



The Council Communiqué

Florida Council of Chapters
Military Officers Association of America



June 2022

Issue 170



President's Message

CDR Patrick R (Pat) Kluever, USN, Ret.
Naval Aviator (1320) - Navy Test Pilot School Graduate
(Class-71)

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GREETINGS MOAA MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,
COL Mike Borders offered to delay this edition of the Communiqué until after the West Palm Beach convention so I could use it for my first President's message. Thanks Mike! - that's the kind of selfless leadership I've witnessed as part of the FCoC leadership team over the past two years, and it has been a pleasure for Mary and I to team with Mike and Diana. We all learned a lot and tried new things as we navigated the "rocky shoals" of COVID - we powered through because of Mike's tireless personal efforts and leadership - Well Done Sir!!

FIRST - INFORMATION FROM LTGEN ATKINS
LtGen Atkins and Laura attended our recent (9-12 June) Florida convention. I received a note on 15 June that he had spoken with several members about an upcoming cruise to Vietnam and some were very interested in taking the cruise. However, he had just been told the cruise only had 5 staterooms left open and was concerned that our

Florida members understood the urgency of booking now if they wanted to join the cruise. I said that we had delayed the June edition of the Communiqué to include information on the convention and I would pass along his concern.

Cruise Data follows: 50 Years of Freedom Anniversary Trip
Vietnam, Cambodia & the Mekong River - Ho Chi Minh City to Sim Reap ~ 12-nights February 17-March 1, 2023 with optional 3-night Hanoi Extension. Questions Contact Mike Tyrell, at 1-800-211-5107 or mike@moaavac.com.

Cruise website:

<http://brennco.com/MOAAVACATIONS/vietnam>

MOAA article: [MOAA - Revisiting History: Join MOAA for a Vietnam Cruise](#)

WELCOME AND THANKS
FCoC Congratulates and Welcomes Aboard new Vice President (VP) COL Steve Bond and new Area Vice Presidents (AVPs) COL Don Panzenhagen (Northwest Area) and COL Gary Nolan (Southwest Area).

Continued on next page

My assessment is that your Council is capable, committed and ready to take on any challenge and succeed.

Thanks to Immediate Past President (IPP) COL Len Friedlander for your support during last two years. As new IPP COL Mike Borders will continue to be our primary switchboard operator for FCoC and Chapter Zoom sessions - Thanks Again Mike!. Mike's remarks as IMM follow COL Steve Bond's VP message below.

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

Our legislative friends in D.C. acknowledge they are lobbyists, and they need that title to do their job. I am not a lobbyist. Rather, I believe all of us supporting the MOAA mission are advocates. Advocates for active-duty service members, veterans, their families and survivors. As advocates we are in a long game as administrations and level of support change, but we must compete effectively year-to-year to ensure future success.

WARDROOM ETIQUETTE

Just like family gatherings, politics and religion have no place in our discussion or communications as we conduct MOAA business. Both topics are naturally divisive and ultimately destructive. I ask you to work on and worry only about what is in our wheel-house and support our mission - ensuring our service members, veterans, and their families and survivors continue to receive the pay, benefits, recognition and support they earned through their service and sacrifice for the United States of America!

SET COURSE & SPEED - FUTURE VECTORS

Luckily Mike and I have worked closely as Council leaders. I am VERY comfortable with where FCoC is headed, and we will maintain course and speed while focusing on supporting the success of all Florida Chapters. ***However, I do have three vectors for emphasis going forward:***

1. **RECRUITING:** Unique as a Veteran organization, MOAA's national membership is growing. Also Florida is growing as a preferred business and retiree destination, and a percentage these people are veterans. I think it makes sense that our Florida Chapters should be growing. What do we need to do to make that happen? VP Steve Bond will be the champion for this vector working with the AVPs for recruiting/retention in Chapters within their areas. See more detail in Steve's following VP remarks.
2. **LEVERAGE OPPORTUNITIES:** Three things come to mind:
 - a) Paying attention to all the things MOAA National is providing and taking maximum advantage of those offerings

SIGNIFICANT DATES FOR JUNE & JULY

June 6, 2022 – D-Day (1944) Anniversary of the World War II Allied invasion in Normandy, France.

June 14, 2022 - Flag Day - A day to commemorate the adoption of the United States flag.

June 14, 2022 - Army Birthday

June 19, 2022 - Father's Day

June 23, 2022 - Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday

June 25, 2022 - Anniversary of the start of the Korean War (1950)

June 27, 2022 - National PTSD Awareness Day

A day set aside to raise public awareness about issues related to PTSD.

July 4, 2022 -

Independence Day

July 27, 2022 - Korean War Veterans Armistice Day (1953)

July 29, 2022 - Anniversary of the Army Chaplain Corps

(e.g. Mercer ad funds, USAA and MOAA Foundation Grants, monthly virtual seminars, and incentives/awards),

- b) Actively advertising and supporting the work our Council's legislative team is doing for Veterans at all levels, and
- c) Holding working sessions in conjunction with Council leader's visit to Chapters (meet with Chapter leaders after lunch or before dinner to provide information, discuss ideas and issues, and verify leader information). Council leadership will champion this vector.

3. **SPOUSES:** In many of our Chapters (and FCoC) spouses provide invaluable support and many serve as officers. I would like us all to recognize the work/contributions by spouses and surviving spouses at every opportunity. Request all Council and Chapter leaders champion this vector.

NEXT PORT VISIT

During the 6-7 January 2023 Leadership Training Seminar in Orlando I expect to learn new MOAA national capabilities and offerings. I encourage all Florida Chapter Presidents to attend this annual event with a few of your new Chapter leaders to learn how to take advantage of new MOAA national capabilities and opportunities for your Chapter.

In closing, I am honored to be your Council President and I am humbled by your confidence in a "seasoned" naval aviator.

Best Regards & Carry On, Pat K.



Vice President's Message

COL Steve Bond, USA (Ret)

What an honor to be elected to serve as the Vice President of the Florida Council! I have seen up close and personal the great work the council does, most recently during the state's Advocacy in Action (AiA) engagements and in setting up the convention held in West Palm Beach this month. The convention was a super event and I want to extend my thanks to those that orchestrated it. Those of us attending had a wonderful time. Legislative Advocacy and "Camaraderie with a Purpose" are the primary reasons, along with community service of why we exist as an organization!

As the Council's Vice President, I will be working closely with our new President, CDR Pat Kluever, with the vectors he outlined in his article, and helping him coordinate the council's activities, the efforts of our seven Area Vice Presidents and leaders from our 40 Chapters. One of Pat's vectors is "Recruiting" to increase our numbers across the state and make our voice even louder in the Halls of Congress, in Tallassee, and in our communities on behalf of the serving military, all veterans and their families. As the Council's Membership Chairman, I have used these pages over the past year to outline a state-wide Membership Campaign. The campaign concept charts are now posted on the Council's Membership webpage at <https://www.moaaf.org/Membership.aspx>. I encourage all

chapter leaders and membership chairs and presidents to review and discuss those charts. The hard work of the campaign is just beginning. As we work on implementation, we need to be ready to bring new and engaged members. In the next few weeks, we will work with MOAA national on a push to get area MOAA non-Chapter members to sign up with a chapter. I will be working with the Area Vice Presidents and Chapter Leaders on this in the coming months.

The MOAA motto of “Never Stop Serving” resonates strongly with me. As servant-leaders, accomplishing the mission and taking care of the troops was drilled into all of us. MOAA makes a huge difference on behalf of the military, all veterans, and their families at the National level. The Council and our Chapters are key to our collective successes at the state and local levels. For all our Council and Chapter Leaders, I am looking forward to working with you! If you have questions or comments, contact me at vpfcoc@gmail.com.

