



Officers' Call

Newsletter of the Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
October 2025



Presidents Message

LTC Don Hansen, USA (Ret), Chapter President

Welcome to October, the first full month of Fall. Some of the historical events that happened in October included: the end of the Nuremberg Trials on the 1st in 1946; on the 21st in 1945, Aachen was the first German city to fall to U.S. troops; and the United Nations Organization was founded on the 24th in 1945. On the 13th of this month, we observe Indigenous People's Day.

Last month we had to vacate Eisenhower RRC due to maintenance and rug replacement and held our meeting in the Lake Okahumpka Rec Center. A nice location on the lake but it is nice to be back at our home at Eisenhower this month. Our speaker, Lt.Cdr. David F. Barden, USNR (Ret.) gave a nice presentation of "Heads Up on Trust, Wills, and Estates." Here he is on the left, receiving his Speaker's Gift.



This month we will hear from the Coleman Federal Correctional Complex (FCC) Senior Warden Shannon D. Withers. Last year, October 9, 2024, he was scheduled to talk to us but the meeting had to be cancelled when the FCC sheltered in place and The Villages Rec Centers all closed on the day of our meeting due to Hurricane Milton. That missed opportunity was unfortunate as registered attendees for that meeting was going to be one of our largest attend-



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OUR NEXT MEETING

**Wednesday
October 8th
11:30 a.m.**

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



OUR MEAL

Our Caterer will be the Live Fire Chefs of Ocala who will be serving a loaded garden salad; lemon, garlic & herb roasted chicken (bone in); garlic jasmine rice; mashed potatoes & gravy; and sautéed vegetable medley.

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
October 3rd**

[Click Here](#)

or contact Tim or Annette Balliett at tabal-liett46@gmail.com or 352-728-2945.



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

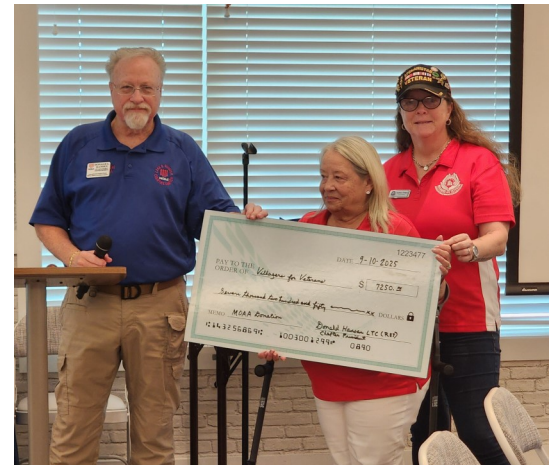
Presidents Message Continued

ance for a meeting to date. The Warden was gracious enough to accept another invitation to talk and we will hear about FCC-Coleman, the largest Correctional Complex in our nation with 5 prisons, and about the U.S. Bureau of Prisons. Most people may know about Coleman's location right across CR 470 from Middleton but hardly anyone knows the complex contains 2 Penitentiaries, 1 Middle, 1 Low, and 1 Camp. It promises to be an extremely interesting and insightful talk.

Our Dine-To-Donate partnership with the Suleiman Family Restaurants has continued to be a solid fundraiser for our JROTC Scholarship program. This month's date and location will be October 21st at the Havana Country Club Restaurant. **Remember** - a \$5 donation in our JROTC Jar will get you a \$10 certificate from David Suleiman to be used at any of his restaurants. **However**, don't use any of his certificates when paying the bill on the 21st as that will keep us from receiving 20% of your meal price as a donation to our chapter. Use them at another visit not connected to our chapter fund raising day.



