



Officers Call

Newsletter of the Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
October 2026

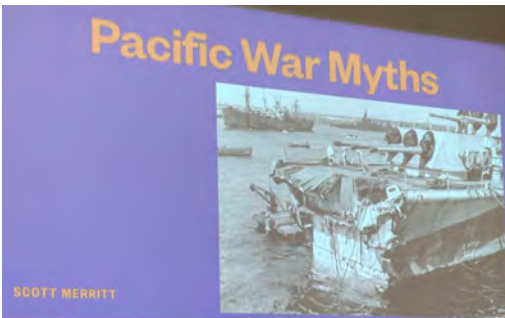


President's Message

LtCol Don Hansen, USA (Ret)
Chapter President

Welcome to October where we observe: the first full month of Autumn; Columbus Day (12th); the founding of the United States Navy in 1775 (13th); the founding of the United Nations organization in 1945 (24th); and Halloween (31st).

We kicked off our Fall meetings last month and our speaker was Scott Merritt who gave us a quick overview of the war with Japan in the Pacific during WWII titled "Pacific War Myths." Scott did a fantastic job, as always, and we enjoyed the presentation very much as he busted a number of myths surrounding the war in the Pacific.



Our speaker this month will be one of our favorite authors, Carole Engle Avriett, who will give us a brief overview of the latest book she is writing (she has written 12) dealing with one of the deadliest and least known battles in Germany during the last year of WWII. As you know, Carole has spoken to us three times previously about her books: "Coffin Corner Boys"; "Marine Raiders"; and "Midnight in Ironbottom Sound." Accompanying Carole will be the production team of Dean C. Jones and Debbie Faris who will tell us about the process of making a movie out of Carole's latest book "Midnight in Ironbottom Sound." It should be an interesting presentation.



(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

OUR NEXT MEETING

**Wednesday
Oct 14th
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
Oct 9th**

[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.

President's Message Continued



We were visited by Marie Bogdonoff, Founder and CEO of Villagers For Veterans, one of the eight local military oriented charities we support with donations. We were able to present Marie with a check for \$6,500.00, \$3,000 of which came from our April Golf Tournament and \$3,500 from a grant we received from National MOAA.

Recording our gift was was Veronica Wernicke, Daily Sun Senior Writer who does such a terrific job in reporting veteran events here in The Villages. An article on our presentation to Marie appeared the next day in The Daily Sun. Thanks for attending our meeting Veronica.



Also at our last month's meeting, we presented long time member and chapter leader, Dolphus (Pete) Rector, CWO4, USN (Ret.) with the Florida Council of Chapters Leadership Award. Pete has served as Vice President and also as Treasurer for our chapter. Unfortunately, we will lose Pete and his wife Nona this month as they move to North Carolina to be nearer to family. We will certainly miss Pete as he has been a strong leader and supporter in our chapter over the years.

Speaking of supporting our chapter, we are asking you members to step up and take positions in the leadership of our chapter. We are immediately seeking to fill the positions of Chaplin, State Legislative Affairs Liaison, and membership on our Golf Tournament Committee. We also are asking you to bring baskets, ribbon, and bottles of wine to our meetings in order to make gift baskets for our golf tournament silent auction next April.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

President's Message Continued

Our monthly Dine-To-Donate Day will be at the [Prima Italian Steakhouse Restaurant](#) on **October 20th**. Please plan to have a meal there on that day and the Suleiman Family Restaurants will provide our JROTC Scholarship Fund 20% of your meal price.

Just write MOAA on the top of the bill you are presented with and they will do the rest. By participating in this monthly DTD Day, the Suleiman's provide us with a Certificate good for a meal a week (up to \$25) for 52 weeks which we then raffle off to raise money for our JROTC Scholarships and Charity Donations.

We have thus earned \$5,000 from this raffle each of the last two years which is a major addition to our Golf Tournament earnings allowing us make the donations we do each year. Also, donate \$5 in the JROTC Jar at the front desk and you will receive a \$10 Suleiman voucher for you to use at the restaurant at a later date.



Thanks to member Stanley (John) Whidden, Col, USA (Ret.), who desired all of us to know that the dedication ceremony for the **National Desert Shield and Desert Storm**

Memorial in Washington, D.C., will take place on **Saturday, October 24, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. DDT**. The public event is being

organized by the [National Desert Storm Memorial Association](#) and will be held at the memorial site on the southwest corner of

Constitutional Avenue NW and 23rd Street NW, just steps from the National Mall and the Lincoln Memorial. It is open to the general public as no formal invitation is required to attend the ceremony.



