President’s Message
Col Leonard Friedlander, USAF, Ret

I am extremely proud to have received your support for the FCOC Presidency, and hope that I, together with the other elected officers, can meet your expectations. We intend to do our utmost to support the chapters, ensure the timely flow of information throughout the organization, and advocate on behalf of active duty uniformed personnel and veterans. But, we will be the first to admit that we cannot do it by ourselves.

I want to thank the Lee Coast Chapter for hosting a very successful 2018 convention at the Sanibel Marriott Resort. Special kudos go to the convention chairperson, Doug Quelch and his wife, Mary, as well as his able and industrious assistants, Marilyn Lenihan and Terry Robertson -- who were everywhere.

We were privileged to have a contingent from National MOAA join us: President & CEO Lt Gen Dana Atkins and his wife Laura; VP for Government Relations Col Dan Merry and Program Director CAPT Erin Stone.

Lt Gen Atkins presented 30 MOAA four- and five-star Col Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards for Chapter/Council Newsletters and Websites to FCOC and its Chapters. In addition, Col Merry and CAPT Stone provided their insights into current national and state legislation to a Standing Room Only audience.

Lt Gen Atkins was the Convention Keynote Speaker, and he subsequently installed the incoming FCOC officers at the Military Ball. I am certain that incoming Vice President Mike Borders, and Area Vice Presidents Ernie Joy, Don Courtney, and Pat Kluever join me in thanking Gen Atkins for performing the ceremony, and the membership for their trust in our ability to lead the organization for the next two years.

I had my first real foray into “Big MOAA’s” activities when I participated in “Storming the Hill” this past April together with Marc Oliveri, Troy Scott, Mike Borders, and Rick Buchanan (MOAA Director from Bradenton). We engaged the 29 members and/or staffs of the Florida delegation, asking for their support of the proposed 2019 2.6% pay increase for our active duty service members and to protect against the further erosion of military pay and benefits. We also focused on ending the reduced pay for the more than 200,000 Chapter 61 retirees who were medically retired prior to reaching a 20-year service career with a disability rating of 30% percent or...
greater. We hope the chapter legislative liaisons will address these issues with their Representatives when they visit them during congress’ August recess.

There is much to be said for the camaraderie we glean from our relationships with other military members in our chapters, but we have a big job facing us as we go forward. We need to learn about the issues facing our brothers and sisters in arms and their families (active or vets) and find ways to advocate on their behalf, locally or nationally, through a strong vibrant organization.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the FCOC Leadership Forum in Orlando Jan 17-20, 2019. Additional information will be forthcoming.

My proverbial door is open for two-way communication. I look forward to visiting your chapter at your invitation to learn about the issues facing your chapter and your community, and to assist in any way that I can. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Christa and I wish all of you a very Happy Independence Day and a wonderful summer.

Len

The 2018 Florida Council of Chapters Annual Convention (FCOC), hosted by the Lee Coast Chapter, June 1-3, at the Sanibel Harbor Marriott Resort and Spa in Fort Myers, was a resounding success!

The 206 registered attendees included representatives from 31 chapters, spouses and significant others, local presenters, vendors, and Lt Gen Dan Atkins, USAF (Ret), President of MOAA, accompanied by headquarters advocacy staff, Col Dan Merry, USAF (Ret) and CAPT Erin Stone, USN (Ret).

The Convention began with break-out sessions for early arrivals, followed by the FCOC Board Meeting, chaired by LTC Marc Oliveri USAR (Ret).

This was followed by the President’s Reception during which Lt Gen Atkins awarded 30 MOAA four- and five-star Col Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards for Chapter/Council Newsletters and Websites to FCOC and its Chapters.

The evening was capped off with those enjoying the buffet on the Marriott Princess Sunset Dinner Cruise with a beautiful sunset over the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River and Sanibel Island.