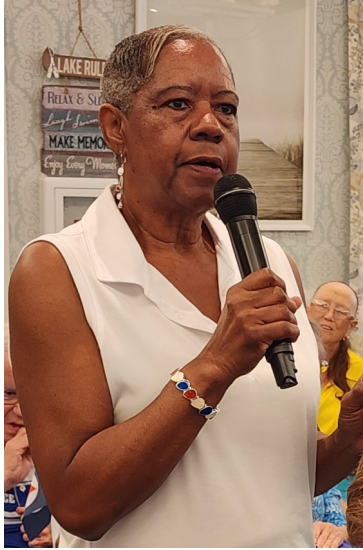
At our September meeting, we presented the Villagers for Veterans (VfV) a check for \$7250: \$3,250 from the MOAA Foundation, \$3,000 from us, and \$1,000 from an anonymous donor. Receiving our donation was VfV CEO Marie Bogdonoff and her 1st VP (and our chapter member) Kathryn Wilgus. Our funds will go toward purchase of appliances at the new Ashley's House.



We introduced the Reverend Gary H. Kadow, CEO of the Project SOS (Support Our Soldiers, Inc.) Charity we support and heard a short explanation of his charity helping homeless veterans making the Ocala National Forest their homes.

Presidents Message Continued

We also heard from Colonel Max Schulman, President of the MOAA Nature Coast Chapter, who we are in discussions with to assist them with their chapter and perhaps making them a satellite chapter to ours.



Finally, we heard from chapter member Dr. Carrie Dixon, LTJG, USN (Former), and Chapter President of The Villages African American Club, who spoke on her chapter's "The 2025 All-Male Fashion Show" Fundraiser being held Saturday, November 1st, at the Savannah Center from 5-9 p.m. Our chapter purchased a table of eight to help with the fundraising as our donation will go toward their Veterans Recognition Dinner. Anyone wishing to attend, please contact Dr. Carrie at 765-620-6450 as the first eight that contact her will have a free seat at the table.

Next month, November 12, will be our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner honoring the six high schools in our two county catchment area that have JROTC units. We will be hearing from the top underclass cadet from each school that received the MOAA Medal and Ribbon as Juniors at their 2025 Awards Ceremonies in April and May and who are now seniors on their time in JROTC and on their plans for the future. We will also hear from their Instructors. Each will have about 5 minutes. The dinner will be catered by Mission BBQ and includes Turkey with all the trimmings.

We will also be presenting a thank-you plaque to our Major Donor for our Military Charities Golf Tournament, Mr. David Blackston of Blackston Financial Advisory Group here in The Villages. Thanks in large part to him, our tournament this year was a huge success and allowed us to present \$39,000 to our 12 Scholarships and 8 local military oriented charities we support. Thank you David!



Well that's all for now. Enjoy October and I look forward to seeing you at our October 8 meeting back at the Eisenhower Regional Recreation Center. Stay safe, be smart, and above all - **NEVER STOP SERVING!**

Membership and Recruiting

COL Al Arnold, USA (Ret), Membership Chairman

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

Bruce Walker, LCDR, USN, retired



We currently have 292 Chapter members. All Chapter members are also members of National MOAA!!

Department of War (DoW) ID card update: there's a lot of conflicting information out there about this subject, to include a recent DFAS newsletter and Marine Corps Semper Fidelis newsletter. I spoke with DMDC on September 19. They told me that the old (to be called legacy) ID card **WILL** expire on 31 Dec 2025 even though the expiration date says IN-DEF. After this date, you will not be allowed on base or entry into an Exchange or commissary. I also spoke with the TRICARE for Life folks about using the old ID card. They said they use the DoW/DoD benefits number (not social security number) that starts with a 00 (zero, zero). If the old card has this number, it's good to go. Otherwise, you must get a new ID card. I would strongly suggest getting the new ID card anyway. The best way to do this is to make an appointment at an ID card facility by going to this website: <HTTPS://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco>. Need help? Call the Central Florida Military Retiree Activities Office (352-430-1679) or me (703-470-3886).

New DoW logon security system: over the next 18 months, the Department of War will replace the legacy DS Logon system, which authenticates users onto more than 200 DoW and Veterans Affairs websites, with a more modern and flexible system called myAuth. The myAuth system is based on a commercial product, rebranded for the War Department, which provides cloud-based "identity as a service" capabilities to the department. Although the target for decommissioning the DS Logon is 18 months, users can log in to myAuth now and set up an account using their DS Logon credentials. If users wait until after DS Logon is gone, the process to create a new account will require reverifying the user's identity

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Chapter Awards



2024



2024

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LTC Donald Hansen, USA (Ret)

Past President

CAPT Paul Hauser, USN (Ret)

First VP

Lt Col Bruce Hacker, USAF (Ret.)