Our caterer for our October luncheon will again be Mission BBQ. They have done so much for our veterans and first responders here in The Villages area and we happily support them as well as enjoy great BBQ lunches. BTW, you can also order a salad as a “vegetarian” alternative. Get your reservation in by noon Friday, 9 October!

Check out the ad later in this newsletter for our raffle of a beautiful patriotic Quilt/wall hanging being offered by our chapter. The drawing will be on our March 10, 2027 luncheon meeting. Also, we have begun selling raffle tickets for the Suleiman Family Restaurants Certificate for one meal a week (up to \$25) for 52 weeks at the Havana Country Club Restaurant. The tickets are \$20 each and there are only 250 tickets. We will draw the winning ticket worth \$1,300 at our Golf Tournament banquet on 2 April 2027. You do not need to be present at the drawing of either of the two raffles.

That's about it for now so enjoy October and our fall season and above all, **NEVER STOP SERVING!**

Membership and Recruiting

Col Al Arnold, USA (Ret)
Membership Chairman



A hearty welcome to the following members who recently joined our Chapter:

- Charlotte Corbin, Surviving spouse
- David Johnson, Col, USA, retired
- Albert Martine, Maj, USAR/ARNG

We currently have 302 Chapter members. All Chapter members are also members of National MOAA!!

Heard this on WVLG radio a while ago – some old-time phrases/sayings. So, I looked them up. Remember these? How many have you used? I'll bet almost all.

- "Heavens to Betsy!"
- "Don't take any wooden nickels."
- "Hold your horses."
- "Well, I'll be a monkey's uncle!"
- "The squeaky wheel gets the grease."
- "You'll catch more flies with honey than vinegar."
- "I wouldn't count my chickens before they've hatched."
- "There's no point in beating a dead horse."
- "If that doesn't beat all."
- "That doesn't amount to a hill of beans."
- "Let's bury the hatchet."
- "Don't get your knickers in a twist."
- "Blood is thicker than water."
- "I haven't seen you since you were knee-high to a grasshopper."
- "You're preaching to the choir."
- "Strike while the iron is hot."
- "Don't cry over spilt milk."
- "Don't put the cart before the horse."
- "A watched pot never boils."
- "Too many cooks spoil the broth."
- "A rolling stone gathers no moss."
- "This isn't my first rodeo."
- "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink."
- "The early bird catches the worm."
- "Never look a gift horse in the mouth."
- "Don't judge a book by its cover."

And there are many more. When you think about it, it's amazing how many of these we have actually used/heard over time.

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President

LTC Donald Hansen, USA (Ret)

Past President

CAPT Paul Hauser, USN (Ret)

First VP

Lt Col Bruce Hacker, USAF (Ret.)

Second VP

Capt. Danny Cagle, USMC (Former)

Historian

Pam Fillmon Sherrill

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SMSgt Rhonda Storey, USAF (Ret)

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Maj Daryl DesJardin, USAF (Ret)

Legislative Liaison

Lt Col Bob Bienvenue, USAF (Ret)

State Legislative Liaison

OPEN

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Col Al Arnold, USA (Ret)

Personal Affairs

LtCol James O'Hagan, USMC (Ret)

Community Affairs

Col Marcus Sherrill, USAF (Ret)

Surviving Spouse Liaison

Cathie Stevens

Provost

COL Kevin Harvey, USA (Ret)

Public Information Officer

Maj Thomas Lutes, USA (Ret)

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

In case you didn't see it in the August 27 MOAA National newsletter, MOAA has a lot of financial calculators that provide dynamic graphics, customizable reports, and explanations of key terms and concepts, all free of charge. Areas include: Military-to-Civilian Financial Calculators, Retirement Savings and Planning, Mortgage Calculators, Loan Calculators, Credit Cards and Debt Management, Auto Calculators, Investment Calculators, Tax Calculators, Savings Calculators, Personal Finance, Insurance Calculators.

Here's the direct link to the calculators:

[MOAA Calculators](#)

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

Stay safe..

Legislative Update

LtCol Bob Bienvenue, USAF (Ret)
Legislative Liaison

MOAA Legislative Update:
[LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER](#)



MOAA's Advocacy in Action Campaign— Status Update



Congress Has Paused **BUT** MOAA is Ready for What's Next

This summer during the 7-week congressional recess, MOAA advocates sent more than 18,000 messages to Capitol Hill. This level of effort serves as signal to lawmakers that MOAA members represent the entire community of uniformed servicemembers, veterans, retirees, and families in their districts!! Florida MOAA Members accounted for nearly 30% of that total. That is impressive considering Florida MOAA Members represent only 9% of MOAA membership.



