify to the relevant congressional committees that reforms will not harm beneficiaries’ access to quality health care.

In his testimony Adirim said *“DoD is revalidating the assumptions made prior to the pandemic when allocating health care resources, to ensure any MTF closures or downsizing occurs only when we are certain that TRICARE networks can provide timely and quality access to health care for our beneficiaries.”*

**This has been MOAA’s main concern throughout the realignment process** – a concern heightened by a 2020 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report outlining how DoD’s initial analysis relied on incomplete and/or inaccurate information.

Since they were announced in the FY 2020 administration budget request, MOAA has also raised awareness of the risks associated with cutting approximately 18,000 medical billets, or 18% of the uniformed military health system workforce.

In this same Senate hearing, Naval Operations Deputy Chief and Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. John Nowell said, *“I will assure you that we will not shift any family member or retiree care or care for our servicemembers if it affects Military Medical Force readiness ... that “care would **not** be moved out of MTFs in areas where the TRICARE network doesn’t have the capability or capacity to absorb it” ... and he further committed “to maintaining graduate medical education.”*

***It sure seems like our collective efforts advocating for the medical care promised and earned for the military community are paying off.***

## **A Quick Look at DoDs FY 2022 Budget Request (just released May 28<sup>th</sup>. )**

DoD wants to sink more than \$5 billion into personnel next year, with a 2.7 percent pay raise and an extra \$200 million in family support programs.

The proposal would also drop the military’s overall end strength by about 5,400, at a time of historically high retention, according to budget documents.

- The Army will come down to 485,000 active-duty soldiers, roughly the same level the Army has held for the past year, and 900 fewer than what the budget called for in FY 21.

- The Navy is projected to go down to 343,450 active.
- The Marine Corps, down to 178,500 active continuing a downward trend in recent years.
- The Air Force, is adding about 1,400 airmen this year, bringing its total to 328,300 on active duty.
- The Space Force is set to add just over 2,000 new guardians to reach 8,400. That growth will come from a mix of recruitment and inter-service transfers,

The budget also includes funding for a host of work force and family issues, including: 2,000 more childcare spaces, \$200 million for DoD schools, and funding for sexual assault prevention and response, suicide prevention and diversity and inclusion efforts.

MOAA staff will be scouring the detailed content and working with committee staff and members to find out where the request is positioned w/r/t the top MOAA issues and other matters affecting the military community. Stand by for Calls-to-Action as these details are revealed and analyzed.



## Personal Affairs

Col Paul Loschiavo, USMCR (Ret)

### Identity Theft

Credit cards are a wonderful thing. They sure make life easy, but... they also make it easy to be the victim of fraud.

You've heard all the ads from companies like LifeLock. For a monthly fee, they will monitor your records and protect you from identity theft. And that's great, except all they do is really act as a burglar alarm. They don't prevent anything, but they try to quickly catch a problem and shut it down before the damage is too great.

Though nothing is absolutely bulletproof, there is something you can do. You can put a "freeze" on your records with the three credit bureaus.

When there's a freeze on your records, no one can access them. If no one can access them, no one can open an account in your name. You're a black hole. You basically don't exist. Becoming a victim of identity theft is nearly impossible.

So.... why don't more people put a freeze on their records? Primarily, because the concept is not well known.

There are three credit bureaus. They all keep records on you and then sell the information about you to anyone who wants to do a credit check on you.

Want to open a new credit card? The first thing the bank will do is run a credit check on you. If your record is frozen, the credit bureau will release no information about you. As they provide no info on you, they cannot charge the bank for the report. Basically, when your record is frozen, the credit bureau gets no revenue. It doesn't take an MBA to figure out why the credit bureaus are not big on people putting freezes on their accounts. They are required to allow it. They're not required to advertise it...

Of course, the freeze works against you if you want to open a new credit card. Or buy a house, or often, when you buy a car. You'd be surprised how often you want someone to get a credit report about you. So the three credit bureaus offer an online way for you to "unfreeze" your account. You can do a temporary "unfreeze" or a permanent unfreeze. Obviously, the credit bureaus want you to permanently unfreeze your account. It's better to do a temporary unfreeze.

So, how do you freeze your records?

The easiest way to do it is to go to the credit bureaus' websites. Keep in mind that they don't exactly make it easy to put on a freeze. In fact, it's just the opposite. They will try to get you to sign up for their version of credit monitoring. You have to look for the page on how to set up a freeze.

The three credit bureaus are: Experian.com, TransUnion.com, and Equifax.com. None of them has "credit freeze" on the first page of the website. All of them try to sell you their version of credit protection, with a monthly fee. Most importantly, all of them have a search box with the universal Popsicle sign. If you type the word "freeze" into the search box, it will take you to their page for turning on a freeze.

I've had a freeze on my records for about ten years. It was much more complicated setting it up ten years ago, and unfreezing was a real pain in the rear for a long time, but it's working well now. Though I still get calls for extended car warranties and I have been the victim of ACH debit fraud, I have not been the victim of identity theft. As near as I can tell, it's free and it works. Be sure to freeze your record and your spouse's.

You should keep your passwords handy. On more than one occasion, I've had to "unfreeze" my records and having the passwords in my iPhone was worth it. iPhones are a pretty safe place to store info. Remember, even the FBI has sued Apple to unlock an iPhone.

Either way, if you'd like to make it just about impossible to be the victim of identity theft... freeze your credit records.

If you have a question about this, send it to me at [MOAA.FCOC.sef@gmail.com](mailto:MOAA.FCOC.sef@gmail.com).



## Surviving Spouse Corner

Patricia Green, Surviving Spouse Liaison

What a busy month May is. There is always so much to do. The chores ... spring cleaning, opening the pool, planting annuals and mulching the flower beds.. are waiting. The activities...school plays, concerts, Baccalaureate, Graduation, weddings...are anticipated. And this year the taxes are completed.

The MOAA events get squeezed into the calendar too. There are several I'd like to discuss with you.

Attend your Chapter meeting. Enjoy the opportunity to exchange smile, laughs, and stories. Read your newsletter carefully. There is a lot of information in it. Volunteer for some project. Write those letters to elected representatives supporting the Advocacy in Action Campaign. Check the MOAA website for the legislative details. Things are getting back to normal.

There was a Florida Council of Chapters Convention in Sarasota on May 14-15. Those who attended know the setting and weather were great. The speakers were knowledgeable and informative. A lot of work and networking got done. There is real value in attending the convention. You bring so much information back to your Chapters. There is a rejuvenation in meeting new people and sharing ideas. Please plan now for the 2022 Convention in Palm Beach, June 9-12.

The monthly meeting of the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter was held May 18. This was 1 pm zoom meeting with two widows speaking about their experiences resolving Claims at the VA. It took Jan Lorette from Ohio 18 months to settle her claim. Denise Caldon Sorkness of Georgia has been battling for DIC benefits her husband earned for 24 years. Despite never having been divorced from her husband, another woman filed a false application and a fraudulent marriage certificate to claim and receive these benefits which Denise could have used to raise her three children from the marriage. What a testimony to perseverance to pursue justice and resolution.

The next Virtual meeting is June 15, 2021, at 5 pm EDT. This will be an informal meeting with exchange of ideas. If you are not yet a member of the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter, you can easily join via email. Go to [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org), click on I am a Surviving Spouse, click on Resources, scroll down to Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter, and click on download membership materials here.

There are no dues. Fill out the application and follow the instructions to return the application. You will be put on a list and notified of the next meeting.

May 18 was also the date of a webinar that MOAA was having in "Remarriage, Divorce, and Your Benefits". I wanted to attend both the webinar and the Virtual Chapter meeting. With MOAA no problem...both the webinar and the meeting were recorded. Go to the MOAA website and ask for help to link to either of these options.



### 2021 FCOC Convention – The Westin, Sarasota, FL

The Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) 2021 Convention, hosted by the Sarasota Chapter, was held at the Westin Sarasota Hotel from 14-16 May 2021, and if you didn't attend, you missed a stellar event.

From the President's Reception on Friday night until the Memorial service on Sunday, the 170 participants at the event enjoyed the camaraderie of their fellow officers and spouses, the welcoming environment in the hotel, and the convention events.

Lt Gen Dana Atkins, the MOAA National President presented 43 Four and Five Star MOAA's Col Marvin Harris Communications Awards for Printed Newsletters and Websites to the Council and the Chapters at the President's Reception.