Second VP

Pam Fillmon Sherrill

Treasurer

CWO3 Dennis Storey, USA (Ret)

Secretary

SMSgt Rhonda Storey, USAF (Ret)

Chaplain

Maj Daryl DesJardin, USAF (Ret)

Legislative Liaison

Lt Col Bob Bienvenue, USAF (Ret)

State Legislative Liaison

Col William Wojciechowski, USAF (Ret)

Membership

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.)

Recruiting

MAJ Thomas Lutes, USA (Ret.)

Newsletter

LTC Luke Emerson, USA (Ret)

Web Site:

www.lakesumtermoaa.org

Information:

info@lakesumtermoaa.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

COL Al Arnold, USA (Ret), Membership Chairman

if they do not have a CAC (which most of us do not). One of the cool features from myAuth that DS Logon did not have is the help feature. So, when you go to myAuth, there's a button that is labeled 'help.' And when you click that, it's going to break down everything about what myAuth is, how to log in, frequently asked questions and what creating a new account looks like. How to create a new myAuth account? Google myAuth, then follow the links to “Creating a New myAuth Account”.

MOAA National membership.

The not so good news. The folks at MOAA National have said their membership fees for Premium and Life memberships will increase effective January 1, 2026. You may be getting correspondence from MOAA National in the next couple months asking you to upgrade your membership before their fees increase.

The good news. At a recent Chapter Board of Directors meeting, we approved an *incentive* for you to upgrade your MOAA National membership. Any Basic member that upgrades to a Premium membership will receive **one-year free** Chapter dues (that's \$20.). Any Basic or Premium member that upgrades to a Life membership will receive **five years free** Chapter membership (that's \$100.)

Why upgrade to one of these memberships? Good question. Check out all the information in the February and March Chapter newsletters at the following links: [Newsletter \(Civic design\)](#) [Newsletter \(Civic design\)](#)

OK. You've decided to upgrade. How do you do that and how do we credit your local Chapter account? More good questions.

- Here's how to upgrade. Login to your MOAA National account. Once logged in, you will see the option to upgrade on your membership account page. You may also call the Member Service Center (1-800-234-6622), where they will assist with the upgrade over the phone and process payment. They will also offer a **10% discount when you call in** to upgrade to Life membership over the phone.

- Here's how to get Chapter credit. Just let me know via email (aeaiii@aol.com) after you've upgraded and I'll make sure your account gets the appropriate credit.

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

Stay safe.

Recruiting Chair

MAJ Tom Lutes, USA (Ret)

We'll be staffing a community outreach and recruiting tent at the Brownwood Market in The Villages on October 4, 2025. It is a great opportunity to make our presence known, talk to people about what we do, and recruit new members. We only do this a couple of times a year and it has been greatly successful so far.



We need your help, we need a few volunteers to help set-up, tear-down, and staff the booth. We'll be running two shifts, 0900-1100 and 1100-1300 on Saturday October 4, 2025. Setup will begin around 8:30. If you would like to volunteer or learn more about this endeavor shoot me an email at lutesaware@aol.com or give me a call at (352) 219-1166. *Never stop serving!*



From: Chapter Elections Nominating Committee

This is from Tom Lutes and Al Arnold, the nomination committee for the Chapter elections we will be having at our November 12th meeting. Our by-laws state we need to elect a president, 1st vice president, 2nd vice president, secretary, and treasurer every two years. And it's that time.

Article XI of our by-laws state that the nominating committee names as well as the nominees shall be published to the membership in a newsletter or separate email. And that the nominating committee shall submit no more than two names for each office. Nominations may also be made from the floor at our November meeting. The term of office is two years, starting in January 2026.