With the House already adjourned until the midterms and the Senate set to do the same in the coming days, the remaining floor action on MOAA's legislative priorities is likely to wait until after the election. With the 119th Congress scheduled to adjourn on December 18th, once again our elected representatives have put themselves in an almost impossible situation to finalize the NDAA and wrap up the budget bills before the CR's expire (in mid-December shortly after their thanksgiving recess) and before their adjournment ... a precarious set-up to avert another government shutdown. MOAA is watching all this very closely.

They will be amping up Calls-to-Action in advance of Congress reconvening to focus their attention on our priorities during the final days working on the must pass legislation.

In the meanwhile, stay up to date with
[MOAA's advocacy news](#) the [Legislative Action Center](#)
and in particular the "MOAA Supported Bills" page [MOAA | Action Center](#)
where you can find our elected officials' co-sponsorship.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

Legislative Update Continued

Florida's November Election

This year Florida citizens will be voting on a **new** Governor, a Senatorial race, a **new** Congressman for District 11, and on a very important Amendment #3 to the Florida constitution.

MOAA's defines Officership as a "lifetime profession" that does not fade after departure from active service. One of the core values of officership is civic participation and service for the greater good of our nation, our communities and our citizens.

In that regard as former and retired officers we should fulfill our responsibility as citizens and **strive to be informed voters on the candidates and their positions.**

As individuals, MOAA members are not prohibited from engaging in partisan political activities so long as they do so **in way that makes it clear they are acting for themselves** it is permissible for an individual to express his or her personal preference in support of or in opposition to a candidate or political party. And they may do so publicly following that advice.

Major Richard Star Act Discharge Petition Clears Threshold

On September 15th, the Major Richard Star Act discharge petition, reached the 218 signatures needed to force a vote on the bill. The petition's success comes after sustained pressure from veteran service organizations, combat-injured veterans, and lawmakers who refused to give up on efforts to pass the legislation. The bill has overwhelming bipartisan support, with 340 cosponsors in the House and 80 in the Senate.

Reaching 218 signatures freezes the petition and places the discharge motion on the House Calendar, where it must sit for seven legislative days before it can be called up. With the House on recess, that window won't open until members return in November. When it does, a signer can bring the motion to the floor, and if adopted, the House proceeds directly to a vote on the Major Richard Star Act.

The vote of the Florida delegation was 7 Democrats and 1 Republican.

The resolution expressly applies to "[t]he retired pay of an eligible combat-related disabled uniformed services retiree, who is retired under chapter 61 of this title with fewer than 20 years of creditable service," which would cover the less than 60,000 combat-injured retirees targeted by the original legislation and address eligibility concerns raised by the Congressional Budget Office. It is unclear whether that change will improve the bill's chances in the Senate, where attempts to pass the standalone Star Act via unanimous consent have been rejected on multiple occasions.

MOAA has supported all legislative avenues to move this long-sought fix forward

Write to your congressman to advance this bill

[MOAA | Stop the 34-Year Wait - Deliver Toxic-Exposed Veterans the Care They've Earned](#)

Community Affairs

Col Marcus Sherrill, USAF (Ret)
Community Affairs

TWO THINGS.....

As we all know, one of the major focuses of our local organization is to support the JROTC programs in 5 Lake and Sumter high schools. As part of that, we have the annual MOAA Medal from each school at our annual Veterans Day dinner to speak to us about their participation and their future. That time is fast approaching and our dinner this year is on Friday, November 13th to avoid conflicts with Veterans Day on her normal Wednesday meeting date. I checked into it a little bit and the cost to go out to dinner at a chain restaurant in the Village's area is between 25 and \$40 (without alcohol) so I know that you are not skipping our November meeting because of cost given we come in at the low end of that range. So, since we can all afford that dinner, we need to participate in that evening and I promise you that you will be extremely impressed with the young folks that you will meet – extremely impressed!

For my second item, as I mentioned last month, we are starting a committee to put together a slate of officers for our election in 2027. And so far, with one article here and one announcement at the last meeting, I have had one response, and I cornered him at the meeting. I am sure none of us want to go back as an organization to where we were 10-15 years ago, so we need to bring in some new “young” blood and also get our spouses more involved. Pam and I need some help to do that so please contact us and put in a little time to help us move forward with the new chapter officers. Our emails are msherrill45@gmail.com and Pafills65@gmail.com

Surviving Spouses Corner

Cathie Stevens
Surviving Spouse Liaison



Did You Know.....



