



The RETROSPECT

TAMPA CHAPTER – A FIVE STAR CHAPTER OF MOAA NATIONAL



January 2026 VOLUME 32, NUMBER 1

GREETINGS!

From the Vice President's Desk: Season's Greetings and a Call to Serve



From the Acting President / Vice President's Desk: 2026 Moving Forward – Our Chapter's Strength is You!

As we step into 2026, I want to extend my best wishes to each of you and your families for a healthy and prosperous New Year. This year is not just about turning a new calendar page; it is about charting a course forward, ensuring the sustained strength and vibrancy of our Tampa Chapter of MOAA.

Looking back on my years of service and various holiday seasons with an equal number spent at home as away from home, these memories underscore a life built on service and adaptability. Now, it is that same spirit of service that we need to carry us forward. Our chapter's operations have long relied on a dedicated cadre of members serving tirelessly on the board. While their dedication has been the bedrock of our past success, to move forward and not just survive, but thrive, we need more of you to get involved. This is a critical time, and our chapter needs your energy and perspective.

The response to our call for leaders has been encouraging; we have already seen interest in the vacant President, Secretary, and Surviving Spouse Liaison positions. This initial interest is a positive sign that members are ready to step up and continue our chapter's legacy. However, we still have opportunities available. If you have ever considered getting more involved, now is the time to reach out. However, we still need members for the Vice President and Assistant Treasurer positions. No prior board experience is necessary—just a willingness to serve and collaborate. Please contact any current board member or email membership@moatampa.org to learn more about how you can contribute to the future direction of our chapter. To truly understand how to best move forward, we need everyone's voice. We sent out a survey to all 165 members seeking valuable input, and while we've seen some positive initial responses, only about 30 members have replied so far. We need greater participation

to get a complete picture of our membership's desires and suggestions. Please take a few moments to complete the survey; it remains open on Survey Monkey until January 12, 2026. Your input is vital in shaping our shared future. The link to the survey is: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8LMZBDL>.

Additionally, a crucial administrative reminder: January is the final month that dues can be paid for your 2026 membership. Timely renewal helps us plan our events, support our initiatives, and maintain the operational strength of our chapter. We would really love to have you pay your dues in person at our January 8 chapter luncheon. It is the perfect opportunity to renew your commitment, reconnect with fellow members, and discuss opportunities to get involved.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement. Let us carry the spirit of service and fellowship into 2026 with renewed energy and purpose, ensuring a strong path forward for the Tampa Chapter.

Warm regards and Happy New Year!

Matt Mularoni
Acting President, VP, and Membership Chair
Tampa Chapter MOAA



LEGISLATIVE LOWDOWN



BEN RITTER, SGT USMC
(FORMER) HONORARY MBR

Capt NORM BILD,
USAF RET

MOAA is following recent Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announcements regarding restructuring within the Veterans Health Administration. This latest announcement is consistent with information that MOAA National members heard during an introductory meeting with VA Secretary Doug Collins and during the early Department of Government Efficiency efforts. MOAA has been, and remains supportive of identifying efficiencies and with saving taxpayer money – as long as those savings do not come at the expense of our veterans. Effective and cost-efficient government operations are a shared objective. When it comes to veteran health care, maintaining standards for access and quality remains the benchmark. Secretary Collins has assured all stakeholders that these standards will be upheld, even amid significant billet reductions.

MOAA will continue to advocate for this restructuring to become a success, but the ultimate report card does not come from MOAA or any Veterans Service Organizations – It comes from the veterans who have EARNED the right to timely ac-

cess to quality health care. Their judgment is the most important verdict on these restructuring efforts, and MOAA will be listening closely for feedback and sharing those insights with VA and congressional leaders.

The FY 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) – cleared the Senate on December 17 by a 77-20 margin and will move to the president's desk for signature.

The \$901 billion measure passed the House 312-112 on December 10. MOAA outlined key elements of the legislation at that time, to include:

- * A 3.8% basic pay raise, in line with private-industry benchmarks,
- * Further protections against medical billet cuts at military treatment facilities,
- * A range of additional improvements for currently serving members and their families, to include child care fee assistance, an increase in Family Separation Allowance, and a report on unreimbursed expenses attached to Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves.

Members of the MOAA National Government Relations Staff will continue to analyze the NDAA and will offer greater details on these issues and others in the coming weeks.

What's Next for Congress – December 18 marked the last day of the year when both the House and Senate were in session. The House adjourned for the year on that day, while the Senate ended its year on December 19. Both the House and Senate are scheduled to return the week of Jan. 5, 2026. Lawmakers have less than a month to avert another federal funding lapse, as the continuing resolution (CR) ending the recent record-setting shutdown (Oct. 1-Nov. 12) will expire on January 30. Some appropriations bills, to include a measure

to fund military construction and the VA, were passed as part of CR negotiations, meaning this shutdown would not affect all corners of the government.

