



Officers' Call

Newsletter of the Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
June / July 2026



Presidents Message

LTC Don Hansen, USA (Ret), Chapter President

Welcome to our June/July newsletter and rejoice as we celebrate our 250th year as a free nation on July 4th next month. We also celebrate a new Newsletter Editor, CWO4 Greg Marsh, USMC (Ret.). Welcome to Greg and a ton of thanks to Luke Emerson for having done a great job for over six years while starting his second career and raising children at home, unlike most of us empty nesters.

Last month LTC Jim Press, USAR (Ret.), presented an excellent talk on the Declaration of Independence and what it meant to our nation following the Revolutionary War. Jim does an outstanding job on his history talks made to various clubs and organizations throughout The Villages. One can certainly tell that his career as a military history instructor at Northwestern Michigan College was an outstanding one.

Our Premier Sponsor for this year's tournament was Freedom Family Investments and it's Co-Founder, Chair, and Chief Executive Officer, Dani Lynn Robison and her husband, Flip, were our guests at the meeting. Tournament Chairman Dan Cagle welcomed them to the meeting and presented them with a thank-you plaque. We then enjoyed a short 5 minute video that Dani had made of our tournament.

Our July Dine-To-Donate day will be on the 21st of July at the Legacy Restaurant at the Nancy Lopez Country Club on the North end of The Villages. When you enter the restaurant, don't forget to look for the sign at the desk telling you that if you donate \$5 to the MOAA Scholarship fund at the desk, Suleiman Family Restaurants (SFR) will give you a \$10 coupon to be used at your next visit to their restaurants. Also, make sure not to forget to write "MOAA" on the top of the bill you will receive so SFR will write our chapter 20% of your meal charge for our scholarship fund. I'm told a number of folks have forgotten to do so and thus we didn't get credit for their meal.

(Continues on next Page)

OUR NEXT MEETING

**Wednesday
Sep 9th
11:30 a.m.**

Location
Eisenhower Recreation Center
3560 Buena Vista Blvd
Wildwood, FL 34785



OUR MEAL

Our caterer will again be Mission BBQ who will be serving pulled pork and chopped brisket along with cheesy potatoes and green beans.

COST

Meals are **\$20.00/person** if you **register and pay** online. Meals are **\$20/person** following the deadline and **\$20/person** if you pay at the door.

RSVP

**No Later Than, 10:30
a.m. on Friday
Sep 4th**

[Click Here](#)

or contact Marv Sherrill at
msherrill45@gmail.com or
813-495-2894.



Check out the Florida Department of Veteran
Affairs for Florida Veteran Legislation.

Presidents Message Continued

As I mentioned last month, we did very well from our 18th Annual Military Charities Golf Tournament clearing \$43,000 and are now in the process of writing checks for our donations which were approved by our Board of Directors to the 8 local military oriented charities we support and to the ten senior JROTC cadet scholarship winners in the five high schools in our two county catchment area that offer JROTC. The Board of Directors also voted to donate \$3,000 to the Joint Veterans Support Committee of the Florida National Cemetery to support the Honoring Monument being placed at the cemetery. A breakdown of the results over the last six years of my time as President of your chapter is found below. I was originally sworn in for the first time in January 2020 but we had to cancel the tournament that year due to the Covid Virus. We had enough money in the treasury to honor our scholarship commitments but we were unable to provide any donations to the charities that year.