Steve

Meet the New Council Vice President:

Steve earned his commission through ROTC and served 29 years in the Army as an Infantry and Military Intelligence Officer in Airborne, Infantry, Military Intelligence, Special Operations, and Joint Commands. He is a veteran of Military Operations in Panama (Just Cause), Haiti (Uphold Democracy), the Gulf Wars (Desert Shield/Storm and Iraqi Freedom), and others. He is a graduate of the Army Command & General Staff College, the Army War College, holds a master's degree in History, and is a Master Parachutist and Ranger qualified. After Steve retired from the Army, he worked for one of the largest Defense-Aerospace Companies in the U.S. as a Director of Business Development in Melbourne, FL from 2004-08, and again from 2009-17. He returned to Government Service in 2008-09 to serve as Government Civilian/Senior Executive Service in a Flag Officer Position, as a Transition Team Director in Iraq. Following his retirement from industry, Steve served in leadership positions in MOAA's Cape Canaveral Chapter (MOAACC)—one of the largest chapters in MOAA—as Speakers Bureau Chair, Army Liaison, Membership Chair, Vice President, and President of the Chapter. He is currently the Past President and Senior Advisor to the MOAACC Board of Directors and has served on the Florida Council (FCoC) Board of Directors as the Membership Chairman since 2021. Steve and his wife Jane live in Melbourne, FL.





Immediate Past President's Message

COL Mike Borders, USA., Ret.

Fellow Florida Council MOAA members, this is my first message as your FCoC Immediate Past President. By the time most of you read this note, Patrick Kluever will have been sworn in as your new FCoC President. As this edition goes to print, we have wrapped up our annual convention and business meeting. Special thanks to Marc Oliveri and the entire convention team for all their hard work and dedicated efforts. We were honored with the presence of our MOAA National President & CEO, Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, who served as keynote speaker, swore in the new board members, and presented the Colonel Marvin J. Harris Communications awards. We also held two board meetings—the first was my last as President, and the second was Pat Kluever's first as President. Other key additions to the board are Steve Bond as the new VP, Gary Nolan as the southwest area AVP, and the appointment of Don Panzenhagen to fill out Nick Moratta's term as northwest AVP. I want to express my sincere gratitude to all the members of the board of directors and officers of the Florida Council. They are all volunteers, and all donate their time and energy to ensuring we stay on track. My special thanks to Pat Kluever. Pat and I developed a special relationship over the past four or five years, and it paid dividends. I cannot thank everyone by name—suffice it to say that everyone on the FCoC board did their part and I greatly appreciate it. The same goes for the volunteers in our chapters. Two years ago, Len Friedlander noted that past President Marc Oliveri and I were his guardrails. I can say the same about both of them plus Pat. I often reach out to them for their wise counsel and advice, and take advantage of their experience and knowledge. I could not have been successful without it.

When I agreed to take on these duties, I had no idea that COVID would be a constant companion. COVID certainly made for some real challenges. I do not have to list them or tell anyone what those challenges were. But it also presented a unique circumstance that actually made the FCoC more efficient and more effective. Whereas we used to have our October board meeting on a telephonic conference call, we now have this great thing called Zoom. And Zoom has allowed us to have coordination meetings of all description. I won't detail it, but we are better coordinated and more informed than ever. Still, on balance, COVID was clearly a net-negative. But we pushed through it, and here we are.

On a sad note, I must mention that Ed Lillich, our long-serving chair for resolutions, bylaws, and ever-present parliamentarian, passed away in May. He and Chris were always at our conventions and leadership fora. Ed was dedicated to his chapter, the FCoC, and MOAA. He will be missed. Again, Diana and I extend our warmest regards and hope that you enjoy many successes as you continue to do the important work of your chapters, the FCoC, and MOAA. Thank you so much for your support and friendship. I know Pat and Mary Kluever can count on the same as he takes the reins and moves forward with the FCoC.

Cheers,
Mike

1 2 M O N T H C A L E N D A R

30 JUN 22: Monthly Round Table - Recruiting (Virtual)
 28 JUL 22: Monthly Round Table - Event Planning (Virtual)
 25 AUG 22: Monthly Round Table - Community Outreach (Virtual)
 29 SEP 22: Monthly Round Table - Branding (Virtual)
 11 OCT 22: Fall FCOC Board Meeting (TBD) (Virtual)
 24-28 OCT 22: MOAA Annual Meeting - Kansas City (Meeting date Friday 28 OCT)
 27 OCT 22: Monthly Round Table - Transition Services (Virtual)
 1 NOV 22 to 1 MAR 23: MOAA Foundation Scholarship Application Window
 17 NOV 22: Monthly Round Table - Retention (Virtual)
 17-20 NOV 22: Georgia State MOAA Convention, Athens, GA
 1 DEC 22 to 28 FEB 23: MOAA Foundation Community Outreach Grant Window
 6 DEC 22: Final Room Registration Count Due for January Orlando Seminar
 29 DEC 22: Monthly Round Table - EOY Review/Discussion (Virtual)
 6-7 JAN 23: Annual Leadership Training Seminar (LTS) - Rosen Center, Orlando
 1 FEB 23: Harris Communications Award Applications Due
 1 MAY 23: Level of Excellence Applications Due
 18-21 MAY 23: FCoC 2023 Convention St Augustine
 1 JUN 23: Strowbridge Legislative Chair/Liaison Award Nominations Due
 1 JUN 23: Surviving Spouse Liaison Excellence Award Nomination Due
 1 JUL 23: Inputs Due for OCT MOAA Magazine

Question? OK, we know that June 14th was Flag Day and the Army's Birthday. What other "day" also happens each June 14th. Hint: It's got something to do with Kentucky. Answer on page 34.

MOAA Florida Council of Chapters Holds Annual Convention

\$5,000 Raised for MOAA Foundation

Colonel Steve Bond, U.S. Army Retired

Delegates and representatives from among MOAA's 40 Florida Chapters gathered for the Florida Council of Chapters (FCoC) 45th Annual Convention 9-12 June, in West Palm Beach, Florida. The theme of the convention was "Fun in the Sun." While there were no PowerPoint presentations, business for the Council was conducted. Of note, delegates elected new officers to council leadership positions and raised \$5,000 for the MOAA Foundation to support its charitable efforts for veterans and military families across the nation.

The work at the convention included the usual Council Board of Directors Meetings and the General Membership Business Meeting to elect new Council Officers. A memorial service to remember those members who died in 2021 was held. MOAA President and CEO, Lt Gen Dana Atkins, USAF Ret, took part and presented Harris Communications Awards to the Council and 24 of the Florida Chapters—the highest amount of any State in the Nation! He also installed the new council officers into their positions on Saturday night prior to the mystery dinner theater. The convention's fun activities included a dining around West Palm Beach, a Casino Night Fundraiser where participants played to raise money for The MOAA Foundation and prizes. There was also a wine tasting and a murder-mystery dinner theater.



Lt Gen Atkins (L) presents CDR Pat Kluever (C), incoming Florida Council President and out-going Council President, COL Mike Borders (R) with the Five Star Harris Communications Awards for the Council's Newsletter and Website.

Convention Highlights:

- Newly elected and installed Florida Council Officers were CDR Pat Kluever (USN Ret), the former Council Vice President was installed as President; COL Steve Bond, (USA Ret) as the senior Vice President; and COL Mike Borders (USA Ret), moved from the President of the Council to Immediate Past President. MAJ Lorraine Holland (USA Ret) was re-installed to continue as the East Central Florida Area Vice President, Colonel Gary Nolan (USAF Ret)-elected Southwest Area Vice President, and Colonel Paul Loschiavo (USMC Ret)-re-elected as Southeast AVP. A full listing of all council officers and directors can be found at <https://www.moaaf.org/Council.aspx>.
- A memorial service for chapter members we lost in 2021, was held and their names are listed in the Convention Program. The link to download the Convention Program is on the FCoC website at <https://www.moaaf.org/Convention.aspx>.

(Note: Enter "2022" and go to the bottom of the page to download the program.)

The Casino Night fundraiser offered convention participants the fun and excitement of playing games of chance and winning prizes, while directly aiding the MOAA Foundation in its important



Marilyn Leehan, Council Treasurer (R) receives a leadership plaque from Council President Mike Borders for her work on the FCoC Council.

work. Fleet Landing was the overall sponsor of the event. At the conclusion of the convention, Lt Gen Atkins received a \$5,000 check, the net proceeds of the fundraiser for the MOAA Foundation. In 2021, the MOAA Foundation awarded grants of over \$44,000 to 12 Florida Chapters for community-based programs directly aiding veterans, their families, and those currently serving our nation.

Pictures and the program for the convention are posted on the Florida Council Website-- www.MOAAFL.org. In addition to the memorial list of names, the program includes welcome letters from MOAA and Elected Officials, and advertisements from businesses and chapters. Next year's convention will be 18-21 May in St. Augustine, FL at the World Golf Village Renaissance St. Augustine Resort. Mark your

calendars now. All MOAA members and guests are invited!