The All-Hands Breakfast guest speaker was the Executive Director of the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, MajGen James "Hammer" Hartsell, USMC (Ret), who shared his priorities for the FDVA, stressing the need to connect with Vietnam Vets and Women Vets.

In addition to the 2022 FCOC budget being approved at the Annual FCOC Business Meeting, four FCOC Area VPs were elected – Benny Blackshire (WC), Ron Birchall (EC), Nicholas Marotta (NW) and Howard Hill (MC).

Saturday afternoon was devoted to Seminars addressing various topics of interest -- Surviving Spouses, Federal & State legislative issues, Membership & Chapter Affairs, MOAA Committee Module, FCOC Website upgrades, and the 2022 MOAA Convention.

Saturday evening was topped off with the Military Gala, with over 150 attendees. In addition to receiving a Space Force flag from Fleet Landing, we celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of FCOC's affiliation with MOAA National with a special cake cutting ceremony. Congressman Greg Steube, a Sarasota chapter member, spoke on his Veterans True Choice Act, which would expand health insurance options for disabled veterans. Lt Gen Dana Atkins updated us on MOAA's current activities and legislative activities for the next Congress – and Mike Borders presented him with an FCOC donation to the MOAA Foundation and a handmade commemorative plaque by Marc Oliveri - after which, we danced to the music of LeCroix until late in the evening.



Sunday morning, we closed the convention with our Traditional Memorial Service for our departed comrades.

Based on the feedback we've received from the attendees the convention was what we needed –a welcome change from the COVID-19 concerns and relative isolation of the past year, and a chance to interact with our fellow veterans. There were many contributors from the Sarasota Chapter, the FCOC Board, and the hotel staff that were critical to making the convention a success – and we sincerely thank all of them.

Some photos follow representing some of the great times had by all. A complete viewing of the presentations and the 492 images available can be found on the FCOC website.



*Dana Atkins (L) presents the 50th Anniversary Affiliation certificate to Mike Borders (R)*



*Lt Gen Dana Atkins speaking at the FCOC Convention Presidents Reception*



*Pat Kleuver (2nd from left) and members of the Historic Mayport Chapter present the Space Force flag to Mike Borders, FCOC President*



*Lt Gen Dana Atkins, MOAA Pres & CEO (L) & COL Mike Borders, FCOC President (R) present the MOAA Five-Star Communications Award for Websites to LCDR John Snyder (C) FCOC Webmaster.*

*Marty Brown, Communique Editor, receives Five-Star MOAA Communications Award for e-newsletters from Lt Gen Dana Atkins, MOAA Pres & CEO*



*L-r) Newly installed FCOC Area Vice Presidents Dan Hill, Ron Birchall & Benny Blackshire*

*MajGen James Hartsell, Executive Director Florida DVA, speaking at the Convention's All-Hands Breakfast*







MOAA President & CEO Dana Atkins (L) receive a commemorative plaque from FCOC President Mike Borders

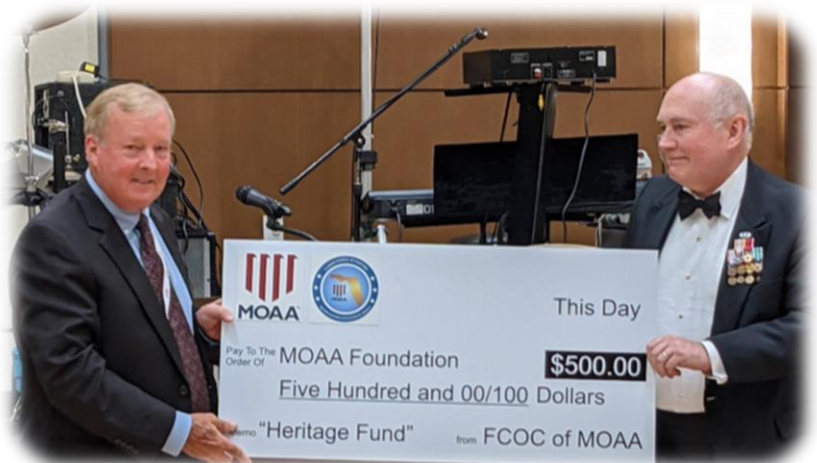


(L-r) Troy Scott (Sarasota Chapter President), Dana Atkins (MOAA Pres & CEO), Mike Borders (FCOC President) Cutting the cake celebrating FCOC/MOAA 50th Affiliation anniversary



FCOC President Mike Borders (L) present a commemorative clock to MajGen James Hartsell, USMC (Ret) Executive Director Florida DVA at the convention All Hands Breakfast

FCOC President Mike Borders (R) presents MOAA President Dana Atkins with an FCOC Donation to The MOAA Foundation



## **CONGRATULATIONS to the Florida winners of the Colonel Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards.**

Florida led the way with the FCoC and 25 chapters garnering a total of 48 awards. This is the most awards ever and the most in the nation. Great work by all. Big time kudos.

### **5-Star Winners**

Florida Council of Chapters (print newsletter and website)  
 Ancient City Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Cape Canaveral Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Cape Coral Chapter (print newsletter)  
 Charlotte Harbor Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Citrus County Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Clearwater Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Halifax Area Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Historic Mayport Chapter (print newsletter)  
 Indian River Chapter (website)  
 Kingdom of the Sun Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Lee Coast Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Northeast Florida Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Northwest Florida Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Palm Beach-Martin Counties Chapter (print newsletter)  
 Pensacola Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 St. Petersburg Area Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Sarasota Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 South Central Florida Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Sun City Center Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Sun Coast Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Tampa Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Treasure Coast Chapter (print newsletter and website)  
 Volusia County Chapter (print newsletter and website)



### **4-Star Winners**

Indian River Chapter (print newsletter)  
 Flagler County Chapter (print newsletter)



## **MOAA Foundation Community Outreach Grant Awards**

CONGRATULATIONS to our Twelve Florida Awardees

Yet again Florida chapters lead the pack! We congratulate the twelve chapters identified below for applying for and receiving a MOAA Foundation Community Outreach Grant to support their chapter's activities serving their military and veteran communities. Several of these chapters also received COVID relief funds in response to their submissions.

The MOAA Foundation Program has announced their awards totaling \$84,000 to 33 MOAA chapters across the U.S. who are giving back to the military community through programs that provide needed outreach, services, and recognition to servicemembers, veterans, and military families. As noted, twelve of the 33 selected chapters are from Florida. The FCOC is very proud of them for all they do to support military and veteran families in their communities.

Most of our chapters are deeply involved in their communities and are doing excellent work. The twelve Florida chapters receiving the MOAA Foundation grant took advantage of the program by documenting their efforts and submitting a grant request per the program guidelines. Chapters should take a good look at the grant program guidelines and submit a proposal for their community project when the next grant cycle opens up later this year. If you need info on how to apply, what kinds of programs are supported, or any other information, you can check with the FCoC president, VP, or the leadership of the winning chapters.

The MOAA Foundation Community Outreach Grants are intended for the delivery of community services in one of nine areas of critical family need: housing, food assistance, employment, health, family support, community reintegration, financial assistance, legal assistance, and transportation. To make a donation and to learn more about the program and the MOAA Foundation, go to [MOAA.org/foundation](https://www.moaa.org/foundation), or visit MOAA's [new online donation portal](#).

To see a full list of winning chapters, go to: <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2020-news-articles/moaa-foundation-announces-23-community-outreach-grant-recipients/>

Cape Canaveral Chapter	Tampa Chapter
Clearwater Chapter	Treasure Coast Chapter
Southwest Florida Chapter	Lee Coast Chapter
Northwest Florida Chapter	Indian River Chapter
St. Petersburg Area Chapter	South Central Florida Chapter
Sarasota Chapter	Historic Mayport Chapter





## Florida Veterans Council Update

MAJ Lorraine Holland, USA (Ret), FCoC Committee Chair, Florida Veterans Council

### Calling All Florida Women Veterans!

I'm a board member on the joint Florida Veteran's & Florida Dept of Veteran's Affairs (FDVA) Counsel, and the newly appointed FDVA Executive Director MG (ret) Hartsell spoke passionately about his two top priorities in support of Florida Veterans. First is to bring our Vietnam Veterans to the forefront with awareness and guidance to access their earned services, benefits and support they justly deserve. The second initiative is long overdue, and that is making our Florida Female Veteran's a priority to ensure we capture the uniqueness of their requirements here in Florida to better serve them.

