President’s Message

LTC Marc Oliveri, USAR (Ret)

Once again the Florida contingency participated in “Storming the Hill” on April 13, 2016. As your President, I was honored to be part of this annual event. Joining me this year, the Florida “Stormers” were, General Robertson, Lt Col Jim Conner, Dottie Conner, Joyce Harte, CAPT Robert Silah, and Jenine Oliveri. Our group was divided into three teams. Assigning 10 offices per team, all 27 Florida House members and 2 Florida Senate offices were visited. The two main legislative issues recommended by MOAA national were:

Reject Disproportionate TRICARE Fee Hikes and Program Changes.
Eliminate the Widows Tax (SBP – DIC Offset).

Each office was presented a pamphlet explaining MOAA’s position on the issues and supporting background information. All were receptive to MOAA’s issues and recommendations.

It is noteworthy to mention that the halls of congress are long and no matter how hard we tried to limit our walking distance between visits our team clocked in at 11,000 plus steps. I believe that is the equivalent of several miles. Not complaining, just saying.

Several days later, we were on the move again, this time to Cape Canaveral, where the 2017 annual convention program was discussed. I must say that the Cape Canaveral Chapter has a great venue lined up for next year. The convention will be at sea for 7 days. All those attending the convention will have plenty of time to relax, go on tours while in port and participate in convention classes and meetings while at sea. I believe we have more port days than sea days. Oh, did I mention it will be held on the “Oasis of the Seas”? I will be sending out a ‘save the date’ email outlining this great event. We have extended participation in this cruise to Family and Friends just like we did in our Dec. 2015 cruise. Please join us.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the great time had by all at our 2016 convention in Lakeland. Thank you Gary Clark and the Imperial Polk County Chapter for your hard work putting this event together. We all had an opportunity to witness the patriotism and esprit displayed by Lakeland from all the JROTC cadets at the high school to the cadets presenting the colors at each event. Our traditional Military Ball was replaced this year by a 40,50 and 60 Canteen event. A big band, and I mean BIG, played music from “days gone by” and all danced to the tunes of Glenn Miller and other artists before my time. I especially appreciated the band leader playing my request of “Moonlight Serenade.” Pictures of the convention will be on display on the website.
President’s Message (continued)

I have found that during my visits to our chapters the number of members and chapter description does not fully display the soul of these chapters. Each chapter is like a snowflake, no two are alike, yet they all have a common goal. The dedication displayed goes beyond description. I am truly impressed by what you all are doing. Please don’t stop.

Marc, Jenine and General Robertson with Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

FCOC President Marc Oliveri and wife, Jenine, and General Tony Robertson, MOAA Chairman of the Board, with Congresswoman Corin Brown.

Jenine and General Robertson with a member of Senator Nelson’s Staff.

Marc & Jenine attended an event at the White House. Marc says…..

“Jenine and I were on the line and Mr. Obama came up to us and extended his hand to me.”
Personal Affairs
Sherry Freese, Personal Affairs Chairman

THANK YOU LAKELAND! Great time was had by all at the 2016 FCOC Convention!

I agreed to head FCOC Surviving Spouses. Let me know if I can assist in any way.

Sherry Freese
727 360-3102 or 727 641-5979. momfreese@aol.com

Wanted

FCOC Convention Coordinator

Use your event planning and negotiating skills!

Contact Marc Oliveri for info:
ltcolmarc@gmail.com

“You’re a Grand Old Flag”
Flag Day

6:00 PM-7:30 PM, Sunday, June 12th
Patriot Plaza, Sarasota National Cemetery

On Sunday, June 12th, the Military Officers Association of Sarasota will join the Pops Orchestra for Bradenton and Sarasota to celebrate the 239th birthday of our nation’s flag. Enjoy a stirring 90 minute concert of patriotic music by the Pops and choral selections by Gloria Musicae. A special feature of this event will be a formal Flag Retirement and Renactment Ceremony overbooking the impressive features of Patriot Plaza.

www.starsandstripescelebration.com

MOAA

Sarasota Chapter

The Pops
May all the spouses and dependents forgive us for our oversight, and now accept our thanks and our heartfelt salute for their courage, love and devotion.

Memorial Day has just passed and I hope all who ever wore the uniform of the United States felt honored and appreciated. I was blessed to be able to preach a Memorial Day sermon at church and afterwards give the invocation at a Memorial Day Concert where we also distributed the Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemoration pins. To see the faces of those receiving their pins was extraordinarily moving.

