



Heartlander

South Central Florida Chapter
January 2020



South Central Florida Chapter of MOAA

P.O. Box 7841
Sebring, FL 33872



Chapter Officers:

President: Mike Borders, tel. (h) 863-402-8292; (c) 703-795-8776
Vice President: Fred Carino, tel. 863-381-3636
Treasurer: David Grey, tel. 785-282-5445
Secretary: Mark Milia, tel. 407-222-4867
Recruiting/Retention: Ed Gadbois, tel. 808-280-7773
Legislative Affairs: Tom Nunnallee, tel. 863-446-0055
Surviving Spouse & Personal Affairs: Craig Smith, tel. 207-703-3402
Newsletter: Bob Brooks, tel. 863-471-6318
Past President: Roy Whitton

Our Web Site: www.scfcmoaa.org
Florida Council of Chapters website: www.moaaf.org
Take Action. MOAA Legislative Action Link:
<http://www.moaa.org/takeaction/?tab=Legislative-Action-Center#Legislative-Action-Center>

16 January 2020. Winter Gala at the Island View Restaurant at Sun N' Lake clubhouse, 5223 Sun N' Lake Blvd, Sebring. 6:30 PM. **Coat and Tie. Reservations will be taken/payment up front/plated meal. This is also the installation of our board for 2020-2021 term.**

6 February 2020: SPECIAL FIELD TRIP to NOAA's Aviation Operation in Lakeland. We will depart in our own vehicles at approximately 0830 from the Winn Dixie parking lot in Avon Park. We'll hear from the "Hurricane Hunters" and more. More info to follow, but please mark your calendars. There will be no meeting at the museum for February.

Special Notice: The January dinner/social will be a "Winter Gala." We need help to make this happen. The board is looking for a few volunteers. Please let Mike or one of the board members know if you are willing and able to help. Thanks!

Membership Renewal: Chapter Members, it's time to "REUP" for 2020. Please bring to the next meeting \$20 in cash, or a check made out to SCFC of MOAA in the same amount. If you would like to mail it to us the address is: SCFC of MOAA, PO Box 7841, Sebring, FL 33872. Scholarship donations are also appreciated.

January Birthdays:
4 January: Malcolm Johnson
4 January: Fred Carino
6 January: Doc Savage
14 January: Gil Uribe
15 January: Paul Ebersbach

Editor's Note: If your birthday is not recognized, it is because you did not include it on your application form. Please contact our Secretary, Mark Milia at 407-222-4867, and provide the same.

President's Message:

January of 2020 marks five years since we held our first chapter dinner/social, after reestablishing the chapter at a small get together the previous November. We should be rightly proud of our accomplishments over these five years. Besides all the good "stuff" like Christmas toy drives, support to JROTC, providing grant monies to the Veterans Council, the Vietnam War 50th anniversary pin program, sponsorship of Veterans Day activities, and so much more...not to mention consistently winning 5-star awards from MOAA National for our overall chapter "goodness", the newsletter, and the website, and so much more... We can also take heart in the fact that we have great camaraderie in our group. We believe a big part of that is the fact that we leave two things at the door: politics and rank. There is almost a guarantee that discussion of politics would breed ill will and discontent. And rank—yes, we wore it on our collars when we were on active duty. And while we recognize the accomplishments associated with the rank we achieved, being on a first-name basis in our activities fosters the very camaraderie and friendship we strive for. We are proud of all we have accomplished. We have more to do, and we look forward to moving "upward and onward."

I wish to thank the outgoing board members for their contributions over the last several years. Membership Chair Ed Gadbois has been with us since we got things going again. He has been a faithful servant of the chapter. Fred Carino stepped in as VP when we asked for his help. He has done great things for the chapter. Mark Milia jumped into action as Secretary when we needed his assistance. He has done this well and has done so much more. We'll miss them on the board, but will still see them at our activities. As Glenn West steps in as VP, Doug Tait as Secretary, and Bob Posthumus as Membership Chair, we welcome them aboard and are confident that they will provide the same great support that the others have. Tom Nunnallee, Bob Brooks, Dave Grey, and I will continue and look forward to serving you and the chapter for the next couple of years.

Our chapter gala dinner/social is on the 16th of January at 6:30 PM at the Island View Restaurant in the Sun N' Lake clubhouse. If you have not yet made your reservation and dinner choice, time is running out. Please see the attached reservation form. Fill it in and send it with your check as soon as possible. We want to see you there. Feel free to invite a guest. If you don't have a dark suit, dress uniform, or tux, don't let that stop you. Sport jacket and tie are fine. Be there or be square!!