Years	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Golf Tourney Income	\$18K	\$30K	\$30K	\$33K	\$36.5K	\$43,000
Charity Gifts						
TV Honor Flight	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Villagers For Veterans (Ashley's House)		\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
DAV Chapter 150	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,000	\$2,500
Smiles For Vets (Rotary)	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$3,500
Support The Troops	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$2,000
Op. Helping Hand	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500		
Project SOS					\$2,000	\$2,500
Combat Veterans To Career	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Operation Shoe Box		\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,000
TOTAL - Charities	\$9,000	\$13,500	\$15,500	\$17,000	\$18,000	\$20,000
Total -Scholarships	\$9,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$21,000	\$20,000
Number	12	12	12	12	12	10
(South Sumter High School dropped JROTC after 2025)						
Joint Veterans Support Committee - FL National Cemetery Honoring Monument						\$3,000
Total Distributions	\$18K	\$28.5K	\$30.5K	\$32K	\$39K	\$43,000

We are now dark for June, July, and August but will be back for our September luncheon meeting on September 9th. I hope most of you will be able to attend but in the meantime and through-out the summer months, be safe, be smart and above all, **NEVER STOP SERVING!**

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MILITARY CHARITIES GOLF TOURNAMENT
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18th Annual Military Charities Golf Tournament April 10, 2026 at the Harbor Hills Golf and Country Club



Greeters



Checking in



Opening Ceremonies



Golf Chairman Dan



Golf Pro Tom



Long Ball Hitter and her money collector



TCWV Foursome



Easy does it.



Signature 16th Par 3 Hole



Dinner at last



Silent Auction



Live Auctioneer Marc



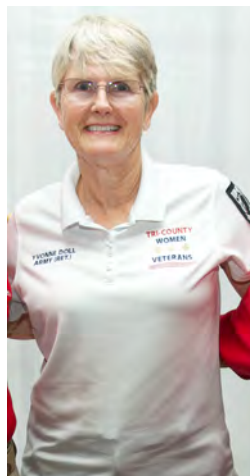
Treasurer Dennis with winning Men's team. Mark Buell, George Lopiccio, Rick Brackins, and Gary Shiner tallied a 52



Dennis with winning Women's team. Deni Elwood, Kathey Contres, Kathleen Bloomer and Ann Lombardi - shot 67



Dennis with winning Mixed team. Tom Leimberger, Sara Marcando, Hope Warren, and Lynn Tracy - shot 59



Closest to the Pin (Women) Holes 5 & 13 were Yvonne Doll and Karen Marcus



Closest to the Pin (Men) Holes 8 & 16 were Bernard Wedding and Frank Altman



Tournament Chairman Dan Cagle with wife and Auction Chairwoman Debbi



Ending a perfect tournament and going home with Silent and Live Auction winnings!