Often the military member is rewarded, but those who are left behind are forgotten and do not get the praise they deserve. I want to recognize a wife and daughter who refused to accept the military claim that the remains of their husband and father was among the bones of those returned and buried in 1979 in the National Cemetery. I learned about them from a newspaper article in the Raleigh News and Observer forwarded to me by the wife of one of our Northeast Florida MOAA members.

Donald David Stewart deployed to Vietnam in January, 1965 leaving behind his pregnant wife who gave birth a couple of months later. After flying 343 combat missions Staff Sgt. Stewart died on Dec. 11,1965. He and three other U.S. crew members of the 315th Air Commando Group were carrying 81 Vietnamese soldiers who fought alongside the Americans. In heavy fog in Phu Yen their plane crashed into the trees on top of a ridge in dense jungle, killing everyone on board.

When Sgt. Stewart’s daughter Dona grew up she made repeated requests for the military to go investigate the crash site and was told it wasn’t even on the list. In 2007 she and her mother went on their own to Vietnam and stayed a month. The location was a two-day hike from the nearest village and too strenuous for the two women; so the local guides they had enlisted went to the overgrown site, taking photographs and bringing back pieces of the plane, boots and other paraphernalia.

It took until the summer of 2015 for the Stewart family to learn the truth about Sgt. Stewart’s remains. Forensics specialists had restested old bones and matched them to samples from family members. “He never got to hold me,” said Dona Stewart, now 50. But in the fall of 2015 at a military lab in Hawaii that positively identified her father’s skeletal remains, she was able to say, “I got to hold him.” On Nov. 9, 2015 the remains of Staff Sgt. Donald Stewart were finally laid to rest at home in North Carolina.

After 50 years, the tenacity and diligence of Sgt. Stewart’s wife and daughter finally brought closure to their family.

Too many families don’t ever have resolution. Immediately following the MOA of Sarasota Ceremony for the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of Vietnam, a veteran’s wife approached me who wanted help with her husband. He had returned home with PTSD, but would never seek help or discuss it with her. She has stayed with him for 50 years because she loves him, but he has never dealt with his extenuating problems.

There are still numerous unresolved situations that we all too often ignore. As I reflect on my own ministry, I realize my focus was more often for the service members’ traumas, rather than the families. May all the spouses and dependents forgive us for our oversight, and now accept our thanks and our heartfelt salute for their courage, love and devotion.
As I reported to the Florida Council of Chapters Board Meeting at our State Convention last month, the House Armed Services Committee had completed its work on HR 4909. On May 19th the full House voted passage of that Bill. Click here to go to the FCOC website to see how your representatives voted on that Bill. http://www.moaafl.org/Legislative.aspx then click on “Action” under the National dropdown menu.

The Senate Armed Services Committee finalized its version, S 2943 the same day. The Senate plans to vote on their defense bill during the week of June 7. As I write this column over a hundred amendments have been introduced including a pay raise provision to match the House version offered by Chairman McCain. Read more about these amendments in MOAA’s Legislative Update of My 27th.

MOAA and 25 other members of The Military Coalition recently sent a letter of thanks to Senators Casey and Moran for their amendment SA 2943 to the Senate NDAA Bill released by the SASC providing some financial relief to military spouses who must get re-licensing in a new state after a PCS move for their military family. A pdf copy of this letter will be posted to the FCOC website under Legislation - Federal - "Hot Issues". You might find the facts and figures in the letter of interest in any correspondence you would send to our senators regarding this amendment as well as the others described in the paragraph above.

After the final vote on the Senate floor, House and Senate lawmakers will begin their work ironing out their respective differences in conference committee.

You may recall that last year this was a very contentious process. And the final version, although passed in both Houses, was vetoed by the President. After negotiations leading to the "Bi-Partisan Budget Agreement of 2015", the Committees’ staffs reworked the joint bill which again passed and this time was signed by the President.

