



MILITARY OFFICERS CALL
Sun City Center Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
 P. O. Box 5693, Sun City Center, FL. 33571



Volume 35 Number 10 **OCTOBER 2019**



President's Message
Benny Blackshire, LTC USA (Ret)

OCTOBER SPEAKER

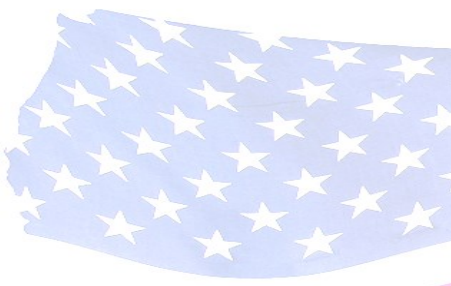
Rear Admiral Wallace N. Guthrie USN (Ret)



Admiral Guthrie served in the Navy for more than 38- years both on full-time active duty and in the Navy Reserve.

He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and earned advanced degrees in Management and Education at Rollins College, Winter Park, FL.

His Navy career specialty was Submarine Warfare. He served on both conventional and nuclear powered submarines at duty stations in San Diego, CA and Holy Loch, Scotland. His last at-sea assignment was on the nuclear-powered, Fleet Ballistic Missile submarine USS Fort Meade, MD... retiring again in 1997.



The nuclear submarine is a key component in our national defense structure. ADM Guthrie will provide a non-technical overview of our submarine force. His presentation will trace submarine development since the Civil War and describe the types and capabilities of a modern nuclear submarine. Generous use of visuals will provide an insight into the role of the submarine in our national defense. Ample opportunity is provided for questions, so come prepared.

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September 4 Luncheon



CAPT William Stoehs—LTC Benny Blackshire



From left, Dolores Schissel, Merrill Pritham and Jan Bassett

Navy Capt William Stoehs addresses MOAA

William F. Stoehs, Captain USN (Ret) was the featured speaker at the Military Officers of America Association (MOAA) monthly meeting, held in the Florida Room at the Sun City Center, North Side Atrium Building on September 4th, 2019.

After receiving his BBA degree in Business Management from Lamar University, he attended Navy OCS in Newport, RI.

Upon commissioning, he served 2½ years as a deck officer and OOD on fleet Oiler, USS Kaskaskia (AO-27) in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean Sea. When his ship was decommissioned, Bill received river boat training and was sent to the Mekong Delta area of Vietnam. He served with River Assault Division 153 as Senior Patrol Officer and later as Commanding Officer.

Bill also served as Senior Advisor to a Vietnamese Navy unit, River Interdiction Division 48.

Capt. Stoehs continued in the Naval Reserve for the next 20 years. Assignments included work with the Military Sealift Command and the Joint Chiefs at the Pentagon. He also completed the Strategy & Policy program at the US Naval War College.

Bill continued in the Naval Reserve for the next 20 years. Assignments included work with the Military Sealift Command and the Joint Chiefs at the Pentagon. He also completed the Strategy & Policy program at the US Naval War College. He retired as a Navy Captain in 1992.

Capt. Stoehs discussed his harrowing experiences as Senior Patrol Officer and Commanding Officer with a River Assault Division in Vietnam.

Left, Jan Bassett, Regent of the Colonel George Mercer Brooke Chapter DAR presented 2 Surviving Spouse certificates and pins to surviving spouses of Vietnam veterans. The Chapter is a partner of the Department of Defense commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

The Membership Committee Chair is providing the following to update the Chapter membership regarding our Chapter LOE & MOAA rewards. Also, this article will list new Chapter members.

- 202 Chapter members
- 120 LIFE members
- 32 PREMIUM members
- 17 BASIC members
- 29 non-MOAA members
- 4 Honorary members

New Chapter member(s) last month:

Mr Alvin Jupiter AUX
COL John Otis, USA
1LT Robert Putnam, USA

REMINDER: The Chapter reimburses \$100 to members upgrading to LIFE when LIFE certificate is presented to the Treasurer.

MOAA ACTION SITE

I have created this box to direct members to the online MOAA 'Take Action' site in order to assist MOAA in achieving their legislative goals.

[Click here](#) and select the issue(s) you would like to have MOAA discuss with your representatives. Fill in the form and click submit. MOAA will send it to your representatives. You can add your own comments if you wish.

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SECRETARY	
LTC Ed Mooney, USA (Ret).....	751-6844 edmlc@yahoo.com
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Lt Col Ferris Garrett, USAF (Ret).....	841-0532 garrett4@tampabay.rr.com
TREASURER	
1st Lt Bob Cochran USA (Fmr).....	677-2606 boblo15@msn.com
ASSISTANT TREASURER	
D. Kay Benson (Aux).....	938-3030 mamby45@hotmail.com
DIRECTOR	
LT Dave Floyd, USN (Fmr).....	334-7797 DavidFloyd2012@yahoo.com
DIRECTOR	
Doris Glass (Aux).....	642-0497 Luncheon Reservation Coordinator dobygl@juno.com
DIRECTOR	
CAPT Frank Kepley, USN (Ret)	642-0801 Public Affairs Officer Legislative Affairs Publisher/Editor Officers Call Newsletter dkepley@tampabay.rr.com
DIRECTOR	
Jane Foppe (Aux)	541-2618 ljcfoppe@aol.com Surviving Spouse Liaison
PAST PRESIDENT	
LTC Charles Conover, USA (Ret).....	260-3257 charlierconover@gmail.com
PERSONNEL OFFICER	
CDR Ed Socha, USN (Ret)	634-4957 Personnel Affairs Proofreader (newsletter) ejsfalcon1@frontier.com
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- Homeless Prevention for Women Veterans: help with rent, child care and licensing training
- Operation Warm Heart, administered by the 1st Sergeants Group at MacDill AFB, who provide commissary vouchers for soldiers in need

- Scholarships and Leadership Programs for students from military families
- Operation Helping Hand: monthly support for military families of wounded servicemen and women at the James A. Haley VA Hospital in Tampa

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Is it time to give Chesty Puller the Medal of Honor?



