MOAA’s annual event of “Storming the Hill” is just around the corner this April. Each year, Florida’s three teams work diligently to schedule meeting appointments with our congressional representatives. This is not as easy as it might sound.

Many hours of letter writing, emails, phone calls, follow up phone calls and more follow up phone calls are a daily exercise. All this is done to finalize a workable schedule to meet, discuss and confirm commitments from each of the 9 to 10 offices the teams visit. This is only part of the preparation. Once the teams arrive at the hotel in Alexandria, Virginia 2 days before the actual storming event, MOAA national takes over by educating all members on the background and position on each of the issues.

On the day of the actual “Storming” event, all participating MOAA members from across the country, including MOAA directors and staff board busses from the hotel in Alexandria, Virginia and travel to the Capitol building. Once there, photos are taken and then the teams are released to walk up the Hill to their scheduled meetings. This is a long day and last year, with a pedometer strapped to my person, I registered at the end of the day with over 10,000 steps.

“Storming the Hill” is a wonderful experience knowing that you are contributing and supporting the well-being of our military families.

Once the “Storming” event is over and we return home, our advocacy does not end there. It is just the beginning. All of our chapters Legislative Chairs are requested to follow up on the issues discussed at the Storming day meeting and request that the representative keep their supportive commitments.

I must remind all our members that MOAA is an advocacy organization and as such, we should take every opportunity to direct our representatives to the MOAA issues at hand.

I direct you to Robert Bienvenue’s article in this month’s Communiqué, read the issues and what we request of each of our Florida chapter members to do.

I would be remiss if I did not mention about our upcoming convention. Our Convention Chairman, Doug Quelch, has been doing an outstanding job coordinating and preparing for this...
President’s Message, (Continued)

convention. Please go to our website http://moaafl.org/Convention.aspx and review all the material outlining this annual event. Also check out the information on pages X and X of this issue.

With this Communiqué my term as council president will come to an end on June 2, 2018. It has been a pleasure serving as the council president and I thank all the chapters in our council for their warm welcome when visiting. You are all doing a great job and the spirit of “Never Stop Serving” is reflected in your work.

Thank you again for allowing me the privilege of serving you.

Marc

### Florida April 18 2018 “Storming the Hill” Team Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Members</th>
<th>Congressional Offices Scheduled to Be Visited</th>
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<tr>
<td>LTC Marc Oliveri, USA, ret</td>
<td>Sen. Marco Rubio</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCoC President</td>
<td>Rep. Lois Frankel</td>
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<td>Rep. Debbie Wasserman-Schultz</td>
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<td>Rep. Daniel Webster</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTC Mike Borders, USA, ret</td>
<td>Rep. Stephanie Murphy <strong>Mbr HASC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>FCoC South West Area VP, and</td>
<td>Rep. Al Lawson</td>
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<td>Chapter President, MOA of SW FL</td>
<td>Rep. Carlos Curbelo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rep. Darren Soto</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rep. Ron DeSantis</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCoC Vice President</td>
<td>Rep. Vern Buchanan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rep. Gus Bilirakis</td>
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<td>Rep. Bill Posey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victoria Ocasio</td>
<td>Rep. Tom Rooney</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOAA Staff</td>
<td>Rep. Brian Mast</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen</td>
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<td>Rep. Alcee Hastings</td>
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<td>Rep. Frederica Wilson</td>
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<td>Rep. Ted Deutch</td>
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<td>Col Troy Scott, USAR, ret</td>
<td>Sen. Bill Nelson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Past FCoC President</td>
<td>Rep. Francis Rooney</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rep. John Rutherford</td>
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<td>Rep. Val Demings</td>
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<td>RADM Rick Buchanan, USN ret</td>
<td>Rep. Neal Dunn</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOAA Board of Directors</td>
<td>Rep. Charlie Crist</td>
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<td>Rep. Dennis Ross</td>
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<td>Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart</td>
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<td>Rep. Matt Gaetz <strong>Mbr HASC</strong></td>
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<td>Rep. Ted Yoho</td>
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Hopefully, the team will find our elected officials responsive to their specific requests for support.
Florida Council of Chapters Legislative Update

First of all, I want to thank those of you who let me know that you followed up on the request I sent via email on March 28th to the Chapter Presidents and Legislative Liaisons in the “Pre-Storming FCOC Legislative Action Message”. Getting the suggested message in that email to your Chapter’s Congresspersons directly from their constituents will go a long way to supporting the efforts of our teams who will be visiting those Congresspersons on April 18th in their Capitol Hill Offices.