FDVA has asked Bob Asztalos, the Chairman of Florida Veteran's Foundation [www.helpflvets.org](http://www.helpflvets.org) to head-up the Women's Veterans Initiative. Bob has asked me to be the lead voice for gathering information, and eventually helping to identify and set-up a committee of about 12-15 Florida women veterans from all services - enlisted and officers. At our May MOAA Florida Council of Chapters (FCoC) Convention, Gen Hartsell announced his initiative and reiterated that he is putting a full court press on a fact-finding mission. This will highlight areas that haven't been addressed, areas that need improvement, and areas that Florida has done right by our female veterans.

General Hartsell's goal is to make Florida the number one veteran destination (we are just behind Texas) due to the ability of our veterans to have access to all benefits they have earned. When calling Florida their home, Gen Hartsell wants to highlight that Florida is known for treating its veterans with dignity and respect and our state sees to it they have full access to resources to help navigate what they are entitled to. We can't improve the quality of life for our veterans unless we are aware of the shortfalls and elevate them to Tallahassee. We are very fortunate that Governor DeSantis is a Navy veteran and knows first-hand the sacrifices the military makes every day, in and out of uniform. Thanks to his support of our Floridian veterans, we want to raise awareness and if warranted, get state legislation passed where needed. If we discover concerns that cut across all states, with the help of MOAA, we will raise them to the Federal level. My gut says this very well may be the case during our fact-finding phase.

To help initiate and stimulate dialog between you and other women veterans, I'm tossing out a few areas that come to mind: Health care at VA facilities (treatment at VA centers and care the VA contracts out to civilian agencies), Veteran's Treatment Courts, homelessness, food insecurity, access to Veteran's Service Officer's (VSO), navigating the VA disability process, transitioning shortfalls from active service to civilian life for female veterans, treatment for PTSD/sexual trauma/brain injury, and access to specialized medical treatment unique to females. We are reaching out to all female veterans who answer to "her/she."

For all our members (this isn't an ask for just the females!) I respectfully ask that you engage in dialog with female veteran's you either meet or have access through email correspondence. Here in Florida, you are at the grass roots level, and our first mission is to identify specific female veteran issues before we establish a counsel to prioritize and raise awareness to Tallahassee. If concerns are not unique to Florida, please forward them as well. As a female veteran with 20 years on active duty both enlisted and as an officer, I appreciate all our veterans who sacrificed while in service to our great nation. I thank-you for stepping-up to be a voice for so many women that may not think they have one. It's long overdue that women veteran's get the recognition and benefits that may have either been overlooked or under-utilized. My aim is to make sure my sisters-in-arms are elevated to the status they rightly deserve - there are so few women who were willing to get out of their comfort zone to defend our country, and now is our time to be recognized!

I appreciate your willingness to be a part of this ground-breaking initiative, and I'm looking forward to hearing back from you soon - no comment is too great or too small to help stimulate further inquiries and discussions. Please forward your comments to [lorraine holland@hotmail.com](mailto:lorraine holland@hotmail.com) or phone 407-221-1388.



## Florida Department of Veterans Affairs Update

Lt Col R. Steven Murray, USAF (Ret.)  
Communications Director, Florida Department of Veterans Affairs

### Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Celebrates 2021 Legislative Accomplishments

*Governor Ron DeSantis' Signs Budget Highlighting Strong Support for Florida's 1.5 Million Veterans, Their Families, and Survivors*

The budget signed into law on 2 June by Governor Ron DeSantis, allows the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs to continue to be the premier point of entry for Florida veterans to access earned services, benefits and support. The agency's budget resulting from the recently concluded 2021 Florida Legislative Session continues its legacy of excellence.

According to retired Marine Corps Major General James S. "Hammer" Hartsell, Executive Director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. "Working together and building on our previous veteran-directed successes, we'll ensure Florida continues to be the most sought after state in the nation."

FDVA is a 1,500-member constitutionally chartered State Veterans' Affairs department responsible for serving the nation's third largest veteran population. The department operates a network of seven state veterans' homes and provides outreach to c On 4 June, Governor Ron DeSantis signed three military- and veteran-related bills into law to establish a "Purple Star Campus Program," help transitioning servicemembers gain workforce training, and enhance veterans' preference in hiring.

## Supporting Florida's Veterans in Their Communities

The budget supports the daily operations of Florida's six state-run veterans' nursing homes and one assisted living facility. These facilities provide essential services and care to veterans throughout Florida.

In addition to the base budget, FDVA was provided the following:

**\$2 million for final construction costs of the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie** was funded. The 120-bed skilled nursing home is scheduled to open to residents later in 2021.

**\$19 million for initial start-up and daily operating expenses of the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home and the Lake Baldwin State Veterans' Nursing Home in Orlando** was provided. The funds also will help offset costs of FDVA's veterans' claims examiners as they advocate for the earned services, benefits and support of Florida's 1.5 million veterans.

**More than \$1.3 million for Florida is for Veterans, Inc. (Veterans Florida) for Veterans Employment and Training Service**, which provides veterans with training for job placement, opportunities for veteran entrepreneurship, and SkillBridge, which connects active duty service members with jobs in their last six months prior to discharge.

**\$500,000 to the Florida Veterans Legal Helpline** to provide direct advice and assistance to low-income veterans over the phone, schedule appointments for extended services with full-time attorneys who focus solely on veterans, and coordinate referrals to partners throughout the State of Florida.

**\$245,000 to Veterans in Crisis Emergency Fund** (Florida Veterans Foundation) to add a caseworker, who along with the Executive Director will field calls, verify the needs of those veterans, and directly help or work in partnership with other organizations and provide the financial resources to those veterans.

And, on 4 June, Governor Ron DeSantis signed three military- and veteran-related bills into law to establish a "Purple Star Campus Program," help transitioning servicemembers gain workforce training, and enhance veterans' preference in hiring.

### **Creation of "Purple Star Campus Program"**

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) will establish a "Purple Star Campus Program" to identify schools that support military connected children and demonstrate a commitment to provide critical transition supports to military families by:

- Designating a military liaison to directly support families;
- Updating the school website with resources for military students and families;
- Offering a student-led transition program to assist military students acclimate into a school;
- Expanding staff professional development training opportunities on issues relating to military students; and

- Reserving controlled, open enrollment seats for military-connected students to utilize to ensure school choice opportunities are available to them, regardless of the time of year their military transfer takes place.

### **Supporting Veterans Through Employment and Training**

House Bill 435, Veterans Employment and Training, designates *Veterans Florida* as the state's principal DOD SkillBridge assistance organization to educate in-state and out-of-state transitioning service members of available SkillBridge apprenticeships, internships, and fellowships across Florida during their last 180 days in uniform and to assist employers develop and implement new SkillBridge training. Service members in SkillBridge gain valuable civilian work experience while maintaining their DOD salary and benefits.

Separating or retiring servicemembers interested in participating in the Florida SkillBridge Initiative can visit [www.veteransflorida.org/register](http://www.veteransflorida.org/register).

### **Enhancing Veterans' Preference in Employment**

Senate Bill 922 authorizes state and political subdivisions to waive certain postsecondary educational requirements for employment for eligible servicemembers and veterans. It also enhances point preferences given to veterans and their family members when a numerically based selection process is used for hiring.



In honor of Flag Day (the 14<sup>th</sup>) and National Flag Week (13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>) ...

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*I am the flag of the United States of America.*

*My name is Old Glory.  
I fly atop the world's tallest buildings.  
I stand watch in America's halls of justice.  
I fly majestically over institutions of learning.  
I stand guard with power in the world.  
Look up and see me.*

*I stand for peace, honor, truth and justice.  
I stand for freedom. I am confident.  
I am arrogant. I am proud.  
When I am flown with my fellow banners,  
My head is a little higher,  
My colors a little truer.  
I bow to no one!  
I am recognized all over the world.  
I am worshipped - I am saluted.*



*I am loved - I am revered.  
I am respected - I am feared.*

*I have fought in every battle of every war for more than 200 years.  
I was flown at Valley Forge, Gettysburg, Shiloh and Appamatox.  
I was there at San Juan Hill, the trenches of France, in the Argonne Forest, Anzio,  
Rome and the beaches of Normandy.  
Guam, Okinawa, Korea and KheSan, Saigon, Vietnam know me.  
I was there. I led my troops.  
I was dirty, battleworn and tired,  
but my soldiers cheered me and I was proud.*

*I have been burned, torn and trampled on the streets of countries  
I have helped set free. It does not hurt for I am invincible.  
I have been soiled upon, burned, torn and trampled in the streets of my country.  
And when it's done by those whom I've served in battle - it hurts.  
But I shall overcome - for I am strong.  
I have slipped the bonds of earth and  
stood watch over the uncharted frontiers of space from my vantage point on the  
moon.  
I have born silent witness to all of America's finest hours.  
But my finest hours are yet to come.  
When I am torn into strips and used as bandages for my wounded comrades on the  
battle field,  
when I am flown at halfmast to honor my soldier,  
or when I lie in the trembling arms of a grieving parent at the grave of their fallen son  
or daughter,*

***I am proud.  
I am the flag of the United States of America.***

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Originally entitled, *My Name is Old Glory* by Howard Schnauber

© 1994 the author [Mr. Schnauber has given permission to the public to use this poem for program or publishing purposes. Please [credit the Fort Collins Public Library](#) Local History Archive, Oral History Interview of Mr. Howard Schnauber, the author.]