More than 300 Marines have earned the Medal of Honor since award's inception in 1861. But missing from that list is perhaps the most legendary Marine, whose memory still looms large in the lore of the Corps: Lt. Gen. Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller.

The image of Puller's iconic frown and his memorable quips about combat have come to define what it means to be a Marine for generations. Puller once told his troops, at the Battle of Chosin Reservoir, when surrounded by enemy fighters in Korea, "All right, they're on our left, they're on our right, they're in front of us, they're behind us ... they can't get away this time."

Puller earned five Navy crosses, the nation's second-highest honor for valor. At least two serious attempts have been made to get one of Puller's awards upgraded to the Medal of Honor, but they failed. Even today, Marine veterans and devotees still grumble that Puller deserves to be recognized with the nation's highest honor and the book has not been closed on the matter.

Kim Van Note, president of the Basilone Memorial Foundation, a charity named for one Marine Medal of Honor, definitely believes he should have been awarded the Medal of Honor.

Editor' note: When I was an intern at the Portsmouth Naval Hospital, in 1962, I treated the general and asked him about the famous quote. He chuckled and admitted to making the comment.

World's oldest barber predates The American Legion



Few living people can remember a world prior to The American Legion. Anthony Mancinelli is one of them.

A Legionnaire from Post 1796 in New Windsor, N.Y., Mancinelli celebrated his eighth birthday almost two weeks before the organi-

zation's initial caucus more than a century ago. Born on March 2, 1911, near Naples, Italy, Mancinelli lived in Europe during the duration of World War I. He moved to the United States in 1919.

Today, the 108-year-old is not only remarkably healthy, he continues to work fulltime as a barber at Fantastic Cuts in New Windsor. He is currently recognized as the "world's oldest working barber" by Guinness World Records. He most likely is the world's most experienced as well, giving his first haircut when Warren G. Harding lived in the White House, 97 years ago.

"I first cut hair when I was 11. By 12, I was a full-fledged barber," he said.

When he owned his own barbershop in Newburgh, N.Y., he built a loyal customer base that continues to seek his services.

The older Mancinelli attributes his longevity to "clean living" and his work ethic. "I never thought I'd reach this age to tell you the truth... People say, 'You're 108 and you still work?' I like to work. If I stayed home, I'd get old fast."

Post 1796 Commander Tracey Lanthier recognizes the significance of having the world's oldest barber in his post. The post held an official celebration for Mancinelli's 108th birthday party and featured him as the grand marshal for the community's Memorial Day parade.

Sun City Center MOAA Website

Don't forget to visit our new 5-star website. The link to the website is: <http://moaaf.org/chapters/SunCity/> You will find much membership information, photos, calendar of events, past newsletters and more. If you would like to suggest topics for inclusion contact Jim Haney at jhhaney1@gmail.com Click here for SCC [MOAA Website](#)

Publisher/Editor

CAPT Frank Kepley, USN (Ret)

We need your input about member activities associated with MOAA and articles of interest to the military community. Contact Frank at:

dkepley@tampabay.rr.com 813-642-0801



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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Frank Kepley, CAPT USN (Ret)

More Disruption to Military Medicine Expected in 2019 (MOAA newsletter)



MOAA has learned that the Defense Health Agency (DHA) will assume command and control of all military treatment facilities (MTFs) by Oct. 1, 2019. Original plans called for a phased approach to this goal by 2021. This is an aggressive undertaking, and officials admit it will require

considerable effort to get it right — efforts that unquestionably would be hampered by a 20% reduction in military medical billets.

In the U.S. alone, DoD will establish 20 large-market areas and 16 small markets, as well as numerous stand-alone MTF's in rural areas, according to a message that DHA Director Vice Adm. Raquel Bono circulated among leadership. They will transition from a military service-led model into what they term a "market construct."

What will this mean for the beneficiary population? There will be disruptions for retirees as well as military families. Many already are being told to find providers outside of the MTFs, a move that will only become more pronounced by this accelerated timeline.

What would these "markets" look like? There's really only one example: the National Capital Region has been established as a market under the purview of the DHA for close to two years. This market has two major medical centers, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and Fort Belvoir Community Hospital in Virginia. These tri-Service facilities are major referral centers, medical readiness teaching platforms and heavily concentrated with beneficiaries.

This should be a well-oiled market, except that it is not.

MOAA has learned of major issues with technician and nurse staffing which has resulted in major reductions in operating room capacity and putting valuable surgical training programs at risk. Many beneficiaries from all specialties have been referred out to the TRICARE networks. If the pinnacle of military medicine, Walter Reed, is having these critical issues, what can we expect from all of the other MTF's?

"If the goal is to tear down the military health system, this would be a reasonable way to do it," warned one service health official who asked not to be identified.

Editor's note: Again, I would urge you to [Click here](#) and ask your representatives to vote against this plan.

Lawmakers Champion Bill to Strengthen VA Caregiver Support (MOAA Newsletter)



Two lawmakers backed legislation to require more transparency in how the VA administers its caregiver programs — allowing caregivers to assume a larger role in caring for their veteran.

Sens. Gary Peters (D-Mich.) and Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) cosponsored a bipartisan bill, [S. 2216](#), the

Transparency and Effective Accountability Measures (TEAM) for Veteran Caregivers Act.

"MOAA members and veterans and their caregivers care passionately about VA health care and understand the importance of the multitude of programs and services needed to help veterans lead full and productive lives," said Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret), president and CEO of the Military Officers Association of America.

"The provisions in the TEAM for Veteran Caregivers Act are long overdue and needed to help rebuild trust and confidence between those most vulnerable and in need of health care services and the VA health care system charged with meeting their needs. We are confident they will provide much-needed peace of mind to veterans and their family caregivers."

MOAA urges members and readers to support the bill by clicking [here](#) to send a letter to your lawmakers urging them to sign on as cosponsors. [Click here](#) for full MOAA discussion of this important topic.

Five years after the Department of Veterans Affairs was rocked by a scandal over appointment delays linked to veterans' deaths, it still struggles with scheduling issues and tracking wait times, a government oversight official told Congress.