New Member: Stuart "Sandy" Rhoades

Special Note on our 6 February Field Trip: As you can see in the below long-range calendar, our normal meeting at the museum will not take place in February. Instead we will be going to the NOAA Air Operations Center in Lakeland. NOAA is one of the seven uniformed services and are MOAA members. More specifics to follow, but we will likely rally at the Winn-Dixie parking lot in Avon Park at 0830 and drive our POV's. We are looking at an NLT 0830 departure time, so please be there earlier. We can consolidate folks in the vehicles to the degree possible. Stay tuned.

Did You Know?

A Billing Glitch Overcharged Thousands of TRICARE Beneficiaries. Contributed by Amy Bushatz of Military.Com

You may or may not be affected. See this article for info. If you are unsure, you may want to check your credit card statement if you use TRICARE/Humana. A massive billing glitch in [Tricare's](#) East region, managed by Humana, in early December slammed about 25,000 beneficiaries with premium charges 100 times more than they owe monthly for their coverage. The problem impacts all users in the East region who automatically pay monthly enrollment fees by credit or debit card, including military retirees on [Tricare Prime](#) and those enrolled in [Tricare Reserve Select](#), [Tricare Retired Reserve](#) and [Tricare Young Adult](#). It does not impact retirees and others who pay premiums through paycheck allotment. The incorrectly billed amounts range from just over \$4,000 to almost \$110,000, depending on the set monthly premiums, according to a Military.com calculation. The charges were levied on one day, with some users reporting they received alerts from their banks or credit cards in the early afternoon. While some users had the charge denied by their bank or credit card, others did not. All charges were to be voided, with credits made to accounts within 24 to 48 hours, Defense Health Agency officials said in a post on Tricare's Facebook page. Related: [Tricare Contractor Pledges Help in Wake of Massive Billing Glitch](#). The error came four days before the end of Tricare's open enrollment period, during which users could change their plans for the coming year. Outside that window, which ran Nov. 11 to Dec. 9, active-duty family members and military retirees must experience a "qualifying life event" to make a plan change.

Did You Know 2?

Whether or Not You Can Carry a Weapon on Post/Base. Contributed by Amy Bushatz of Military.Com

In the wake of mass shootings, including multiple active-shooter incidents on military installations, some might be wondering whether they can openly carry a gun or have a concealed weapon on base. The answer is probably not, according to typical military base rules. But that might not be true for all current and former troops, depending on the base. While post commanders by and large determine their own regulations for acceptable (Cont.)

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Chapter Calendar

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5 March 2020. Dinner/Social with spouses/better halves/significant others: 6:30 PM, Cowpoke's Watering Hole, 6:30 PM. 6813 US 27 South, Sebring.

1 April 2020. Board Meeting: 1700 (5:00 PM) Business Meeting, 1830hrs (6:30 PM). Venue: Sea Services Museum, 1402 Roseland Ave., Sebring, FL 33870, (corner of Kenilworth and Roseland, about a mile east of Sebring High School).

Did You Know 3?

My HealthVet is a Great On-Line Tool Provided by the Veterans Administration

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) accomplished a record landmark Oct. 15, when the agency registered more than 5 million users on My HealthVet, which encourages Veterans to take control of their health.

The web-based portal provides online tools that enable Veterans to proactively engage with their health care team and make informed decisions about their health and well-being.

“My HealthVet is a shining example of how Veterans can play a more active role in their health care journey,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “VA is committed to providing the necessary technologies to ensure that Veterans receive care when and where they need it.”

The tool allows Veterans to refill prescriptions, view scheduled VA appointments, send secure messages to their health care teams and download their personal health record. Since the site’s launch in 2003, Veterans have used My HealthVet to refill more than 148 million prescriptions, send in excess of 86 million secure messages, view upcoming VA appointments more than 74 million times and download more than 37 million health data reports.

To enroll, visit <http://www.myhealth.va.gov/>.

Did You Know 4?

VA’s Board of Veterans’ Appeals Plans Virtual Hearings in 2020--*Continued evaluation of testing will broaden scope of participation*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Board of Veterans’ Appeals (Board) and Office of Information and Technology (OIT) are working towards nationwide availability of virtual hearings for Veterans next year, allowing access using their mobile phone or laptop via the VA Video Connect app.