***As we celebrate Flag Day and Independence Day and every day that we fly the flag, take a photo of you and yours proudly flying your flag at your home, from your flagpole, on your car, in your yard or wherever you do so, send it to me and I will select a few for publishing in the next Communiqué'.***

***Randy Fiebrandt (rfiebs1953@gmail.com)***





## Florida Council of Chapters "Chapter News"

### Sun City Center Chapter

Maj. James Haney USMC

#### WW II CENTENARIAN VETERAN HONORED

Former Army Corporal Elmer Mack celebrated his 100th Birthday on Wednesday, 19 May 2021, with the Sun City Center community. He was very surprised by the celebration organized by Chapter 2<sup>nd</sup> VP retired Air Force Lt Col Walter Cawein. The celebration included a golf cart parade with more than one hundred cart participants and observance presentations by individuals and organizations. In the accompanying picture, Chapter member retired Coast Guard RADM Ronald Silva presented Elmer with a Chapter CENTENARIAN HONORS certificate.



#### CHAPTER DONATION TO MY WARRIOR'S PLACE

The Chapter presented Kelly Kowall, founder of My Warrior's Place retreat in Ruskin (FL), with its annual donation of \$1000.00 on Tuesday, 11 May 2021. Pictured in the accompanying photo at MWP are, left to right, Chapter 2d VP Walter Cawein, Chapter member Ronald Silva, Kelly Kowall, Chapter President Jim Haney and Chapter member James Fletcher. After the presentation, Kelly conducted a tour of the waterfront retreat and introduced the group to a new project for a dog kennel & run to care for pets temporarily that could not otherwise be taken care of.



The 31 May 2021 Sun City Center Memorial Day Commemoration was hosted by the MOAA Sun City Center Chapter at Trinity Baptist Church with participation and attendance by many MOWW Chapter Companions. During the solemn event local Gold Star father Craig Gross, father of Army Corporal Frank R. Gross, KIA Afghanistan 16 July 2011, was the honored speaker. Since there was no 2020 event, more than 300 local veterans that passed away during the last 24 months were honored with a Living Flag Tribute. If you would like to view the video of the ceremony, go to

<https://www.facebook.com/Trinity.Sun.City.Center/videos/505856207424925/>

## Central Florida Chapter

CDR Randall Fiebrandt, USCG (Ret), Focus Editor/Communications

At our May members dinner, 2LT Daniela Mejia (our most recent ROTC Intern and newly commissioned) pinned the 50<sup>th</sup> Vietnam Era Commemorative Pin on our Chapter members and Surviving Spouses. All living U.S. veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time during the period of November 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975, regardless of location, are eligible to receive a lapel pin and citation. Surviving Spouses are also eligible. Special thanks to our surviving spouse member Judith Myers and her DAR chapter for giving our chapter the Pins



## Charlotte Harbor Chapter

LTC Hugh Porter, USAR, Newsletter Editor

The MOAA Charlotte Harbor Chapter conducted its annual NJROTC Medal and Scholarship dinner on May 17 at the Twin Isles Country Club in Punta Gorda. The Chapter awarded medals to cadets from Charlotte, Port Charlotte, Lemon Bay, and North Port High Schools.

The Chapter awarded \$4000 scholarships to a student from each of the high schools. Each scholarship is \$1000 per year for four years for students who successfully continue their education to completion. Every student is either a NJROTC member or has a military family connection. The parents and NJROTC instructors were also invited guests.



### Scholarship Awardees

North Port High School  
Kristen Johnston  
Port Charlotte High School  
Colleen Morse  
**Not Pictured**  
Lemon Bay High School  
Elianna Ward  
Charlotte High School  
Kasyn Carlton



### **MOAA Medal Awardees**

*Charlotte High School: Ethan Mazy with Maj Billie Rankins and Chief Scott Williams*  
*Lemon Bay High School: Lauren Dukes with Chief David West*  
*North Port High School: Grant Knauer with LCDR Dee Barnes*  
*Port Charlotte High School: Devin Richter with LCDR Sonja Harry*

## **Clearwater Chapter**

Robert J (Jim) Souders, Maj USAF Ret

### **CLEARWATER CHAPTER HEARS FACTS ABOUT GULF OF TONKIN**

The Clearwater Chapter was pleased to have former Navy Lt. Gary Williams speak at their recent luncheon and provide some little known insight into the Gulf of Tonkin “incident”, the subsequent Vietnam War, and its impact on US society in general. The response to the attack on the USS Maddox in August 1964 by the US Navy was led by Cmdr. James Stockdale.

Gary provided a detailed description of Stockdale’s role in what we now know as the “non-attack” on the USS Maddox and USS Turner Joy as well as his experience leading the Johnson/MacNamara ordered retaliatory strikes on N Vietnam facilities.

Cmdr. Stockdale, at the time was a Navy F-8 Crusader pilot and commander of an F-8 squadron assigned to the USS Ticonderoga. He was later shot down, captured, and held in the infamous Hanoi Hilton for seven and a half years. Upon his release, he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor and promoted to Vice Admiral.

Gary went on to describe a chance encounter with retired Vice Admiral Stockdale in the late 1980s where they discussed these events which had such a profound impact on our history. There were more than 2.5 million lives lost of which over 58 thousand were Americans.

Many who served there suffer from physical injuries, PTSD, affects of Agent Orange and survivor’s guilt.





*Former Navy Lt. Gary Williams*

*BG Ret Jeff Doll presents Clearwater Chapter Certificate of Appreciation to Gary Williams*



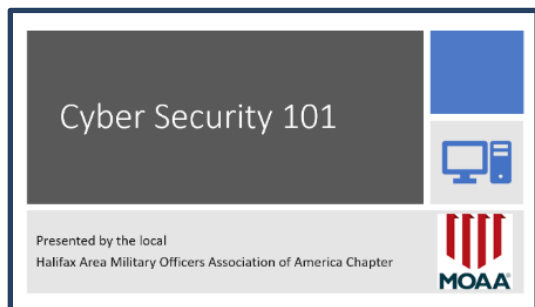
## Halifax Area Chapter

CAPT Mary McLendon, USN (Ret'd), Personal Affairs / Benefits

### Cyber Security 101 Briefing & Workshop

The Halifax Chapter of MOAA developed a Cyber Security 101 briefing & workshop which is being offered as a community service program. There is no charge for this program but donations are accepted to support Chapter volunteer efforts at the Emory Bennett Veterans Nursing Home, monthly coffee & donuts at the local VA Clinic, and MOAA scholarships to military cadets at local universities such as Embry-Riddle, Bethune-Cookman, Stetson, and Daytona State.

This 1-1½ hour seminar includes a presentation on the threats to your personal information and covers specific actions you can take to increase the security on your cell phone, tablet, laptop & desktop computer. The second half of the seminar includes a hands-on workshop which demonstrates how to secure both iPhones and Android devices.



Let's face it – we live in an ever increasing digital world. Our work lives, personal lives, and finances are now reliant on the internet, mobile computing, and other electronic media. And while automation makes our lives easier, it also makes us more vulnerable to malicious attacks, invasions of privacy, and fraud. Cyber-attacks are an increasingly sophisticated and evolving danger to you & your personal data. And attackers are using social engineering and artificial intelligence to circumvent many security controls.

How do we counteract the negatives of automation? We learn and use cyber security tools. Cyber security is the process & means of protecting data, networks, and personal information from unauthorized users, destruction and change. What are our biggest threats? Weak passwords, e-mail dangers, quick to click users, unpatched software, open systems, automatic connections and 'unsanitary' internet usage.

A recent presentation was also made to Women of Wings (WOW), a professional group of female pilots, in Port Orange FL.