"At this time, we continue to be concerned that VA has not sufficiently addressed the reliability of its wait time data," Draper said. "For example, we have found that VA's wait times do not capture the time it takes

Wait Continues on Additions to VA's Agent Orange-Connected Illnesses



In March, Veterans Affairs officials said they may have a decision on adding four new diseases to the list of Agent Orange presumptive benefits eligibility by the start of the summer. Five months later, they still haven't moved ahead.

"They told us they were ready to go, and we haven't gone anywhere," said Rick Weidman, executive director for policy at Vietnam Veterans of America. "It feels like they just don't want to spend any money on this."

Vietnam veteran advocates feel a sense of urgency because the youngest who served there are in their early 60s.

Almost two years ago, then-VA Secretary David Shulkin suggested he was moving towards adding more illnesses to VA's presumptive conditions list for Agent Orange, but those changes never materialized.

Last November, researchers from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine announced they had compiled "sufficient evidence" linking hypertension, bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and Parkinson's-like symptoms with exposure to Agent Orange and other defoliants used in Vietnam and surrounding countries in the 1960s and 1970s.

The delay is the latest frustration for Vietnam veteran advocates already unsettled by the department's decision earlier this summer to postpone payments related to "blue water" Navy veterans's cases until early 2020.

Congress and the courts have mandated that sailors who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam during the war receive the same presumptive illness status as their fellow troops who served on the ground. But lawmakers also gave VA an option to delay processing those claims for six months, to ensure the rush of new cases doesn't overwhelm the existing benefits system.

VA secretary moves to permit public display of religious symbols



Citing a need to protect religious liberty, Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie issued new policies permitting displays of religious and spiritual

symbols in VA facilities.

Religious symbols will now be allowed in public areas of VA facilities, including lobbies, public entrances, security and information desks and nursing stations. In directives sent to VA facilities nationwide, Wilkie clarified that displays "should respect and tolerate differing views" and "should not elevate one belief system over others."

"We want to make sure that all of our veterans and their families feel welcome at VA, no matter their religious beliefs. Protecting religious liberty is a key part of how we accomplish that goal," Wilkie said in a statement. "These important changes will bring simplicity and clarity to our policies governing religious and spiritual symbols, helping ensure we are consistently complying with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution at thousands of facilities across the department."

An official announcement about the new rules cited a recent Supreme Court decision in which a 40-foot "Peace Cross," a tribute to World War I dead, was permitted to remain at a public intersection in Maryland. The court rejected the argument that the cross was an unconstitutional endorsement of Christianity, but justices didn't reach an across-the-board consensus about how to handle religious imagery on public property.

Editor's Note: If based on the above Supreme Court decision, I have a feeling we have not heard the last of this issue.

These soldiers will have a drone in their pockets during their Afghanistan deployment



Soldiers will have a drone in their pockets during their Afghanistan deployment. The three-year goal of putting a mini-drone in the hands of squad-level soldiers will finally see action in theater when "Fury" paratroopers with the 1st

Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment take the "Black Hornet" miniature helicopter drone to Afghanistan this month.

The drone capability was first requested by the Army to industry in early 2016 when leaders at the Maneuver Center of Excellence sought a "pocket-sized drone" for low-level reconnaissance.

"We've had numerous studies as well as experimentation within our battle labs. We continue to see that soldiers are kind of lacking at the squad level for relevant information that's immediately around them," Phil Cheatum, deputy branch chief of electronics and special developments at MCoE told Army Times in 2016.

The gap was in short-range recon.

"It is the start of an era where every squad will have vision beyond their line of sight.

TurboTax and H&R Block Saw Free Tax Filing as a Threat — and Gutted It



Despite signing a deal with the IRS that pledged they would help tens of millions of Americans file taxes for free, tax software giants Intuit, the maker of TurboTax, and H&R Block instead deliberately hid the free option and actively steered customers into

paid products, according to an internal document and five current and former employees of the companies.

H&R Block explicitly instructs its customer service staff to push people away from its free offering, according to internal guidance obtained by ProPublica.

"Do not send clients to this Web Site unless they are specifically calling about the Free File program," the guidance states, referring to the site with the company's free option. "We want to send users to our paid products before the free product, if at all possible."

Steering customers away from TurboTax's truly free option is a "purposeful strategy," said a former midlevel Intuit employee. For people who find TurboTax through a search engine or an online ad, "the landing page would direct you through a product flow that the company wanted to ensure would not make you aware of Free File."

Privately, the free filing option is seen for what it is: a threat to the companies' profits.

Editor's note: Try to remember what these weasels are actually up to next year.

Veterans Only' parking spaces are popping up in South Florida



A South Florida city founded by World War II veterans wants to make it easier for fellow veterans to park. The West Miami city commission passed an initiative Wednesday to designate "veterans only" parking spaces in the city, which is nestled between the Tamiami Trail and Coral Way.

The reserved spaces will be available at city-run parks and facilities. At the commission meeting, commissioner Eric Diaz-Padron, who presented the initiative, held up a sign to show how the spots will be designated. The spaces will say "Veterans Only Parking" with seals of the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy.

"These spaces will not only be a showing of appreciation to our veterans, but also a functional benefit for those who fought in defense of our freedom.

How will his city's new designated parking program be enforced? The honor system.

Editor' Note: Good luck with that.

JOIN TODAY

Not a member of MOAA? When you join MOAA, you become part of the strongest advocate for our military's personnel and their families. The stronger our membership is, the stronger our voice becomes. Consider joining today because every voice counts.

This move would end naming bases, ships in honor of the Confederacy and its leaders



Defense Department officials would be barred from naming any bases, ships or other equipment after Confederate military leaders and war victories under language inserted in a House budget bill Wednesday.

The prohibition, approved by House lawmakers without objection, would not force any changes to existing names on bases or installations, but would mandate that the defense secretary not use the problematic Confederate monikers in the future.

Congressional Democrats have pushed similar legislation in recent years, but without success. By adding it into the annual defense authorization bill for fiscal 2020 — which sets a host of military spending and policy priorities — House Democrats can force a debate on the issue during chamber negotiations later this summer. Senate leaders have not weighed in on the issue.

The Army operates 10 installations named after Confederate military commanders. There are no such installations for the other military departments, according to the Congressional Research Service, though some Navy ships have been named after Confederate officers or battles.