Lt Gen Atkins (Foreground), swears in the newly elected Florida Council Officers. (L-R) Commander Pat Kluever-Council President, Colonel Steve Bond-Council Vice President, Major Lorraine Holland-East Central Area Vice President, Colonel Gary Nolan-Southwest Area Vice President, Colonel Paul Loschiavo-Southeast AVP, and Colonel Mike Borders, Immediate Past President.

Casino Night activities. Big Winners??





Lieutenant Colonel Marc Oliveri (R)-Convention Chair, MOAA Board of Directors and Past President of the Florida Council and Commander Pat Kluever (L)-President of the Florida Council present Lt Gen Atkins with a check for \$5,000, the net proceeds of the Casino Night Fundraiser.



Chaplain's Message

By CH (COL) Anthony P. "Tony" Clark, ARNG, Ret.

Summertime: the season when "the days are longer, the nights are stronger" and "the living is easy." It's a season marked by growth: foliage gets greener and fuller and your lawn seems to grow knee high overnight.

Most liturgical Christian traditions (Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal) mark this "long green season" in the Church year with green vestments and weekly Gospel readings that focus on the disciples (and worshipers) growing in their faith through Jesus' teaching, preaching, and action.

Regardless of your faith or spiritual tradition, the summertime can be a time marked by personal growth and development on so many different levels and in so many different dimensions of our lives. Intellectually, for example, what could you learn this summer? Is there an author with whom you can do a deep dive into their writing? Perhaps you dig deeper into the history of your city or region? Maybe it's an online course?

On the spiritual level, how can you draw closer to the "who" or "what" that grounds you and brings you peace, purpose, and meaning? It may be practicing a new style of prayer or meditation? What about a daily journal of reflection, spending time in the morning or evening and recording thoughts and reflections? Or spiritual reading, perhaps from an unfamiliar spiritual or faith tradition?

How could you grow physically? Yes, I know the Florida heat limits our outside time, but yoga, aerobics, and other exercise options are definitely indoor friendly. And if you are a crazy person like me that enjoys exercise in the Florida heat and humidity, DRINK MORE WATER!!! It may be the summer, but our bodies are designed to be active, so however you do it, move it, move it!

A final thought on growing and developing during this season of growth: growth, development, and learning in all dimensions of life occur outside our comfort zones. An area of growth for me, for example, is practicing yoga. And that is waaaay outside my comfort zone in so many ways. But the improved balance, flexibility, and sleep are well worth the awkwardness in the poses.

So move beyond your comfort zones and grow like the grass this summer!

Legislative Affairs

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



	<p>MOAA Legislative Update: Read about the latest MOAA Advocacy News and Calls-to-Action here.</p> <p>https://moaa.quorum.us/</p> <p>Take Action Now!</p>	
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Toxic Exposure Reform Bill Passes Senate

Please ask your House member to ensure this legislation crosses the finish line

The Senate, with a bi-partisan vote of 84-14 on June 16, passed the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022, HR 3927, sending the bill back to the House for consideration.

Although neither of the Florida senators had been co-sponsors of the Senate version, both voted for this Bill.

The House previously passed a version of the omnibus toxic exposure reform legislation along party lines 256-174. This new vote is necessary to accept the changes made by the senate.

MOAA is asking its members and others to reach out to their representatives once more and secure their support for expanding VA care to more than 3.5 million veterans, adding 23 ailments to the list of those connected to toxic exposure, funding dozens of new VA facilities in 19 states, and improving toxic exposure-related screening, research, and claims processing.

Use this link to:

[Ask Your House Member to Vote for the Honoring Our PACT](#)

Biggest military pay raise in 20 years should be boosted even more because of inflation worries

Servicemembers are in line for their biggest pay raise since 2003 next January, but lawmakers and advocates are questioning whether that will be adequate to keep military families in good financial health. That's because the formula used to calculate annual pay hikes (The Employment Cost Index or ECI) doesn't take into account issues like short-term inflation spikes.

The Congressional Budget Office has predicted a 6.1% jump in the consumer price index this year, but none of that extra expense is built into the military pay raise formula. So, by the time troops see that extra 4.6% in their paychecks in seven months, their basic household expenses may have already ballooned to well above that rate.

This approach sets the 2023 pay raise based on where the ECI stood in October of 2021 ... when it goes into effect, it's already out of date.

"I believe that we should be able to get more flexibility and agility with military pay," said Dan Merry, vice president for government relations at the Military Officers Association of America. "This pay raise [proposal] is going to be woefully short of the inflation rate."

TAKE ACTION:

[Urge Your Lawmakers to Pass a Fair Military Pay Raise](#)

MOAA-Backed Bill Would Make Spouse Licensure Support Program Permanent

Almost 4 in 10 military spouses work in a profession requiring licensing or certification. These spouses are disproportionately affected by state-specific licensure requirements, causing delays and gaps in employment after military moves. Relicensing costs add up quickly with PCS moves every two to three years.

The FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) authorized the reimbursement of qualified relicensing costs up to \$500, including exam and registration fees. The FY 2020 NDAA raised the maximum reimbursement amount to \$1,000, but this program has a sunset date of Dec. 31, 2024.

Earlier this year, Reps. Matt Cartwright (D-Pa.) and Sanford Bishop (D-Ga.) joined Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) to introduced the ***Military Spouse Jobs Continuity Act (H.R. 7840)*** – legislation permanently authorizing the military spouse licensure reimbursement program. This stop gap measure helps alleviate part of the burden on military spouses where interstate compacts don't exist or where states have not joined that would provide automatic license transferability.

The Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO) continues to work with state legislatures to introduce bills to have states join those compacts. Those compacts would cover variety of professional fields including nursing, physical therapy, teaching, social work, and dentistry/dental hygiene.

Florida Status

Florida has joined compacts for **Nursing** in 2016 and the **Professional Counseling** compact this legislative session, 2022. Legislation was also introduced for the **Psychology Interjurisdictional** compact, but it did not make it through to a floor vote in the Senate.

There has been no action on the five other compacts that have been finalized by other states. The FCoC will continue to advocate for support when those additional compacts may be introduced in the Florida Legislature.

Call-To Action

[Contact your representative today](#) and urge them to support **H.R. 7840** to permanently authorize the military spouse licensure reimbursement program.

Governor DeSantis signs Bills to support Military Families and Veterans

In March, Bob Bienvenue, our FCoC Legislative Committee Chair issued a **Special Edition Legislative Update** to Chapters and their members promoting a major advocacy effort:

- To inform our legislators of the positive impact several bills under consideration will have on military families,
- To seek support from those legislators to advance the bills in the final months of the session.

Those efforts paid off when three of those bills made it to the Governor's desk with unanimous approval on the final vote in each chamber.

SB 562/HB 0559 Occupational Licensure of Military Spouses

Establishes authority for and procedures to expedite professional license applications submitted by spouses of active-duty members of Armed Forces.

SB 430 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Extends the scheduled expiration of Florida's participation in the Compact, thus ensuring that the children of active-duty service members are able to transition, based on appropriate education, with seamless school placement, enrollment, records transfers, and verification of graduation authorities and requirements.

SB 358/HB 1521 Professional Counselors Licensure Compact

The creation of the Professional Counselors Licensure Compact establishes standard criteria for licensing professional counselors to practice in member states. (Implementation upon enactment of the Professional Counselors Licensure Compact into law by 10 states.)

At a **Press Event** on June 8th in Fort Walton Beach at Props Craft Brewery & Taproom. the governor signed two of those bills to specifically benefit the state's active-duty military community—**SB 430 & SB 562**. **SB 358** was previously approved by the Governor on April 6th.

Besides the advocacy by FCoC members, the bills were promoted by *The Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO)* regional representative Eric Sherman and the *Florida Defense Support Task Force - Family Support Working Group*.

Another Bill on our advocacy list was **HB 953/SB 1370: Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact**: This compact would authorize Florida psychology regulatory authorities to afford legal recognition to psychologists licensed in another state. It passed unanimously on floor of House on 2/25/22, but died in Senate Appropriations Committee because work was stacked up near the end of their three month legislative session.



Florida Department of Veterans Affairs Update

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

Governor's Budget Continues to make Florida most Veteran Friendly State in Nation

State Veterans' Homes Receive Critical Funding to Recruit and Retain Key Health Care Professionals and Expand Access to Eligible Veteran Residents

TALLAHASSEE – Thanks to a budget signed into law June 2 by Gov. Ron DeSantis, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs continues to be the premier point of entry for Florida's 1.5 million Veterans to access earned services, benefits and support. The agency's \$172 million budget is a direct investment in Florida Veterans and their families.