If you are interested in setting up a presentation for a group, please contact Kim Ramos, Colonel (Ret'd) USAF, cell (228) 447-7802, e-mail [karamos@att.net](mailto:karamos@att.net).

## Indian River Chapter

Lt Col Carroll Oates, 1<sup>st</sup> vice president Indian River Chapter MOAA

Indian River County is one of the smallest Counties in Florida. It only consists of two cities, Vero Beach and Sebastian but, in my opinion, it is one of the most beautiful areas and has much to offer, especially to the 15,000 American Veterans who live there. You see Indian River County (IRC) has one of the best Veterans Councils in the United States. The Council is populated with IRC-MOAA Chapter FL36 Officers who, for many years now, have taken the success of the Council as their method and mission.

In 1987 IRC-MOAA along with veterans from American Legion and VFW groups created The Indian River Veterans Council as a higher- level headquarters type organization that oversaw the



subordinate units and focused to utilize their combined resources in the mission of Veterans Helping Veterans. It was only normal that the MOAA Officers most often took the lead and organized the Council into a powerful 401C3 County supported and recognized entity. A MOAA Officer has been chairman for more than 20 years and the eleven-person board of Directors has always had a majority made of IRC-MOAA members.

IRC MOAA and the Council work side-by-side, as dual participants. MOAA provides the leadership and much of the manpower and the Council provides the methods and direction in which to succeed. It is a unique way to command and control the 25 Military Organizations within the County. It ensures maximum use of resources and buy in by the cities and County itself.

Within IRC MOAA we assign at least two members as voting delegates to the council. Additionally, the Council Chairman and six council board members are currently enrolled. One can imagine just how valuable the council can be in both the council's mission of "VETERANS HELPING VETERANS" and MOAA's motto of "Still Serving". Additionally, several MOAA members have taken on leadership positions in managing programs such as the Veterans helping Veterans Program, Veterans in the Classroom and Upward American Veterans (Outreach) program.

Many MOAA members have joined our Speakers Bureau, Memorial Day & Veterans Day Events committees and assisting in managing the Veterans Council's bus transportation committee which provides transport for veterans to the VA Hospital and other health services, not to mention numerous fundraising events throughout each year.

Can you see the opportunity this gives to our Chapter?

IRC-MOAA fulfills its mission through and with the County's Veterans Council. We take the lead on the County's two main Veterans events each year, the Veterans Day and Memorial Day programs on Memorial Sanctuary Island. Also, veterans bus transportation to the West Palm Beach VA Hospital. We take the leadership with UAV (Upward American Veterans, Veterans Outreach, Veterans helping Veterans (Home Repairs) and Veterans in the Classroom Program. Additionally, several MOAA Chapter members have become teachers in our very own MOAA Veterans in the Classroom Team serving all county school and several private schools and organizations. At least three of our members have taken leadership roles in 'Next Gen' which is a sub-section of the Veterans Council that includes mostly younger veterans (and a few of us older ones) who still served after 1990. Many members have volunteered



*MOAA Class to Scouts: "During March and April 2021 Members of Indian River County MOAA Veterans in the Classroom Team conducted three Classes to The Trail Life Scouts and to the Heritage Girl Scouts at the King Baptist Church in Vero Beach, FL."*



*IRC-MOAA Officers took part in Veteran Interviews conducted by Vero Beach High School, Sebastian River High School and St. Edwards High School between January through May 2021*

many hours working at the Council's retail store called The Victory Center.

The mission is simple: Get more members involved, raise more money for IRC-Veteran's assistance (We have recently been awarded over \$160K in Grants to support our projects), gain even more visibility and credit for everything we do. Maintain status as the County's prime Veterans supporter. A council's project is a Chapter's project.

## Kingdom of the Sun Chapter

LTC Arlo Janssen, USA (Ret), Editor of the Sunbeams, KOS/MOAA

The Kingdom of the Sun Chapter held their May 6, 2021, meeting at the Braised Onion Restaurant in Ocala, Florida. The call to Order was conducted by the Chapter President, Lt Col Carol Walker, USAF (Ret). The speaker for the May 2021 luncheon was COL Nick Navetta, USAR (Ret). COL Navetta's topic for the meeting was "Investing Considerations for 2021." He passed out the ten RULES of the ROAD for investing provided by his company Edward Jones. The first rule was to "Develop Your Strategy," and rule two was to "Understand Risk." All ten rules were listed in a hand-out for chapter members. He received many good questions from the KOS members at this luncheon. COL Navetta has been selected by the Ocala Magazine as "Best Financial Planner" for the years December 2019 and 2020.



*KOS President Carol Walker greeting Nick Navetta the speaker at the May 6, 2021, KOS Luncheon*



*Four early KOS members at the May 6, 2021, KOS Luncheon at the Braised Onion. Please note the braised onion on the wall. L-R: Front Row - Anita Harvey, Jim Harvey; Upper Row - Joe Voge, and Diane Trice.*



Our Kingdom of the Sun (KOS) Chapter President, Lt Col Carol Walker, USAF (Ret) attended The Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) 2021 Convention held at The Westin, in Sarasota, FL. She received two Communication Awards on Friday night, May 14, 2021, at the President's Reception. The first award was a Five-Star award for the printed Sunbeams newsletter. LTC Arlo Janssen, USA (Ret), is the Editor of the Sunbeams newsletter for KOS. The second award was a Five-Star award for the KOS Website. MAJ Steven McNeil, ARNG, is the KOS Web Master for our chapter.



*Double Five-Star Awards for KOS at the 2021 FCOC Convention held in Sarasota*

*L-R: Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret), Lt Col Carol Walker, USAF (Ret), and COL Mike Borders, USA (Ret)*



*KOS member Mary Rose Janssen donating to COL Craig Ham for the "Stuff the Bus" program on May 28, 2021.*

The Kingdom of the Sun (KOS) Chapter supported the "Stuff the Bus" display held at the World Equestrian Center (WEC) in Marion County on May 28 – May 31, 2021. The "Stuff the Bus" program was started by KOS and is in its twentieth year. The Marion County Veterans Council now operates the "Stuff the Bus" program. COL Craig Ham, a member of our KOS Chapter, was the leader for setting up the outside "Stuff the Bus" display in the parking lot. The donation table and the silent auction display were in the Arena 2 building. The special "Eyes of Freedom" memorial display is in the lobby inside the front of the building. The displays were featured for a full four days at the World Equestrian Center.

## Lee Coast Chapter

Marilyn Leehan, Treasurer & Webmaster

With the MOAA Store shut down, we were grateful that FCOC provided us with the MOAA Awards medals, thanks to Mike Borders finding a Florida Company to make them. Our Lee Coast Chapter provided one to an outstanding Junior JROTC cadet at each of the 16 Lee County High Schools, though Covid prevented a county-wide awards night to do so in person.



We were, however, able to attend a modified awards program at the Lee County School offices to present five \$1,000 scholarships. They were presented to five graduating seniors who have participated in service-learning projects, in honorable standing showing exemplary leadership in their High School's JROTC program, who has been accepted into an ROTC program with the objective of a military career in pursuit of a commission. One of our outstanding chapter members, General James Dozier, has recently established a Foundation (also being funded with the sales of his new autobiography) and he also presented three scholarships. His scholarships were presented by two of our members who serve on his foundation board.



*Lee Coast Chapter President, Terry Robertson, presents the Chapter Scholarships*



*Lee Coast Chapter members, Teresa Galgano & Tom Madigan, present the James Dozier scholarships*



Thanks to the success of the annual MacKenzie – Janes Tribute Golf Outing, our Lee Coast Chapter Foundation was able to double its annual support of Mission United 211 to \$10,000 this year. Our chapter, under the leadership of past president, Roger Triftshauser brought the blueprint for Mission United 211 to the local United Way 5 years ago. In 2020 they fielded 80,545 calls and helped 1790 veterans. At left: Terry Robertson and Roger Triftshauser present the check to United Way director and Mission United 211 Veteran specialist.



# Historic Mayport Chapter

CDR Pat Kluever, USN (Ret)

27 April 2021 - Jean Ribault USMC JROTC Award  
Chapter USMC Programs Lead LtCol Joe Ruthenberg presented the MOAA Medal to Cadet 2nd Lieutenant Kurtis Weimann.



4 May 2021 - No-Dough-Dinner - USO Mayport

Volunteers from Historic Mayport Chapter supported a No-Dough (Free) Dinner (NDD) for enlisted active duty military families in our area at a drive-thru no-contact event called Taco Tuesday at USO Mayport.