The Army also has control of Arlington National Cemetery, which contains a section for Confederate graves and a monument to their dead.

The naming rules would block any names “referring to the Confederate States of America,” to include any person who held a leadership role within the Confederacy and any “city or battlefield significant because of a Confederate victory.”

VP Pence lauds Coast Guard crew for massive cocaine haul



Vice President Mike Pence stopped by Naval Air Station North Island near San Diego on Thursday to honor the crew of the Coast Guard cutter Munro, which offloaded nearly 20 tons of cocaine seized during recent counter-narcotics operations.

Flanked by bricks of cocaine nabbed by the Munro as well as the cutters Vigorous and Mohawk, Pence lauded the Coasties for “this momentous occasion and this historic offload.”

“I came here today on behalf of your commander in chief and the American people to say thank you for a job well done,” Pence told the crew. “And welcome home.”

The patrol by the three cutters across large swaths of the Eastern Pacific confiscated more than 18,000 kilograms of cocaine — plus 423 kilograms of marijuana — that officials estimate is worth \$569 million on the street.

Officials also released harrowing footage of a drug bust at sea that featured Munro’s crew members leaping onto a drug-sub as it tried to flee.

The U.S. Coast Guard cutter gets closer to the vessel, and a person is able to climb aboard and pound on the vessel’s hatch. A suspected drug smuggler emerges,

hands in the air.

Editor’s note: Boy, jumping on a mostly submerged sub (see photo above) is ‘guts ball’.

Bowe Bergdahl loses unlawful command influence appeal based on Trump tweets



The Bowe Bergdahl case was briefly back in court this summer, as attorneys for the former soldier argued that President Donald Trump’s comments about a conviction and prison time amounted to undue command influence and interfered with his right to a fair trial.

The Army Court of Criminal Appeals convened a three-judge panel to hear the case, and in a 2-1 ruling affirmed Bergdahl’s guilty plea and previous sentence — a reduction in rank to private, a \$10,000 fine and a dishonorable discharge.

Bergdahl’s attorney told Army Times that the legal team now plans to appeal to the civilian court with jurisdiction over the U.S. armed forces in Washington, D.C.

“Although there was some evidence of unlawful command influence adduced at trial and in the post-trial process, the government met its burden to demonstrate that an objective disinterested observer would not harbor a significant doubt as to the fairness of the proceedings,” the Army appeals court opinion reads.

Editor’s note: What a shame.

Military studies ‘hyperfit’ women who pass grueling courses



In the nearly four years since the Pentagon announced it was opening all combat jobs to women, at least 30 have earned the Army Ranger tab, two have graduated Marine infantry school and three have passed the grueling initial assessment phase for Green Beret training.

Their numbers are small, but their completion of some of the military’s most arduous physical and mental courses has raised an intriguing scientific question: Who are these “hyperfit” women and what makes them so competitive?

During early debate on the move to open all combat jobs to women, military leaders raised questions about whether women were up to the jobs or if putting them on the front lines would make units less capable. The Marine Corps sought an exemption to keep some combat jobs closed for precisely that reason, but they were overruled by then-Defense Secretary Ash Carter.

Women, however, have increasingly made it through the nine-week Ranger course, and the numbers of those trying out for other special operations jobs is slowly inching up. The courses all encompass a number of phases and run from about nine weeks to a year or two for the most elite commando jobs.

They involve a wide array of grueling physical fitness tests, combat water survival, day and night land navigation, long road marches carrying heavy packs, extended patrols through various climates, and extensive mental, psychological and leadership testing.

Self-charging batteries might become a thing



The growth of 5G and the internet of Things means more and more devices rely upon "always on" power that is drawn from batteries. Rather than create gazillions of batteries to power all those devices, cutting-edge scientists are working with piezoelectric material to develop devices that create and store their own electricity. Such devices would eliminate the need for replacement batteries.

The whole process of collecting data, communicating with the cloud services, storing and analyzing it at servers is energy-hungry. We will soon have more than 50 billion smart devices, most of them installed in hard-to-reach areas, and regular battery replacement and maintenance are infeasible. [Click here](#) for additional information.

OPSEC: Why this retired one-star says service members should trash their Chinese Huawei smartphones



If you have a Huawei smartphone, retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Robert Spalding has a message for you. Throw it out.

That's because Spalding, the former senior director for

strategic planning and national security adviser to the White House, says the Chinese Communist Party could be spying on you.

U.S. sales of the phones were banned by the White House in May and later, they specifically were banned on military bases, where the phones were pulled from the shelves. But so far, no ban has been put in place for usage by service members and Defense Department employees who purchased the phones prior to the sales ban.

Spalding, in a series of interviews with Military Times, said the current ban does not go far enough. "No active duty service member should be using a Huawei device, especially not on a U.S. military installation," he said. "Huawei smartphones are both a personal security and a national security risk."

Spalding, who left the National Security Council in 2018, said his warning also includes Huawei's other tech devices such as laptops and modems, and extends to the ZTE brand too.

Smartphones know who you are and where you are, your gait, your voice, your height, even when you hand your phone to another person to use it. All of this information is recorded and if you own the wrong phone, could be transmitted without your consent, explained Spalding.

The directors of the NSA, CIA, FBI, National Intelligence, Defense Intelligence Agency and National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency showed their agreement against usage of the devices at a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing on Capitol Hill in 2018. When Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., who introduced the bill to ban the sales of Huawei, asked each of the directors to raise their hands if they would personally use Huawei devices, no hands were raised.

That leaves service members with only a choice between iPhones and Android 5.0 and above which provides

full-disk encryption protection with the user's device password, explains Spalding. Apple and iPhone record personal information but do not currently send the information back to Apple, but Androids do transmit the information to Google. What they do with the information wasn't clear.

First Meal on the Moon Was Communion. It Would Have Caused Riots in Present-Day US



It was the second man on the moon, Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, who made history in a very different way on that day in 1969. Although it's now mostly a footnote in the NASA archives, one of the

first actions on the moon wasn't to pull on a spacesuit. It was to partake in Christian communion to thank God for all that had been accomplished.