"I'm extremely proud of Governor DeSantis and the State Legislature in recognizing the vital importance of our health care professionals who provide critical and loving care to our veterans' home residents," said retired Marine Corps Major General James S. "Hammer" Hartsell, Executive Director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. "The budget strengthens our ability to recruit and retain critical care providers in our network of state veterans' homes, helping us ensure Florida continues to be the most Veteran sought after state in the nation."

FDVA is a nearly 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 eight state-run veterans' nursing homes and one assisted living facility, and provides statewide outreach to connect Veterans, their families, and survivors with earned services, benefits and support.

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

Veterans throughout the state. Included in the budget is \$55 million to support the costs for the State Veterans' Nursing Homes to ensure the provision of quality care for our Veterans.

The budget also provides \$5.6 million for salary incentives for nursing staff involved in the daily operations of FDVA's veterans' homes, reflecting Florida's commitment to recruiting and retaining the highest quality caregivers for our residents.

\$2.4 million for Florida is for Veterans, Inc. (Veterans Florida), 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.

Governor DeSantis Signs Six Bills to Support Florida's Military Families

FORT WALTON BEACH, Fla. - Gov. Ron DeSantis signed six bills June 9 to support veterans, military members, and their families in finding employment and educational opportunities in Florida. These pieces of legislation build on funding provided in the Freedom First Budget signed by Governor DeSantis to support Florida's military members and their families.

"Florida is the most military friendly state in the nation, and I am proud to continue that commitment to our military members and their families by signing these pieces of legislation," said Gov. Ron DeSantis. "Providing military families with the resources they need to receive a high-quality education and find good jobs is the best way that we as a state can show our appreciation for the sacrifices that they make."

"We're very appreciative of Governor DeSantis' unwavering support of Florida's 1.5 million veterans, their families, and survivors. As a Navy combat deployed veteran, he appreciates the importance of expanding earned benefit eligibility to our active-duty members, our veterans, and their family members," said retired Marine Corps Major General James S. "Hammer" Hartsell, Executive Director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. "Working together to offer enhanced educational and workforce opportunities for our nation's heroes, we'll ensure Florida continues to be the most sought-after state by veterans in the nation."

The six bills signed by the Governor will support education opportunities for veterans and children of active-duty military as well as expand access to employment opportunities by removing barriers to licensure and postsecondary education requirements. Those bills are:

House Bill (HB) 45 provides educational opportunities for disabled veterans by providing additional assistance to achieve a 100 percent award for tuition and fees.

Senate Bill (SB) 430 reenacts the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children which ensures a smooth transition for children of active-duty military families by enabling seamless school placement, enrollment, records transfers, and verification of graduation requirements.

SB 514 allows state agencies to substitute work experience, including military experience, for postsecondary education to allow veterans to use on the job experience to apply for civilian jobs.

SB 896 will help veterans access jobs in education by allowing their military service to count toward the requirement for a temporary educator certificate under the mentorship of a certified teacher.

SB 562 requires the Department of Business and Professional Regulation to expedite license applications of active-duty military spouses.

SB 438 updates Florida's definition of Uniformed Service to include the United States Space Force and updates military base names.

The Governor also announced that CareerSource Florida and state workforce agencies will dedicate \$20 million in targeted workforce training supports for Florida's veterans. This funding will focus on high demand industries including aviation, aerospace, and defense.



Personal Affairs

Col Paul Loschiavo, USMCR (Ret)

"Honor Flight Allergy"

Last year, my wife and I bought a home in Longwood, just north of Orlando, to be nearer to the kids. I soon joined the Central Florida Chapter of MOAA, and attended my first event with them in February. One of the guest speakers happened to be from **Honor Flight**.

Honor Flight is the organization that organizes flights to Washington DC for veterans who might not have had the opportunity to get up there and see the monuments. Originally, they did World War Two veterans. They've since expanded it to include Korea, then Vietnam veterans. In many ways, it's the Vietnam veterans who appreciate the trip the most. As you well know, most Vietnam veterans returned to the US only to be scorned for their participation in the conflict. As many Vietnam veterans didn't exactly ask to go there, it hurt even more.

The speaker at the MOAA event described the Honor Flight program, asking if anyone in the audience would be interested in attending. Having started my military career after Vietnam ended, I don't qualify, so I filed the event in my mental file cabinet in the event I run into any Vietnam veterans.

Son-of-a-gun, the very next night, we went to dinner at a neighbor's home. I knew that he had been an Army Warrant Officer helicopter pilot, but not much more about his service. During dinner, we were talking about lots of things. The subject of our service came up and he told of having received a very low lottery number, and he knew he would be drafted. Hearing that if you enlisted first, you had a good chance of getting your choice of MOS, he visited a recruiter. After taking the qualification exam and getting a good score, the recruiter offered him flight school. Enlisting in the

Delayed Entry Program, he entered active duty on his eighteenth birthday, and earned his wings and a warrant by his nineteenth birthday. (Pretty impressive given the then 85% flunk-out rate from Army Helicopter training.)

He served his year in-country and returned to the US with a chest full of medals and ribbons before his twenty first birthday, only to be greeted with disdain. Like many Vietnam veterans, he returned to civilian life and... moved on.

We were talking about flying and our service, when without much thought, I asked him if he had ever heard of Honor Flight? He had not. I explained what I had heard the day before. He was uninterested.

The next day, his wife connected with me and asked about it. She said that he was “too proud” to admit that he’d like to go and was actually very interested. She mentioned that when he got to see the traveling Vietnam Wall a few years ago, he was in tears. I told her that I’d see what I could do to get him invited.

I connected with **Lorraine Holland**, the MOAA CFC president and she gave me the contact info of **Karyn Rinaldi** from Honor Flight. A bunch of texts and emails followed and **US Army Warrant Officer Bob Ellis** was invited to go on the April Honor Flight. He accepted, and his step-son, an Army Iraq veteran, agreed to be his “guardian.”

For each veteran who goes, a guardian goes along. The flights depart at 5am and return at midnight the same day. As many of the veterans are pretty advanced in age, it’s the guardian’s job to attend to the veteran’s needs during the very long day.

Devin Wooldridge, Bob’s step-son and guardian for the day, picked up Bob at 4:30am. They went to Orlando International Airport where they met with the other participants for this Honor Flight. With just about everyone wearing a “veteran” ball cap, they boarded a chartered 60 seat business jet for the two-and-a-half hour flight to Baltimore Washington International Airport.

Once there, they boarded buses for the first stop at Arlington National Cemetery, and specifically to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, for the Changing of the Guard. They were each issued wheelchairs (whether they needed one or not), which gave them *front row seats* for the ceremony. From there, they went to the Air Force Memorial with its “incredible view.” Boarding the buses for the ride across the Potomac River, they were then let loose on the National Mall. Bob visited the World War Two Memorial and finally, the Vietnam Memorial... also known as “The Wall.”

Bob was totally impressed that there were hundreds of high school kids in the crowds. It reinvigorated his opinion of young people to see that they were able to honor those ordinary people who went before them and did extraordinary things.

With each of the bus rides, the DC Police provided escorts so that there were no delays for the buses of VIPs. And when the airplane landed at Baltimore International and back at Orlando International, the airport fire trucks greeted them with water arches!

Bob mentioned that the Honor Flight people provided multiple surprises during the day. He was “celebrated” over and over again, and totally appreciated it. He said that one in particular was a

“wrecker...” (Rather than ruin it for future Honor Flight attendees, he’s keeping the details quiet.)

In the group of veterans on the flight, there was one World War II veteran, “two or three” Korea veterans, and the remainder were veterans of Vietnam. At no time was a veteran alone. They always had someone at their side making sure that each veteran’s needs were met. They had plenty to eat and drink the entire trip and it cost him nothing. *Everything* was covered by Honor Flight.

About twenty hours after departing, the group was back at Orlando International. For the last time that day, they were loaded onto a bus for the trip to the terminal. As with each time before, the bus was wrapped in an “Honor Flight” banner and local law enforcement provided an escort. They unloaded after midnight, pretty weary but still operating at full speed on pure adrenalin.