Chapter volunteers included (L-R) Nancy Russell, Mary Kluever, Karl Price, Pat Kluever, Dante Capurro, and Cindy Tomlin (in blue). Volunteers prepared 400 individual meal bags with taco-seasoned meat, flour tortillas, chips and all the fixings. The bags were combined into larger containers for

pre-registered families to pick up at a designated time. Military I.D. cards were checks for the proper name and the number of family members were verified. Volunteers then loaded the containers into the family vehicle with a desert sized for the family, thanked the family for their service, and wished them a wonderful dinner. The great weather helped everyone support these very grateful enlisted military families enjoy a meal of tacos the day before Cinco de Mayo.



May 2021 - Volunteers from Historic Mayport Chapter supported a Healthy Military Family Initiative (HMFI) event at USO Mayport on Cinco de Mayo. This program provides fresh meats, vegetables, fruit, breads and deserts to be prepared at home. Families also shop at an outside table to pick up needed diapers, wipes, pet food and assorted supplies.





One hundred enlisted active duty military families had pre-registered and a group of vehicles pulled up outside USO Mayport every 15 minutes to receive food and pick up supplies.

### 15 May 2021 - FCOC Annual Convention - Sarasota Westin

Three couples from Fleet Landing accompanied Pat & Mary Kluever to the annual Floria MOAAS convention. This year the convention was held at the Sarasota Westin and hosted by the Sarasota Chapter. The couples from left to right below are Commander Pat & Mary Kluever, Mary Ellen and Rear Admiral (U) Andy Granuzzo, Dante and Meg Capurro, and Louise and Commander John Lones. During the ceremony the couples passed a United States Space Force ceremonial flag to Florida Council President Colonel Mike Borders, USA. The flag was donated to the Florida Council by Fleet Landing as a sign of continued support to the Florida Council and the convention.



## Citrus County Chapter

By COL Mark Bodenheim USAR (Ret), Membership Director, Citrus



*Cadet Commander Krystal Mattei, Navy JROTC program, Crystal River High School, was awarded a \$1000 scholarship from the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Citrus County Chapter at the May 13th JROTC scholarship awards luncheon at Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club. Pictured from left to right: Mr. Thomas Kennedy, Citrus County School Board member and event speaker; CW05 Elizabeth Rivera, USN (Ret), Senior Naval Science Instructor, Crystal River High School; Mrs. Melissa Neumann, mother of Cadet Commander Mattei; Cadet Commander Krystal Mattei; and CAPT Terri Harrison, USN (Ret), President, MOAA Citrus County Chapter.*

*Chapter members listen to Mr. Thomas Kennedy, Citrus County School Board member and event speaker at the May 2021 MOAA Citrus County Chapter JROTC scholarship awards luncheon. Mr. Kennedy talked about the importance of JROTC high school programs and their preparation of future leaders.*



*Cadet Commander Krystal Mattei, Navy JROTC program, Crystal River High School (left) is photographed here with her \$1000 scholarship check and award letter presented by CAPT Terri Harrison, USN (Ret), President, MOAA Citrus County Chapter, during the chapter's annual JROTC scholarship awards luncheon. Cadet Commander Mattei is interested in pursuing the teaching profession with her college education.*

## Sarasota Chapter

LT Alan Forrester, USN (Ret)

### MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION MEMBERS TREATED TO A PAINTING LESSON FROM RENOWNED ARTIST JOE PALMERIO

MOAS Luncheon in April the attendees were treated to a painting lesson from Joe Palmerio, a renowned local artist. Mr. Palmerio, a resident of Sarasota for the past twenty-eight years, is a graduate of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and the Barnes Foundation, Lower Merion, Pa.



He studied Sculpture at the Frudakis Academy, and metal sculpture at Tyler School of Art, Temple University. He taught painting in community arts centers in Pennsylvania and Colorado and taught physically challenged adults in Philadelphia for seven years. Mr. Palmerio exhibits throughout the United States. Numerous private and public collections include his works.

He began by telling the audience they were going to get a painting lesson and described the site he was going to paint; one we were all familiar with - O'Leary's Tiki Bar on City Island, looking to the west towards Big Pass. He completed an oil painting about 14"x11" in the Plein Air style, a French expression meaning "in the open air." It is used by artists to describe the art of outdoor painting, capturing landscapes and views in natural light, although he did it on a stage at Michael's on East.



He emphasized that the major items to take into consideration while painting are the values; light, medium and dark colors and how you blend them together to create a work of art. He set up his old French easel on the stage, which was interesting in itself. The easel has stand-alone legs, complete with storage compartments for his paints, brush, and assorted rags, etc., everything that a painter would need. He emphasized that it was over 40 years old and an antique itself.

During his presentation he presented several anecdotes about his career, with help from his spouse Gioia talking about his awards; working as a recreation leader for the City of Philadelphia, the Director of Recreation for the Ute Mountain Indian tribe in Colorado., and as the Everglades Artist in Residence in 2003.

After completing his painting, Joe graciously offered it up for our 50-50 Raffle and one of our long-time members won it. This was truly a great presentation.

### **MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION AWARDS \$56,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS**

As in past years, the Military Officers Association of Sarasota through its Foundation has continued its support of the local community by awarding a total of \$56,500 in scholarships and awards to various programs since January 2021. Covid-19 prevented the organization from holding its customary award luncheon, and therefore the staging of a group photo.

Fifteen graduating high school seniors received scholarships of \$2,000 each; and veteran student support programs at local universities and colleges were awarded \$25,000 to provide financial assistance to veterans in need.

Additionally, the Booker High School JROTC was awarded \$1,000 in recognition of the students' initiative and diligence in helping with the clean- up of a long neglected Sarasota cemetery.

Last not least, JROTC cadets from five area high schools were recognized with checks of \$100 each for their outstanding academic and leadership record.

MOAS and its Foundation are loyal supporters of the Southeastern Guide Dogs and My Warrior's Place and will continue to provide assistance to deserving charitable and veterans' organizations during the remainder of the year.

## South Central Chapter

COL Mike Borders, USA., Ret.

### SOUTH CENTRAL FLORIDA CHAPTER WINS MOAA GRANT, CONTRIBUTES \$7,500 TO COUNTY VETERANS COUNCIL

For the fifth time in four years, the South Central Florida Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) was one of a few chapters around the nation awarded the MOAA Foundation grant in the amount of \$7,500. The grant looks at local economic conditions as well as the impact of COVID in the community.

The chapter will donate the funds to support the Veterans Assistance Fund through the Highlands County Veterans Council, as it has done in past years. This fund provides food and financial assistance to needy veterans in the community.

With this year's grant, the chapter has provided a total of nearly \$30,000 to the Veterans Council over the last four years.

Helping our fellow veterans in need is all about taking care of our own and leaving no veteran behind, said Colonel Mike Borders, U.S. Army (Ret), local chapter president. The first four iterations of the program proved invaluable, and we are pleased to continue our support and assistance.



*Harry Marsh, President, Veterans Council of  
Highlands County  
Glenn West, VP, South Central Florida Chapter  
of MOAA and the Veterans Council  
Charlie Martin, Member  
Mike Borders, President  
David Grey, Treasurer*



# South Dade Chapter

Col Paul Loschiavo USMCR (Ret), SE Area VP

## Quilts of Valor

Recently, I got to visit the good people of the **South Dade Chapter of MOAA**. South Dade is south of Miami. Don't bother taking I-95 there. It terminates before you get there. To put this into perspective, the only chapter farther south in the US is the Florida Keys Chapter. **Tom Powell**, the Chapter President, had invited me to a board meeting. I did not know what to expect. From my perspective as the Area VP, South Dade was pretty... sleepy.

It turns out that I was wrong. Seven Board members were there, as well as six or seven spouses and significant others.

Besides being active in presenting JROTC Medals to cadets, the chapter is very active giving out **Quilts of Valor**. I just happened to be sitting next to **Joyce Cotner**, who does the quilts. I asked Joyce to explain. For the last seven or eight years, she would make patriotic quilts and the chapter would present them to a service person attached to the Homestead Air Reserve Base or the US Southern Command, in a dignified ceremony. In this Iraq-Afghanistan environment, there is no shortage of combat veterans to recognize.



Joyce was too modest. My wife is a quilter and it takes a ton of effort to make a quilt. It turns out that Joyce has made and distributed some *twenty seven* quilts over the years. Under the heading of statistics, they have honored sixteen male combat veterans and one female combat veteran, as well as a female Korean War Red Cross Worker, with each recipient receiving a hand-quilted original quilt at a nice Luncheon event at the Homestead Air Reserve Base.