The All Hands Breakfast, hosted by the Lee Coast chapter, kicked off Saturday. Following the

Continued on page 4...
Florida Council of Chapters Legislative Update

On May 24th the house passed its version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) HR 5515, by a vote of vote of 351 to 66. The Florida delegation voted 26 – 1; the disserter was Frederica Wilson of FL district 24. Follow this link to see MOAA's analysis of the provisions of this Bill: https://www.moaa.org/Content/Take-Action/Top-Issues/Currently-Serving/House-Committee-s-Defense-Bill-Markup-Prioritizes-Pay,-Readiness.aspx

On the same day, The Senate Armed Services Committee passed it’s version of the NDAA S. 2987. The Bill is yet to be scheduled for a floor vote in the full Senate. Follow this link to see MOAA’s analysis of the provisions in this Bill: https://www.moaa.org/Content/Take-Action/Top-Issues/Currently-Serving/9-MOAA-Goals-Included-in-Senate-s-NDAA-Markup.aspx During the markup, over 300 amendments—offered by both Republican and Democratic members—were considered and adopted. When the bill comes up for floor debate we should expect additional amendments,

The next step is for a Joint House-Senate Conference Committee to reconcile the differences between the two bills, and then for a second vote to adopt in both chambers. MOAA will be identifying the issues coming out of the Conference needing our advocacy, in advance of the August Recess Congressional visits (read below) so we can take them up at those meetings with our Legislators.

August Recess Status

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has announced he is canceling most of the Senate’s time-honored August recess. Many consider this an election-year move blaming Democrats “historic” obstruction of the president’s judicial and senior officials’ nominations. He also said he wants to pass as many annual spending bills as possible before the Sept. 30 end of the federal fiscal year. Something they haven’t been able to do in almost 20 years! Leaders hope that would diminish the chances for a budget standoff that could spark a politically damaging government shutdown. Again, something they were unable to avoid just this past January!

Last year, McConnell also announced he would delay the chamber’s five-week August break by two weeks. But the Senate’s late-July defeat of the Republican effort to repeal Obama’s health care law took the wind out of the GOP’s sails and they ended up staying just one week longer.

Continued on page 4
However, the House is still planning a five-week break beginning July 27, which would limit the legislative work the Senate can achieve alone.

**This Mission is MOAA’s Number One Grass-Roots Advocacy Goal.**
The upcoming August Congressional Recess will be a time for all chapters to aggressively address getting their Representatives to sign on as co-sponsors of MOAA’s Bills of Interest which focus on eliminating inequities affecting Chapter 61 retirees and surviving spouses’ benefits. It is likely this will be before Congress’ vote on the final version of the NDAA, so there may be other issues we’ll be asked to address. **STANDBY** for more on this as the August approaches. I will send out a Special FCoC Legislation Action Request in advance of the August Communique publication.

**Please begin planning now for that face-to-face meeting in August** by calling your Representative’s District office to schedule it. MOAA will be providing prepared talking papers by the end of July that you can use to address the issues and even hand out at your meetings.

With 43 chapters and 27 Congressional Districts, there is an overlap of chapters in many of those districts. I urge the Area VPs to work with their chapters and possibly assist them in scheduling a joint visit with leaders/members from multiple chapters each playing a role in those meetings. **Select your team for those visits now and provide them the background on these issues that have been flowing out of MOAA in their weekly Legislative Updates**

As has been asked in the past, MOAA would like your feedback after your meetings. The FCOC would also like that same feedback. Email to Colonel Dan Merry at MOAA  danm@moaa.org or legis@moaa.org and “CC” Lt Col Bob Bienvenue, the FCOC contact rbienven@sprynet.com. Bob will consolidate the inputs to the FCOC President and Area VPs.

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Presentation of the Colors by the Cypress Lake High School JROTC Color Guard, Pledge of Allegiance, and invocation by Lee Coast’s LCDR Terry Robertson, Chaplain Corps, USN (Ret), the assembled enjoyed a plated breakfast.

2018 Convention chair, CDR Doug Quelch, USN (Ret) introduced the keynote speaker, Lt Gen Atkins who gave a comprehensive overview of the national organization, the challenges and successes of this past year’s advocacy efforts, and what to expect going forward…including a rehabbed headquarters.

A benediction by Reverend Elizabeth Jensen of the Venice Chapter closed the Breakfast. The annual business meeting immediately followed.

Following an invocation by FCOC Chaplain, Col Charles Caudill, USAF (Ret), President Marc Oliveri chaired the meeting and oversaw the unanimous Continued on next page...
May-June 2018

...continued from previous page

election of new FCOC President, Col Leonard (Len) Friedlander, USAF (Ret) of the Sarasota Chapter. COL Mike Borders, USA (Ret) from the South Central Florida Chapter was elected Vice President. Additional officers, elected by regions, were East Central Area Vice President (AVP) CAPT Ernest (Ernie) Joy, USN (Ret), from the Cape Canaveral Chapter, and Southwest Area Vice President, CW4 Don Courtney, USA (Ret) from the Bradenton Chapter.

