



Lake & Sumter Counties

Military Officers Association of America



Lake Sumter Counties Chapter of MOAA Board of Directors (BoD) Minutes July 1, 2025

1. Meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm on July 1, 2025, at 3607 Enterprise, The Villages FL, 32163. The meeting was led by President Don Hansen.

2. Attendees.

Don Hansen - President
Bruce Hacker - 1st Vice President
Rhonda Storey - Secretary
Dennis Storey - Treasurer and VA Service Officer
Al Arnold - Membership
Tom Lutes - Recruiting
Bob Bienvenue - Legislative Liaison (Federal)
Bill Wojciechowiki – Legislative Liaison (State)
Daryl DesJardin - Chaplin

3. September Meeting Meal Caterer. Don Hansen. Mission BBQ will be the Caterer for this meeting. They will also provide the meal for the November Dinner. Live Five out of Ocala will provide the October meal.

4. Treasurers Report. Dennis Storey.
Beginning Balance **May**: \$63,149.73
Expenses: **\$11,500.00**
Debit Card Purchases **\$4,752.61**
Deposits: \$884.15
Ending Balance: \$63,419.73
All bills are paid through the end of the year.

Beginning Balance **June**: \$55,419.73
Expenses: **\$12,000.00**
Due Change: \$5.00
Debit Card Purchases **\$4,752.61**
Deposits: \$520.88
Ending Balance: \$43,935.61

5. Membership. Al Arnold. We have 291 members in the database, 24 of them are over 90. We have one that is 106 years old. We will verify this one as well as the others to ensure our roster is up to date. National database went down and without notice it is

now back up. We have four new members since last month. We still have limited access to the database.

6. Congressional Liaison (State). William Wojciechowski

a. Governor's budget includes the following appropriations:

To ensure the continued support of Florida's veteran community, the budget invests:

- An additional **\$20.8 million** to support capital improvements for the State Veterans' Nursing Homes.
- A continued funding of **\$1 million** to provide for a Veteran's Dental Care Grant Program to enable deserving qualified Florida Veterans to receive no-cost dental care to improve their general health.
- A continued **\$2 million** investment to assist veterans in securing meaningful skills-based employment, provide employers a skilled talent pipeline, and to assist veterans in creating and operating a small business.

b. Other key bills made into law which are effective July 1 include:

House Bill 797 streamlines access to long-term care for veterans and their spouses by removing bureaucratic obstacles like Certificate of Needs processes. It also facilitates better utilization of skilled nursing facilities across the state by allowing them to designate specific beds for veterans and their spouses. The bill empowers FDVA to approve these designations, so long as facilities meet rigorous standards for care and admission.

Senate Bill 116 provides a comprehensive overhaul of how Florida supports its veterans by expanding suicide prevention programs to include early recognition of mental health conditions and not just emergency intervention. The bill also directs the creation of a statewide plan for adult health care centers dedicated to veterans.

Senate Bill 910 protects veterans from predatory practices by cracking down on bad actors who seek to exploit veterans navigating the benefits process. This legislation creates strong new protections for veterans by placing clear limits on unaccredited benefits advisors, qualifying payment contingent upon securing a real increase on benefits for the veteran, and capping payouts. It also bans referral kickbacks, prohibits misleading guarantees, and mandates that anyone offering paid benefits must pass a high-level background check. Violators will face stricter penalties under the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act.

7. Congressional Liaison (Federal). Bob Bienvenue

Increasing the number of our chapter members who are registered and participate in the Legislative Action Center - I have included some data on that. (Attachment A). This potentially may be added to the Level of Excellence Criteria.

Also attached is a read ahead for this discussion that the Council Legislative Chair Pierre Louis prepared to address at the January Leadership Training seminar. It's a very good guide for raising the level of LAC participation. As you'll read in the attached - straw-man plan for this year's Summer AiA during the Congressional August Recess

was put together by the Florida Council Legislative Chair and appeared in the June Communique.

Although the specific topics haven't been identified, he is working on the background papers based on MOAA's current **Supported Legislation** [MOAA | Action Center](#) and active **Advocacy Campaigns** [MOAA | Action Center](#) as found on the LAC pages of the website.

Pierre's suggested action for chapters right now is to create the "**Block lists**" [described in the attached] that we (the board) will use to engage our members directly and thereby increase the grassroots activity/communication to our elected federal officials on legislative matters affecting us and the actively serving community we support.

8. Surviving Spouse Liaison. Cathie Stevens – Absent

9. Recruiting. Tom Lutes

- a. Submitted a request for a spot for the 18 October 2025 Brownwood Market.
- b. Request a **volunteer** assistant to transition equipment (table, chairs, tent, ect) to the assigned spot. Volunteer will be part of the Membership/Recruiting Team.
- c. Tom is putting together a contact list of potential members as we meet them. Al Arnold said we have a potential members list in the database; however, we need to have an email address since, without it, we have trouble sending out emails because they will bounce. We can keep a second list of those with out emails if we want.