Speaking about the teams, the members and the respective Senators and Congresspersons they are scheduled to visit is on page 2 of the President’s Message.

Finally, A FY 2018 Spending Bill

“In the past, by failing to pass a budget on time or eliminate the threat of sequestration, Congress sidelined itself from its active constitutional oversight role. It has blocked new programs, prevented service growth, stalled industry initiative, and placed troops at greater risk .... Congress as a whole has met the present challenge with lassitude, not leadership.” Gen. Jim Mattis, Secretary of Defense

After 5 months and 23 days, 5 continuing resolutions (CR), and 2 government shutdowns since September, the start of FY 2018, Congress finally funded the federal government for the remainder of this fiscal year by passing a $1.3 trillion "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018" omnibus spending bill. Although late, the defense funding increases in this year’s appropriations bill will start to arrest the decline in readiness that has hurt the services over the past several years.

Here is how the Florida delegation in the House voted on H.R. 1625, the FY 2018 budget:

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<th>Against</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full House</td>
<td>145 - R</td>
<td>111 - D</td>
<td>90 - R</td>
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<td>Florida Delegation</td>
<td>8 - R</td>
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As you can see it took a majority of Democrats to raise the vote tally to pass this bill.

It will take more than one year to get healthy making FY 2019’s budget very important. Congress is now conducting hearings on the president’s FY 2019 budget request of $686 billion for the Department of Defense.

Although the coming year’s budget should be easier to pass because Congress has already agreed to increased spending limits for both defense and non-defense accounts, legislation is unlikely to be completed before Congress adjourns this fall for their November elections. That will result in the tenth straight year of starting the new FY year with a Continuing Resolution.
St Pete Chapter Fund Raiser: Convention Shirt Quilt

This lovely quilt, made from the shirts of previous FCoC conventions, will be offered in a drawing at the 2018 convention in Sanibel. This fund raiser is sponsored by the St. Pete chapter.

TICKETS: 6/$5:00

More Info? Contact Sherry Freeze, 727-641-5979

Joint Select Congressional Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform

This bipartisan and bicameral panel created by a provision in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, had its first meeting on Thursday, March 8, 2018. The 16 appointed members of the panel are tasked with identifying and recommending reforms to the budget and appropriations process. Co-Chair Rep. Steve Womack (R-AR) said at that meeting: “I am encouraged that we share the desire for a budget and appropriations process that works in Congress and for the American people.”

Co-Chair Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY) added these comments about the Committee: “American families and communities are poorly served when Congress fails to enact timely full-year appropriations. Endless Continuing Resolutions, government shutdowns, and governing by crisis benefits nobody. I look forward to engaging to determine if there are bipartisan reforms that would be helpful in breaking the current cycle of dysfunction.”

The Committee is charged to submit its Report, Recommendations, and Proposed Legislation to both Chambers no later than November 30, 2018.

Despite having the third largest delegation in Congress, none of the 16 members of this committee are from Florida.

Can this really get the job done …… we’ll just have to see…

Legislative update continued on page 5
A Sad but True Story of Congress’s Failure to Keep Our Nation’s Solemn Obligations to the Well-being of Our Uniformed Servicemembers and to Their Families Who Also Sacrifice in Service Everyday

HR 1078, the Military Hunger Prevention Act is a bill to exclude the receipt of the Armed Forces basic housing allowance in determining eligibility for Federal programs issuing benefits for nutrition assistance such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This is necessary as the DoD Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance program is now defunct.

The bill was introduced on February 15, 2017 by Congresswoman Davis of California and co-sponsored by Congresswoman Jenkins of Kansas as well as Congressmen McGovern of Massachusetts, Young of Alaska, and Walz of Minnesota. There are currently 60 co-sponsors. There are just TWO members from Florida who have co-sponsored this bill: Darren Sota, (D; FL -9) and Ted Deutch (D; FL – 22) Where are the 25 others???

A companion bill S. 2488 was introduced in the Senate on March 1, 2018 by Senator Duckworth (D – Il) and now has 13 co-sponsors – neither Senators Nelson or Rubio are co-sponsors. They need to be activated!