COL Carol Zieres, USA (Ret), from the Tampa Chapter which is hosting the June 2019 Convention, announced the convention site will be at the beautiful Safety Harbor Resort and Spa on the Pinellas County side of the Bay. Safety Harbor, which is a small town above the Highway 60 Causeway, is world renowned for its therapeutic springs. The Resort is located adjacent, and in easy walking distance, to the bustling downtown with art galleries, shops, and dining establishments.

The National MOAA Legislative Update was ably handled by Col Dan Merry and CAPT Erin Stone. Col Merry gave a brief overview of the legislative process and the difficult challenges MOAA and other veteran organizations are facing with the partisan divides, the seemingly broken appropriations process, and the relentless march toward privatization of core services. He also emphasized the critical role that the chapters play ensuring MOAAs legislative agenda is heard and responded to on the Hill.

CAPT Stone, MOAA’s Program Director, Engagement, announced headquarters’ new initiative to form Virtual Chapters that will connect members nationwide, either electronically or by phone. The two initial chapters, which are nationwide in scope and issue-oriented, are a Uniformed Services Nurse Advocates Chapter and Surviving Spouses Chapter. For those wanting to participate or for further information:

Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter: Co-Presidents: Gail Joyce and Micki Costello and an email address for those who want to join: mssvc02@gmail.com.

Uniformed Nurses Virtual Chapter: President: COL Jeri Graham, USA (Ret). joyce2@flash.net. Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 19 June at 2000 EST.

The highlight of the Convention was the Military Ball on Saturday night. Following an open-bar reception, festivities in the ballroom commenced with the Presentation of the Colors by the Lee County Sheriff’s Honor Guard. This was followed by the rousing Guns n Hoses Pipes n Drums of Southwest Florida, with a medley of the service songs and a fly-by by the Lee County Sheriff’s Helicopter Detachment.

Toasts were offered, followed by a plated dinner and topped off with a ceremonial cake cutting after the installation of new Officers by Lt Gen Atkins.

Admiral Thad Allen, USCG (Ret) gave a thought-provoking speech on the challenges facing the nation and lessons he had learned serving over 40 years including managing the natural disasters,

Continued on next page...
Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and the man-made disaster, Deepwater Horizon while USCG Commandant in two Administrations.

After dinner, retiring President Marc Oliveri gave his heartfelt farewell speech and presented awards and gifts.

As a surprise, and in recognition of his efforts over the past three years, Lt Gen Atkins presented the first MOAA Presidential Award to outgoing President Marc Oliveri.

This was followed by awarding of raffle baskets, the coveted Convention Shirt Quilt by the St Pete Chapter, and other gifts.

President Len Friedlander presented a hand engraved vase from the FCOC membership to outgoing President Oliveri to commemorate his three-year tenure as President of the state organization.

Local band, La Croix, tuned up the music and dancing commenced. All had a great time.

Sunday morning began with a Memorial Service in the sunlit Island Room. After a beautiful invocation by Col Charles Caudill, FCOC Vice President COL Mike Borders read the names of members departed this past year followed by the ringing of the bell. Taps was played by Cypress Lake HS JROTC Cadet 1rst SGT Evan Franke.

In addition to business meetings, the Lee Coast Chapter organized six well-attended break-out sessions focusing on activities supported by their chapter: Songs and Stories by Dan Perkins; VA Medical Facilities/Volunteering presented by Nathan Witt; Southwest Florida History presented by Lee County Commissioner Frank Mann; Veterans Benefits by Ed McKeon; Community Blueprint/Mission United Collaboration co-hosted by RADM Roger Triftshauser, Cliff Smith, and LTC (R) Gary Bryant; and Veterans History Project presented by Dr. Austin Raabe.

The Veterans History Project, affiliated with the Library of Congress, provides a unique template to engage FCOC chapters with their members personal military histories and those of other veterans of our nation’s armed conflicts from World War I through the Iraq and Afghan Wars. Dr. Raabe, a retired Florida Gulf Coast University chemistry professor, has organized and mentored several high school students to undertake the oral histories (https://www.naplesnews.com/story/news/local/2016/08/09/high-school-students-preserving-memories-war/87639872/). Additional information on the program, which is funded by Congress with the corporate sponsorship of AARP, can be found at: https://www.loc.gov/vets/vets-home.html.

Additional break-out sessions included the personal recollections, slides, and analysis of modern Saudi Arabia by CDR Doug Quelch: Arab

Continued on next page...
Culture, Islam, & ISIS and a screening of the PBS Documentary – ENLISTED. Jeffrey Rogers presented a session on Council Membership Assistance.