Upon entering the terminal, they were greeted by a color guard provided by the Sea Cadets plus a couple hundred friends and families, most waving American flags and all cheering. Even just standing in the crowd, it was impossible to *not* be moved. The greeting of “welcome home” was heard over and over again. There wasn’t a dry eye in the house. Apparently, *Honor Flight Allergy*, the sudden and uncontrollable welling of the eyes that is endemic among Honor Flight attendees, is quite contagious.

If you’re a Vietnam veteran, you *need* to do this. You did not get a welcome home parade back then. Honor Flight will make sure you get one now.



Surviving Spouse Corner

Patricia Green, Surviving Spouse Liaison

Many of the MOAA Chapters in Florida take the Summer off. I had hoped to start the summer with the MOAA FCoC State Convention. Unfortunately, I had to miss it because I had contracted Covid. Looking through the attendee list, I did not see many names of Surviving Spouse Liaisons. I hope that many of you can make arrangements to come to the Florida Leadership Forum on January 6th & 7th, 2023. There will be programs for you and Spouses at this gathering. Clear your calendar and make attendance a priority.

Before that there is an opportunity to attend the MOAA National Meeting in October 2022 in Kansas City. Watch for more information.

Meanwhile, enjoy your summer. My plans are to engage my grandsons and granddaughter in the military. Recently while traveling with one grandson, we stopped at Warner Robbins Air Force Base in Macon, GA. They have a fantastic museum there. My 13 year old, Jackson, was amazed. We did a little car tour of the base, also. Wide eyed, he exclaimed...There is a grocery store, a gas station, a bowling alley, a church...why it’s just like a town. Having health issues, neither his mom

or dad had been able to serve in the military, so this was his first exposure to a military base. I had not realized what a great experience it would be for him.

Maybe you don't live near a base. Then, I suggest a road trip. Check online for tours available on the base, an Inn for guests. If that's not possible, there are great books about the military at your library. (The MOAA Magazine often suggests books to read, and has reviews.) Just now there are so good movies about the military also. Be sure and check for age appropriateness, though.

I suggest having an overnight party with the grandkids and bring out the photo albums and scrap books. Relive some of your adventures at overseas assignments. The kids will love it. They'll enjoy learning a new dimension of your life, and viewing pictures recording your youth. Have a fun summer. Come back in the fall refreshed and ready to engage in Chapter meetings and activities.



CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Please remember to update your Chapter rosters on the FCOC Website. This helps to ensure that there is a proper accounting of your members as well as see to it that everyone gets reminders of the distribution of this Communiqué'. Go to the web site, MEMBER ACCESS, CHAPTER ADMIN and complete the process of updating your rosters.

Florida Council of Chapters “Chapter News”

Sun City Center Chapter

CDR Cliff Korn, USNR (Ret), Newsletter Editor

The Sun City Center Chapter has been extremely active before its summer hiatus. At the chapter luncheon meeting in May, we were delighted to enjoy an informative presentation by Dr. Susan MacManus, a USF Distinguished University Professor (Political Science) Emerita, and a chapter honorary member. She provided an unbiased review of the current state of Florida's politics with an eye on the upcoming mid-term election. She can be seen Sunday mornings on ABC Action News' *Full Circle Florida*.

The chapter also had a leadership role in Sun City Center's Memorial Day remembrance ceremony. This ceremony is designed to honor all former or present community military veterans who have died in the past year. They were recognized and honored by a Roll Call of Departed Comrades held concurrently with a Living Flag Tribute. SCC Chapter Chaplain and Florida Council of Chapters' West Central Area Vice President, LCOL Benny Blackshire, was announced as the ceremony's Grand Marshal.



Dr. Susan MacManus and Chapter President, COL Eunice Patxot



SCC Chapter President announcing Benny Blackshire as Grand Marshal.

Citrus County Chapter

By COL Mark Bodenheim USAR (Ret), Membership & Communication Director

Citrus High School (CHS) Air Force (AF) JROTC Cadet Maj. Maya Christian received the Evelyn H. Reading JROTC Scholarship Award of \$1500 at the Citrus County Chapter JROTC scholarship awards luncheon on May 12, 2022, at the Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club. The scholarship is funded and disbursed by the Citrus County Education Foundation (CCEF), with the award application and selection administered by the MOAA Citrus County Chapter. (L-R): Dr. Scott Hebert, Chief Academic Officer, Citrus County School District; Mr. Gene McGee, CCEF board member; CCEF Assistant Director Tiffani King; AFJROTC Cadet Maj. Maya Christian; COL Pete Tan, USA (Ret), MOAA Chapter President; COL Curt Ebitz, USA (Ret), MOAA Chapter Vice President and scholarship director; MSgt Eric Brown, CHS



Citrus High School (CHS) Air Force (AF) Cadet Lt. Col. Samantha Gerstner received the Maurice "Bud" Wise JROTC Scholarship Award of \$1500 at the Citrus County Chapter JROTC scholarship awards luncheon on May 12, 2022, at the Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club. The scholarship is funded and disbursed by the MOAA Citrus County Chapter with the award application and selection administered by the MOAA Citrus County Chapter. Pictured from left to right: Dr. Scott Hebert, Chief Academic Officer, Citrus County School District; Drew Gerstner (father); Lisa Yeager (mother); AF JROTC Cadet Lt. Col. Samantha Gerstner; COL Pete Tan, USA (Ret), MOAA Chapter President, COL Curt Ebitz, USA (Ret), MOAA Chapter Vice President and scholarship director; MSgt Eric Brown, CHS AFJROTC Instructor.



Pictured here is Dr. Scott Hebert, Chief Academic Officer, Citrus County School District (left) receiving a certificate of appreciation from COL Pete Tan, USA (Ret), the MOAA Citrus County Chapter president, for his speaker presentation during the MOAA JROTC Scholarship awards luncheon at Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club. Dr. Hebert spoke on the numerous ways the Citrus County School District is engaged with JROTC programs, Veterans organizations and Veterans Appreciation Week events.

Cape Canaveral Chapter

Marilyn M. Sanford, MOAACC Media Relations

Annual MOAACC ROTC and JROTC Awards Luncheon

On April 10 the Military Officers Association of America's Cape Canaveral Chapter (MOAACC) held a luncheon to honor 19 distinguished military cadets from Brevard County ROTC, JROTC, and Sea Cadet Units, as well as the Civil Air Patrol Squadron. The JROTC cadets received a MOAA medal, a framed certificate, and a \$400 award from MOAACC's JROTC medal grant program.



The MOAA Medal was created by the Military Officers Association of America to recognize leadership and the academic achievements of ROTC and JROTC Cadets. It is presented annually to selected individuals who have good academic standing; are of high moral character; and who have exhibited a high degree of loyalty to their unit, their school, and their country. In addition, they have demonstrated exceptional potential for military leadership as a member of the Reserve Officers Training Corp or the Junior Officers Training Corp.

Several Brevard County high schools as well as FIT were represented. The recipients were honored by their instructors, their family and friends, and all MOAACC members in attendance.

Retired Army Lt. Colonel Harry O. “Skip” Taylor Inducted Into Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame

Governor Ron DeSantis and the Florida Cabinet voted unanimously to induct 15 veterans into the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame. Included was MOAACC member Retired Army Lt. Col. Harry “Skip” Taylor from Viera.

The Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame recognizes and honors those military veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the State of Florida through civic, business, public service or other pursuits. It is not a traditional hall of fame, as it focuses on post-military contributions to the State of Florida.

Taylor’s 31-year Army career began in 1962, when Uncle Sam drafted him. During his two years in Vietnam with the 1st Cavalry Division, he was awarded a Silver Star and three Bronze Stars for valor, plus two purple hearts. He rose from the bottom to close to the top, working at the Pentagon, NATO, the DIA and the State Department.

After retirement, Taylor and his wife, Mary Beth, lived in Belize where he served as operations officer for the Belize Youth Conservation Corps. He then moved to Miami, where he volunteered as a master naturalist in the Everglades; taught at Florida Atlantic University and Nova Southeastern; and served as the Rotary Club’s Assistant District Governor for Florida.

A Board member and Survivor Assistance Officer with MOAACC, Taylor helps veterans with VA issues as a DAV Chapter 123 certified service officer. At Indian River Colony Club, he chairs the community’s foundation, which funds college scholarships for local students. He has mentored approximately 100 veterans, either homeless or with substance abuse issues, through Veterans Treatment Court. He also visits the county jail to help incarcerated veterans with issues regarding their health, disabilities, and court proceedings.