Here is the slate we have prepared:

President: Don Hansen

1st Vice President: Bruce Hacker

2nd Vice President: Dan Cagle

Secretary:

Treasurer: Dennis Storey

You'll note that the secretary position has no nominees. If you would like to run for secretary, or any of these offices, please let Tom and Al know at: lutesaware@aol.com and aeaiii@aol.com. Please let us know no later than 1 November 2025 so we can appropriately prepare.

Chaplain's Corner

Maj Daryl DesJardin, USAF (Ret), Chaplain



I write this month's newsletter article not just as your chaplain, but as a fellow traveler on an unexpected journey. Four years ago, I received a diagnosis that changed everything: Parkinson's disease. Like many newly-retired service members, I thought my toughest battles were behind me. I was wrong.

But here's what I've discovered: Parkinson's isn't just taking things away—it's teaching me lessons I never expected to learn. These aren't the lessons I would have chosen, but they're profound nonetheless, and they connect deeply to the values we've carried throughout our military service. Here are just three lessons I'm still learning:

The Hardest Lesson: When Willpower Isn't Enough

The first lesson hit me immediately after diagnosis: this isn't an enemy I can defeat through determination alone. For decades, military training taught me that proper planning, decisive action, and relentless will could overcome almost any obstacle. Parkinson's laughs at that approach.

My balance issues don't respond to positive thinking. The fatigue that sometimes overwhelms me by noon doesn't yield to the work ethic that once carried me through 16-hour days in the field.

But here's the deeper truth: learning to work with limitations isn't defeat—it's wisdom. I've had to develop new strategies. Some days, I accomplish three important tasks instead of ten. I've learned to schedule demanding activities when my medication is most effective. I've discovered that accepting help isn't weakness; it's tactical intelligence.

The Reality of Asking for Help

No lesson has been harder than learning to ask for help. The first time I had to ask my fiancée, Jackie, to help me tie my shoes, I felt diminished. The first time I couldn't button my dress shirt, I was angry at myself.

But I've learned something crucial: the people who love us want to help. Jackie told me recently, "You spent over thirty years taking care of everyone else. Let me take care of you now." Accepting help isn't just about swallowing pride—it's about allowing others to serve and recognizing that interdependence has always been more honest than independence.

What Really Matters

Parkinson's has been a ruthless editor of my priorities. When you realize your energy is limited and your time uncertain, you become very selective about where you invest both.

I've stopped attending meetings that don't matter and resigned from committees that drain rather than energize me. I've learned to say no to good things so I can say yes to essential things. The result isn't a diminished life—it's a concentrated one, with the excess removed to intensify what remains.

What I Want You to Know

If you're walking a physically-debilitating path yourself, whether it's Parkinson's or another health challenge, you're stronger than you think, even on the days when you feel weakest. The courage that carried you through military service is still there—it just looks different now. Your identity isn't shrinking; it's deepening.

If you're caring for someone with any health struggles, your service is sacred. The daily tasks you perform and patience you show are acts of love that honor both your vows and your values.

To our entire MOAA community: we've always been stronger together than apart. Don't let any diagnosis make you feel alone. You belong here. Your experience matters. Your voice is still needed.

Parkinson's has taught me that life isn't about avoiding struggles—it's about finding meaning within them. I still serve, just differently. I still lead, just more quietly. I still hope, just more carefully. And I still believe that our lives have meaning beyond what we can control.

This isn't the retirement any of us planned, but it's the one we've been given, and there's grace to be found here if we're willing to look for it.

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Please Support our Golf Tournament Hole Sponsors

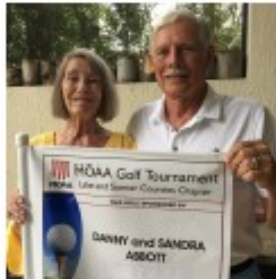


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Janet Arnett
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Dennis & Rhonda Storey
Bruce & Nancy Hacker

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



Continuing Resolution Looms as Shutdown Risks Grow

With just few days until the end of the fiscal year and the Oct. 1 government funding deadline, Congress faces mounting obstacles to avoid a shutdown. Lawmakers are working on a short-term continuing resolution (CR) to **extend funding into November**, but **divisions in both chambers threaten progress. Both parties appear entrenched, raising the likelihood of a shutdown** even as leaders on both sides acknowledge it would damage national security and political stability.