Of special note: Color Guards for the Plated Breakfast and the Memorial Service were from the Lee County Schools JROTC program which is resident in 14 Lee County High Schools with over 6000 cadets; the largest program in the nation. Guns n Hoses Pipes n Drums of Southwest Florida, is an organization of former firefighters and other first responders, police, and military veterans that perform for first responder or police funerals, military or other patriotic events.

Vendor tables were: Fleet Landing Senior Community (Jacksonville), Indian River Colony Club (Brevard County), Shell Point Retirement Community (Lee County), Songs and Stories for Soldiers, and Tampa MOAA Chapter – 2019 Convention.

Further information on breakout sessions is available from CDR Doug Quelch.

Well done, Lee Coast!

A Montage of Memories

Photo credits for article and montage: Mary Bondurant, Terry Robertson, George Cajigal, & Polly Parks
Chaplain’s Message
Chaplain (Col) Charles Caudill, USAF, (Ret) Religious Activities

Love Yourself

June 2018

June is usually connected with thoughts of love and weddings. I would like to focus on the real meaning of love, and that is: we must first love ourselves before we can successfully love others.

My father used to ask me, “Have you hugged yourself today?” He told me to look into the mirror and say, “I love you.” He explained that God made me and loved me and He never made any junk. This was reinforced by both my parents, who constantly demonstrated their love for me. I do not remember a day of my youth that I did not get a hug followed by the words “I love you.” Although, my parents worked, when they came home in the evening, they gave me plenty of attention. My mother insisted on tucking me in bed every night, and even continued when I would come home from college. I would be in bed reading when I would hear her coming down the hall, and I would throw off the covers so she could tuck me in. Their examples of love made it easy for me to serve as a Chaplain in the military, giving love and assisting others to love themselves.

When I taught “Marriage and The Family” at the Virginia Military Institute, I would ask the cadets what they were looking for in a person they wanted to marry. They would describe physical attributes, appropriate education, housekeeping skills, and/or family wealth regarding their future spouses. I would tell them they had overlooked the most important question, which was “What am I giving?” What we offer is what we usually get. When we love ourselves we discover forgiveness, tenderness, hope, love, inner strength and beauty not only in ourselves, but in others as well.

When I was stationed at Grenier Field in Manchester, New Hampshire, I worked closely with a blind girls’ camp sponsored by the Lions’ Club. The base officers and airmen built a chapel for the camp and also removed all the tree stumps to clear the area so the girls would not trip. I will never forget the girls coming up to the troops and touching their faces and telling the troops how handsome they were. They could only feel their faces, but could “see” their spirits. This proved my father was right once again. It is not the outward appearance that really counts; it is our loving spirits.

Take time to look in the mirror and into your eyes, remembering the eyes are the windows of the soul. If we have grown spiritually through the years what a wonderful sight we will see. We cannot stop the outward manifestation of aging such as wrinkles, baldness, grey hair, or weaker frames, but if we love ourselves more, what fun life can be.

continued on next page
...Chaplain’s Message

The important secret of having quality as we grow older, is to never lose our child. The child in us is more interested in discovery and peace of mind than in our appearance and circumstances. Make every day a day to love yourself.

Vice President’s Message

COL Michael Borders, USA (Ret)

To the Members of the Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) and MOAA members in the state of Florida:

I am honored to have been elected as your state Vice President at the Sanibel Island convention on 2 June 2018.

Though I have only been in Florida for four years, it has been my privilege to serve as the South Central Florida chapter president since arrival, and on the FCOC for the last couple of years as area VP for the southwest, as well as membership chair for the southern half of the state.

I am committed to doing what I can to assist and support the FCOC, the chapters, and our members in my new capacity. As our organization continues to advocate for our former, retired, and currently serving service members, you have my promise to do my part.

I look forward to attending some of your functions over the next two years. I am happy to attend luncheons, dinners, conduct installation ceremonies, or whatever you may need.

If I can be of assistance in any way, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me by phone or e-mail.

I am a firm believer in the “Never Stop Serving” motto. I will be there if you need me.

Cheers,
Mike
Florida Department of Veterans Affairs Update
LTC R. Steven Murray, USAF (Ret.)
Communications Director, Florida Department of Veterans Affairs

Florida Veterans Support Line Expands Statewide at 1-844-MyFLVet

TAMPA – With a veteran population of more than 1.5 million in Florida, Crisis Center of Tampa Bay is pleased to announce the Florida Veterans Support Line, 1-844-MyFLVet (1-844-693-5838), has expanded to every county in Florida.