The May 27th MOAA Legislative Update provided a brief comparison of the two versions of those bills to highlight the differences and to state MOAA’s position of support of the respective provisions.
The following table was derived from MOAA’s reports and the summaries of the bills issued by the House and Senate Committees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>House HR 4909 Passed Full House 5/19</th>
<th>Senate S 2943 Passed SASC 5/26; Pending full Senate deliberations</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay Raise</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>House provision prohibits the president from reducing pay raise below the ECI legislatively mandated rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSIA</td>
<td>Extends to Sept 2018</td>
<td>Permanent Extension</td>
<td>MOAA appreciates the provisions to extend the SSIA, however the monthly rate needs to be increased from the current $310 per month, with the goal of phasing out the SBP-DIC offset completely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRICARE-for-Life fee increases</td>
<td>No Changes for those currently enrolled</td>
<td>No Changes for those currently enrolled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tricare Fees</td>
<td>Implements changes to cost-sharing, deductibles, and other fees for the future force.</td>
<td>Increases in existing single and family annual enrollment fees for working-age military retirees</td>
<td>MOAA urges support for the House provisions for current eligibles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy Co-pays</td>
<td>Not clear at this time</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increases pharmacy co-payments incrementally over a 9-year window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Allowance for Housing</td>
<td>No Change</td>
<td>BAH would be calculated using the servicemember’s actual housing cost or the BAH rate, whichever is less. The bill also proposes dividing the normal BAH rate by the number of BAH-eligible occupants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense Funds</td>
<td>$543.4 billion for base functions $35.7 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO)</td>
<td>$543 billion for base functions $59 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations $5 billion of the OCO funding supports base functions</td>
<td>Both Bills authorize funding from the OCO account to be used for Base functions (similar to the funding gimmick which was vetoed last year). The “top line” follows the Bipartisan Budget Agreement,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$23.1 billion additional OCO funding to support base functions; see Note 1

The DoD Budget request for FY-2017 followed the Bipartisan Budget Agreement from last fall.


On May 19th -- after passage of S-2943 by the SASC.

“The Senate NDAA, at present, conforms to last year’s budget agreement. But when the legislation comes to the floor [after the Memorial Day recess], I will offer an amendment to increase defense spending above the current spending caps, reverse short-sighted cuts to modernization, restore military readiness, and give our servicemembers the support they need and deserve. I do not know whether or not this amendment will succeed. But the Senate must have this debate. And senators must choose a side.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manpower</th>
<th>Army + 20,000</th>
<th>MC + 3,000</th>
<th>AF + 4,000</th>
<th>No change from DoD request</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note 1 House version pays for these manpower increases by the one-time allocation of OCO funding to Base functions

The administration has spoken out against some of the provisions of these Bills;

Defense Secretary Ash Carter strongly objected to the use of OCO funds for base budget functions in recent testimony to the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee. The HASC version of the defense authorization bill takes $18 billion from the overseas contingency operations fund and uses it for base budget expenses, which is “deeply troubling and flawed for several reasons” said Carter. “The approach proposed by HASC Chairman Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) is gambling with war fighting money at a time of war,” because it does not fund OCO for the entire fiscal year. “It buys force structure without the money to sustain it and keep it ready, effectively creating [a] hollow force structure,” and it doesn’t address the looming threat of sequestration, Carter added. “It is a step in the direction of unraveling the bipartisan budget act … and it is another road to nowhere with uncertain chances of ever becoming law,” he said.

The May 16th Statement of Administration Policy on HR 4909 issued by the White House “strongly objected to many provisions in this bill.” It further stated in part:

“H.R. 4909 fails to provide our troops with the resources they need to keep our Nation safe. Instead of fully funding wartime operations … the bill would redirect $18 billion of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds toward base budget programs that the Department of Defense (DOD) did not request, cutting off critical funding for wartime operations after April 30, 2017. Not only is this approach dangerous, but it is also wasteful. The bill would buy excess force structure without the money to sustain it, effectively creating hollow force structure that would undermine DOD's efforts to restore readiness.”

“Furthermore, the bill's funding approach attempts to unravel the dollar-for-dollar balance of defense and non-defense funding increases provided by the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) of 2015, threatening future steps needed to reverse over $100 billion of future sequestration cuts to DOD.”

“If the President were presented with [this version of] H.R. 4909, his senior advisors would recommend he veto the bill.”
Legislative Affairs, Continued

As you can tell from the comparison of the provisions in the Bills and from the remarks above, the road ahead will be filled with many roadblocks and detours to providing our troops and their families with compensation and benefits rightfully earned by their service to our nation, and the resources necessary, both short and longer term, to fulfill their military missions.