My motto is “Never stop serving” he says.



Florida Tech ROTC Panther Battalion Commissions Four New Army Second Lieutenants

The Florida Institute of Technology Army ROTC Panther Battalion held their Spring Ceremony to commission four new Army Second Lieutenants on Friday, May 6th. The Commissioning Ceremony was held in the Florida Tech Student Union Building with friends and families in attendance. This was the first in-door commissioning ceremony at Florida Tech since the start of the pandemic in 2020. The new Lieutenants took the commissioning oath of office and pinned on their new lieutenant gold bars in the ceremony. They heard messages from Dr. Marco Carvalho, Acting President of Florida Institute of Technology, and Guest Speaker Brigadier General William Glaser, the Director of Synthetic Training Environment Cross-Functional Team with the Army Futures Command in Orlando.

The new Florida Tech Graduates and Army Second Lieutenants are:

- Ryan Lepp who graduated with a B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was commissioned as an active-duty field artillery officer with a basic branch of engineer.
- Nicholas Piccirilli graduated with a B.S. degree in Aviation Management (non-flight) and was commissioned into the Florida National Guard as an Air Defense Artillery Officer.
- Tricia Prior graduated with a B.A. degree in Forensic Psychology and was commissioned as an active-duty Air Defense Artillery Officer.
- Liam Avery Yu graduated with a B.S. degree in Information Systems and was commissioned as an active-duty Transportation Officer.

The new Lieutenants were also congratulated by LTC Jimmy Crook, Florida Tech Professor of Military Science. Colonel Steve Bond, US Army-Retired and Past President of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC), congratulated the new officers on their achievement, and presented them with “Gold Bars” -- the rank insignia of Second Lieutenants on behalf of MOAACC. Col. Bond wished them the best of luck, as they begin their journey as officers in the United States Army.



New Army Lieutenants and Speakers at the Florida Tech Commissioning Ceremony on May 6th. (L-R Front: 2LT Liam Yu, 2LT Nicholas Piccirilli, 2LT Tricia Prior; L-R Back: Guest Speaker-Brigadier General William Glaser, 2LT Ryan Lepp, Florida Tech Professor of Military Science LTC Jimmy Crook, Acting Pres Florida Tech Dr. Marco Carvalho, and Past President Cape Canaveral Chapter of MOAA Colonel (Ret) Steve Bond.

MOAACC Recognition Luncheon

At the monthly luncheon on Tuesday, May 17, MOAACC members honored 23 Brevard County students from 11 different high schools (and one home schooled) who received an appointment to a military academy or an ROTC Scholarship at a college or university. These students went through a rigorous selection process and represent the top performing students in Brevard County. During the program, each student received a personalized letter of congratulations from MOAACC President Kenneth Lowe, and a MOAACC challenge coin in recognition of their achievement.



Central Florida Chapter

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

JROTC Awards Luncheon, April 23rd

The Central Florida Chapter celebrated what we call our favorite luncheon of the year on April 23rd with special guests, seven of the eight JROTC Senior Cadets who were each the recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship Award from our Chapter. The Cadets, their family, and a Cadre member were hosted at each table by one of our members. There were 58 of us to share in the exciting achievements of not only what the cadets had accomplished in High School, but we shared in the excitement that some received Service Academy Appointments, and some have already contacted the ROTC Cadre at their chosen university! Each year, we can't be more impressed with our selection of cadets, and each year we hear and see more potential for military service in the cadets we selected. The three board members (MAJ Holland, Lt. Col. John Thomas and COL Kin LaFate) interviewed the cadets.

[Find & Join
a Chapter](#)

The Chapter intended to award between five (5) and eight (8) \$1,000 scholarships to deserving graduating cadets. These scholarships are in addition to the 23 non-monetary MOAA JROTC Leadership Awards awarded to Detachment juniors which was addressed in a separate letter by Chapter member Lt.Col. John Thomas, USAF (Ret).

Each of the 32 high schools with JROTC detachments in Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties were invited to nominate two outstanding seniors. Eighteen of the 32 schools nominated thirty-two cadets for the scholarships.

Every nominated cadet was offered the opportunity to interview. The selection board believes the opportunity to interview is sometimes more important than whether the cadet wins or loses. Winners were announced shortly



*Cadet Trinitee **Jeffers**; Cadet Caelan **Burgos**; Cadet Tatianna **Penn**; Cadet Verne **Washington, Jr** (accepted to West Point); Cadet-Lieutenant Commander **Ramos**; Cadet Colonel Alexander **Plant** (accepted to USAFA); Cadet Lt. Col Quang **Le**; (Not attending) Cadet Karen **Quizhpi***

after. The selection board generally used but was not limited to the following criteria in selecting the winners: military bearing and appearance in uniform, cadet assignments, AP and Honors classes completed, GPA, school activities, service to and employment in the community and desire for future military service. This year five males and three females were selected as winners. This was the first time in five years that the male winners outnumbered the females.



Kingdom of the Sun Chapter

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

The Kingdom of the Sun Chapter and the Citrus County Chapter of MOAA held their joint meeting at Stumpknockers on Thursday, April 7, 2022. We had over fifty Chapter members and guests at this special luncheon. Sheriff Mike Pendergrass from Citrus County and Al Harrison, a Veteran Service Officer from Marion County, were special guests. Everyone enjoyed the camaraderie and the selection of fried catfish, grilled chicken, or prime ribs from the menu. Our KOS Chapter Treasurer Linda Byrd did a great job in managing this annual luncheon held at Stumpknockers along the Withlacoochee River in Dunnellon, FL.



Linda Byrd is the center of attention working at the reception table at Stumpknockers for Joint KOS and Citrus County Luncheon held on April 7, 2022.



The Kingdom of the Sun Chapter held their KOS Awards and Recognition Dinner meeting on May 5, 2022, at the Ocala Ballroom, located at 108 N. Magnolia Ave in Ocala, FL. We had over fifty KOS members and guests at this gala evening event. The Call to Order was conducted by the Chapter President, MAJ Joseph Voge, USA (Ret). A buffet type meal with four choices were presented to the members and guests attending the evening event. The KOS awards were presented by President Joe Voge to Emily German from Forest High School and to Joshua Lathrop from Dunnellon High School.

KOS Chapter member Captain Tim Williams, USMC (Ret), was the featured speaker at the On Top of the World (OTOW) Memorial Day Ceremony held on May 30, 2022. The ceremony was held in the Recreation Center at 11:00 AM to a Ballroom full of veterans, family members, and friends.



Tampa Chapter

Ken Martin, LTC USMC (Ret) and edited by: Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret)

The MOAA Junior ROTC (JROTC)/ROTC Awards Program

The MOAA Junior ROTC (JROTC)/ROTC awards program recognizes an outstanding cadet or midshipman who has demonstrated exceptional potential for military leadership (exceptional academic achievement in the case of the Marine Corps JROTC [MCJROTC] program.) All military services officially have approved the medal for presentation.

The presentation of an MOAA ROTC/JROTC medal and certificate is an excellent way for chapters to gain exposure in their community and, at the same time, foster a positive military recognition among the youth of the community. Accordingly, it has always been the desire of national MOAA that the medals are awarded by a local chapter and not the national organization.

The typical award consists of a red, white, and blue ribbon 13/8 inches wide with a bronze disc pendant 15/8 inches in diameter and a matching service ribbon and a certificate of presentation.

Our chapter sponsors and presents the MOAA JROTC medal and certificate to the following local high schools: Alonso, Armwood, Blake, Chamberlin, Freedom, Gaither, H.B. Plant, Hillsborough, Jefferson, King, Leto, Middleton, Plant City, Robinson, Sickles, Strawberry Crest, Tampa Bay Technical, and Wharton.

Our chapter also sponsors and presents the MOAA ROTC medal and certificate to the following college ROTC programs: University of Tampa Army ROTC, University of South Florida Army ROTC, University of South Florida Naval ROTC, and University of South Florida Air Force ROTC. A chapter member usually volunteers and presents the award at the school's award ceremony.