Florida has the third largest veteran population in the nation. Through a simple phone call to 1-844-MyFLVet, Florida veterans who are struggling with issues like PTSD, substance abuse, relationship troubles and personal finances can connect confidentially to emotional support and community resources, 24 hours a day.

As part of the statewide expansion of the Florida Veterans Support Line, the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay created a revolutionary billboard appearing near MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa. “Stitches of Duty” was stitched entirely of actual military gear donated by veterans. Watch the complete story here.

“For service members, the billboard lets us know there are people who understand our struggle and there is somewhere we can reach out to for help,” said U.S. Army Combat Medic and billboard contributor, Kari Padilla. “The donated items are so important to us as service members, and parting with them is our way of showing the community we’re still here and we still need help.”

When a veteran calls 1-844-MyFLVet, they will speak with someone who is trained to provide immediate emotional support. Calls are answered by a network of local, non-profit organizations throughout the state, including those that also answer calls for the 2-1-1 system in Florida. Veterans can also be referred to both VA and non-VA resources, including non-profit organizations, community programs and local government services. Help is available regardless of discharge status. A list of the organizations answering calls to the Florida Veterans Support Line can be found at: https://flvetsupportline.squarespace.com/about

“We are proud to have piloted the Florida Veterans Support Line in Tampa Bay, and now, based on the statewide need and positive impact of this service on our veteran community, we are thrilled to expand the resource statewide. Thanks to funding by the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs, we will be able to more broadly serve those who have so bravely served our country,” said Clara Reynolds, President & CEO of Crisis Center of Tampa Bay.

“We pride ourselves on being the most veteran-friendly state through our support of the more than 1.5 million veterans that reside in Florida. We are honored to support this initiative as part of our goal to ensure Florida veterans receive their earned services, benefits and support,” said Steve Murray, communications director of the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs.

For more information about the Florida Veterans Support Line, visit www.MyFLVet.com.

About Crisis Center of Tampa Bay
The mission of the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay is to ensure that no one in our community has to face crisis alone. The organization is the community’s gateway to help, hope, and healing, and is Tampa Bay’s elite
"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
provider of crisis and trauma services. Responding to more than 160,000 requests for help each year, the nonprofit agency offers a range of evidence based programs designed to meet community needs:

- Gateway Contact Center (2-1-1: suicide prevention, crisis counseling, and information and referral services)
- Corbett Trauma Center (trauma counseling and sexual assault survivor services)
- TransCare (9-1-1 emergency and mental health ambulance services, medical van transportation)

For more information regarding the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, please visit [www.crisiscenter.com](http://www.crisiscenter.com).

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Florida MOAA Leaders Visited Capitol Hill to Discuss Military Issues

Leaders of the Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) of MOAA visited legislators’ offices Wednesday, April 18, on behalf of Florida’s service members and veterans and their family members and survivors. The Hill visits were coordinated through the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) as part of the association’s largest annual grassroots advocacy event: [Storming the Hill](https://www.moaanational.org).

The Florida team, led by FCOC President Marc Oliveri, along with Vice President Len Friedlander, former FCOC President Troy Scott, Southwest Area VP Mike Borders, Bradenton chapter member and National MOAA board member Richard Buchanan, and Mrs. Victoria Ocasio, National MOAA member of the Currently Serving Spouse Advisory Council, met personally with legislators and staff members from the offices of the two senators and twenty-seven representatives from the state’s delegation, to convey MOAA national’s unified messages on key issues. By the end of the day, the Florida team visited all twenty-nine of our congressional delegation.

Our FCOC team asked legislators and their staffs to support the proposed 2.6-percent pay increase for our active duty servicemembers for 2019 and to further protect against the erosion of military pay and benefits. We also discussed ending reduced pay for Chapter 61 retirees. Chapter 61 retirees, so named because of the chapter in Title 10 U.S. Code that covers disability retirements, have been medically retired prior to reaching a 20-year service career with a disability rating of 30 percent or greater. There are over 200,000 such individuals caught in a “Catch-22”, with over 90% being former enlisted personnel.