"Aldrin, seated next to Neil Armstrong, became the first person to celebrate a religious sacrament on a heavenly body outside Earth."

"The ordained Presbyterian elder wrote in a piece for Guideposts in 1970 he chose Holy Communion because his pastor at Webster Presbyterian, Dean Woodruff, often spoke about how God reveals Himself through the everyday elements," the outlet continued.

What is especially fascinating here is that Aldrin was very much a man of science. He was an expert in astronautics, wrote NASA's vital guide to orbital docking essentially singlehandedly, and held a Doctor of Science degree from MIT. Yet Aldrin was also a man of deep faith.

"I opened the little plastic packages which contained bread and wine," Aldrin said. "I poured the wine into the chalice our church had given me. In the one-sixth gravity of the moon, the wine curled slowly and gracefully up the side of the cup. It was interesting to think that the very first liquid ever poured on the moon, and the first food eaten there, were communion elements."

Aldrin's view that his Christian faith wasn't incompatible with science, but rather complimented it, flies in the face of current attitudes in much of the establishment media.

In today's world, anyone who believes in God is portrayed as some sort of backward anti-science peon.

Editor's Note: I would like to say it's not true but alas, I'm afraid it is.

Senate confirms Milley as chairman of the Joint Chiefs



Army Gen. Mark Milley will be the 20th chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, following an 89-1 vote in the Senate Thursday.

Milley, the former Army chief of staff, is expected to replace Marine Corps Gen. Joe Dunford as the

nation's top uniformed officer sometime in September. He will work again beside newly installed Secretary of Defense Mark Esper. The two worked side by side for two years, when Esper was Army secretary.

Sen. Jeff Merkley, a Democrat from Oregon, was the lone no vote.

A native of Winchester, Massachusetts, and a fervent supporter of the Boston Bruins and other city teams, Milley received his Army commission from Princeton University in 1980.

Survey: Public confidence in the military is high, especially among older generations



The U.S. military remains among the most trusted public institutions in America but commands more respect among older generations than younger ones, according to a new survey from the Pew Research Center released Monday.

Researchers said their findings as a whole showed serious concerns among Americans in their public institutions. In interviews with more than 10,000 Americans conducted late last year, the center found that 69 percent believe the government intentionally withholds important information from the public that it could safely release, and 75 percent said federal agencies do not deserve any more public confidence than they currently have.

The armed forces are one of the exceptions. In the survey, 83 percent of all respondents said they have confidence in the military "to act in the best interests of the public," tied with scientists for the most of any group or institution listed.

Police officers received a 78 percent confidence rating. For journalists, it was 55 percent. Elected officials were among the lowest in the survey, at 37 percent.

Editor's note: The low confidence rating for journalists and elected officials is shocking! Who knew?

Lawsuit filed against VA secretary over delaying benefits for Blue Water Navy vets



A lawsuit was filed Monday against Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie over his decision to delay claims processing for tens of thousands of "Blue Water" Navy veterans until next year.

Military Veterans Advocacy and the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association filed the lawsuit in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, arguing Wilkie doesn't have the authority to delay work on the claims until Jan. 1, 2020 — a decision he announced earlier this month.

Blue Water Navy veterans served aboard aircraft carriers, destroyers and other ships in the territorial seas of Vietnam and fought for years to prove they were exposed to the chemical herbicide Agent Orange. Because of a federal court case and a new law passed by Congress, they became eligible in June for VA disability compensation.

Advocates stressed in their complaint that the veterans can't afford to wait for benefits. The lawsuit names one veteran, Johnnie Harper of Louisiana, who "is not expected to survive" until 2020.

"These veterans are dying at a high rate every single day," the complaint reads. "[They] deserve the peace of mind and sense of closure that accompanies a granted claim for earned benefits."

John Rowan, president of Vietnam Veterans of America, wrote to Wilkie soon after the VA announced the delay. He called Wilkie's decision "frustrating" and a step backward in the progress made for Blue Water Navy veterans this year.

In an official statement, Wilkie said the VA needed time

to implement the law without causing adverse effects on other veterans awaiting claims decisions.

Here's how 3 million more people will get military shopping benefits



As about 3 million more people will soon be eligible to shop at military stores, officials are working to make sure these new customers will have access to bases, and that the shelves will be stocked.

Starting Jan. 1, all service-connected disabled veterans, Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war and primary veteran caregivers will be eligible to shop at commissaries and exchanges, and officials from three federal agencies are preparing the way.

The newly eligible customers will also be able to use certain morale, welfare and recreation activities. It's the largest patronage expansion in more than 60 years, said Virginia Penrod, principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for manpower and reserve affairs, who spoke at a recent meeting of the American Logistics Association.

The expansion is about a 50 percent increase in customers. Currently, about 6 million total households are eligible for the benefit; this adds 3 million, said Justin Hall, director of the DoD office of MWR and Resale Policy. "That's a huge lift across the entire system," he said.

A small fee applies only to new patrons using credit cards in commissaries, not to Medal of Honor recipients or others who were previously authorized to shop. New customers can avoid any fees by paying by cash, check or using the Military Star card. It only applies at the commissary, which is funded primarily by taxpayer dollars.

Health insurers see telehealth as one way to improve timely access to care

A FAIR Health review of more than 29 billion private health care claim records revealed that telehealth utilization rose 624% from 2014 to 2018, with nearly a 1,400% increase in non-hospital provider-patient communications. "Health insurance providers know timely access to appropriate care is important, and many offer telehealth benefits," writes AHIP communications director Alicia Caramenico.

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Scales Tip Toward 'Fish Oil' Intake for Heart Failure Prevention



High plasma levels of the kinds of fatty acids found in fish oil were associated with a lower long-term risk for new heart failure (HF), whether with reduced or preserved ejection fraction (HF_{rEF} or HF_{pEF}), in a community-based cohort of more than 6000 people.

The greater the plasma levels of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), a prevalent n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acid, also called omega-3, the lower the risk for both forms of HF during a median follow-up of 13 years.

The findings from the Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis (MESA), published July 10 in JACC: Heart Failure, add to a literature of abundant but diverse observations on the CV effects of elevated levels of fish oil, whether achieved by diet or supplements.