The virtual hearings are based on the Veterans Health Administration's tele-health platform and lets Veterans participate in their appeals hearings from the comfort of their homes.

“VA strives to provide integrated solutions that leverages 21st century technology to significantly increase the number of hearings completed annually,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Giving Veterans the ability to participate in secure, confidential virtual hearings is another aspect of VA’s modernization to provide Veterans with the ultimate customer experience.”

The testing of virtual hearings began in July of 2019. The collaboration with OIT, Veteran Service Organizations and other Veteran representatives has been positive. To date, the Board has held 155 successful virtual hearings. Veterans who otherwise would have had to cancel their hearings were able to participate in virtual hearings and receive decisions.

The Board of Veterans’ Appeals (Board) makes final decisions for VA regarding appeals for Veterans’ benefits and services. The Board’s mission is to conduct hearings and issue timely decisions for Veterans and other appellants in compliance with the law.

WWII Veteran, the Battle of the Bulge, Buchenwald, and a pair of boots. (See Picture under Chapter Members in Action)

George Nashif was our guest speaker for the December meeting. He told quite a tale of going from being a young man in New Jersey to his participation as a medic and infantryman in WWII in Europe. He described fighting in the famous Battle of the Bulge, his participation in the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp, and several other aspects of his time in the Army as a member of the *Greatest Generation*. The most humorous tale he told was of cutting down a paratrooper who was hung up in the trees. The paratrooper had been shot in the leg. With his medical training, he treated the leg wound as best he could. He also noted the beautiful (Corcoran) jump boots the airborne soldier was wearing. So he took them. After the war George drove a delivery truck in the NJ/NY area. One day he saw a guy in a butcher shop with a limp. The next time he went in, he asked the guy why he was limping. He replied that he had been shot in the leg on an airborne drop. He told George that a medic had treated him but that the “SOB” stole his boots. George told him that he was the “SOB” in question. They became lifelong friends.

MOAA Grant Monies Support Thanksgiving Baskets (See Picture under Chapter Members in Action)

Our MOAA Family Foundation grant monies partially funded the recent Thanksgiving basket donation to some 35 needy veteran families in the local area. The same will happen for Christmas and we are glad to be of service to our less fortunate brothers and sisters-in-arms in the community.

Christmas Toy Drive for the Salvation Army. (See Pictures under Chapter Members in Action)

Yet again, we delivered several sleighs full of toys for the neediest kids in the community. You can be proud of what we did for these youngsters. They will definitely have a better Christmas morning because of YOU. Thanks to Glenn and Pam West for once again heading up “Santa’s Workshop.” Thanks to Tom Nunnallee as well in his role on the Executive Advisory Board of the local Salvation Army.

Navy Pilot Takes a Hop. (See picture under Chapter Members in Action)

Former Lieutenant Del Smith, USN visited the Experimental Aviation Association at Sebring airport. Del flew combat missions in Curtiss SB2C Hell Diver bombers from the carrier USS Hornet CV-12 in the Pacific in World War II. Del was recently hosted by the EAA and Highlands Flying Club on a 45 minute flight around the area. Prior to this he shared some of his flying experiences with four Sebring High School students and EAA staff. Del was very pleased with the experience of being in the air and visiting with the students. At 98 years young, Del did most of the flying in the Cessna 172. His host pilot said Del was very smooth on the controls and that he would have awarded him his pilot’s license had that been the purpose of the flight. John Rousch and Dale Huffman of the EAA told Del how honored they were for his visit. Del, as you might expect, was all smiles.

SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

Craig Smith, Surviving Spouse/Personal Affairs Chair

If you're looking for information related to Surviving Spouses, the MOAA website allows you to access several articles under their drop-down MENU for Surviving Spouses. For instance, the very first one is Reacting to Stress:

By [Capt. Kathy Thorp](#), USN (Ret), *Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee member*

Stress happens to all of us; no one can escape it. It's how we handle the stressful situation — the fight-or-flight response — that's important. There are many resources and recommendations to manage stress. It's not a one-size-fits-all list; what works for one person, might not work for you, so consider the following suggestions:

1. Determine where the stress is coming from, and change what you can. Have a toolbox of techniques, such as deep breathing exercises, yoga, or stretching exercises, to use when you find yourself starting to feel anxious.
2. Remove yourself, if possible, from the stressful situation.
3. Manage your time well, and spend your spare minutes doing something that brings you joy.
4. Preserve your boundaries, especially in the area of your sleep routine. Strive to obtain a minimum of seven hours of sleep each night.
5. Practice saying "no," and delegate as necessary.
6. Schedule quiet time to relax during your day. It might include moments of reading, praying, or mindful meditation.
7. Pick up a pen and a journal, and write down your emotions.
8. If the stress becomes overwhelming, reach out to a medical professional or a chaplain for assistance.