This legislation will make a meaningful difference to tens of thousands of currently serving military families who struggle with food insecurity yet face a needless barrier to accessing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

For currently serving members of the military, food insecurity is triggered by a number of different circumstances, including low pay among lower ranking enlistees, high unemployment among military spouses, large household sizes, challenges around activation and deployment, and unexpected financial emergencies. These conditions force military families to rely on Food Pantries for emergency assistance. Those who make significant sacrifices for our country shouldn’t have to struggle to put food on the table for their families. This NEEDS to be FIXED.

Proponents of this Bill had sought to roll the new proposal into the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act. Lawmakers proposed paying for the cost increases to provide SNAP for our military families in need through higher Tricare pharmacy co-pays. [Another tax on one of our benefits to pay for a necessary program expansion.] But to do so, the House Armed Services Committee needed an administrative waiver from the House Committee on Agriculture, which has legislative oversight of the SNAP program. The chair of that committee, however, told members of the House Armed Services Committee that he wanted to wait to consider the bill as part of the notoriously controversial Farm Bill in FY 2019 because he objects to paying for the increase through a Tricare fee change.

Florida members on the House Committee on Agriculture are Representative Ted Yoho (FL-3), Neal Dunn (FL-2), Al Larson, Jr. (FL-5), and Darren Soto (FL-09). The single Florida member on the House Appropriations Agriculture Subcommittee is Tom Rooney (FL-17).

Pitting SNAP benefits against increased Tricare costs wrongly and unfairly treats our military families as political bargaining chips between different congressional committees.

When your Representative says they support our currently serving military and their families, ask them why don’t they co-sponsors bills like HR 1078 and S 2488 and the others reported on in this issue of the Communiqué.
Legislative Report Card

Following are the current MOAA “Bills of Interest” and the co-sponsorship status of our Florida Senators and Congresspersons for these matters of importance to the 780,000 currently serving military and their families, military retirees and their dependents and surviving spouses who live here in Florida:

S 66 A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation, and for other purposes. Introduced January 9, 2017 by Sen. Dean Heller (R-NV); Neither Rubio nor Nelson have signed on as co-sponsors of this Bill

S 339 A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans’ dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes. Introduced February 7, 2017 by Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL); 38 Co-Sponsors including Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL).

HR 303 a companion bill to S 66 to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit additional retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or combat-related special compensation. Introduced January 5, 2017 by Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL). Florida co-sponsors: Rep. Vern Buchanan (R-FL), Rep. Neal Dunn (R-FL), Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL), Rep. Bill Posey (R-FL), Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Rep. John Rutherford (R-FL). Where are the other 20 members of the Florida delegation???

HR 333 A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability rated less than 50 percent to receive concurrent payment of both retired pay and veterans’ disability compensation, to extend eligibility for concurrent receipt to chapter 61 disability retirees with less than 20 years of service, and for other purposes. Introduced January 5, 2017 by Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA). Florida co-sponsors: Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL), Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL), Rep. Darren Soto (D-FL). Again, where are the 24 other members of the Florida Delegation, in particular those who co-sponsored H 303 above???

HR 846 a companion bill to S 339 to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan for military surviving spouses to offset the receipt of veterans’ dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes. Introduced February 3, 2017 by Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC). 241 Co-Sponsors - 17 Florida members have signed on as Co-Sponsors

HERE ARE THE TEN FLORIDA MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT SUPPORTED THIS BILL
Darren Soto (D, FL-9), Val Demings (D, FL-10), Daniel Webster (R, FL-11), Gus Bilirakis (R, FL-12), Kathy Castor (D, FL-14), Thomas Rooney (R, FL-17), Francis Rooney (R, FL-19), Lois Frankel (D, FL-21), Debbie Wasserman-Shultz (D, FL-23), Mario Diaz-Balart (R, FL-25

Please take the time to make a phone call to both the District and DC offices of your Congressperson to ask for their co-sponsorship of these Bills that MOAA supports.
Chaplain’s Message
Chaplain (Col) Charles Caudill, USAF, (Ret) Religious Activities

God’s Love
April, 2018

March 2, 2018, was the day that Billy Graham’s body was laid to rest. It brought back memories of first seeing him. I was a student at High Point University and along with several other college friends attended one of his revivals in Greensboro, NC. He made me feel as if I was in the presence of God.

I never forgot his message about love. I was well acquainted with love because my parents were exactly that. I wanted to be like my father who personified love. It took me a long time to pray to God because my father loved me, always stood by me and gave me all the advice I needed. He always told me to “Love God, then do as you please.” Then you want to please God.