The analysis "may reopen the discussion on the role of omega-3 fatty acids in the context of prevention and treatment of heart failure," writes Aldo P. Maggioni, MD, Heart Care Foundation, Florence, Italy, in an accompanying editorial.

Fish-oil supplements would likely be more effective than eating more fish to achieve the levels that may be of benefit, Shearer and coauthor Timothy D O'Connell, PhD, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, speculated in a joint interview.

Editor's note: The effectiveness of Omega-3 fatty acid supplements has been controversial for years. This study is certainly welcome and hopefully accurate.

Dying of cancer, a Green Beret makes his Feres Doctrine case to President Trump



Sgt. 1st Class Richard Stayskal was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer in June 2017. He had been having trouble breathing for months, but a January scan at Womack Army Medical Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, led to a pneumonia diagnosis, and he went home.

Upon further review, that initial chest scan did show a tumor in Stayskal's lung. The Womack doctors hadn't caught it on his first CT scan, but when he showed up in the emergency room unable to breathe in May, another doctor picked up the old scan and noticed a mass.

Records show a recommendation for a biopsy, but the family was never notified. By the time a civilian doctor diagnosed him, the tumor had doubled in size and spread to other organs.

But Stayskal and his family cannot sue those Womack doctors for missing the tumor or failing to tell him about it, because a 1950 Supreme Court decision that created the Feres Doctrine prohibits service members for seeking compensation for illness or injury they suffer as a result of negligence on the part of the military. Sgt Stayskal took his case directly to Trump.

The Sergeant First Class Richard Stayskal Military Medical Accountability Act of 2019 is part of the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, and with it, is that piece of legislation named after him. Now it needs the Senate's vote and the president's signature to become a law.

The Feres Doctrine prohibits service members for seeking compensation for illness or injury they suffer as a result of negligence on the part of the military.

Editor's note: It is time for the Feres Doctrine to be eliminated. It was meant to protect the DoD from bad, split-second judgment calls by medics and surgeons in combat, but it covers all scenarios in the Defense Department's in-house medical system and should be jettisoned. Let's hope it gets through the Senate intact. There have been far too many negligent cases that have nothing to do with combat. Many of them relating to dependent care.

Neil Armstrong Died From Botched Surgery!?



Armstrong died after suffering a cardiac tear when a pacing wire, routinely placed on the surface of his heart during cardiac bypass surgery, was removed and he suffered bleeding and low blood pressure.

Having survived all the risks of space flights in balky rockets and underpowered lunar landers, Armstrong met his end at age 82 after cardiac bypass surgery after which he was up and walking in the halls.

Temporary pacing wires are often placed at surgery, either on the surface of the right or left ventricle, and sometimes on the surface of the atrium. And they're secured by a slight curve in the tip of the thin pacing wires with or without a stitch.

With bypass surgery, the wires are usually pulled at the bedside on the 2nd or 3rd postoperative day.

But when the wires are pulled, there has to be care. If there is too much tension, pulling too hard could rip the surface of the heart, causing life-threatening bleeding into the pericardial space around the heart, as apparently happened in Armstrong's case.

Attempts at treatment first in a catheterization lab and later in an operating room over less than a 2-hour period did not prevent extensive organ damage from low blood pressure, and he died several days later.

An expert for the Armstrong family that once pericardial tamponade was diagnosed at the bedside, Armstrong should have been taken immediately to the operating room for prompt exposure of the heart and stabilization of the bleeding.

The hospital paid \$6 million to the astronaut's family. The amount of the settlement is enormous for the death of an 82-year-old retired man. Defense counsel usually point out that 82-year-olds have exceeded their life expectancy and have no earning capacity, therefore no economic damages.

But Armstrong wasn't just any person.

Retired admiral, 8 others charged in latest 'Fat Leonard' indictments

Retired US Navy Rear Adm. Bruce Loveless, four retired-Navy captains, a Marine colonel and three other individuals were arrested and charged Tuesday in the latest indictments related to the Glenn Defense Marine Asia (GDMA) bribery scandal. The investigation is also known as the "Fat Leonard" case, after a nickname for GDMA's former chief executive officer, Leonard Francis.

Paris is reopening its most terrifying attraction at the Eiffel Tower



When it comes to thrill-seeking, blood-pumping activities fit for adrenaline junkies, a visit to the Eiffel Tower doesn't exactly spring to mind.

Well, that's until now, with the city making big plans to re-open its most terrifying attraction.

The Smash Perrier Paris zipline was originally set up by the French mineral water brand of the same name in 2017 to celebrate the French open, coinciding with the 130th anniversary of the Eiffel Tower.

From June 11, 2019, it will re-open to the public. The free ride will see brave participants climb to the zipline's summit of 115 meters, and descend 800 meters of cable at maximum speeds of 88 kilometers per hour.

The terrifying journey from the Eiffel Tower to the Ecole Militaire lasts just 60 seconds, but boasts incredible views of the city – are you brave enough to give it a go?

Do American political divisions impact troops? Here's what enlisted leaders have to say



The U.S. military's senior enlisted leaders faced questions at the Pentagon about how the enlisted force has adjusted to the hyper-partisan political climate of 2019.

While political division appears to increasingly be the norm in civilian life, enlisted service members have remained relatively insulated, according to Army Command Sgt. Maj. John Wayne Troxell, the top enlisted adviser to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

"One of the things that makes our military great is that we remain apolitical," Troxell said in a nod to the long-standing rules that restrict political activity by personnel in uniform.

There is also a large demand on the armed forces right now across the globe, he noted. It includes the growing deterrence missions against Russia and China, as well as the existing operations to counter violent extremist groups in the Middle East and Africa.

Those have a unifying effect on the enlisted force, according to Troxell.

"The troops at the lower level are more focused on being prepared to go and do the mission that they signed up for," he said.

The data highlights that the military isn't necessarily immune to the partisanship infecting civilian life, but senior leaders still said Wednesday that the mentorship and culture offered by service counteracts those trends.

Florida program puts commandos back in uniform and out on the streets as law enforcement officers

A new special operations forces career-transition pro-



gram in Florida is putting service members back in uniform by turning former commandos into law enforcement officers.