However, defense appropriations have not been approved for the fiscal year, meaning those who serve and have served will face many of the same challenges they planned for in the fall: The potential of missed paychecks, delayed or discontinued support programs, last-minute changes to PCS moves or training timetables, and other fallout. MOAA will continue its work over the recess and into the new year to secure protections from these effects, including legislation that would allow the Pentagon to pay all servicemembers during a funding lapse (without relying on last-minute adjustments) and to ensure retirement pay continues uninterrupted for U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and NOAA Commissioned Corps retirees.

More Work to Do – The top-lobbyist honor comes as MOAA concludes its work in the first session of Congress and lays out the groundwork to launch the new year's strategy, ensuring momentum and sustained advocacy through 2026. From efforts to securing key language in the final draft of the FY 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to maintaining momentum on the bipartisan – and bicameral-supported Major Richard Star Act, to building protections for servicemembers, veterans, and survivors in the event of another government shutdown, that work is far from over.

"Recognition is important, but it's the powerful voice of our more than 350,000 members that truly sets us apart as we hold the line in Washington," said Maj. Gen. April Vogel, USAF (Ret), MOAA's vice president of Government Relations. "Be sure to make your voice heard through

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan 7, 2026
Board of Directors Meeting
Virtual TBD

Jan 8, 2026
Chapter Luncheon
11:30 AM – 12:00 PM Social
12:00 PM – 1:30 PM Lunch
Columbia Restaurant
(see page 9)

Jan 29-31, 2026
MOAA Florida Council of Chapters
Leadership Training Seminar &
49th Annual Convention
Rosen Center, Orlando, FL
<https://flmoaa.org/events/>



For all upcoming events click on the link to our website calendar:
<https://moatampa.org/events/>

REMINDER:

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
FOR THE FEBRUARY 2026
ISSUE IS 20 JANUARY 2026

Please submit articles in a Word
Document and photos in JPEG
Email articles to
coms@moatampa.org

NOTICE: If you have a change of
address, please notify our membership
team via email—Matt Mularoni at
membership@moatampa.org

LEGISLATIVE LOWDOWN *cont.*

our Legislative Action Center – your engagement helps MOAA make a difference.”

House Bill Would Support Military Spouses During Permanent Change of Station (PCS)

Moves - A bipartisan House bill would provide additional leave to military spouses employed by the federal government who are facing a PCS move, offering much-needed support during an unstable time for families who serve.

The PCS Leave for Military Spouse Federal Workers Act, introduced November 25 by Representatives Andrea Salinas (D-Ore.) and Gabe Evans (R-Colo.), requires the government to provide these spouses with at least 40 additional hours of paid leave to address “activities directly related to … the employee’s move to a new geographic location where the employee’s spouse will be assigned to work.” Existing guidance in multiple federal departments encourages such leave, but the legislation would codify it.

More than 8,000 military spouses are employed by the federal government, according to a 2024 Office of Personnel Management (OPM) demographic report. A 2022 OPM report noted more than 5,500 employees married to active duty servicemembers.

“When I worked for a civilian employer, I had access to a similar benefit, and that additional leave was invaluable. It allowed me to manage the packing and delivery of household goods and make a cross-country drive,” said Stephanie Rose, MOAA’s Director of Government Relations for military family and survivor policy. “Policies like this not only give military spouses the time they need to complete a government-ordered move, but they also send a powerful message: Their federal employer recognizes and supports their family’s service to our nation.”

This bill is in line with a 2023 executive order encouraging federal agencies to adopt this policy

in an effort to retain military spouse talent in the federal government. Salinas introduced the legislation after hearing from constituent Elizabeth Lee, who said an early career PCS move forced her to take unpaid leave and caused significant harm to her professional prospects. “This bill would alleviate one more recurring barrier placed on military spouses trying to maintain full-time employment,” Lee said in the press release announcing the legislation.

This bill is in line with a 2023 executive order encouraging federal agencies to adopt this policy in an effort to retain military spouse talent in the federal government. “As a veteran who has received [PCS] orders multiple times, I know firsthand the sacrifice that military spouses like my wife make to support their partners,” said Evans, who spent 12 years in uniform, serving as an Army helicopter pilot.

Supporters alongside MOAA include Blue Star Families, the Military Family Advisory Network, and the National Military Family Association.

The move would mark another step toward Office of Personnel Management’s priority goal of becoming “the employer of choice for military and veteran spouses.” It’s one of several spouse-employment initiatives backed by MOAA, to include expanding the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to add military spouses as a target group and a bipartisan bill lowering the qualifying time for spouses to take time off work under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) from a year to 90 days.

When MOAA Speaks, Congress Listens – Contact your elected officials and share your concerns.