MOAA is closely monitoring these developments and the potential impact a CR or shutdown would have on uniformed servicemembers, veterans, survivors, and their families.

Continuing Resolutions: A Costly Stopgap

While a CR is far less disruptive than a shutdown, MOAA has long cautioned against their repeated use. **Congress has missed the deadline for passing all appropriations bills for more than a quarter-century, and while stopgap measures may keep the lights on, they delay readiness investments, quality-of-life improvements, and health care reforms while wasting billions of taxpayer dollars.**

Operating under a CR means:

No new initiatives: Housing repairs, child care expansions, and health care improvements cannot move forward.

Readiness delays: Training exercises, PCS moves, and equipment contracts are disrupted or deferred.

Pay and benefits uncertainty: Adjustments to allowances or new benefit provisions tied to annual legislation may be postponed.

Shutdown: The Far Worse Option

While disruptive, CRs at least keep the government operating and ensure servicemembers receive timely pay. A shutdown, by contrast, halts many federal operations outright.

Servicemembers must report for duty during a shutdown, but their paychecks will stop unless separate legislation is passed to authorize compensation.

Coast Guard members have gone without pay in past shutdowns, and uniformed personnel in the U.S.

Public Health Service and NOAA are not typically covered by shutdown pay protections.

PCS moves and training schedules may also be delayed or canceled, disrupting both families and unit readiness.

Veterans may see slower processing of disability claims and other VA benefits, while families could lose access to child care, commissaries, and other support services.

Legislative Update (Continued)

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

What Would a Shutdown Mean for Retirement Pay?

Retirees and annuitants from the armed services would continue to receive pay during a government shutdown, but beneficiaries who served in the commissioned corps of the U.S. Public Health Service or NOAA lack such protections.

A passage in the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) moved Coast Guard military retiree pay under the Pentagon's Military Retirement Fund (MRF), which allows payments to continue during a funding lapse. While USPHS and NOAA retirees and annuitants are paid via the Coast Guard Pay and Personnel Center (PPC), they are not paid from the MRF. Their service-specific funding streams would be cut off until funding for respective agencies is restored.

Finding a Funding Fix

As MOAA works to ensure those currently serving – in all branches – continue to receive pay during a shutdown, we will also work toward our cornerstone goal of service parity in these pay issues.

We'll also continue pressing lawmakers to break the long cycle of budget brinkmanship and pass funding bills in a timely fashion, which would alleviate this type of fallout (and save billions of dollars in misaligned funding caused by continuing resolutions). **Those who serve and have served should not bear the cost of congressional inaction, no matter the uniform or type of service.**

When MOAA Speaks, Congress Listens

The Pay Our Troops Act of 2026 - H.R. 5401 would guarantee members of the armed forces — including the reserve component and members of the Coast Guard — continue to receive pay and allowances during any lapses in appropriations in FY 2026.

MOAA continues to advocate for full parity across all eight uniformed services, including the commissioned corps of both the U.S. Public Health Service and NOAA. While they are not included in this legislation, MOAA recognizes and values the work of Congress in advancing H.R. 5401. Ensuring continued pay for servicemembers and their families during a government shutdown is a critical step forward

Our servicemembers and their families stand ready to serve through any crisis. Congress must provide them the certainty of uninterrupted pay so they can remain focused on the mission, not potential financial hardship.

This message needs to be strongly conveyed to our elected officials

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Pay Our Troops During a Shutdown](#)]

Why Truman Changed the 'War Department' to the 'Department of Defense'

Excerpted from an article by [Claire Barrett](#) in the **The Military Times**. Wednesday, Sep 17, 2025

During a White House press event on Aug. 25, President Donald Trump remarked that the Department of Defense name “*didn’t sound good*” to him. “*Department of Defense, I don’t want to be defense only,*” he continued. “*We want defense, but we want offense, too.*”

The president noted that under the old moniker, the Department of War, the United States enjoyed an “unbelievable history of victory” that included the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, the wars against Native Americans, the Spanish-American War, World War I and World War II.