Run by the Pasco County Sheriff's Office, the program is part of the the Law Enforcement Academy at Pasco-Hernando State College. While PCSO officials say they would consider hiring program graduates, those completing the course become eligible to serve in law enforcement departments of any Florida county, said Pasco County Sheriff's Office Cpl. Jennie Jones, an academy instructor.

The program is in its infancy and seeking recruits, said George McDonald, a retired Army Green Beret colonel and the Pasco County Sheriff's Office Bureau. Chief of Joint Operations McDonald is leading the program created to help special operations forces (SOF) troops transition out of military service and into law enforcement.

Alzheimer's Blood Test Shows 94% Accuracy



"Amyloid-beta changes are highly predictive of who will get amyloid plaques in the brain years before detection by amyloid PET scans," Randall Bateman, MD, of Washington University in St. Louis, and co-authors told MedPage. "This suggests that an amyloid-beta blood test is more sensitive for Alzheimer's disease changes compared to the currently used standard of a PET scan."

Notably, however, not everyone with amyloid plaques goes on to develop Alzheimer's disease.

Nevertheless, this research "is one of the most important studies on blood-based biomarkers for Alzheimer's," noted Oskar Hansson, MD, PhD, of Lund University in Sweden, who was not involved with the study.

Editor's Note: They seem to be close to nailing the cause of this horrible disease, now if they can just discover an effective treatment.

House chairman calls for nationwide veterans hospital stand-down to bolster suicide prevention training



The chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee is calling for a nationwide stand down and a full review of all Veterans Affairs suicide prevention policies in light of an inspector general report criticizing

local hospital leadership errors ahead of a patient death in Florida earlier this year.

Within the next few weeks, Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., wants to see VA non-essential work at the medical centers halt for a day and staff focus on those issues instead "so every leadership executive, administrator, nurse, doctor, and employee across VA understands how to identify veterans in crisis and get them the help they need."

"We cannot keep delaying action," he said in a statement. "Americans must know that key policies to keep veterans safe are in place, that VA will enforce them, and trust that senior VA leadership will be held accountable."

The Digital Doctor: The Next Big Leap in Healthcare



Tabassum Salam, MD, American College of Physician (ACP) vice president for medical education, believes despite clear challenges, telemedicine is here to stay.

"It's a physical or emotional strain to leave the home and go to a doctor's visit and the likelihood of those patients ad-

hering to those appointments is low," Salam said. Video visits may help the most at risk patients keep their appointments.

Though just 1 in every 5 surveyed ACP physicians with video visit technology reported using it weekly, half said they use remote care management on a weekly basis. That said, another 42% of respondents said that even if reimbursement was satisfactory and regulations were barrier-free, they would have trouble integrating virtual care into practice workflow.

Increased technology poses real challenges and questions. Patient privacy, broadband coverage, and overtreatment are all real possibilities when it comes to telehealth.

Despite the limitation and setbacks, telemedicine is growing and is already changing the US healthcare system. And with it, the doctor-patient relationship can also be reshaped.

Though it may be hard to see equal growth between medicine and technology right now, they will soon be synonymous.

'In every uniform is a human being' — an Air Force vet is on a mission to take portraits of 7,500 veterans in all 50 states



By Veterans' Day this November, former combat photographer Stacy Pearsall will have traveled to all 50 states, snapping stark black-and-white portraits of more than 7,500

military veterans.

According to the retired Air Force staff sergeant, her "[Veterans Portrait Project](#)" began as a sort of self-styled therapy as she recovered from a neck injury and head trauma that resulted from a roadside bomb blast in Iraq in 2007. She said it remains a balm for the physical and emotional aftermath of her experience.

Earlier this month, Pearsall set up her mobile photo studio in the enormous Boeing Center atrium at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans.

Aside from the decorated baseball caps and T-shirts that commemorated their units and theaters of operation, the veterans looked just like anyone else. Their experiences and sacrifices were invisible.

But as Pearsall posed them and asked questions about their pasts, the significance of their service shone.

"Combat veterans tend to withhold a lot from others," Pearsall said. "Their experiences have injured them and they don't want to project that injury on others."

"I want people to realize that in every uniform is a human being with a heart and a soul, people they love, history and baggage. I want every veteran to know they're thanked."

New Law Will Allow Thousands More Veterans to Join American Legion



Thousands of honorably discharged veterans will soon be able to join the American Legion under new legislation expected to be signed soon by President Donald Trump.

Under the new law, any honorably discharged veteran who has served since Dec.

7, 1941, may join the American Legion, meaning military veterans who served in what were previously considered periods of peacetime between wars are now eligible for membership.

As a congressionally chartered organization, eligibility for the country's largest veterans service organization, with nearly two million members, is established by Congress. It had been open to veterans who served during declared wars, such as World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam.

But many troops served in lesser conflicts between those periods, Sinema said in the bill. More than 1,600 troops were killed during these military operations.

Membership in traditional veterans service organizations has declined over the past several decades as members age and pass away and veterans of recent conflicts have sought out other groups or social organizations.

This year, however, the Veterans of Foreign Wars reversed that trend, adding nearly 25,000 new members.

Veterans service organizations provide a social structure for veterans and also advocate on their behalf. Groups such as the VFW, American Legion and Disabled American Veterans are among the most influential in Washington, D.C., with members numbering in the millions.

They also provide help to veterans, with service officers trained to provide guidance to members on their benefits, including disability compensation claims and education.

Cigarette smoke makes MRSA superbug bacterium more drug-resistant



Cigarette smoke can make MRSA bacterial strains more resistant to antibiotics, new research from the University of Bath has shown.

In addition cigarette smoke exposure can make some strains of *Staphylococcus aureus* — a microbe present in 30-60% of the global population and responsible for many diseases, some fatal — more invasive and persistent, although the effect is not universal across all strains tested.

Florida Council of Chapters Communiqué

August 2019 Issue

See what the other Chapters are doing. The *Florida Council of Chapter's* newsletter, the "Communiqué" can be accessed by clicking on the link below. After you click the link and then click *Allow*, it may take a minute or so for the newsletter to pop up. It is worth the wait.