There is a MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter?

The Virtual Chapter is an affinity group whose members share information and ideas with others in a virtual environment. This chapter is intended to be an enhancement to, rather than take the place of geographic chapters and there are no dues. Everyone has busy lives; therefore, members participate to the extent they are able. While the chapter is geared toward surviving spouses and surviving spouse liaisons, any MOAA spouse is welcome for membership. Meetings are held monthly on the third Tuesday, January – October, via Zoom either with or without video, or by phone. Members participate to the degree that they are able. There are no dues. Several weeks in advance of each meeting members will receive an email alerting them to the date and time of the gathering: a follow on email with instructions for joining the meetings is sent several days prior to each meeting. HOW TO JOIN? Just send an email to

mssvc02@gmail.com and let them know you would like to join in on the monthly Surviving Spouse Virtual Zoom meetings and you will be added to the email list.

ADDED BONUS: There is also a Surviving Spouse Virtual Book Club! You can join in by using the same email above and express your interest. A new book is discussed each month January – October. The Book for October is The Lager Queen of Minnesota. The Book Club meets the third Monday of the month at 4:00PM.

Click the logo above for more information

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 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 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 **ad-vocacy**:

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.

Chapter Shirts & Name Tags



3451 Wedgewood Lane The
Villages, F: 32162
Tel 352-750-1600



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.



2027 MOAA Charity Golf Tournament

Capt Dan P. Cagle, USAF (Ret)
Golf Committee Chairman

Welcome back for another year. Our 19th Annual Golf tournament will be held on the 2nd of April 2027, once again at Harbor Hills Country Club.

Our first Golf Committee meeting of the year was on September 25 th We have a new Organizational Chart that will soon be released, as well as a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). A big thanks to our Golf Committee Team that contributed to this effort. This will be especially helpful for out NEW members.

SPEAKING OF NEW MEMBERS

We are looking to fill two leadership positions: **Sponsorship Team Leader and Vice Chairman**. If you or anyone you might know is interested, please have them contact me directly and I will review the position responsibilities with them. It is always good to have a member of the team step up and take a leadership role.

Looking forward to working with everyone again and making this another successful year!

Hit 'em "Long & Straight,"
Dan

MOAA GOLF TOURNAMENT AUCTION UPDATES

From DEBBIE CAGLE

Looking back on last years' tournament, I'm reminded of how much heart and dedication went into every single basket we created. From gathering donations to arranging them with care, each of you brought your special touch, and it showed. The success we had was a direct result of your teamwork, generosity, and willingness to go the extra mile.

Now, as we gear up for this year's event, I'm thrilled to see so many familiar faces returning and to welcome new volunteers joining us for the first time. Your energy, ideas, and commitment are what make this tournament more than just a day of golf - it's a celebration of community and shared purpose. I can't wait to see what we accomplish together this year and the joy it will bring to everyone involved.

With gratitude and excitement,
Debbie Cagle

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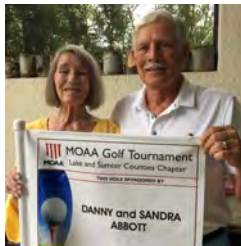
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**BRUCE AND NANCY
HACKER**



Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
Charity Sweepstakes



WIN

America's Semiquincentennial Celebration Quilt



Proceeds from this sweepstakes will be used to support Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America charity programs, including Scholarships to ten high school Junior ROTC cadets in five area High Schools and area veterans/military-oriented charities.

Win this hand-made, one-of-a-kind 6'4" x 4'10" quilt hand-crafted for America's 250 Anniversary.

**Only 300 tickets will be
sold for \$20.00 each.**

Winner will be drawn March 9, 2027 at the Eisenhower Recreation Center, The Villages, FL.
Winner need not be present to win!

***Dine once a week for FREE
at***



Win a FREE meal at the Havana Country Club once a week for a year!

Only 250 tickets will be sold for \$20.00 each. A winner will be drawn April 2, 2027 at the Golf Tournament. The winner need not be present to win. The winner will receive a FREE meal at the Havana Country Club once a week for one year (a \$1300 value!). The FREE meal award is not transferable and only can be used by the winner.

Proceeds from this drawing will be used to support Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America charity programs, including Junior ROTC Scholarships and support of various veteran-oriented charities.

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/memberships>

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