My own journey to become a Chaplain had disappointments and obstacles. First, my Dad who was a minister told me if I could do anything else don’t become a preacher. I had to work several jobs to pay for both colleges and when I didn’t have sufficient funds to finish my last year of undergraduate school I was going to leave. When the President of the college learned why I was withdrawing he surprised me with a scholarship which enabled me to finish school in three years.

At Seminary I realized I was studying strictly to become a local pastor, which was something I didn’t want. I told one of my professors I couldn’t continue and he advised me since God had sent me I needed to finish graduate school. Upon graduation I entered the military and was told I was the youngest Chaplain to ever enter the Air Force. I was 23 and the chaplaincy gave me the real meaning of my own search. All I ever wanted to do was to give love to those in need.

I have continued to learn about the nature of God and love through the Bible and certain literature. In Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Moses says: “Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.” And in Colossians 3:12-14 Paul writes: “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

Even a bird can teach us about love. In Jonathan Livingston Seagull, Fletch asks Jonathan how can he love the flock of seagulls who have acted like a mob and tried to kill him. Jonathan replies: “O, Fletch, you don’t love that! You don’t love hatred and evil, of course. You have to practice and see the real gull, the good in everyone of them, and to help them see it in

continued on next page
Chaplain’s Message

themselves. That is what I mean by love. It’s fun, when you get the knack of it.”

Another wonderful teacher was Leo Buscaglia who wrote Living, Loving & Learning. He thought most of the world’s problems would be solved if we demonstrated God’s love. He wrote: “If everyone had just one single person in his life who says, ‘I will love you no matter what. I will love you if you are stupid, if you slip and fall on your face, if you do the wrong thing, if you make mistakes, if you behave like a human being—I will love you no matter.”

My desire has been to please God, try to emulate his love and share it with those I care so much about; and, my prayer is that all of us discover the joy of surrendering to God’s love.

Ardie R. Copas State Veterans’ Nursing Home Begins Construction!!!

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. – Family, civic, community, veteran and political leaders, including Gov. Rick Scott and Senate President and Treasure Coast state senator Joe Negron, celebrated the groundbreaking for the new 120-bed Ardie R. Copas State Veterans’ Nursing Home in the Port St. Lucie community of Tradition on March 20, 2018.

The home is named in honor of Fort Pierce and St. Lucie County native and Vietnam War Medal of Honor recipient Sergeant Ardie R. Copas (photo on right), who was killed in Cambodia in 1970.

In a March 18, 2014, Valor 24 ceremony at the White House, President Barack Obama presented the Medal of Honor posthumously to Copas daughter, Shyrell Jean Copas, along with 23 other Army recipients in recognition of their valor during major combat operations in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

The veterans’ home, expected to be completed in 20-24 months, will have 60 beds devoted to residents with Alzheimer’s/Dementia. Most residences are two-person semi-private rooms, with separate living areas and a shared bathroom. Included in the overall design are six bariatric rooms and six private rooms. A video walk-through of the planned facility can be viewed at: https://youtu.be/5ISH1cfS4BY.

The Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs currently operates award-winning veterans’ nursing homes in Daytona Beach, Land O’ Lakes, Pembroke Pines, Panama City, Port Charlotte and St. Augustine and one veterans’ assisted living facility in Lake City.

The program was begun in 1990 and groundbreaking has become a gubernatorial signature. The 501(c)3 program is also supported by donations and a voluntary $1 donation when acquiring or renewing drivers licenses.
Florida Department of Veterans Affairs Update

Compiled from reports submitted by LTC R. Steven Murray, USAF (Ret.)
Communications Director, Florida Department of Veterans Affairs

2018 Florida Legislative Session

The 2018 Florida Legislative Session concluded on March 11, 2018. Two veteran-related bills were passed by both houses and signed into law by Governor Rick Scott. Both are effective July 1, 2018.

Senate Bill 100 - Identification Card and Driver License Fees for Veterans: The bill eliminates the $1 or $2 fee a veteran must pay to have the word “Veteran” displayed on an identification card or driver license issued by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV). The bill also expands the forms of identification that a veteran may present to the DHSMV as proof of veteran status for the purpose of receiving the “Veteran” designation on an identification card or driver license to include: A veteran health identification card issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and a veteran identification card issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to the Veterans Identification Card Act of 2015. Additionally, the bill prohibits tax collectors from charging a veteran the $6.25 service fee for driver license services rendered pursuant to ch. 322, F.S., upon presentation of specified documentation proving that the individual is a veteran.