Apr2014.pdfhttp:www.moaafi.org/communiqué

Editor—Polly Parks. Send articles and photos to:

Polly Parks pparks@igc.org

Smoking-Related PAD Damage Persists After Quitting



Cigarette smoking is a greater risk factor for peripheral artery disease (PAD) than for coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke, and that risk persists far longer than for the other atherosclerotic diseases after smoking cessation.

Quitting smoking was associated with the greatest reduction in risk for PAD, with an 80% lower risk seen 30 or more years following cessation, but smoking-related risk also remained elevated following cessation for a longer period for PAD -- roughly prospective 3 versus 2 decades following cessation for CHD, and 5-20 years for stroke.

In a large cohort study, current smokers with a 35 or more pack-year cigarette history had more than double the adjusted risk for developing PAD compared with for CHD or stroke, according to Kunihiro Matsushita, MD, PhD, of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, and colleagues.

But smoking-related risk also remained elevated following cessation for a longer period for PAD -- roughly 3 decades versus 2 decades following cessation for CHD, and 5-20 years for stroke, the authors reported.

Coastie in Viral Video Who Jumped on Drug-Running Sub Will Get Award



That Coast Guardsman who banged on the hatch of a semi-submersible to catch a couple of alleged cartel drug runners in a viral video is now up for an award, the top enlisted Coast Guardsman said Wednesday.

"We will definitely recognize that person" with an appropriate award, said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Jason Vanderhaven.

The Coastie in the dramatic video has yet to be identified, but he performed a "tremendous feat of bravery" in leaping onto the semi-submersible and rushing forward to bang on the hatch, Vanderhaven said.

The incident took place June 17, 2019, in the Eastern Pacific when two rigid-hulled inflatables from the Coast Guard Cutter Munro, out of Alameda, California, caught up to the semi-submersible.

After demands to stop were ignored, a Coast Guard boarding team jumped onto the moving vessel and arrested the alleged drug runners.

The capture of the semi-submersible was one of 14 interdictions carried out by the Munro and two other cutters off the coasts of Mexico and Central and South America between May and July 2019, according to the Coast Guard.

The interdictions resulted in the confiscation of "39,000 pounds of cocaine and 933 pounds of marijuana, worth a combined estimated total of \$569 million," according to the service.

Editor's Note: If you saw the video of the coastie jumping on that vessel, you no doubt agree with the planned award. I got nervous just watching him beat on that hatch.

See photo above.

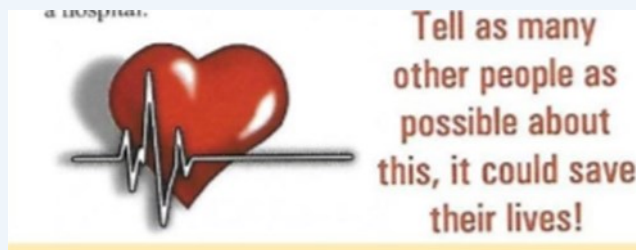
How To Survive A Heart Attack When Alone —CPR For Yourself—

Let's say it's 6:15 p.m. and you're driving home (alone of course), after an unusually hard day on the job. You're really tired, upset, and frustrated. Suddenly you start experiencing severe pain in your chest that starts to radiate out into your arm and up into your jaw. You are only five miles from the hospital nearest your home. Unfortunately you don't know it; you'll be able to make it that far. What can you do? You've been trained in CPR but the guy that taught the Course neglected to tell you how to perform it on yourself.

Since many people are alone when they suffer a heart attack, this article seemed in order.

Without help, the person whose heart stops beating properly and who begins to feel faint, has only about 10 seconds left before losing consciousness. However, the victims can help themselves by coughing repeatedly and very vigorously. A deep breath should be taken before each cough and the cough must be deep and prolonged, as when producing sputum from deep inside the chest. A breath and a cough must be repeated about every two seconds without let up until help arrives, or until the heart starts beating normally again.

Deep breaths get oxygen into the lungs and coughing movements squeeze the heart and keep the blood circulating. The squeezing pressure on the heart also helps it regain normal rhythm. In this way, heart attack victims can get to a hospital.



IN MEMORIAM

No reported passings reported

Monthly Member and Board Meetings

Luncheon: Wednesday Oct 2nd, 2019 11:00 am
Florida Room

Board Meeting: Wednesday Oct 9th 2019
10:00 am—Trinity Baptist Church

Membership Committee Mtg. Club Renaissance
3rd Wednesday Oct 16th, 2019



Chapter 5–Star
Level of Excellence Award



Newsletter 5-Star
Communications Award

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

MOAA: The SCC Chapter of The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) membership is granted to Army; Navy; Marines; Air Force; Coast Guard; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Public Health; the National; Guard or Reserve components both active or retired; and former officers and Warrant Officers who were separated under acceptable conditions.

MISSION: The mission of Sun City Center FL chapter shall be to promote the purposes and objectives of the Military Officers Association of America; foster fraternal relation among retired, active duty and former officers of active duty, retired and reserve components personnel of the uniformed services and their dependents and survivors; provide useful services for members and their dependents and survivors and serve the community and the nation.

MEETINGS: A meeting is held monthly (except July/August) in the Atrium building in the Florida room at 11:00 a.m. and includes lunch and a guest speaker.

ACTIVITIES: Coordinate and sponsor Annual Memorial Day ceremony; provide awards and honorariums to outstanding JROTC Cadets; contributed to Operation Warm Heart and Helping Hand; contribute to My Warriors Place; provide funds for MOAA scholarships and participate in numerous community activities.

Additional information can be obtained by calling 813-642-0801 or e-mailing dkepley@tampabay.rr.com. You can also contact us by mail at Frank Kepley, 815 Freedom Plaza Circle, Apt 104 Sun City Center Fl. 33573.

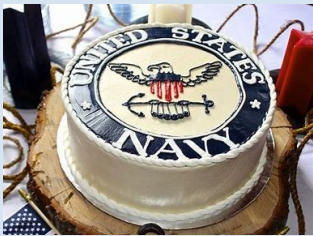


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