2026 JROTC AWARDEES

**EUSTIS HIGH SCHOOL AIR FORCE JROTC UNIT (CMSgt Raul H. Rosales, III)
Presented by Marc Sherrill (1 May)**

LEADERSHIP AWARD - Cadet Lyann Lopez



\$2,000 SCHOLARSHIPS - Cadets Jillian Taylor & Cadet Stanley Gardner



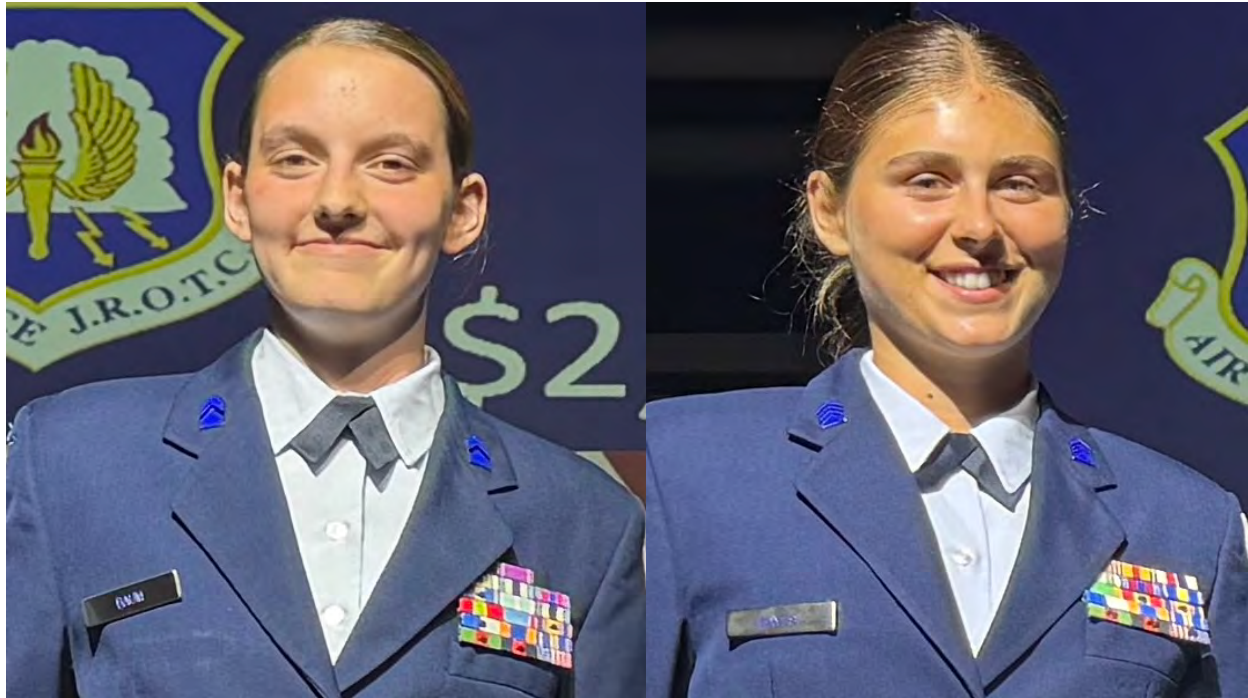
**LEESBURG HIGH SCHOOL AIR FORCE JROTC UNIT (Major Glenn Tussing)
Presented by Marc Sherrill (29 April)**



LEADERSHIP AWARD - Cadet Jayden Calhoun



\$2,000 SCHOLARSHIPS - Cadet Sophia Baum & Cadet Riley Hayes



**MOUNT DORA HIGH SCHOOL AIR FORCE JROTC UNIT (Major Andrew Scott)
Presented by Marc Sherrill (2 May)**

LEADERSHIP AWARD - Cadet Alexandra Johnston



\$2,000 SCHOLARSHIPS - Cadet Taizo Yatab & Cadet Marley Brooks



**SOUTH LAKE HIGH SCHOOL NAVAL JROTC UNIT (Lt. Col. John Pylant)
Presented by Greg Marsh & Elizabeth Nolan (28 April)**



LEADERSHIP AWARD - Cadet Hailey Powers



\$2,000 SCHOLARSHIPS - Cadet John Orama & Cadet Alicia Whetstone



**UMATILLA HIGH SCHOOL ARMY JROTC UNIT (LTC Al Nevárez)
Presented by Tom Lutes & Dennis Storey (29 April)**

LEADERSHIP AWARD - Cadet Samuel Solomon



\$2,000 SCHOLARSHIPS - Cadet Hunter Casares & Cadet Paisley Vining



Membership and Recruiting

COL Al Arnold, USA (Ret), Membership Chairman

A **heartly welcome** to the following member who recently joined our Chapter:

Ann Fagan, CAPT, USPHS, retired



We currently have 297 Chapter members. All Chapter members are also members of National MOAA!!

Last month I explained why you should join MOAA and “Never stop serving” to assist you in helping to recruit new members, or, if you’re a prospective member receiving this newsletter, why you should join now. This month, I’d like to briefly highlight the many benefits of being a MOAA member. Bet you didn’t know all these!!!

Go to the MOAA National website (www.MOAA.org). Across the top of the first page, you’ll see:

- News & Info
- Advocacy
- Events
- Member Benefits
- Resources

Each of these sections has a wealth of information and benefits. Note that some are for all members and some are only for Premium and Life members.

Here are only a couple examples:

News & Info: A significant amount of military-related news as well as numerous free publications and videos for you and your family.

Advocacy: The area where you can see all of MOAA’s legislative campaigns as well as access the Legislative Action Center where you can easily send already comprised letters to your senator/congressman about current issues we all care about.