As I have said many, many times, standby for a barrage of Calls to Action from MOAA to communicate with our elected officials requesting their support as the legislative process treads along. They have already started – click on this link to send a letter to our Senators regarding MOAA’s support of selected amendments to the Senate Defense Bill: http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=72342626

Since this is the last Newsletter prior to our face-to-face visits this summer with our Representatives, I remind you that MOAA will be providing specific Talking Papers to help us define the support we want to from our congresspersons during the August Recess visits. I will provide any last minute updates to the legislative issues and strategies via email to help you all to be successful in this important Grass Roots Advocacy Mission.

Flight to Honor
Gary Clark, Col USAF (Ret)
President, Imperial Polk County Chapter

This is what F2H (Flight to Honor) is all about. This young man wanted to have his picture taken with a WWII veteran he had never before met.

Flight to Honor Polk Florida (FHPF) is sponsored by the Polk County Veterans Council. Eligible veterans are flown to Washington DC to visit the memorials. Any veteran is welcome to apply. Polk County residency is not required. Priority is given to those with serious medical conditions, WWII, Korean War and Vietnam War veterans.

http://www.polkveteranscouncil.com/
Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee (SSAC)
Joyce Harte, MOAA Print & Digital Media Committee

Military Officers Association of America Meeting
I visited with Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Team Leader Dottie Conner and Board Member Joyce Harte who stopped by my office last week to discuss the monetary offset for recipients of both the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities and dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC), commonly known as the SBP-DIC offset or the “widow tax.” This inequity affects tens of thousands of surviving spouses of servicemembers who had paid premiums into SBP as a life insurance benefit for their spouses, but whose spouses are prevented from collecting the full amount into which the servicemember had paid due to the spouses also receiving DIC from the Department of Veterans Affairs. I have been a longtime supporter of repealing this unjust offset, including cosponsoring H.R.1594, the Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act, in the current Congress, in addition to supporting other measures to repeal other offsets that negatively and unexpectedly affect military retirees, veterans, and their surviving spouses. One of the first efforts I pursued upon being elected to Congress was repealing the unjust offset between SBP and social security recipients, which eventually became a reality with a phased-in repeal of such offset. Rest assured, I will continue to support efforts to repeal the SBP-DIC offset until this repeal becomes a reality, and I appreciate Ms. Conner and Ms. Harte for taking the time to meet with me.

(L-R) Storming Team Leader, Dottie Conner, US Congressman, Jeff Miller, MOAA Board Member, Joyce Harte
Venice Area Chapter End of Year Activity Report
Dallas Jensen, LTC USAR (Ret)
President, Venice Chapter MOAA

In the artillery the forward observer is expected to radio the fire direction center “END OF MISSION” and then send a description of the status of the target.

We have END OF MISSION.

Flag Protocol Lesson 10 for 6 classes was conducted at Lamarque Elementary. Jim Harrington, Rod Dimon and I conducted the Lesson 10.

The monthly social for May was held at the British Open Pub and arranged by Rod Dimon.

At the May 19th social, our webmaster and newsletter editor, Marjorie Healey, was presented with a Four Star Certificate for our newsletter and a Five Star Certificate for the website, www.venicemoaa.com. This is the fourth award in a row Mrs. Healey has received for the website.

National MOAA Awards were completed at North Port and Venice.

Scholarship award at North Port High School was presented by 1st Vice President Rod Dimon.

On the same day at the same time I presented the scholarship award at Venice High School. The total scholarship value at Venice was $5.4 million.

On Friday, 27 May, Mike Healey and I conducted the Lesson 10 Flag Protocol at Garden, Venice and Laurel Elementary Schools. Six classes.

On Saturday, 29 May, Brigadier General Jerry McIlmoyle, USAF Ret, presented the keynote remarks at the Sarasota National Cemetery for Memorial Day. Jerry was great. We are proud you are a member or our chapter Jerry.

On Monday, 30 May, Memorial Day, I presented the wreath and Jim Harrington carried the chapter flag for the Memorial Day Ceremonies at Patriots Park.

Thus END OF MISSION

There are some ongoing issues; A request for funding assistance for the recruiting effort is pending.

Financial grant approval for Venice JROTC through the Venice Yacht Club is expected in the autumn.

A search for a meeting location that serves lunch is ongoing.

Have a great summer.