House Bill 29 - Military and Veterans Affairs - The Don Hahnfeldt Veteran and Military Family Opportunity Act (https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/29/BillText/er/PDF): Generally, the bill eases professional licensing fees and requirements for certain military members, veterans, and their spouses, including in the Departments of Health (DOH), Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR), Agriculture and Consumer Services (DOACS), Office of Financial Regulation (OFR), Department of Financial Services (DFS), and Department of Education (DOE).

The bill further specifies that laws and rules regulating apprenticeships and approved apprenticeship agreements do not invalidate any special provisions for veterans, minority persons, or women. The bill also requires the DOE to lead and coordinate outreach efforts to educate veterans about apprenticeship and career opportunities.

The bill also expands and clarifies the process for obtaining veteran training grants and instituting a veteran entrepreneurship program through Veterans Florida in the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs.

The bill allows Junior Reserve Officer Training instructors to participate in the Florida Teachers Classroom Supply Assistance Program.

It additionally gives children of an active duty member, not stationed in Florida, but whose home of record or state of legal residence is Florida, priority for attendance in the Florida Virtual School.

Lastly, March 25 every year is designated “Medal of Honor Day” and the DOE is encouraged to incorporate into the character development program module on patriotism, the sacrifices that veterans and Medal of Honor recipients have made in serving our country and protecting democratic values worldwide.
"We looked at a number of communities, but Fleet Landing stood out for its friendly, welcoming atmosphere, elegant dining, beautiful grounds and proximity of medical and military services."

—Col & Mrs. Frank Donnelly, USMC(Ret), Current Residents

Discover a retirement community that enhances your life on all levels. Call to learn more: 904.242.6560 or 1.877.291.4484 toll free

One Fleet Landing Boulevard | Atlantic Beach, FL 32233 | fleetlanding.com/military
The Florida Legislature established the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame to honor and recognize veterans, both living and deceased, for their post-military service to the state. Names honoring selected inductees are memorialized through the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame Wall on the Plaza Level of the Florida Capitol.

Those nominating a veteran will need to complete a nomination packet that can be downloaded from www.FloridaVeteransHallofFame.org. Nominations are based on established criteria including recognizing veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the State of Florida through civic, business, public service or other pursuits. It is not a traditional military hall of fame, as it focuses on post-military contributions to the Sunshine State.

The Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame Council, an appointed seven-member advisory panel, is responsible for accepting nominations to be considered for induction into the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame. In selecting its nominees, the council gives preference to veterans who were either born in Florida or adopted Florida as their home state. Each year, the council transmits its recommended list of nominees to the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs, which submits the nominations to the Governor and Cabinet, who will select the nominees to be inducted.


Please note: Florida is a “sunshine” state. Most written communications, including emails, texts, etc., to or from state officials regarding state business is public record and available to the public and media upon request.

Be an Active MOAA Advocate

Make sure you mail out the Postcards found in your April Issue of the Military Officer magazine urging your Senators and Representative to support a pay increase to keep military compensation comparable to the private sector Employment Cost Index at 2.6% for 2019.

My Congressman
2160 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C.
20515
Convention Update

Fort Myers / June 1-3, 2018

There is still time to Make Your Reservations for our 2018 Annual Convention to be held 1- 3 June 2018 at the Sanibel Harbor Marriott Resort and Spa in beautiful Fort Myers.

The resort requires our guaranteed rooming list by MAY 4, 2018. We will continue to take reservations after that date, but there is no guarantee your room dates will be available.

The setting is spectacular and we have been given a room rate of $139 a night, with free parking and no resort fee (and no taxes if you sign up through the FCOC site). The same rate applies if participants wish to register up to three days before or three days after the convention (space available basis).

Make this a tremendous vacation; there is so much to do in the area, so plan to stay a few days extra, even if you just want to pamper yourself at the Spa. For those locally who do not plan to stay at the hotel, please register for the activities planned. We currently have 163 registered attendees and are planning for 200 to 250.

To register, go to www.moaafl.org and click on the sand castle. The only event that is closed is the Sunset Dinner Cruise on Friday night. We very quickly registered the 120 persons the yacht holds. However, if you would like to go on a sunset dinner cruise, you can sign up with the hotel individually for any night other than that Friday.