These are a few ways that will help at any time of your life. I think whether you're a surviving spouse or not, we all need to reevaluate our life and plan for any changes that come our way.

If you have a specific question or concern the following MOAA National Chairpersons are more than willing to help you address your specific concern, as am I. Their contact information is below:

Gail Joyce
mssvc02@gmail.com
(214) 676-2132

Micki Costello
mssvc02@gmail.com
(214) 770-4140

Are you looking for a way to serve veterans in a very direct and meaningful way?

Well, here is your chance. The County Veteran Services Office, located right behind the Watering Hole restaurant is short staffed and needs help desperately. They need someone to answer phones, greet folks coming in, and generally serve as an all-around receptionist. There is no pay for this job, but there is reward—the reward of helping our veterans. If you want to volunteer, call Denise Williams or Carol West at 863-402-6623.

ALAN KENT NEEDS HELP: DAV VAN DRIVERS NEEDED!!!

As many of you know, the DAV supplies the local VA Clinic with 2 vans to be used to drive disabled veterans to Bay Pines VA Hospital, Bradenton VA Clinic and Cape Coral VA Hospital. The hospital pays for fuel & maintenance. We need to supply the drivers. Currently we are down to FOUR drivers... with a commitment of 12 - 20 runs per month. We lost a half dozen snowbird drivers who went home. We have 3 or 4 out with illnesses and/or injuries.

We NEED YOUR HELP. We need about a half dozen more drivers to drive at least one day per month. Most of the current drivers are former enlisted folks... a few, like me, are officers. There is no shame being an officer who drives enlisted to their appointments! I have been doing this for 10 years and enjoy almost every trip I drive! I am thrilled to be able to help them. These veterans we transport are, for the most part, those who cannot afford to own a car or are physically unable to drive the 220 mile round trip to St Petersburg. Give up a day each month to help them... and you'll enjoy all the "sea stories" that you hear on the van!

Please contact our Van Coordinator, Fred Norton, at the Sebring VA Clinic at 863-471-6227, ext 22697.

Many thanks!!!

Alan Kent, LCDR, SC, USN-RET

PURPOSES OF THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a not-for-profit corporation that is operated exclusively to further the interests of the nation and its uniformed services personnel, their family members, and survivors.

From the preamble to the Bylaws of The Military Officers Association of America

- To inculcate and stimulate love of country and flag;
- To defend the honor, integrity, and supremacy of our National Government and the Constitution of the United States;
- To advocate military forces adequate to the defense of our country;
- To foster the integrity and prestige of uniformed service;
- To foster fraternal relations between all branches of the various Services from which our members are drawn;
- To further the education of children of Service personnel;
- To aid personnel of the Services from which our members are drawn, and their family members and survivors, in every proper and legitimate manner; and
- To present their rights and interests when Service matters are under consideration

We unite to form THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

TAKE ACTION!!
www.moaa.org

MOAA Legislative Goals for 2019: *Note that the 2020 goals have not been released*

- Ensure any TRICARE reform sustains access to top-quality care.
- Prevent disproportional TRICARE fee increases.
- Sustain military pay comparability with the private sector.
- Block erosion of compensation and non-pay quality of life benefits.
- End financial penalties for military survivors.
- End concurrent receipt penalties for military retirees.
- Achieve equity of benefits for Guard/Reserve members with their active duty counterparts.
- Strengthen DoD-VA collaboration and services to support wounded warriors and an expanding population of women veterans.
- Ensure timely access to service-earned VA benefits.
- Protect military and veteran family support programs and policies.

Take Action. MOAA Legislative Action Link:

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

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If you want to sign up for a range of updates from MOAA National, you can go to: http://moaa.highroadsolution.com/moaa_preference_page/EmailSearch.aspx and follow the prompts. It gives various options for the type of information desired, as well as the frequency you may wish to receive it. Don't miss out on this valuable resource!