Mayport Chapter Memorial Day Event
John Snyder, LCDR USN, (Ret)
Past President, FCOC Web Master

“Mayport Chapter sponsored the Memorial Day event at the Beaches Veterans Memorial Park in Atlantic Beach FL. President Pat Ivory was Master of Ceremony”
Northeast Florida Chapter
Dick Chadwell, CWO2, USN (Ret)
2nd VP, Northeast Florida Chapter

Graduation and Commissioning Ceremony of
Ensign Ryan Danek, USN. Jacksonville University

Charles Lusk and Mrs. Rita Sharpe, Captain Sharpe’s Widow.

Lt Col Russ Mengonegal, USAF (Ret)
Receives the Life Time Achievement Volunteer Services Award in May

May 1, 2016 Ensign Ryan Danek, USN was awarded the Captain Lawrence A. Sharpe, USN Ceremonial Sword at his commencement and commissioning ceremony at the University of Jacksonville. The Ceremonial Sword is presented to the top ROTC student in the ROTC Unit, University of Jacksonville. In attendance was NE FL MOAA CDR Charles Lusk, USN (Ret).

As reported in Clay Today:
Russ Mengonegal, at the age of 94, it seems there is not a nonprofit in Clay County for which Russ has not volunteered or helped. He has served at Penney Retirement Community, J.P. Hall Children’s Charities, The Food Pantry of Green Cove Springs, Rotary Club of Green Cove Springs, Republican Executive Committee, Clay County Planning and Zoning Commission, St. Vincent’s Clay County, Hibernia Oaks Homeowner’s Association and First Presbyterian Church in Green Cove Springs. He is a member of the Military Officers’ Association, U.S. Air Force Association; American Legion, Florida Post Orlando; The US. Coast Guard Auxiliary; and Phi Delta Kappa International Education Fraternity.
Fleet Landing actually has given us the freedom to pursue a more active lifestyle than when we were burdened with maintaining a house. We are impressed with the management of Fleet Landing, the dining experience, and the wellness encouragement initiative.

— RADM & Mrs. Richard Cueroni, USN(Ret), Current Residents

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Money Can’t Cure What Ails Veterans Affairs
By Anthony Principi

Mr. Principi served as secretary of Veterans Affairs from 2001 to 2005 and was chairman of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission. He is now chairman of the Spectrum Group, a government-relations firm in Alexandria, Va.

Submitted by: Gary Clark, Col, USAF, (Ret), President, Imperial Polk Chapter & Polk County Veterans Council

The VA has ballooned to over 365,000 employees. Are vets feeling better?

‘Total VA funding has grown by nearly 86 percent from 2009,” says the headline of a document put out by the Department of Veterans Affairs this year in support of the agency’s fiscal year 2017 budget request for $182.3 billion. Politicians and government officials argue that increases in VA funding demonstrate a willingness to support veterans and their legitimate needs. Many of the increases are justified because of the higher costs of providing health care and the growing numbers of veterans receiving compensation and pension benefits.

Yet our concern should not be about the amount of money the VA spends. We should focus instead on the impact that money has on the lives of veterans. While the annual budget was growing over the last decade, there have been cuts to literally hundreds of programs throughout the federal government, many of which directly benefit veterans and their families.

Instead of arguing about VA funding levels every year, it’s time to consider fundamental changes in the way the VA delivers services. Here’s how:

• Realign the separate VA and Defense Department health-care systems. Together, the two health systems receive more than $100 billion in taxpayer funding every year. A fully integrated system would help control health-care costs. It also would help VA and Defense Department employees—who provide care to the same veterans and active-duty service members at different points in their lives, although Defense also cares for dependents—refocus their efforts to provide coordinated world-class care.

• Close unneeded facilities. The VA is no longer a hospital-centric organization. The department’s health-care services, like those outside of government, have been significantly decentralized to locations such as the VA’s 1,215 community-based outpatient clinics. Much of the money now being spent to maintain infrastructure would be better deployed to pay for doctors and nurses delivering top-notch medical care.

• Refocus the disability-compensation system. The spouses of heroic men and women killed in Iraq and Afghanistan fighting against ISIS, al Qaeda and the Taliban receive the same level of death and indemnity compensation, pension benefits and home-loan benefits as my widow would, should I die of prostate cancer that may or may not have been related to my service in Vietnam 46 years ago. Inequalities like this will cause the American people to question the entire rationale behind the veterans disability-compensation system, which is still based on principles developed in 1917.