It gets better. She's an active member of the Ocean Waves Quilters Guild and they sponsor *half* of the presentation events. Pre-pandemic, the Guild had about a hundred and twenty members, which is somewhat larger than the MOAA Chapter!

I mentioned to Joyce that I'd like to write about her for the Communiqué. She wrote the following about the MOAA Chapter's participation in Quilts of Valor. It's amazing what you can accomplish when you don't care who gets the credit.

Here is what she provided:

Since 2016 the members of MOAA South Florida Chapter 25 have recognized Military Appreciation Month by honoring combat war veterans with Quilts of Valor at an Awards' Luncheon Ceremony at Homestead Air Reserve Base. Mistress of Ceremony and local Chapter Secretary, Joyce Cotner, a representative of the National Quilt of Valor Foundation, and Col Charlotte de Ogburn, USAF (Retired, Nurse Corps) worked in tandem presenting each quilt.

Quilts of Valor are presented to active duty and reserve military service members and veterans who have been touched by war. These quilts are a lifetime award that have been stitched with love, prayers and healing thoughts. Each quilt was crafted by members of the *Miami Ocean Waves Quilt Guild*. The Quilt and its Presentation Case is a token of appreciation that says Thank You for the veteran's Service, Sacrifice and Valor to our Country.

Army veteran Charlie Hudson, a reporter and writer for the South Dade News Leader, has covered our Quilt of Valor Award Ceremonies. Photos and Write-ups appear in the local paper. For additional information, please view [www.govf.org](http://www.govf.org)



*Joyce Cotner (in red)*





# Southwest Florida Chapter

Susan Farr, President

On May 14, 2021 at Glen Eagle Golf & Country Club, MOASWF hosted a dinner for the JROTC Instructors in Collier County. Each JROTC Program was awarded \$500.



*CAPT Andrew Vallozzi, IV, 1st Vice President, along with Admiral Jerry Johnson presented the awards to the instructors.*



*LCDR Robert Perfetto, Admiral Jerry Johnson, SFC James Washington, AI, Palmetto Ridge High School*



*LCDR Robert Perfetto, Admiral Jerry Johnson, MAJ Ruben Gonzalez, SAI, Barron Collier High School*



*LCDR Robert Perfetto, Admiral Jerry Johnson, COL Ian Falk, SAI, Golden Gate High School*



*LCDR Robert Perfetto, Admiral Jerry Johnson, LTC Paul Garrah, SAI, Naples High School*



*Admiral Jerry Johnson, LTC Kerrye Glass, SAI, Immokalee High School*



*Special presentation and remembrance by the JROTC Senior Army Instructors to Liz Bennett in honor of LCDR Benny Bennett*

## Tampa Chapter

Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret), Editor, The Retrospect

### MOAA Tampa Chapter's "Thriving After Military Service" Transitioning Veteran Event

by Col Paul (PJ) McAneny, USAF (Ret)

On Thursday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, the Tampa MOAA Chapter hosted its inaugural event for transitioning military members and their families. The popular event was titled "Thriving After Military Service" and, rather than the typical transition events which are focused on, job skills, resume writing, networking, etc., the MOAA event addressed leading fulfilling lives following your military service. The theme of the morning portion of this unique seminar was "a focus on the family" with speakers from TRICARE and the Veterans Administration as well as local Financial Advisors and Attorneys. The afternoon was dedicated to "a focus on the community" with representatives and volunteers from organizations such as MOAA's own Tampa Chapter, Association of the US Army-SunCoast Chapter, Hillsborough County Veterans Treatment Court, 1<sup>st</sup> US Volunteer Cavalry Regiment – Rough Riders, Tampa Sports Authority, EoS Fitness, and the South Tampa Chamber of Commerce. Attendees included a variety of ranks (officer and enlisted) from all four services. One enthusiastic attendee stated, "Extremely valuable! I'm in the middle of my transition now and this was the only venue I've seen that covered these topics."



Charles Dalcourt  
"Thriving After Military Service"

A residual benefit of conducting the "Thriving After Military Service" seminar was that it served as a productive marketing and recruiting event for our local chapter. The MOAA-Tampa Transition Seminar will be held quarterly with the next event tentatively scheduled for Thursday, August 19<sup>th</sup>.

## Sun City Center Chapter

B. Frank Kepley CAPT USN (Ret)

### Renée Brunelle Co-Founder of Pathfinders Downsizing Solutions addresses local Sun City Center FL MOAA Chapter 42.

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Chapter 42, met for their monthly luncheon in the Fellowship Hall at the Trinity Baptist Church. Renée Brunelle was the featured speaker. Renee is the Co-Founder of Pathfinders Downsizing Solutions. She guides clients in the navigation of smoothly moving from one residence to another by "rightsizing" their entire home.



Renée guides clients on what to take, what to sell and what to donate/trash. Since moving to Tampa over twelve years ago, Renée has supported USCENTCOM, USSOCOM, SOCCENT, 6th & 927th Wings at MacDill Air Force Base and the Florida National Guard. She continues to volunteer at MacDill Air Force Base by working as one of the 927th Board of Directors.

She has been part of the South Tampa Chamber Military Affairs Committee for over a decade. Also supports the 6th Wing at the Commander's Chalet for AirFest, assists the Airmen & Family Readiness offices and provides donations to the dorm residents.



*Renee Brunelle*

Through Pathfinders Downsizing Solutions clients, she is able to provide ongoing donations to Liberty Manor Veterans Home and other local charities. Renee has Bachelor and Master Degrees in Health Science from Armstrong Atlantic University in Savannah, Georgia with a focus on senior health and wellness.

Renée discussed and encouraged the veterans organizations chapters to initiate programs to recognize and recruit surviving spouses to join the various veterans organizations. She provided tips such as appointing and electing them to leadership roles; putting them in charge of special projects; initiating post death contact; inviting them to chapter meetings; and submitting them for surviving spouse liaison excellence awards.



*(L-R) D. Kay. Benson; Renée Brunelle, Surviving Spouse and speaker; Darlene Craig; Doris Johnson; and Jane Foppe*

Following her presentation, Renée and four MOAA surviving spouses were recognized and presented with a bouquet of flowers. See photo above. A delicious lunch was then served. All attendees were pleased to be able to once again meet in person rather than virtually.

## Cape Canaveral Chapter

Marilyn M. Sanford, MOAACC Media Relations

### Florida Tech ROTC Panther Battalion Conducts Virtual Commissioning for Two Army Second Lieutenants

On Friday April 30<sup>th</sup>, the Florida Institute of Technology ROTC Panther Battalion held their Spring Commissioning Ceremony for two new Army Second Lieutenants. Normally, the Panther Battalion conducts the commissioning with speakers, friends and families attending on the Florida Tech Campus just prior to spring graduation. Due to on-going pandemic measures however, the commissioning for the new Army Officers was conducted virtually. They took the commissioning oath of office via video-conference from multiple remote locations, pinning on their new rank insignia with friends and family, while other participants live-streamed the ceremony from over 30 locations. At the ceremony, LTC Jimmy Crook, Florida Tech Professor of Military Science, reminded the new Lieutenants of the responsibilities they were undertaking as commissioned officers in the Army. The Lieutenants also heard messages from Dr. Dwayne McCay, President the Florida Institute of Technology, and Brigadier General Joseph B. Berger III, Commandant of the Army's Judge Advocate General Legal Center in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The new Florida Tech Graduates and Army Second Lieutenants are:

- Marco Vergara, graduating with a degree in Biomedical Science. He was commissioned as an Active-Duty Medical Service Corps Officer. Marco received a four-year ROTC scholarship to attend Florida Tech. As part of his ROTC studies, he completed a Cadet Leadership Development and Cultural Understanding Course in Chile. He is also a graduate of Vista Murrieta High School in Murrieta, California.
- Alex Apathy, Graduating with a degree in Aviation Management. He received a three-and-a-half-year ROTC scholarship to attend Florida Tech. His ROTC studies included Opposing Force Training and Basic Airborne (Parachute) Training. He is also a graduate of Berea-Midpark High School in Berea, Ohio.



Normally, representatives from the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC) attend the commissioning ceremony and present the new officers with their first "Gold Bars" --the rank insignia of Second Lieutenants. This year, MOAACC representatives remotely

live-streamed the ceremony and “virtually” presented the commissioning sets to the new officers. Colonel Steve Bond (USA-Retired), President of MOAACC said--“We congratulate Alex and Marco and welcome them to our ranks. We wish them the best of luck in their journey as officers in the United States Army.”