Events: See all the military-related upcoming webinars; e.g., Understanding Your Earned VA Benefits (June 2) or Understanding Your Guard and Reserve Benefits (June 23).

CHAPTER OFFICERS

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LTC Donald Hansen, USA (Ret)

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Second VP

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Maj Daryl DesJardin, USAF (Ret)

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Lt Col Bob Bienvenue, USAF (Ret)

State Legislative Liaison

OPEN

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Personal Affairs

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Community Affairs

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Newsletter

CWO4 Greg Marsh, USMC (Ret)

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www.lakeandsumtermoaa.org

Information:

info@lakeandsumtermoaa.org

[Follow us on Facebook](#)

Mailing Address:

Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter –
MOAA

P O Box 666

Lady Lake, FL 32158-0666

Membership and Recruiting Continued

Member Benefits: Find exclusive discounts, read about Pay and Benefits, see all the MOAA healthcare resources, find exciting travel opportunities at reduced costs.

Resources: find all sorts of financial calculators to provide dynamic graphics, customizable reports, and explanations of key terms and concepts.

I hope this brief listing has wet your appetite to at least browse through the MOAA National website and take advantage of your benefits.

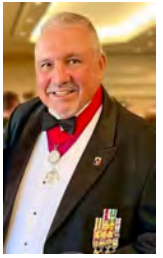
But what about your Chapter benefits? As a MOAA Chapter member, you gain insight into all the Florida state military-related legislation and what you can do to help keep our earned benefits from eroding. Your minimal chapter dues (that haven't increased in many years!!) goes to the JROTC cadets and organizations mentioned in our golf tournament article. Our monthly luncheons provide interesting guest speakers as well as a chance for camaraderie and networking with like-minded folks. This all goes toward staying in touch with a significant part of our lives and supporting the mantra of "Never stop serving".

As always, if you have questions or need more information, call or email me.

Stay safe.

Chaplain's Corner

Maj Daryl DesJardin, USAF (Ret), Chaplain



There comes a moment — sometimes quiet, sometimes unmistakable — when a person must honestly reckon with what the body is saying. That moment has arrived for me. Parkinson's disease has made it increasingly difficult to serve this chapter with the consistency, energy, and presence you deserve. And you deserve nothing less than a chaplain who can be fully present.

This is not a decision made in discouragement. It is made in honesty — and in deep gratitude. Serving among men and women who carry the weight of a life given to service with such quiet dignity has been one of the genuine honors of my life. Every invocation, every prayer offered over a meal or a memorial, every moment of shared silence — each was received as a gift, not a duty.

If this season of service has taught me anything, it is that presence is the greatest offering we can make to one another. Not programs, not polished words — presence. The simple willingness to show up, look someone in the eye, and say, "I see you. You matter here." That is the ministry of community, and it is one every member of this chapter can practice — with or without a title.

I have also learned that knowing when to pass the torch is its own form of leadership. Yielding to someone with fresher legs and a fuller tank is not retreat — it is wisdom. I hope that lesson takes root in all of us. I pray for our Board of Directors as they discover the right person for this sacred position.

Stepping away from this role does not mean stepping away from life. Jackie and I dream of more travel — of showing my Canadian fiancée more of this remarkable country, planning several cruises and savoring bucket-list places we talk and dream about daily. Health has redrawn the timeline a bit, and our plans are now more focused on traveling while we can...before I'm no longer able.

There is something clarifying about limitations. They have a way of burning off the non-essential and leaving only what truly matters. What matters to us is time — time together, time in new places, time simply savored. And wherever the road leads, this MOAA chapter travels with us. You are woven into who I am.

The future of this chapter is bright. Our leadership team is incredibly talented. An organization that depends on any one person to carry its spirit is fragile. Ours is not fragile. It is deep-rooted — and the best of its story is still ahead.