This was a highly successful event, both for our Florida team, but more broadly for the entire MOAA delegation from all fifty states. The entire delegation was led by Lt Gen Dana Atkins, CEO and President of MOAA National.
“MOAA members spent Wednesday (18 April) calling for important legislative actions to benefit service members, veterans and spouses. We clearly made a statement as 150 MOAA members fought for the 200,000-plus Chapter 61 retirees, the president’s 2.6 percent pay raise for 2019 and for further protection for military pay and benefits,” said MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret). “We also shared vital information regarding extraordinary TRICARE fee increases, and the need for legislation to end the “Widows’ Tax” for those surviving spouses who lose some or all of their Survivor Benefit Plan annuity to pay for the Dependency Indemnity Compensation. While the Storming effort rings a loud bell on Capitol Hill, its true impact will be realized in the weeks to come, as MOAA’s government relations staff continues to work with members of Congress to make these critical actions a reality.”
Supporting JROTC's throughout Florida

The KOS Scholarship dinner meeting took place at the Elks Club in Ocala, Florida, on May 3, 2018. Seven $1,000 Scholarships were awarded at the dinner. Linda Byrd, Chairperson for the KOS Scholarship Committee, made the presentation 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 KOS MOAA JROTC Leadership Award Medals at the meeting. The KOS Scholarship Committee consists of Mrs. Linda Byrd, Chairperson, COL Gorham Black III, CDR Thomas Dann, and COL Robert Schlegel. The KOS Scholarship Dinner was featured in the Ocala Star Banner newspaper on May 8, 2018.

The MOAACC Luncheon on 17 April was an historic event for Cape Canaveral Chapter. The Student Affairs Committee, supported by MOAACC and the Good Deeds Foundation, was able to recognize Cadets of the Year from 20 of 21 ROTC, JROTC, Sea and Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Cadets from every such unit in Brevard County. The only missing Cadet was out of the State on a special trip!!

Over the last two years MOAACC Student Affairs, ably led for many years by CW4 Bob John USA, and now chaired by CW4 Dan McIntyre USCG, has added liaison and support connections to three new units, one Sea Cadet Bn and two CAP wings. They now support all such elements in the county (at least those we know of!).

Thanks to generous Fall donations last year, the GDF hopes to support the “Team of 21” with more than $6000 total in 2018. Funding is used for special events, supplies, upgrades, individual awards and other support costs not available to the units without outside help.

Great job to the above “Cadets of the Year” and to all the Cadet Programs in Brevard which are helping to shape America’s future.
Supporting JROTC’s throughout Florida

The Citrus County Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) held its annual JROTC Scholarship Award luncheon on May 10th at the Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club. Pictured is runner-up awardee, Air Force Cadet Colonel Haley Andersen, receiving a $500 scholarship award. Pictured from left are: COL Dennis Yamrose, JROTC USAF Citrus High School instructor; Mr. Tom Gates, friend of family; Ms. Mary Andersen, mother; Cadet Colonel Haley Andersen; COL Mark Bodenheim, USAR (Ret), MOAA Citrus County Chapter president; CW04 J.J. Kenney, USMC (Ret), scholarship selection committee chairperson; and Superintendent Sandra “Sam” Himmel, Citrus County School District.

Pictured from left are Superintendent Sandra “Sam” Himmel, Citrus County School District, receiving a certificate of appreciation from COL Mark Bodenheim, USAR (Ret), MOAA Citrus County Chapter president for her presentation during the chapter’s annual JROTC Scholarship Award luncheon.

The Citrus County Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) held its annual JROTC Scholarship Award luncheon on May 10th at the Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club. Pictured is first place awardee, Air Force Cadet Major Robert Harper, receiving a $1000 scholarship award.

Pictured from left are: COL Dennis Yamrose, JROTC USAF Citrus High School instructor; Mr. Richard Harper, father; Mrs. Tica Harper, mother; Cadet Major Robert Harper; COL Mark Bodenheim, USAR (Ret), MOAA Citrus County Chapter president; CW04 J.J. Kenney, USMC (Ret), scholarship selection committee chairperson; and Superintendent Sandra “Sam” Himmel, Citrus County School District.
Dr. Susan MacManus Speaks at Sun City Meeting

Dr. Susan MacManus, an Honorary Member of MOAA, was the featured speaker at the Military Officers of America Association (MOAA) monthly meeting, which was held at the Sun City Center, North Side Atrium Building on May 2nd, 2018.

Dr. MacManus is a Distinguished University Professor of Public Administration and Political Science in the Department of Government and International Affairs at the University of South Florida. She is nationally renowned for her expert and incisive commentary on public opinion and intergenerational politics and has appeared on ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX, CNN, Fox News Channel, MSNBC, PBS, BBC, NHK (Tokyo), Australian Television, C-SPAN, National Public Radio, and in various print media. She is currently the political analyst for ABC Action News in Tampa Fl. Dr. MacManus is a Fulbright research scholar and has written numerous books.