We need a compensation system that understands today’s economic realities: One that focuses first on veterans whose disabilities were incurred in combat or while training for combat. One that rewards veterans for overcoming their disabilities and becoming productive members of the workforce while taking steps to improve their health.

• Do more to integrate private providers into the VA health-care system. In recent months, a task force formed by Concerned Veterans of America has suggested giving every eligible veteran the opportunity to receive health care from private providers, while also giving them the option to use the VA for care if they prefer.
We shouldn’t fully privatize veterans care. There are many exceptional people working for the VA, and its health-care system has helped tens of millions of veterans live better lives. But the department needs to focus its health-care and research on issues of particular importance to veterans, such as prosthetics, rehabilitation, spinal-cord injuries, post-traumatic-stress disorder and suicide prevention. Private providers should augment the VA in caring for veterans unable to receive timely care.

At the end of 2004, my last year as secretary of Veterans Affairs, the VA had some 235,000 employees. Today it has more than 365,000. The number of staff in VA headquarters in Washington, D.C. and throughout the country has increased by 32% since 2008. They are good public servants. But many are health-care and benefit professionals who should be providing direct care or services to veterans and their families, or managing VA facilities in need of better leadership.

The VA is a great organization, one whose accomplishments played a major role in the greatness of 20th-century America. It’s time to reform and rebuild the department so that future generations of veterans, their families and all Americans can benefit from its services and its achievements. Let’s stop throwing money at the VA’s problems. Instead, let’s fix them.
Kingdom of the Sun (Ocala) Events
Arlo Janssen, LTC, USA, (Ret)
President, Kingdom of the Sun Chapter

KOS Scholarship Dinner

The Kingdom of the Sun (KOS) Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) held their May Dinner meeting at the Elks Club in Ocala, FL on May 5, 2016. Larry Fagan, Capt USN (Ret), presented scholarships to seven high school seniors from Marion County. Three of the scholarship winners have received appointments to the various military academies. William "Bill" Murry, COL USA (Ret), presented eight Leadership Awards to seven high school juniors and one sophomore that were part of the JROTC in Marion County. Gorham Black, COL USA (Ret), addressed the audience to end the evening program. The KOS Scholarship Dinner was featured on the front page of the Ocala Star Banner on May 9, 2016.

40th Anniversary Celebration Luncheon

The Kingdom of the Sun (KOS) Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) held their June luncheon at the Elks Club in Ocala, FL on June 2, 2016. The West Port High School JROTC presented the Colors at the start of the 40th Anniversary Program. The Mayor of Ocala, Kent Guinn, welcomed members and visitors to Ocala, Florida. Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret), President and CEO of MOAA from the Washington, DC area, was our Keynote speaker. LTC Marc Oliveri, USAR (Ret), President of the Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC), was in attendance at our meeting. Four charter members of KOS were honored at the program. They were Nan Andrews, Margo Langstaff, Jane Melissari, and Bonnie Morris. We had over 70 members and guests for our 40th Celebration.

L-R, Dana Atkins, Lt Gen, USAF (Ret), President, of MOAA; Marc Oliveri, LTC, USA, (Ret), President of the Florida Council of Chapters; Arlo Janssen, LTC, USA, (Ret), President of the Kingdom of the Sun Chapter; and Past President KOS-MOAA and Past President of the FL Council of Chapters COL Henry Ince, USAR (Ret)
Gary Clark, and the Imperial Polk Chapter, incorporated a FCOC Convention, with all that entails, with a unique look at venues of interest in Polk County.

With events scheduled at Summerlin Military Academy, Draken International Hangar, Central Florida Aerospace Academy, Tigertown and Veterans Park, attendees made the rounds and saw the sights.

The FCOC thanks Imperial Polk for a great event!

See all the pictures on the Convention Facebook Page

Saturday lunch entertainment!

Saturday banquet at the Florida Air Museum

Fran Martin, (L) former FCOC Legislative Affairs Chair, & Dottie Conner show us how it’s done!
See all the pictures on the Convention Facebook Page

Saturday Banquet at Florida Air Museum! Some party suits still fit!