Do not wait for the perfect moment to serve, to speak, or to connect. The calendar does not guarantee us another meeting, another luncheon, another chance to say what needs saying. If a fellow member has quietly disappeared from your ranks — reach out. If someone is sitting alone at the next gathering — sit with them. If a role is going unfilled — consider whether it might be yours to fill.

This organization endures because of people who keep choosing to show up for one another. Be one of those people. Be the reason someone feels less alone, more valued, more connected to the legacy they helped build. That is the challenge I leave with you — and I am confident, joyfully so, that you will meet it.

Legislative Update

Bob Bienvenue, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Legislative Liaison

MOAA Legislative Update:

<http://www.moaa.org/takeaction/?tab=Legislative-Action-Center#Legislative-Action-Center>



MOAA's Advocacy in Action Campaign— Status Update



Star Act Advocacy Doubles Down on the Hill

The same day as MOAA AiA visits to Capitol Hill on April 15th, the **Veterans Justice Alliance** hosted a bipartisan press conference on Capitol Hill to shine a brighter spotlight on the Major Richard Star Act – a bill with the support of more than 390 lawmakers ... *but one that has yet to receive a vote by either the full House or Senate.*



Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.), who introduced the House version of the bill, called passing this bill an issue of “**fundamental fairness**”....

“Quite simply, these brave men and women are penalized for being wounded in service to our nation Fiscal responsibility should never come at the expense of the men and women who have already sacrificed their health, their careers, in many ways their future earning potential, in defense of our freedom.”

Supporters working to end the “wounded veteran tax” faced by these combat-injured retirees came together from across the military advocacy community. Along with MOAA’s work through our Advocacy in Action campaign, the association was a founding member of [the Star Act Alliance](#), a group of nonprofits including Veterans of Foreign Wars, Wounded Warrior Project, Blue Star Families, and more groups working together to move the bill forward.

Both our Florida Senators and local Congressman Daniel Webster (District 11) are co-sponsors of this legislation. **However, it is clear from the failure to even move for these bills for a vote during this session (and in previous sessions) that signing on to support the bill hasn’t been enough to get final approval.**

As congressman Bilirakis said, this is an issue of “*fundamental fairness*”
**and MOAA is asking us to again do our part in
keeping it at the top of the mind of those we send to Capitol Hill.**

Click here to send your message today [MOAA | Stand with Our Wounded Warriors: Advocate for the Major Richard Star Act](#)

Advocacy in Action 2026: MOAA Members Take the Hill **By: Kevin Lilley MOAA Staff April 15, 2026**

MOAA members brought the organization’s top priorities to Capitol Hill on April 15, visiting about 300 congressional offices; interacting with lawmakers and staff members around conference tables, in hallways, and over coffee; and *carrying forward the mission of preserving service-earned benefits for all who serve and have served, their families, and their survivors.*

Legislative Update (Continued)

Bob Bienvenue, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Legislative Liaison

Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), MOAA's president and CEO, said

"Advocacy in Action demonstrates the power of our grassroots advocacy, the power of our members and our mission, and the power of our democracy. We've made great strides on these issues by connecting our members with their lawmakers on the Hill, but our work is far from over."

Answering the Call

MOAA members from across the nation visited offices in support of four pieces of bipartisan legislation:

The Major Richard Star Act, which would end an unfair pay offset faced by tens of thousands of combat-injured veterans.

The Shutdown Fairness Act, which would ensure continued, timely pay for the armed services during federal funding lapses.

The GUARD VA Benefits Act, which would allow veterans to keep the benefits they've earned by protecting them from unaccredited for-profit "claim sharks."

The Military CARE Act, which would create a system to provide military treatment facility patients with the tools they need to combat access-to-care issues, and gather data on those issues to improve accountability and oversight.

Supporting All Who Serve

MOAA's priorities cover a range of programs and people ... **not just for the 8 unformed service members of all ranks but their families, retirees, and surviving spouses.**

Local Advocacy

In addition to the 130 MOAA members who visited the Congressional Offices on Capitol Hill, our Chapter Legislative Liaison, Bob Bienvenue, met virtually with Caleb Miller, a Legislative Communications Assistant in Congressman Webster's DC office to discuss the same Legislative Priorities Agenda.