Nametags: If you don't have and DO want a chapter nametag, please let us know. We need your info as you want it to appear on the tag: Name, Rank, Service. Spouse/significant other's name. The cost is \$10.00 each. Here is an example:



WHO CAN JOIN MOAA?

MOAA membership is open to all officers, commissioned or warrant, whether on active duty, retired, former, reserve or national guard of all the seven uniformed services, including the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Public Health Service.

Would you like to buy a MOAA polo shirt or some other MOAA item? Go to the MOAA "Store," click on the following link: <http://www.tmgwebstores.com/moaa/default.html> You can also call them at 1-866-860-9293. They have everything from men's and ladies' polos, coffee

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Chapter Members in Action



December dinner guest speaker George Nashif gets his one of a kind MOAA cup from Mike



Thanksgiving Baskets at the Veteran's Service Center in Sebring that our Member Helped Prepare



Christmas Toy's Collected by Our Chapter for Distribution by the Salvation Army

Chapter Members in Action



**Del Smith Enjoying His Ride in a Cessna 172 Hosted by the
EAA and Highlands Flying Club**

USEFUL ADDRESSES, PHONE NUMBERS AND WEB SITES

Air Force Retiree Services: (800) 531-7502;
www.retirees.af.mil

Arlington National Cemetery: (703) 607-8000;
www.arlingtoncemetery.org

Armed Forces Retirement Home: (800) 422-9988;
www.afrh.gov

AAFES: (214) 312-2011; www.aafes.com

Army Retired Services: (703) 571-7232; <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement>

Burial at Sea: (866) 787-0081; <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupersnpc/support/casualty/mortuary/Pages/BurialAtSea.aspx> Combat Related Special Compensation: <http://www.secnav.navy.mil/mra/CORB/Pages/CRSCB/default.aspx> DEERS: (800)-538-9552, Fax: (831) 655-8317; www.tricare.osd.mil/deers

Defense Commissary Agency: www.commissaries.com

DFAS Casualty Assistance Branch: (800) 321-1080 or (216) 5225955; (For Reporting a Retiree's death, option #1)

I.D. Cards Benefits and Eligibility: (866) 827-5672; https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/appj/site;jsessionid=_liU5y-4sPqyCtIImmJgUJThnUWUeAanhb15EaGXQn4lh2pEEKpso!416826654?execution=e1s1

Internal Revenue Service: (800) 829-1040; www.irs.gov

Marine Corps Retired Affairs: <https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/webcenter/portal/MRAHome>
(Hover over "Veteran Marines" then click on "Retired Services")

Medicare: (800) 633-4227. TTY: (877) 486-2048;
www.medicare.gov

Military Officers Assoc. of America: (800) 234-6622;
www.moaa.org

National Burial Services: (800) 697-6940

NPC Navy Reserve Personnel Management (PERS 9):
(866) 827-5672; www.npc.navy.mil/career/reservepersonnelmgmt/Pages/default.aspx

Navy Casualty Assistance: (800) 368-3202

Navy Retired Activities Office: (866) U-ASK-NPC
(866-827-5672)

MILL RetiredActivities@navy.mil; www.npc.navy.mil/support/retired_activities/Pages/default.aspx

Reserve Component SBP: (866) 827-5672 ask for PERS-912

Retiree Dental — Delta Dental: (888) 838-8737;
www.trdp.org

Servicemembers Group Insurance (SGLI): (800) 419-1473; www.insurance.va.gov

Social Security Administration: (800) 772-1213;
www.ssa.gov

Pay/SBP Questions: www.dfas.mil. Pay inquiries and update of pay or SBP records in case of death, divorce, or remarriage:

Retiree:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Retirement Pay
P.O. Box 7130 London KY 40742-7130
(800) 321-1080, (216) 522-5955

SBP/RSFPP annuitant:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Annuitant Pay
P.O. Box 7131 London KY 40742-7131
(800) 321-1080, (216) 522-5955
(800) 669-8477; www.insurance.va.gov

Burial information: (800) 827-1000; www.cem.va.gov

GI Bill: (888) 442-4551; www.gibill.va.gov

VA: www.va.gov **Regional offices:** (800) 827-1000
(overseas retirees should contact the American Embassy/consulate)

TDD (800) 89-4833

Insurance: A Regional Office and Insurance Center
PO Box 7208 (claims inquiries) -ORPO
Box 7327 (loans) -ORPO
Box 7787 (payments)
Philadelphia PA 19101
(800) 669-8477; www.insurance.va.gov

Now and Always We'll be There.



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