JROTC Awardees at the MOAA Tampa April luncheon pictured from left to right: Norm Bild, MOAA Tampa Chapter; Cadet Ensign Jason Martin, Freedom HS; Cadet 2nd LT Andrew Bryant, Middleton HS; Charles Dalcourt, MOAA Tampa Chapter President; Cadet Eleanor Francis, Sickles HS; Cadet Master Sergeant Karolyn McDaniel, Strawberry Crest HS; Cadet Captain Elise Christensen, Alonzo HS; and Cadet Jeremiah Camcho, King HS

The MOAA Tampa Chapter recognized the JROTC Cadets at the April luncheon and MOAA Tampa Chapter members assisted in helping to present awards to our future leaders at Gaither High School, Robinson High School, Jefferson High School in Tampa and Strawberry Crest High School in Dover, Florida. It's inspiring and an honor to meet all of these young men and women and their families. We would love to have someone from our chapter at every JROTC Leadership Award presentation next year. COME NEXT YEAR AND GET INVOLVED!!! It's an experience you'll NEVER forget!



Colonel Carol Zieres, USA, (Retired) presenting the MOAA JROTC Leadership award to Cadet Master Sergeant Karolyn McDaniel

CAPT Sara Marks, Nurse Corps, USN (Ret) presenting the MOAA JROTC Leadership Award to Cadet Daniel Carvejal at Gaither High





MOAA Tampa JROTC Award at Robinson High School on April 21, 2022, presented to Cadet Ensign Layla Whitmire by Colonel Bernard Lieving USA (Ret).

MOAA Tampa JROTC Leadership Award presentation to Junior Cadet Sabrina Molina Suarez at Jefferson High School on April, 27, 2022 by Colonel Matthew Cogdell, USAF (Ret).



Sarasota Chapter

Col Len Friedlander, USAF (Ret)

SMOF Scholarship Check to Manatee Technical College (MTC)

On April 22nd MOAS member Mike Staley presented a \$6,000 Sarasota Military Officers Foundation scholarship check to Brittany Burton, Manatee Technical College Veterans Representative and Financial Aid Specialist for subsequent distribution to veterans attending the college.

Mike is a member of the MOAS Scholarship Committee and has been the chapter's point of contact with the college for the past seven years.

Brittany is the primary college staff member interacting with attending veterans seeking financial aid.



2022 SMOF Scholarship Awardees

On Friday, 20 May 2022, the Sarasota Chapter May Luncheon was highlighted by the chapter's award, through its charitable arm, Sarasota Military Officers Foundation (SMOF), of sixteen \$2,000 scholarships to 16 outstanding young adults from our local high school students who are preparing to attend college. The awards were presented by the luncheon's guest speaker, Sarasota Mayor Eric Arroyo.



Back Row (L-R) Zachary Hudson (Venice HS), Kaya Bartlett (Venice HS), Jaxson French (SMA), Daniel Delzer (SMA), Giacomo Mutti (Booker HS)

Front Row (L-R) Krystal Porlles (Sarasota HS), Sophia Burns (Venice HS), Adelyn Morris (Booker HS), Annabelle Weber (Booker HS), Chloe Sebiro (Booker HS) – Mayor Eric Arroyo

Not pictured: Cooper Bowditch (SMA), Evangeline Brancati (Booker HS), Kassandra Bryan (SMA), Riley Rendle (SMA), Skyla Sheehy (Pine View), Elizabeth Waring (Venice HS)

HEROES R&R WEEKEND EVENT

From Thursday, April 7 through Sunday, April 10, 2022, the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Sarasota Chapter hosted a four-day retreat for Veterans experiencing war and stress related mental trauma at My Warrior's Place (MWP) on the beautiful Little Manatee River. This retreat was made possible by a generous Community Outreach Grant from the MOAA Foundation and a donation from our Sarasota Military Officers Foundation. We, in consultation with MWP, selected eight Veterans, three with guide dogs, from sixteen applications. Unfortunately, one selectee had to cancel due to an unforeseen health event. Our guests were provided with lodging, meals, and snacks. Most importantly, they participated in group sessions with professional therapists emphasizing a holistic approach to physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and family well-being to equip attendees with tools aimed towards dealing with trauma and grief.

Sitting around the fire pit at night and sharing their stories became a therapy in itself for our guests. A boat trip on the river a welcome means of relaxation.

For the fun part, BBQ Masters Bill Burkett, Carl Griffith, Burke Brooks, and Jameel Hakeem, ably assisted by Bryan Jacobs, all volunteered their expertise and taught the art of barbequing and smoking brisket, pork, fish, chicken, and beef — ending their lessons on Sunday with a friendly, but fierce BBQ and smoker competition between veterans' teams demonstrating what they had learned. Our very own Jon Gordon, MOAA Sarasota President, had the honor of being one of the three judges in the final contest.

Our thanks to the BBQ Masters, the volunteer helpers from across the state, the Veterans who participated in the program, and the many supporters and their families who attended on Sunday.



We owe a special thank- you to Kelly Kowall, founder of My Warrior's Place, who has dedicated her life to provide this beautiful campus for veterans, first responders, and Gold Star Families; to Irene Burkett, Mental Health Counselor, for volunteering her time and expertise; and to Susan Stockwell, who spent untold hours assisting the chapter in preparing the grant request, doing the required preliminary work and pulling it all together for a successful event.

Our sincere appreciation to the MOAA Foundation for awarding a community Outreach Grant to this

extremely successful endeavor. It would not have been possible without your support. Finally, many thanks to our MOAS volunteers who worked diligently during the event - Mary & John Gordon, Mike & Patt Staley, Chaplain Michael Lindsey & Debra Sandberg, Troy Scott, Craig Hullinger, Peggy O'Connell, Susan & Jeff Warmington, and Christa & Len Friedlander. Sorry about the bug bites, folks!

St. Petersburg Area Chapter

Tom Hofer, CW5 USA RET, President

In April, St Petersburg Area Chapter approved four \$1,000 scholarships for graduating JROTC students at area schools – Admiral Farragut Academy and Hollins, Gibbs and Boca Ciega High Schools.

In our first visits since 2020, Chapter President CW5 Tom Hofer, USA, Ret and Past President LTC Pauline Mallory, USA Ret presented the outstanding cadet leaders with the MOAA ROTC medal and citation as well as a Letter of Intent to award a \$1000 scholarship to the college/university to which each one had been admitted. Each of the schools had an awards ceremony to which St Pete MOAA was invited.

The honorees were:

Cadet Gabriela Potrero-Luna (Hollins HS) – University of South Florida (USF)

Cadet Christian Fasce (Boca Ciega HS) – University of Central Florida (UCF)

Cadet Raynard McDaniel (Gibbs HS) – Louisiana State University

Cadet Charles Rockefeller (Admiral Farragut Academy) – The Citadel

LTC Mallory and I wished you could have been present at the awards ceremonies and shared our pride in the accomplishments of these cadets and their classmates. To see these young people, execute the flag ceremony and pledge of allegiance was most gratifying. We noted that many of these cadets were minority students who readily embraced the ideals and self-discipline of the ROTC program.

As older folks, we occasionally wonder aloud about the maturity, dedication, and potential of the younger generation. Seeing each cadet group showed us that the future of our nation is in safe hands.



Cadet Christian Fasce and CW5 Hofer at Boca Ciega HS awards ceremony



Cadet Ermabella Leon and LTC Mallory



CW5 Hofer and Cadet Potrero-Luna at Hollins HS award ceremony

And if you missed it

Dear MOAA Volunteer Leaders,

Today (April 28th, 2022), I am reaching out simply to say THANK YOU for all you do in your local and/or virtual communities for our Association. We appreciate you more than we can ever express, and the Council and Chapter Affairs team, in particular, is ever so honored and pleased to know you and work with you on a daily basis. Please see a personal thank you message from General Atkins at this link: <https://youtu.be/dsXgHxc3slc> and please share with YOUR leadership teams as desired. Have a great day and stay safe and healthy!

Sincerely,

Erin E. Stone

Captain, Judge Advocate General's Corps, United States Navy (Retired)
Senior Director, Council and Chapter Affairs

One More Thing...And IT'S A BIG DEAL

Congratulations are in order for a great showing on the recent competition for the Colonel Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards. Again, Florida led the way. Not only did the State Council earn the 5-star level for both the Communiqué and the Website, but 22 chapters achieved the 5-star level for one or the other, or both. Additionally, 5 chapters earned 4-star awards, and 3 of those had a 5-star in the other category. The total number of chapters receiving awards is 24 (plus the FCoC), with an overall total of 47. See the complete list below.