Sunday Memorial Service at Veterans Park

Sherry Freese, FCOC Personal Affairs Chair, (L) and the girls from St. Pete having fun!
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

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Call (813) 975-5009 or toll-free (800)
Broward County Awards Scholarships

Steve Bettner, LTC, USA, (Ret)
Chapter President

On May 15, 2016, the Broward County Chapter achieved a goal set four years ago—awarding Scholarships to deserving Broward County JROTC Cadets. The selectees for 2016 were runner-up: Cadet Major Niquiel Fahie, Everglades High School, and winner: Cadet COL Alexandria Smith, Pompano Beach High School. The event was attended by over 80 people, with several Broward County and Florida State officials present. Congressmen Ted Deutch and Alcee Hastings provided Letters of Congratulations. There were other distinguished visitors, including officials of the South Florida Honor Flight, WWII veterans, and our own Gertie Graber, a Holocaust survivor.

The event was held at the Lighthouse Point Yacht and Racquet Club. It immediately took on the air of a family reunion. The highlight of the ceremony was the presentation of a plaque and check to Cadet Smith by Chapter President LTC Steve Bettner (USA, Ret). The event was the culmination of planning and execution by the Chapter JROTC committee, co-chaired by COL Jim Armstrong (USA-Ret) and LTC Ken Green (USA-Ret). It is just the beginning of what will be a long-term relationship between our Chapter and the School Board.

Broward County Chapter Announces First Scholarship Program

Steve Bettner, LTC, USA, (Ret)
Chapter President

Broward County, FL – April 2016 – In January of this year, the Broward County Chapter of MOAA announced its inaugural plan to select and award a three-year scholarship to a Broward County JROTC Cadet. This has been a three-year challenge for the chapter to develop the plan and obtain resources. The Screening Board will review applications and select the most deserving young man or woman and a runner-up. Twenty-seven entries were received out of 30 Broward County public high schools. The winner will be awarded a $4000 scholarship and the runner-up will receive a $500 grant.

There is a lot of excitement within our Chapter and the community about this program. It has the full cooperation, guidance and participation of the Broward County School District. “This is our flagship program in terms of what we do as a Chapter in the Broward County community to Preserve National Security”, notes LTC Steve Bettner (USA, Ret), President of the Broward County Chapter. “We intend for this to be a long-term program and will continue to gather resources to support it.”

The award ceremony will be held May 15, 2016 at the Lighthouse Point Yacht and Racquet Club. LTC Bettner adds, “We owe a heartfelt ‘Thank You’ to our members and the Broward County School District, and all who helped make this happen.”

For more information about the Chapter feel free to call LTC Bettner at 954-942-3651 or access our website at www.browardmoaa.com.

Pictured (L to R): Runnerup Cadet Niquiel Fahie, Chap Legis Liaison LTC (USA-Ret) Thad Hamilton (USA-Ret). Mrs. Diane Runcie, School Supt Robert Runcie, State Rep Gwen Clark- Reed, County Commissioner Chip LaMarca, School Bd Mbr Nora Rupert, Chap Pres LTC Steve Bettner (USA-Ret) and Winner, Cadet Alexandria Smith.
Palm Beach Area Chapter JROTC Awards Night
Ev Henry, Maj, USAF, (Ret)
PBAC Membership Chair

Towards the end of the school year, but well before summer vacation, comes annual Awards Night for JROTC students. For this special occasion, MOAA has created a unique medal, which is awarded to the cadet in each school who exhibits a strong potential for leadership.

Support for JROTC units in our area continues to be one of the chapter’s favorite outreach programs. In addition to presenting the winning cadets their medals, the chapter also provides an annual monetary stipend to each of the programs it supports. (Each JROTC unit decides how the monies will be spent.)

There are 11 JROTC programs in the Palm Beach County (PBC) School District. Currently, the four programs we support are:

Lake Worth Community HS
Forest Hill Community HS
Atlantic Community HS
Boca Raton Community HS

Originally created as part of the National Defense Act of 1916, the Junior Officers’ Training Corps is a Federal program under the auspices of the US Armed Forces, with each JROTC unit organized according to its parent Branch of Service. The purpose of the JROTC program is “to instill in students in secondary institutions the values of good citizenship, service to the United States and a sense of personal responsibility and accomplishment.”