This will be a super convention with a line-up of distinguished guest speakers, starting with MOAA’s President, Lt Gen Dana Atkins and the former Coast Guard commandant, Admiral Thad Allen, who also directed the federal response to Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Music for dancing at the Saturday evening Military Ball will be provided by one of our favorite bands, “La Croix”.

On both Friday afternoon and Saturday morning we will have our usual FCOC board and business meetings, along with speakers representing the VA, the National MOAA Staff, Songs and Stories for Soldiers, the Fort Myers Historical Society and Veterans Benefits.
LAST CALL for FCOC Convention

Saturday afternoon activities are open; shop, sightsee, visit the pool or the spa, or the Hospitality Suite. Also available are a Library of Congress Veterans History Project presentation; a presentation on Arab Culture, Islam, and ISIS by our convention chairman, Doug Quelch, who worked in Saudi Arabia as an advisor to the Royal Saudi Naval Forces; and a documentary made for PBS called *Enlisted*, in which Lee Coast Chapter played a part.

Sunday morning will include our Memorial Service for those who have departed and the first meeting of the newly elected Board.

Please check out the FCOC website, [www.MOAAFL.org](http://www.MOAAFL.org), for more information and photos, and register online with your credit card.

**Hey People, it’s not too late!!**

Lee Coast Chapter Reports
MAJ Brigette Belanger, USA (Ret), President, Lee Coast Chapter

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Chapter Factors

Florida Council of Chapters
Vice President Len Friedlander, Col, USAF, Retired, conducts the April 10, 2018 installation ceremony at the Lee Coast Chapter.

From left to right: Marilyn Leehan Secretary; Terry Robertson, LCDR, USCG, (Ret) Vice President; Brigitte Belanger, MAJ, USA, (Ret), President; and Len Friedlander
Citrus County Chapter Reports
CAPT Terri Harrison, USN (Ret)

Citrus County MOAA Members Hear About County Veteran Services

(Above) MOAA of Citrus County Chapter president (left), COL Mark Bodenheim, USAR (Ret), presents a certificate of appreciation to Citrus County Veteran’s Services Officer, Kimberly Stibbs Menster (right) for her presentation at the chapter’s February 2018 meeting.

(Above center and right) At the February 2018 chapter meeting of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Citrus County Chapter, members listen to Citrus County Veteran’s Services Officer, Kimberly Stibbs Menster’s presentation on her daily work in support of veteran’s programs and issues/solutions affecting the over 28,000 veterans in Citrus County.

The World View 2030 - 2050
At the March meeting, Chapter Member, CW5 Phyllis Wilson, USAR (RET) MOAA Chapter Member and former member of the U.S. Army’s Futures Studies Group, briefed the chapter on a project looking at “The World View 2030 – 2050.”
Kingdom of the Sun (KOS) Chapter Activities
LTC Arlo Janssen, USA (Ret), Editor of the Sunbeams, KOS/MOAA

The KOS March luncheon took place at the Elks Club in Ocala, Florida. The featured speaker was Marion County Sheriff Billy Woods. He covered several topics to include additional security at our schools in Marion County.

The April Meeting is our seventh joint with members of the Citrus County Chapter of MOAA. This meeting will take place at Stumpknockers on the River. I always label this joint meeting as our annual “Fishing Trip,” since catfish is the most popular dish at this restaurant.

Our May dinner meeting is our Annual Scholarship program and we hope to award several KOS scholarships again this year.

Several KOS members have signed up for the 2018 Florida Council Convention at Sanibel. See you there!
Indian River Chapter Report
LTC James Rannazzisi USAF (Ret), President, Indian River Chapter

WWII Veteran Helped by the Indian River Chapter of MOAA And Veterans Council of Indian River County

Harry Lamb served during WWII with the 600th Field Artillery Battalion, 92nd Infantry Division and was awarded battle stars for the France, Northern Italy and Belgium campaigns. Harry contracted frost bite feet in Europe and can barely walk. However, even after serving his country, this US military war veteran faces more challenges here in Indian River County. His wife Gladys had to take their food next door because their refrigerator was broken. Their home had no hot water because the water heater broke and flooded the bathroom. And after hurricane Irma, someone had placed a blue tarp on their leaking roof. They also had a broken window along with several other unsafe conditions.

Gladys Lamb and her 93-year-old husband Harry are both disabled and had been struggling to look after one another. Gladys said they felt that they had no one to turn to for help.