Dr. MacManus, who gives a talk annually to the Sun City chapter, discussed the current political climate in Florida and the nation and discussed the numerous factors that will be in play during the impending elections. Given that the up-coming primary and general elections will feature an abundance of Florida candidates, Dr. MacManus said she is looking forward to analyzing what she thinks will be an interesting and conceivably volatile campaign.

Because of the overwhelming partisan attitudes of today’s politicians, she emphasized the overall disgust the voting public holds for Washington politics and the likelihood that voting turnout will be negatively impacted as a result. She also commented on the current lack of civility being displayed by todays politicians. As always, her presentation was very well received, and she was given a well-deserved standing ovation.

South Central Florida

COL George Cajigal, USA (Ret), SCFC Treasurer

From left: Erin Duffy, Sebring-Tampa Resident Engineer, USACE Jacksonville District, receives a MOAA coffee cup from SCFC President Mike Borders following a June 6 presentation. The chapter meeting was held at Highlands County’s renowned Military Sea Services Museum.

Research 2018 FEDVIP plan information today! TriCase for Life will end dental coverage in 2019

You can now review 2018 Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) plan information to familiarize yourself with the program and its current offerings.

tricare.benefeds.com
Kingdom of the Sun (KOS) Chapter Activities
LTC Arlo Janssen, USA (Ret), Editor of the Sunbeams, KOS/MOAA

AVPs and Marc Oliveri at the 2018 FCOC Convention. Scott Berry, Ernie Joy, Marc, Mike Borders, Wayne Brown.

COL Bob Schlegel, President of KOS, and LTC Arlo Janssen, Immediate Past President, attended the 2018 Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) Convention on June 1-3 at the Sanibel Harbor Marriott Resort and Spa as the two official KOS delegates to the Convention. Wayne and Marty Brown, also members of KOS, attended the 2018 FCOC Convention and received special recognition at the 2018 FCOC Military Gala Ball held on Saturday night, June 2, 2018, for their contribution to the success of the Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC). Marty served as the editor of the FCOC Communique, and Wayne is currently the Mid Central Area Vice President.

Marc Oliveri presents Marty Brown, former editor of the COMMUNIQUÉ, a gift for her exemplary service at the 2018 FCOC Convention.

Two area chapters of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) celebrate over 30 years of mutual history with their annual joint chapter luncheon on April 5th at Stumpknockers on the River. Pictured on left is MOAA Citrus County chapter president, COL Mark Bodenheim, USAR (Ret) and right is COL Bob Schlegel Jr, MOAA Kingdom of the Sun (Ocala) president.

Citrus County and KOS hold annual joint chapter luncheon
Lake and Sumpter County Chapter Report

At the FCOC 2018 Convention Military Ball:
Paul Hauser, Chapter President & wife Sharon; Wayne Brown, Chapter Membership Chair & wife Marty; Barbara and Bob Bienvenue, Chapter and FCOC Legislative Liaison.

Notes on Surviving Spouses Virtual Committee Conference Call
Craig Smith, South Central Florida Chapter SS Liaison

Conference call was held June 5, 2018. Opening remarks from Gail Joyce, and Micki Costello along with invited quests from MOAA National.

1) One of the purposes for the Virtual Chapter is to come together in a joint forum with like concerns and to be a resource for all.
2) Another goal is to reach the younger spouses to get them involved and to let them know they are not alone.
3) We want to reach the home bound spouses who cannot attend meetings and can be in the comfort of their own home, but still feel part of the group.
4) As of today's date 5 June 2018 they have 41 members from 13 states.
5) They intend to have quarterly meetings, but can be reached by email or phone everyday.
6) MOAA National will be an advocate for Surviving Spouse issues and concerns and the Virtual Chapter is a great way to voice them.
7) The Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee is in need of 2 more members the middle part of the country and the western states.

Next meeting to be announced, They are hoping to have Dan Merry as our quest to speak on SBP/DIC. Which was a concern of many Spouses.

Those who want to join, please contact: mssvc02@gmail.com
Historic Mayport Chapter Established

COL Mike Borders, USA, (Ret), FCOC Vice President, South Central Florida Chapter President

On 3 May 2018, representatives of the Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) attended the standup activity of the new Historic Mayport Chapter. The event took place at the Fleet Landing community near the Mayport Naval Station.