While not a recruiting tool per se, students are introduced to military protocol and discipline, as well as to the concepts of leadership and civic responsibility — “in order to enable cadets to better serve their country as leaders, as citizens and in military service should they wish to enter it.” (Reference: en.wikipedia.org)

The Lake Worth Community High School Air Force JROTC program, under the leadership of Lt Col Jose Martinez (USAF, Ret), held an Awards Night on 12 April. Unable to attend, Major Henry met with faculty prior to the event and delivered the designated awards. In the following photographs, Aerospace Science Instructor, MSgt Thomas Frazier (USAF, Ret), presents the annual MOAA leadership medal to AF Cadet Lt Col Aaron Rodriguez, while Aerospace Science Instructor, CMSgt Derek Townsend (USAF, Ret), presents our chapter’s $200 stipend to Cadet Maj. Afeshia Brown (for future studies).

The Trojan Force Academy at Lake Worth HS has 330 students, and the AF cadets are known to participate in many local events. This past year, they clocked over 3700 hrs. of community service.

The Forest Hill Community High School Army JROTC program conducted its Awards Night on 21 April. The following photo shows Sr. Army Instructor, CPT Hector Echevarria (USA, Ret), and Army Instructor, 1SG Antonio Correa (USA, Ret), standing with award recipient Army Cadet LTC Sofia Khalil.
The chapter’s $200 stipend was also presented by the faculty to Cadet Khalil (for future studies). Major Henry and PBAC member, Lt Col Tom D’Abrosca (ANG, Ret), attended the ceremony as our chapter representatives. In the photo, they are standing next to Cadet Khalil and CPT Echevarria.

**The Falcon Battalion** at Forest Hill HS has 380 students, and these cadets are quite active in the local community. This past year, they sponsored four Blood Drives, processing over 400 donors. They placed 1st for presentation in the Veterans Day Parade and 2nd in the local Christmas Parade. They also participated as a cadre in PBC’s ‘Breast Cancer Awareness’ walk. The Battalion achieved 3rd place at Regionals for Competitive Drill, and 5th place in the School District for Marksmanship. According to CPT Echevarria, the cadets were also first in the district to establish a JROTC Drumline, “which is kind of like a band with mostly percussion instruments. The cadets love it.”

**The Atlantic Community High School Army JROTC program** held an Awards Night 22 April. In the following photo, Senior Army Instructor (and PBAC member), LTC James Rodriguez (USA, Ret), is standing beside **Army Cadet CPT Todra Frett**, who was awarded the MOAA leadership medal. In presenting the award, LTC Rodriguez noted: “Cadet Frett can always be counted on to get the tough missions done to standard.”

Major Henry attended the ceremony as our chapter representative, and presented the AJROTC program with a $200 stipend (to assist with their funding of future activities). **The Eagle Brigade** at Atlantic HS in Delray Beach has 365 cadets. Their Air Rifle and Academic Teams were the 2016 “District Champions”, while their Air Rifle and Drill Teams qualified and competed at State level.

**The Boca Raton Community High School Navy JROTC program** held its Awards Night 27 April. During the ceremony, the MOAA leadership medal was presented to **Navy Cadet CPO Emily Christopoul**, for showing “a maturity and seriousness of purpose - and setting a high standard for her fellow cadets.” In the accompanying photograph, Cadet Christopoul is pictured as she accepts her award from guest presenter, 1LT Michael J. Hunt.

The NJROTC program also received a $200 stipend from the chapter (to assist with their funding of future activities).
PBAC Awards, Continued

**The Bobcat Regiment** at Boca Raton HS currently has 360 cadets, who just experienced another banner year. Thanks to the guidance provided by their Navy Instructor and cadet officer staff, this regiment continues to earn many accolades. This, despite the fact that they are waiting on a replacement for LCDR Ken Bingham (USN, Ret), who retired last Fall (21 years after founding the NJROTC unit).

As their PBAC Liaison, CAPT Allan Nirenberg (USN, Ret), recently observed: “Remarkably, at every competitive outing, they have continued to attain top scores, including finishing 1st in Academics and 3rd Overall at the 2016 Navy Nationals.”

This past year, the cadets accrued *15,900 hours of community service*, and earned a “Distinguished Unit Award” from HQ acknowledging their many accomplishments. Also notable: three of the regiment’s top cadets received full-tuition ROTC scholarships to attend college in the Fall. (2 Navy and 1 Army).

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**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 which 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 COMMUNIQUE* and our Website [www.MOAAFL.org](http://www.MOAAFL.org). Ads run for one year.

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

The *COMMUNIQUE* 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 COMMUNIQUE*.

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Thank you!

FCOC

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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

Marty Brown
wb2vyk@gmail.com
336-601-1318
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