Harry learned about and applied to the Veterans Council of Indian River County “Upward American Veterans” (UAV) program for assistance. He was assigned an Action officer, volunteer and Coast Guard veteran Fred Schoenberg to assess their situation. As Fred reviewed the Lamb family needs, he realized that this would be a more extensive project than originally anticipated. He found a second water heater in the kitchen not working, an inoperable washer and no available dryer vent. This home was a definite fire hazard in which no US military veteran should have to live. Veterans Council President and MOAA Director Colonel Sam Kouns visited the Lamb home. He said “no person and especially no veteran should have to live under such poor conditions. Harry served our country bravely and we can’t let him down.”

The UAV Committee pledged $3,000 toward repairs, but more funds were desperately needed. MOAA chapter President, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Rannazzisi responded immediately. MOAA donated an additional $2,500 towards the Lamb family’s home repairs, which included minor plumbing and electrical repair, replacing an exterior door, screen door and window, replacing Washer/Dryer, repairing the refrigerator, and venting the dryer. A friend, Reverend Jesse worked diligently to make some of the repairs.

Fred Schoenberg, the UAV Action Officer, also convinced a reluctant Gladys and Harry to accept VA home assistance three days a week. During a Veterans Council and MOAA visit, Gladys kissed Sam and exclaimed “You are my Angels!”

The Lamb’s living conditions have become much better, except for the leaky roof with the blue tarp, peeling paint outside, and yard debris. The Veterans Council, working in collaboration with the local MOAA chapter, has submitted a grant request to MOAA Military Family Initiative (MFI) National Foundation to address these remaining conditions.

Currently there is a waiting list of 15 more veteran homeowners in Indian River County who require home repairs and improvements. There is an estimated $102,000 worth of work to be done for these veterans who either can’t afford or are physically unable to do it. The Veterans Council is seeking additional funding to meet these needs.
South Central Florida Chapter
COL Mike Borders, USA, (Ret), SW Area Vice President, South Central Florida Chapter President

In April, the South Central Florida Chapter of MOAA began an area wide initiative to present a medal and a certificate to outstanding Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) Cadets in the area High Schools. These young cadets have distinguished themselves during the school year. This is a yearly initiative of the South Central Florida Chapter.

The chapter works with the leadership of Arcadia, Avon Park, Lake Placid, Okeechobee, Sebring, and Wauchula high schools and JROTC programs to choose a cadet with demonstrated leadership abilities for the MOAA award.

This is a great program and we enjoy supporting the young leaders.

In addition, the South Central Florida Chapter will again participate this year in the graduation ceremony of the America Flag Protocol Initiative, Lake Country Elementary school in Lake Placid. The initiative teaches 4th and 5th graders the history and appropriate protocol of the American Flag.
North East Area News

Mayport Chapter Closing, 1 April 2018
CWO4 Patrick J. Ivory, USN (Ret), President 2014 to 2018

It is my duty to report that sadly, the Mayport Chapter, Florida’s First Coast Chapter (FL-17), has closed after 45 years of affiliation with TROA/MOAA. Despite numerous efforts to avert the situation, the membership voted for this because of a declining and aging membership and the lack of volunteers willing to step up to leadership positions in the chapter. Many of the officers, directors and committee chairs served for nearly a decade and several served in multiple positions to keep the chapter going for the past several years.

The Mayport Chapter has a proud history. We supported the local USO in several ways. We helped initiate the No-Dough Dinner program that provided meals to local military families. Most of these families were junior enlisted personnel and many considered the No-Dough Dinner in their monthly food budgets. The Chapter also supported the USO by donating a new refrigerator and to support them financially in maintenance of the facility.

The Chapter supported the ROTC programs at the University of North Florida (Army) and Jacksonville University (Navy/Marine Corps). Members attended commissioning ceremonies and presented the honor graduate with a ceremonial sword or saber. Additionally, we supported 12 JROTC programs in the city of Jacksonville with attending their annual awards ceremonies and provide annual scholarships.

The Mayport Chapter was one of the founding organizations of the Beaches Veterans Memorial Park in Atlantic Beach. A Chapter member has sat on the BVMP Board of Directors since its inception. Also, one of our members developed and maintained the BVMP website. Annually, we participated in Memorial Day and Veterans Day Ceremonies at the park as the host organization and assisting in recruiting guest speakers for these events.

The Mayport Chapter has also been honored by receiving the Chapter Five Star Level of Excellence award annually since the awards inception in 2003. We have also received numerous Four and Five Star MOAA Communications awards for both our newsletter, Highlights and our website.