*(L to R) Alex Apathy, Steve Bond, Marco Vergara*

## **Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Foundation Provides Grant to Aid Local Area Veterans-in-Need**

The Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC) was one of 33 Chapters from among MOAA's 400+ affiliates across the nation awarded a MOAA Foundation Outreach Grant to support veterans in local communities this year. This is the fifth year MOAA offered Community Outreach grants, but the first time The Cape Canaveral Chapter has received one.

MOAACC received the \$3,750 grant from the MOAA Foundation to identify and assist area veterans and their family members in critical need of assistance with housing, subsistence, health, and financial or other emergency relief. Over the next few months, members of MOAACC will be working with three local area veterans support organizations: The Veterans Center of Melbourne (under the Veterans Administration); The Volunteers of America (VOA); and the National Veterans Homeless Support (NVHS) to identify and verify veterans or families of veterans in need. Once area veterans-in-need are identified and validated by the veterans/veteran support organization, MOAACC will identify specific needs, deliver items, or make assistance payments.

Colonel Steve Bond, US Army Retired and the President of MOAACC, said: “We thank the MOAA Foundation for this grant. Taking care of our brother and sister veterans and their families is one of the reasons why we exist as an organization.”

Last year, MOAA's Cape Canaveral Chapter donated nearly \$100,000 to area veterans, active serving military families, and military-oriented students.



## Northwest Florida Chapter

Dave Parisot, Community Outreach Officer

NWFMOA has been awarded two **Community Grants from the MOAA Foundation for 2021**, i.e., a MOAA Community Grant of \$2,500 and a MOAA COVID-19 Relief Grant of \$1,250. Both of these grants, totaling \$3,750, will be used to purchase commissary gift cards for young airmen and soldier families at Eglin, Hurlburt, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (A). In addition, attendees at the May 6<sup>th</sup> Scholarship Luncheon donated \$812 to this cause, and Chapter Treasurer Colton has received an additional \$200 by mail designated for this program. The current combined grant fund and donations will allow us to purchase 190 commissary gift cards of \$25 each. We would like to purchase at least 250 gift cards. Thus, we are keeping the member donation window open through June 30, 2021. We will distribute the commissary gift cards via the First Sergeants Councils in lieu of holding a food drive.

To get a better feel for this problem, please read the MOAA Newsletter at [www.MOAA.org](http://www.MOAA.org) (May 13, 2021) article “**Now Is the Time to End Hunger Among Young Military Families**”. An excerpt from this article: “Junior enlisted military families with two or three dependents face food insecurity, rely on food banks, and fear the stigma of seeking help. Due to the way the Department of Agriculture calculates the military’s Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) as part of income, many military families do not qualify for food stamps (now known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP). This enduring problem for young military families was intensified by pandemic-driven spouse unemployment rates and reduced child care availability. Before the pandemic, over 10,000 military families needed this support.” In this same MOAA article, there are links to contact our House Representative and Senators to support legislation to alleviate these issues. I urge you to do so.

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, the NWFMOA held our annual Scholarship Luncheon with the theme of “Helping to Build Future Military Officers and Leaders”. Chapter member Fran Hendricks, B/Gen, USAF, Ret., presented this year’s MOAA Medal to seven outstanding junior year JROTC cadets enrolled at the seven high schools in our local area with JROTC programs. The MOAA Medal was created by the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) to recognize leadership and academic achievements of ROTC and JROTC cadets in their junior year of college or high school, respectively. Selectees must be in good academic standing, be of high moral character, demonstrate a high degree of loyalty to the unit, school, and country, and demonstrate exceptional potential for military leadership.



**MOAA Medal Awardees and Instructors: Cadet Quin Gable** (Choctawhatchee); **CMSgt Jacquilin Houston** (Fort Walton Beach Instructor); **Cadet Gavin Corber** (Fort Walton Beach); **Cadet Jacob Woodall** (Crestview); **Lt Col Charles Farmer** (Niceville Instructor) who accepted for **Cadet John Harman**; and **Capt. Mike Fisher**, USN (Navarre Instructor) who accepted for **Cadet Donovan Ray**.



And at the same Luncheon, we awarded eight scholarships to local JROTC cadets from local high schools. It was my extreme pleasure to present scholarships totaling \$21,500 to eight local JROTC cadets who will be enrolling in ROTC programs at their selected colleges.



**2021 NWFMOA Scholarship Winners** (\$2,500 each): **Kathrynn Dunn** (Crestview), winner of the “Chong Parisot Memorial Scholarship”, **Isabella Barrette** (Fort Walton Beach), **Logan Herron** (Navarre), **Ethan Gifford** (Navarre), **Christian Padron** (Fort Walton Beach), **Connor Dage** (Niceville), and **Ryan Herron** (Niceville). Not pictured due to IB testing is Cadet **Jeffrey Tavarez** (Choctawhatchee); Jeffrey won this year’s “**Lt Col James and Mrs Una Heavener Memorial Scholarship**” of \$4,000.

In addition to presenting this year’s scholarships, we also recognized members of the Gold Century Club. Members from previous years were recognized at their tables, and scholarship Fund President, Dave Parisot, presented Gold Club recognition certificates to new members of 2020 and 2021 (see photo). Membership in the Gold Club is achieved when accumulated donations since 2015 total to \$500 or more. Since 2015 our Gold Club members have donated over \$35,000 for scholarships.



**New Gold Club Members** who received their certificates of recognition are **Jake and Kathleen Bush**, **Nick Marotta**, **Pete Peterzen**, **Kevin Kirby**, and **Scott and Janet Berry**. Scholarship Fund President **Dave Parisot** is on the right. Absent were **B/Gen Patt Maney** and **Mrs Caroline Maney**.

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## **MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (MOAA) FLORIDA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS (FCOC)**

The MOAA Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) is comprised of 42 Chapters with nearly 5,000 members and their families. FCOC is one of MOAA's largest Councils. MOAA has a membership of over 380,000 members in all 50 States.

The FCOC's primary communication vehicles are our bi-monthly publication, *The COUNCIL COMMUNIQUÉ* and our Website [www.MOAAFL.org](http://www.MOAAFL.org) Ads run for one year.

The *COMMUNIQUÉ* is distributed electronically to all our chapters, MOAA Headquarters in Virginia, and our influential contacts across the state of Florida.

The *COMMUNIQUÉ* provides a unique forum for businesses to reach a select segment of the population. The membership is patriotic and professional. We encourage your business to reach out to our members by advertising in *The COUNCIL COMMUNIQUÉ*.

In appreciation of Businesses that also support the FCOC Annual Convention with Ads in the Convention Souvenir Program Book within the last year the FCOC offers a discount for the same size Ad shown on the following Order Form.

Thank you!

FCOC

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### **Submitting Articles and Pictures for *The Communiqué***

Articles can be attached to an email. Microsoft Word works best (Ariel 12). You can also type your information into the body of an email where it can be copied and pasted into the newsletter. PDF files can also be used but without photos.

Pictures should have a .jpg extension. If you are sending pictures from your chapter, please include the chapter name and the names of those in the picture. A few words on what the event is about will help interest the readers.

If you have questions about your submission, contact

Randy Fiebrandt  
[rfiebs1953@gmail.com](mailto:rfiebs1953@gmail.com)





## The Council Communiqué ADVERTISING ORDER FORM



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**Notes:** Annual is from Jan-Dec; six (6) issues published electronically on the 10th of the even month. Mid-year placement for a recurring annual placement can be at pro-rated annual rate for remaining issues. Copy due dates for 2020 are: the first day of February, April, June, August, October, and December.

*(Ad placement in printed Annual Convention Program (June) is handled separately by Convention Committee; POC's listed under Committee Chairs on last page of Communiqué)*

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Please address questions to Pat Kluever at (540) 775-4955 or at "[vpfcoc@gmail.com](mailto:vpfcoc@gmail.com)"

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PANAMA CITY  
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### [Bradenton Chapter](#)

Bradenton  
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Cape Coral  
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Area: South West  
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Gainesville  
Area: Mid Central  
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Area: Northeast  
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Palm Harbor  
Area: West Central  
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### [Military Officers Association of Sarasota, Inc.](#)

Sarasota  
Area: South West  
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Naples  
Area: South West  
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**Palm Beach Area Chapter**

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Pensacola  
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Area: Northwest

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