“We’ve reestablished at the department the warrior ethos. We want warriors, folks that understand how to exact lethality on the enemy,” [Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth told “Fox & Friends”](#) several days later. “*We don’t want endless contingencies and just playing defense,*” he continued. “*We think words and names and titles matter. So, we’re working with the White House and the president on it. Stand by.*”

Legislative Update (Continued)

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

Origins of the War Department

In 1789, President George Washington signed legislation to create America's first iteration of the War Department. Under Henry Knox, the first secretary of war, the Department of War replaced the wartime Board of War and Ordnance, which was established under Washington in 1776.

[The act](#) was responsible for “for military commissions, land and naval forces, warlike stores, Indian affairs, and granting lands for military services.” However, the War Department primarily oversaw the Army, with the Navy getting its own Cabinet-level department less than a decade later — which also oversaw the Marines.

That structure remained in place until 1947, when President Harry Truman received approval from Congress to create a National Defense Establishment. The NDE eventually took power from the Army and Navy, as well as the newly formed Air Force. It was, [writes Air and Space Forces Magazine](#), “a landmark in the organization of America's military establishment.”

Just a few months after the conclusion of World War II, Truman announced his goal to implement a new governing structure for the military, as the war had induced a need for a more codified command structure. In a [special message to Congress on Dec. 19, 1945](#), Truman stated:

“I recommend that the Congress adopt legislation combining the War and Navy Departments into one single Department of National Defense. Such unification is another essential step — along with universal training — in the development of a comprehensive and continuous program for our future safety and for the peace and security of the world.

One of the lessons which have most clearly come from the costly and dangerous experience of this war is that there must be unified direction of land, sea and air forces at home as well as in all other parts of the world where our Armed Forces are serving.

We did not have that kind of direction when we were attacked four years ago — and we certainly paid a high price for not having it.”

Cognizant of the potential pushback from the Army and Navy and its generals who might view the proposal as a threat to their service's autonomy, Truman wrote in a White House press release on April 5, 1946,

“Unification does not mean subordination of any branch of the service. It does not mean a loss of identity. It means just what the word says — unification. It means a concentration and cohesion of our best military thought and our best military resources, geared to maximum efficiency. It means using our experience in World War II for the peace of the world.”

However, Truman's words of pacification did little to placate certain members of the Navy. In 1949, a small group of senior Navy officers took their private feud with the Army and Air Force public, calling into question the strategy to defeat a Soviet invasion of Europe and the allocation of scarce budget dollars, according to the [U.S. Naval Institute](#). The resulting civilian-military dustup, dubbed the “**Revolt of the Admirals**” would later involve two congressional hearings and amendments to the National Security Act of 1947 “that decisively shaped the character and organization of the military for the next half century,” according to the Air and Space Forces Magazine.

Revolt of the admirals

The cause for the revolt was twofold, arising from both a mismatch between the United States' expansive postwar conception of its national security and the demands for fiscal orthodoxy, according to the U.S. Naval Institute. In a tale as old as time, senior officials wanted a global presence in the wake of World War II — but didn't want to pay for it.

The Truman administration was determined to hold the defense budget to about \$13 billion per year. That relatively tight budget was split into thirds — one slice each for the land, air and the sea.

“This intensified the roles-and-missions struggle,” writes the Institute. “The Navy thought it was in danger

Legislative Update (Continued)

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

of losing its air arm to the Air Force. The Air Force was convinced that the Navy was attempting to build a strategic air force of its own, describing the Air Force's "fetish" for strategic bombing against the Soviet Union as immoral and ineffective.

Creation of the DOD

In light of this "revolt," several amendments to the National Security Act were implemented, converting the National Military Establishment into the Department of Defense. The amendments made the DOD a cabinet-level department and downgraded the services from executive to military departments. The secretary of defense gained complete "direction, authority, and control" over the entire department, becoming the "principal assistant to the President in all matters relating to the Department of Defense." In addition, changes to the National Security Act included the creation of a chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who would directly advise both the president and the secretary of defense. Gen. Omar Bradley became the first chairman in 1949.