Earlier in the year, CDR, USN (Ret) Patrick Kluever had reached out to LTC, USAR (Ret) Marc Oliveri, FCOC President to see what needed to be done to stand up a new chapter where another had ceased operations. Along with FCOC Vice President Col, USAF (Ret) Len Friedlander, Southwest Area VP COL, USA (Ret) Mike Borders, and other members of the Council, as well as assistance from MOAA National Chapter Affairs, all necessary support was provided to get the new chapter up and running. The 3 May event was the culmination of that effort.

During the very well-attended lunchtime activity at Mayport’s Fleet Landing community, some forty members and spouses of the new chapter heard from Marc Oliveri about the advocacy efforts and overall direction of MOAA at the national and state level. He recapped the recent Storming the Hill event and emphasized the need for involvement at all levels—national, state, and local. Following remarks by new chapter President Patrick Kluever, Marc Oliveri swore in the new board of officers and directors.

The chapter is off to a great start and nothing but outstanding results can be expected in the future. Bravo Zulu to Pat Kluever for picking up the ball and running with it.

Fair winds and following seas.
Tampa Chapter

James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital - Tampa, Florida

JAHVH dedicates Bob Silah Virtual Reality Room

By Ed Drohan, Veterans Administration

Hospital and community leaders gathered Thursday, May 17, 2018 to dedicate a new virtual reality room to the man who was instrumental in turning the room from a dream to reality.

The Bob Silah Virtual Reality Room was dedicated in the Polytrauma Center and is named for the retired Navy captain who founded Operation Helping Hand, an organization that has been providing monthly dinners and other financial support for active duty wounded and injured members since 2004. To date OHH – part of the Military Officers Association of America – has hosted 169 consecutive dinners honoring those patients. Silah passed away in August 2016.

Silah’s wife, Katherine, and Son, Jason, helped dedicate the room by removing a cover over a bronze plaque outside the room. Operation Helping Hand provided the funding for all the virtual reality computers, headsets and other equipment in the room, as well as for a dedicated high-speed internet connection for the equipment.

According to Recreation Therapist Jamie Kaplan, planning for the Virtual Reality Room has been going on for five years. It started when former JAHVH chief of staff Dr. Edward Cutolo asked Kaplan to research what would be needed for the room.

“I started doing research and I was looking at all different treatments, modalities, and all the different patient populations that we could see using virtual reality, and I got excited,” Kaplan said. “I went to Bob, and you know something, the first time I was disappointed, but not for the reason you may think. Before I could even make my argument or give my case, he said, ‘Sure, whatever you want, you got it.’ He told me that if it’s for our Veterans, if it’s for our active duty guys and it’s going to make their treatment better, and it’s going to make their lives better, you got it.”

The new room includes virtual reality headsets, high speed computers and gaming systems, along with assorted accessories. Several of the systems are on carts that can be moved to a patient’s room if the patient can’t come to the Virtual Reality Room. Among the activities the equipment can be used for are a flight simulator, driving simulator and virtual shooting ranges.

Patients receiving virtual reality therapy navigate through digitally created environments and complete specially designed tasks often tailored to treat a specific ailment, Kaplan explained. It can be used to treat ailments ranging from PTSD to opioid management.

“Tools like this will help our patients manage their pain. It will facilitate all kinds of treatments for them. It will help alleviate PTSD symptoms, and I could go on and on,” said JAHVH Director Joe Battle. “We want this room to be a legacy to Bob, and the special way we can honor his commitment to all those who have fought the battle.”

Continued on next page...
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/KMvctjoVgtThg1cgr8UQQ

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_3?keywords=snowden%27s+story

Cathy Silah and son Jason attending the dedication of the Bob Silah Virtual Reality Room at the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa, Florida.

Katherine Silah, who said she and Bob would have been celebrating 50 years of marriage this year, said she was excited about the room and the large number of people who came out to help honor her husband. Her son was thrilled as well.

“I'm a little overwhelmed and very, very proud,” Jason Silah said after the ceremony. "I didn't know what to expect when I came out. It's really amazing."

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321.338.5050
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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.MOAALF.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
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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.
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The Council Communiqué is the newsletter of the Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC), Military Officers Association of America, and is published bimonthly: February, April, June, August, October, and December. MOAA, it’s Councils and Chapters are non-partisan organizations. The Communiqué is intended for wide distribution within the FCOC including Chapter Leaders and all Chapter Members in Florida.

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.

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