These awards were presented at the recent convention in West Palm Beach by Lt. Gen. Atkins at the President's reception.

Congratulations to the award winners. This is something we can all be very proud of.

FIVE STARS

Florida Council of Chapters (print newsletter and website)
Ancient City Chapter (website)
Cape Canaveral Chapter (print newsletter and website)
Cape Coral Chapter (print newsletter and website)
Central Florida Chapter (print newsletter and website)



Charlotte Harbor Chapter (print newsletter)
 Citrus County Chapter (print newsletter and website)
 Halifax Area Chapter (website)
 Historic Mayport Chapter (print newsletter and website)
 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)
 Pensacola Chapter (print newsletter and website)
 St. Petersburg Area Chapter (print newsletter and website)
 Sarasota Chapter (print newsletter and website)
 Southwest Florida Chapter (print newsletter and website)
 South Central Florida Chapter (print newsletter and website)
 Sun City Center Chapter (print newsletter and website)
 Tampa Chapter (print newsletter and website)
 Volusia County Chapter (print newsletter and website)



FOUR STARS

Ancient City Chapter (print newsletter)
 Charlotte Harbor Chapter (website)
 Clearwater Chapter (print newsletter)
 Indian River Chapter (print newsletter)
 Palm Beach - Martin Counties Chapter (print newsletter)

Answer: June 14th is Bourbon Day. So, maybe you set aside some time in the day to enjoy a glass of the uniquely American distilled liquor.

Bourbon is a type of whiskey that is made from corn and rye or wheat, and aged in charred oak barrels. Although it is usually associated with Kentucky - about 90% of the world's bourbon is made in the state - bourbon is distilled all over the United States. In fact, for a whiskey to be considered bourbon it must be made in the US, have at least 51% corn and should not contain any artificial flavors or coloring. The higher the percentage of corn, the sweeter the whiskey is.

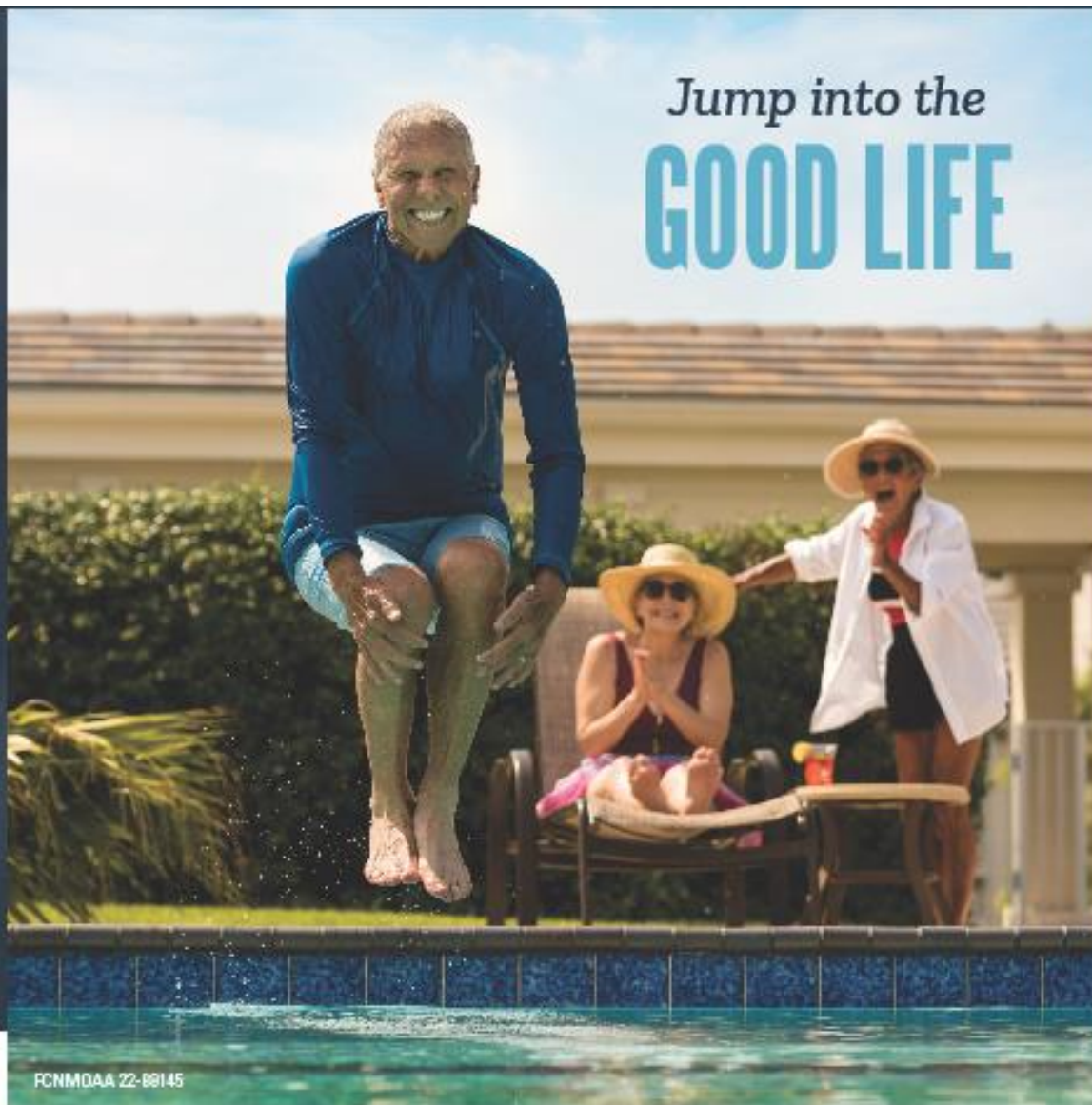
Mysterious Origins

There is some dispute as to why the whiskey is called bourbon. Some people believe that it comes from Bourbon Street in New Orleans, Louisiana, while others think that the whiskey is named after Bourbon County in Kentucky. The origins of the beverage are equally mysterious. A Baptist minister called Elijah Craig is sometimes credited as being the first person in the US to make bourbon.

A Connoisseur's Drink

Because of its bold flavors, bourbon is a niche drink - people either love it or hate it. Experts suggest that beginners mix it with water or on the rocks. Many people enjoy bourbon in a cocktail. Some popular bourbon mixed drinks are bourbon sour, old fashioned, and mint julep.

Did You Know...that the oak barrels used to age the whiskey can only be used once? After a batch of bourbon has been aged, the barrels can be used to store other liquors like tequila, scotch or beer, but never bourbon again.



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Continued on next page

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

The MOAA Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) is comprised of 40 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. 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

Advertise with Us!

Submitting Articles and Pictures for *The Communiqué*

Articles can be attached to an email. Microsoft Word works best (Arial 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

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The Council Communiqué ADVERTISING ORDER FORM



Size of Ad	Per Issue	Annual Placement
QuarterPage (4"Hx3.5"W)	\$ 75	\$ 300 (Save \$150)
Half Page (8" H x 3.5" W) or (4" H x 7.5 W)	\$150	\$ 600 (Save \$300)
Full Page (9.625" x 7.5" W)	\$300	\$1,200 (Save \$600)

Size of Ad: _____ / # of Placements: _____ OR Annual: _____

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)

Amount: \$_____ (make check out to: Florida Council of Chapters and mail, with this completed ad order form, to: Treasurer - FCoC, P.O. Box 60603, Fort Meyers, Florida 33906)

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• Submit PDF or jpeg file of ad(s) or ad update via email **with a scanned copy of completed order form** to: vpfcoc@gmail.com

• Ad copy must be submitted by the first of the month of the month of publication; i.e. Feb 1 for the January-February edition. Please notify the Council Vice President in advance if you plan to change the ad copy.

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

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Cape Coral
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[Lee Coast Chapter, MOAA](#)

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The
Communiqué
is on the web:
<http://moaafi.org/>

The **Council Communiqué** is the newsletter of the Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC), Military Officers Association of America, and is published bimonthly: February, April, June, August, October, and December. MOAA, it's Councils and Chapters are non-partisan organizations. The Communiqué is intended for wide distribution via e-mail within the FCOC including Chapter Leaders and all Chapter Members in Florida. A current issue of **The Council Communiqué** can be found at the Florida Council of Chapters Web Site: <http://www.moaafi.org/>, drop down menu Events/News.

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