As Mr. Miller is newly assigned staffer, Bob presented background on MOAA's mission and presence throughout the country and in particular in Florida. He reported on the 770,000 (est) count of military retirees, their dependents, active duty military and their families who are assigned in the state, and surviving spouses whom we consider our constituents and are the focus in our Advocacy efforts.

Next to come: AiA Summer Campaign

With the release of the president's budget, the **National Defense Authorization Act** process has begun in earnest, and MOAA is engaged at every level.

During the August Congressional recess, when the 119th Congress enters its final stretch, MOAA will re-energize its face-to face Advocacy by asking the **grassroots** MOAA community to conduct visits to both staff and our elected representatives in their Congressional Districts. Be informed to support this other annual effort to finalize the legislative agenda into passed law by subscribing to MOAA's Monthly Legislative Newsletter and sending the messages in the Legislative Action Center [MOAA | Action Center](#)

State Legislative Update

William Wojciechowski, Col, USAF (Ret), State Legislative Liaison



Bill passed away on Sunday, May 31, 2026, at the age of 88 years, 10 months, and 20 days. He had served a total of 35 years in the military: 8 years in the Army Reserve Guard, reaching the rank of SSG in eight years; and then 27 years in the USAF reaching the rank of Colonel before retiring in 1989. Along the way, Bill earned his Doctorate Degree in Education with a concentration in Higher Education Administration and a minor in Public Administration from Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA, in 1971. After retiring from the USAF in 1989, he immediately took the position of President of the Pratt Community College in Kansas, a position he held for 25 years until retiring in 2013 and moving with his wife Terri to Tucson, AZ. Following Terri's death in 2022, Bill moved to The Villages. They had been married 62 years. Bill joined our chapter in late 2022 and soon became the State Legislative Liaison and Liaison to the Villages For Veterans, as well as our in-house grant writer. The day of our tournament, April 10th, we learned that Bill (and us) had successfully obtained his third successive grant from the MOAA Foundation. Bill meant a lot to almost everyone he came into contact with, including his and Terri's five children and one adopted daughter and their families. We will certainly miss him.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

MOAA's status as a tax-exempt veterans organization precludes it from participating in political activities, which are defined as intervening directly or indirectly in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. We all need to be particularly attentive to this *non-partisanship restriction* during this very active political campaign season, when we are wearing our MOAA hat either individually or on behalf of our Chapters.

Nothing

MOAA is a registered **lobbyist** with Congress. This legal designation pertains to the nature of communications with elected officials and staff. Maybe a better term to describe their effort is **advocacy**:

the association does play an active role in the field of military personnel matters and especially proposed legislation affecting the career force, the retired community, and veterans of the uniformed services and advocates for a strong national defense it does not, as an association, become involved in matters pertaining to military strategy or individual weapons systems of the various services. The association believes that such decisions can be made only by those who have all of the facts available to them: today's actively serving military leadership.

MOAA has been recognized for 19 consecutive years by **The Hill News** as a TOP Lobbying Organization based on its effective advocacy on the issues defined in its governing documents and resolutions, presenting and supporting legislative proposals that provide for the fair and equitable treatment of members of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves, military retirees, family members, survivors, and veterans as defined in its federal Charter in 36 USC, chapter 1404.

The Editorial Policy of this Newsletter is consistent with the discussion above.

Surviving Spouses Corner

Cathie Stevens, Surviving Spouse Liaison

Happy 250th Anniversary of the July 4th signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.



Philadelphia Constitutional Hall

Chapter Shirts & Name Tags



3451 Wedgewood Lane The
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Editorial Policy

MOAA is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. It is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization. It is our Chapter responsibility to adhere to MOAA standards in all regards. Membership is open to anyone who has served as a commissioned or warrant officer in any of the eight military services, or is the surviving spouse of an individual who was a member or was eligible to be a member of MOAA.