10. Personal Affairs. Jim O'Hagan – Absent.

11. Golf Tournament.

- a. Tom Lutes recommended that we assign a team lead to each of the tasks, and we write up a description of what this person is required to do, a list of POCs for whatever purpose, processes and procedures no matter how small or large, and update as appropriate.
- b. Don Hansen. We need a **volunteer** to take over the Silent Auction. Lisa and Gary Hostomsky were nominated. Don to get in touch with them. We thank Annette and Tim Valliett who have been doing this for several years.
- c. Don Hansen is meeting with Harbor Hills to coordinate a date for our next Golf Tournament. Hope to come out of this meeting with a signed contract. It was recommended that we ask for a break at the bar, maybe a drink coupon, or a percentage off.
- d. Discussed possibly of using different golf courses, but the consensus of the group after discussion of several courses was, if it isn't broke, leave it as it is.

12. Speakers.

- 10 September 2025 – Atty David F. Barden "Heads up on Trusts, Wills and Estates"
- 9 October 2025 – FCC Coleman Warden
- 12 November 2025 – JROTC Dinner (Day after Military Ball)

13. Miscellaneous.

a. Help with setting up and tearing down tables at the Member Meeting. Arrive NLT 10:45am

b. Plaques for Suleimans (Havana & Legacy) & Blackston. Tom procured and picked up the plaques. Thankyou Tom for your efforts. The plaques were \$45.00 each. We had an anonymous doner who paid for them.

c. MOAA Chapter Member on the Joint Veteran's Support Committee for Florida National Cemetery. Dennis Storey is our representative.

d. Still looking for a **Volunteer** to take over "Dine-To-Donate" project. This does not take much time only one day a month. See Don Hansen if you are interested.

e. Suggestions for Dynamic Speakers. If you know of a speaker we might be interested in, please let one of the officers know.

f. Don Hansen will be out of town for the September meeting. Bruce Hacker will run the BoD meeting.

g. Bob will attend MOAA Conference in Sarasota Springs, where he will receive the 2024 Colonel Steve Strobridge Award for the Council Legislative Chair/Liaison.

h. DoD ID Cards. Al Arnold. The old ID Cards will expire on 31 December 2025. Be sure to get your ID cards updated prior to this date or there is a possibility that you may loose your Tricare for Life Benefit. Let's not let this happen. Al will put out another note on how to do this. The best way is to make an appointment in ([RAPIDS Appointment Scheduler for IDs | Military.com](#)) and go to one of the places listed near your area.

14. We are adjourned until our next meeting on 2 September 2025.

Rhonda Storey

RHONDA L. STOREY
Lake and Sumpter Counties
Military Officers of America (MOAA)

Attachment A

Here are 10 strategies the Florida Council and Chapters can adopt to improve members' engagement rate in the Legislative Action Center:

1. Simplify the Action Process

Provide step-by-step guides or tutorials, such as videos or infographics, to demonstrate how easy it is to use the Legislative Action Center.

2. Personalized Communication

Send personalized emails or messages with specific campaigns that align with members' interests or concerns, increasing the likelihood of participation.

3. Leverage Social Media

Regularly post updates on MOAA's social media platforms with direct links to the Legislative Action Center, using hashtags and compelling visuals to capture attention.

4. Highlight Success Stories

Share examples of how member advocacy efforts have directly contributed to legislative successes, showing the tangible impact of engagement.

5. Gamify the Experience

Introduce friendly competitions among chapters or regions, such as "Which chapter can generate the most letters to Congress this month?"

6. Incorporate Advocacy into Events

Dedicate time during meetings or luncheons for a live demonstration of the Legislative Action Center, allowing members to participate on the spot.

7. Provide Recognition

Acknowledge and reward active participants publicly, such as featuring their contributions in newsletters or on the website.

8. Enhance Accessibility

Optimize the Legislative Action Center for mobile devices to ensure members can easily engage on the go.

9. Educate Members

Conduct workshops or webinars to educate members on the importance of advocacy and how their actions influence legislative outcomes.

10. Set Engagement Goals

Establish clear, measurable goals for engagement (e.g., number of letters sent) and share progress with members to encourage ongoing participation

Attachment B

Florida Chapter Legislative Action Center (LAC) Engagement For 9 Months Ending September 2024			
Chapters with ≥ 100 members	Members	# Members Registered in LAC	# of Actions Taken in LAC
Cape Canaveral	1052	193	148
Tampa	267	63	44
Sarasota	251	41	54
Northwest	239	71	67
Lake & Sumter Counties	189	81	66
Sun City Center	169	25	17
Northeast	162	57	48
Pensacola	141	36	67
Central Florida	140	66	38
Halifax	130	24	37
Historic Mayport	126	28	33
Indian River	109	19	12
Broward County	107	11	11
St Petersburg	104	29	20
Flager County	103	14	5
Charlotte Harbor	101	24	36
Lee Coast	100	13	17
Council Total for all 38 Chapters	3169	789	1067

As of June 26, 2025