"We finally succeeded," [Truman noted](#), "in getting a unification act that will enable us to have unification, and as soon as we get the crybabies in the niches where they belong, we will have no more trouble."

On Sept. 5, 2025, [Trump issued an executive order](#) to restore the use of the Department of War name, albeit as a "secondary title" for the Department of Defense.

As it stands, only an act of Congress can approve the permanent name change

State Legislative Update

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



FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The Florida legislative session convenes in January 2026. Therefore there are no legislative actions to report. The Florida Department of Veterans Affairs and other veterans groups are meeting to *determine and agree on bills in a variety of issues to include property tax exemptions, waiving driver license renewal fees, property tax discounts and a host of other benefits focused on aiding veterans and more so disabled veterans.*

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.

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 the past 18 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



Tips on Traveling Alone

Traveling alone as a widow can be both healing and empowering, but it can come with some challenges as well. I travel a lot and have traveled with friends, a group and alone. Here are some thoughtful tips to help make the experience safe, meaningful and fulfilling.

1. Choose a trip, cruise or destination that you need. There are so many choices to consider. It could be a cruise, a land tour, a spiritual retreat. Everyone has their own preference. For me I like cruises because I can do excursions based on my physical ability, I can take as many suitcases as I want, and I love all the activities a cruise ship has to offer.
2. Plan your itinerary but leave room for last-minute opportunities.
3. Consider guided tours or group travel. There are many travel opportunities for solo travelers or widows. These offer built-in social support and safety concerns.
4. Keep someone at home aware of your itinerary and your location every few days.
5. Avoid sharing personal details with strangers.
6. You will meet fellow travelers or locals to enrich your journey. I have made so many friends on my cruise trips and see them from time to time on other cruises.
7. Toast your partner's memory at a beautiful place. Let your trip carry some emotional significance. Many times, I hear a special song that reminds me of my husband, and I just close my eyes and pretend he's with me at that moment. That brings me real peace.
8. Don't procrastinate – just go! Book a small trip and test it out. You won't be sorry. Or if you don't want to travel alone – ask a friend or join a solo travel group. You'll be glad you did!
9. Solo travel means you'll be handling all your luggage yourself. I always ask for assistance at airports and cruise ports and have no problems. And I am not a light packer! Just remember to tip well.
10. Bon Voyage!

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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:



The Council Communique

Florida Council of Chapters
Military Officers Association of America

Click above to see what's going on in the state!



**TRI-COUNTY
WOMEN
★ ★ ★
VETERANS**



**Fender Stratocaster Guitar
Glass and Wooden Framed Case
Group Photo
and Certificate of Authenticity**

**Autographed by Mick Jagger,
Keith Richards, Charlie Watts &
Ronnie Wood.**



\$25 per ticket or 5 tickets for \$100

Winning Ticket to be drawn on

January 23, 2026 at

TCWV Trivia Night at Colony Recreation Center

Do not need to be present to win.

**Funds to benefit Tri-County Women Veterans -
Women Veterans Honor Retreat**

Tri-County Women Veterans, Inc.

2518 Burnsed Blvd Ste 203, The Villages, Florida 32163

501(c) (3) non-profit - EIN #88-1552498

tricountywomenveterans.org - tricountywomenveterans@yahoo.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 duty as a commissioned or warrant officer in any of the seven 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 age 90 and over become Chapter Life Members with no dues.

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: ____

Last Name: _____ Suffix: ____

Type Membership: ____ Regular ____ Surviving Spouse

Status: ____ Active Duty ____ Retired ____ Former Officer

Rank: _____ Service: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Spouse's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ St: ____ Zip: ____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

____ I am a current MOAA Member. Member#: _____ Life Annual Basic

____ I wish to join National MOAA. Please contact me with information. (circle one)

Annual Dues Fee: Regular Member: \$20 Surviving Spouse Member: \$10

This is an application for: a New or Renewal Chapter membership.

(circle one)

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: _____

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

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

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

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