This newsletter is a publication of the Lake and Sumter Counties Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America. It is intended for wide distribution to all MOAA members in Lake, Sumter and Marion Counties, Florida.

Input for **Officers' Call**, including text and pictures, can be emailed to the editor.



The Council Communiqué
Florida Council of Chapters
Military Officers Association of America



The Army Officer Candidate School Database: Preserving the Legacy of Commissioned Leaders



The Army Officer Candidate School (OCS) Database stands as a landmark resource for OCS graduates, their families, and historians. Built to honor more than eight decades of service and sacrifice, the database is dedicated to preserving the lineage and accomplishments of those who earned their commissions through the U.S. Army's OCS programs.

For over 80 years, Army Officer Candidate Schools have transformed prior-service enlisted Soldiers and qualified civilians into commissioned leaders. From the battlefields of World War II to modern operations around the globe, OCS-commissioned officers have played pivotal roles in shaping American military history. The creation and expansion of the Army OCS Database represents a major milestone in capturing that heritage with accuracy, dignity, and permanence.

For the first time, graduates, families, researchers, and veterans can explore a growing historical archive documenting the men and women who received their commissions through every Army branch school dating back to 1941. This living, continually expanding database currently includes more than **282,500 graduates**, with additional entries added as new records are discovered, digitized, and verified.

More than a directory, the Army OCS Database is a tribute—ensuring that the leadership, commitment, and stories of OCS-trained officers are never lost to time. It serves as a bridge between generations of Soldiers and a foundation for future historical research, education, and remembrance.

www.armyocsdatabase.com



LAKE & SUMTER COUNTIES CHAPTER
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
OF
AMERICA
P.O. BOX 666
Lady Lake, FL 32158-0666

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Today's Date: ____/____/____

Membership is open to those who have served as a commissioned or warrant officer in any of the eight uniformed services of the USA, and who are members of National MOAA. Chapter membership is separate from National membership and carries its own dues. Members 90 years of age and over become Chapter Life Members with no dues.

First name: _____ **Middle initial:** ____ **Last name:** _____ **Suffix:** ____

Type membership: ____ Regular ____ Surviving spouse

Service status: (circle one) Active duty Retired Former officer Date of birth: _____

Branch of service: _____ **Rank:** _____ **Spouse's name:** _____

Mailing address: _____ **City:** _____ **State:** ____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Annual Dues Fee: (circle one) Regular Member: \$20 Surviving Spouse Member: \$10

__ **I am a current MOAA Member.** Member #: _____ **(circle one)** Life Premium Basic

__ **I wish to join National MOAA.** Please contact me with information.

This is an application for: (circle one) New membership or Chapter Renewal

We are a 501(c)(19) tax deductible organization. We welcome voluntary donations to our Junior ROTC Scholarship Fund, which may be included with your dues.

Dues: \$ _____ **JROTC donation:** \$ _____ **Total submitted:** \$ _____

We are always looking for members to help on various committees within the Chapter; if you would like more information about a committee, please check the box of the ones you might be interested in learning more about.

☐ MEMBERSHIP ☐ FINANCE/TREASURER ☐ GOLF TOURNAMENT ☐ MEETING LOGISTICS

☐ AWARDS ☐ LEGISLATIVE ☐ SURVIVING SPOUSE SUPPORT ☐ NEWSLETTER

☐ SOCIAL MEDIA/PUBLIC RELATIONS ☐ WEB SITE MONITORING ☐ OTHER _____

Make Check Payable to: MOAA Mail to: MOAA, PO Box 666, Lady Lake, FL 32158

Membership application may also be submitted at <http://www.lakeandsumtermoaa.org/Join?showall=0>

Need more info? Contact COL Albert (Al) E. Arnold, III, USA (Ret), Membership Chairman, aeaiii@aol.com, 703-470-3886