These are just some of the successes that the Mayport Chapter has enjoyed throughout the years. I personally want to thank all the members for their dedication and camaraderie with a purpose.

New NE Area Vice President

CDR Patrick R (Pat) Kluever, USN, (Ret) has graciously accepted appointment as the new Northeast Florida Area Vice President. CDR Kluever’s spouse is Mary Lee (Mary) Kluever.

CDR Kluever signed up in University of Nebraska NROTC in 1966 and was commissioned in Dec 1971. He was a Naval aviator (navigator) and attended Class-71 of US Navy Test Pilot 76-77 and Navy Postgraduate School 82-85. He retired in 1994.

CDR Kluever can be reached at: patkluever@verizon.net  
(540) 775-4955  
116 Fleet Landing Blvd, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233
The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017, H.R. 3218, passed by the House and Senate was signed by the President on August 16, 2017. Also known as the Forever G.I. Bill, the legislation improves provisions in the existing G.I. Bill and provides more flexibility for using educational benefits. The measure contains a number of provisions that specifically impact disabled veterans and their families, including:

To see the complete text of the Forever G.I. Bill click here

Click the link below for a summary of the bill:
https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/KMvctjovgTlq8UQQ

Skip Hartnett, Maj USMC, (Ret), West Central Chapter

Proceeds from General Snowden's Book Sales Go to Florida Veterans Foundation

Dennis Baker, Commander
U.S. Navy (ret.)

Lt. General Lawrence F. Snowden, USMC, (Ret) passed away in February of 2017 generously leaving 50% of his book sales going to the Florida Veterans Foundation. To find the book:
https://www.amazon.com/dp/098594384X/ref=sr_1_37?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1477104692&sr=1-37&keywords=snowden%27s+story

To find out more about the Florida Veterans Foundation visit their web site at https://floridaveteransfoundation.org/
The Veterans’ Club of University Village

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month at University Village
Please call to RSVP at (800) 524-5020

Tampa’s Superior Life Care Retirement Community offers spacious apartments and villa homes on 36 acres with resort style amenities and services. University Village is located just blocks away from the James A. Haley Veteran’s Hospital and in close proximity to the MacDill Air Force Base.

As an exceptional continuing care retirement community in Florida, University Village offers you The Shield. Financial Security is here when you need it most.

12401 N. 22nd St, Tampa, FL • www.universityvillage.net
Call (813) 975-5009 or toll-free (800) 524-5020 today.
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (MOAA)
FLORIDA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS (FCOC)

The MOAA Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) is comprised of 44 Chapters with nearly 8,000 members and their families. FCOC is one of MOAA’s largest Councils. MOAA has a membership of over 380,000 members in all 50 States.

The FCOC’s primary communication vehicles are our bi-monthly publication, The COUNCIL COMMUNIQUÉ and our Website www.MOAAFL.org Ads run for one year.

The COMMUNIQUÉ is distributed electronically to all our chapters, MOAA Headquarters in Virginia, and our influential contacts across the state of Florida.

The COMMUNIQUÉ provides a unique forum for businesses to reach a select segment of the population. The membership is patriotic and professional. We encourage your business to reach out to our members by advertising in The COUNCIL COMMUNIQUÉ.

In appreciation of Businesses that also support the FCOC Annual Convention with Ads in the Convention Souvenir Program Book within the last year the FCOC offers a discount for the same size Ad shown on the following Order Form.

Thank you!

FCOC

Submitting Articles and Pictures for The Communiqué

Articles can be attached to an email. Microsoft Word works best. You can also type your information into the body of an email where it can be copied and pasted into the newsletter. PDF files can also be used.

Pictures should have a .jpg extension. If you are sending pictures from your chapter, please include the chapter name and the names of those in the picture. A few words on what the event is about will help interest the readers.

If you have questions about your submission, contact

Polly Parks
pparks@igc.org
703-338-6881
**ADVERTISING ORDER FORM**

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- Submit PDF file to: advertising@MOAAFL.org
- Ad information must be submitted by the 1st of the month “preceding” the first month of publication.
### Florida Chapters & Web Sites (if available)

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We're on the Web!

See us at: www.moaafl.org/

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A current issue of The Council Communiqué can be found at the Florida Council of Chapters Web Site: http://www.moaafl.org/, drop down menu Events/News. Opinions expressed by writers are their own, and may not express the positions of FCOC or the MOAA.