Resources: MOAA’s ADVOCACY NEWS Section: <https://www.moaa.org/>
Additional information and support at MOAA’s Legislative Action Center: <https://moaa.quorum.us/>

MOAA TAMPA HONORS OUR COALITION PARTNERS

Photo credit: Sara Marks

Brigadier General Faisal Hamood Al Jumai from Yemen was presented a Letter of Appreciation from MOAA Tampa Vice President (VP) Matt Mularoni, LTC USA (Ret) from the MOAA Tampa Chapter. Brigadier General Al Jumai presented a beautiful medal to our VP on behalf of his country to our chapter.



COL Marius Gabriel Benza from Romania was presented a Letter of Appreciation from the MOAA Tampa Chapter VP Matt Mularoni, LTC USA (Ret). A beautiful challenge coin was presented from COL Benza to our VP.



THE TAMPA CHAPTER OF THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (MOAA)



Candidates
Under
Consideration



Candidates
Under
Consideration



2025 OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT: VACANT

VP: MATTHEW MULARONI LTC USA RET

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT: GAPPED

SECRETARY: KILEY STINSON LT COL USAF RET

TREASURER: LEWIS VANDYKE COL USA RET

SURVIVING SPOUSE LIAISON: VACANT

2025 DIRECTORS:

COMMUNICATIONS: SARA MARKS CAPT NC USN RET

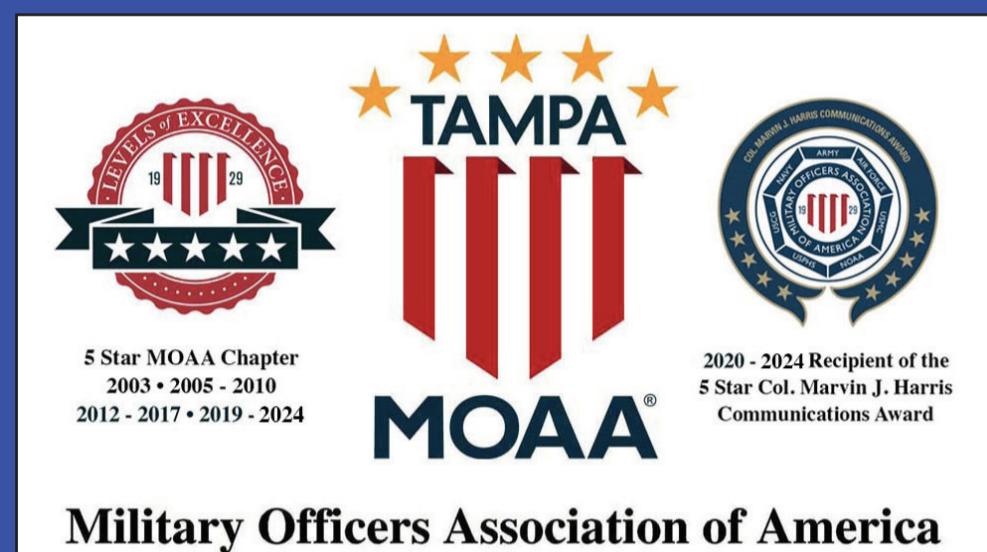
LEGAL AFFAIRS: WILLIAM MITCHELL LTJG (former) USN

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS: BEN RITTER, SGT USMC
(former)/HONORARY MEMBER



MOAA MISSION STATEMENT

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a nonprofit veterans' association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors. Membership is open to those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any component of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force, Public Health Service, or NOAA and their surviving spouses.



Military Officers Association of America

TAMPA CHAPTER MISSION:

To maintain a strong national defense and to ensure our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors.

GENERAL CONTACT INFO:

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Military Officers Association of America
Post Office Box 6383
Tampa, FL 33608-0383
E-Mail: Secretary@moaatampa.org





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THE STUMPS AND ZIPS IN OUR LIVES

—Submitted by Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret)

Author: Gregory Jacobs

As my zero-turn mower cut over the flush stump in the side yard, I was reminded of the pull-up bar that stood there not long ago. While maneuvering ever so slowly around the yard with my 6-year-old grandson on my lap, I pointed up to a tree to show him the remnants of what used to be a zip line across the creek.

In 2018, before my son, David, joined the Army, he decided to assemble a pull-up bar in the yard. I remember coming home from work as he was putting two 4x4 posts into concrete. I recall being very upset that he hadn't asked my permission — I didn't want another thing to mow around. In addition to the pull-up bar, he built a zip line across our creek with the wrong kind of pulleys and cable that was too thin. Instead of being happy with my son's projects, the perfectionist in me was frustrated. When David left for basic training, I took a chainsaw and cut down the pull-up bar at the base to simplify cutting the grass. As for the zip line, it came down all on its own after some use by the kids and their friends.



Sometimes, it is difficult not to be frustrated with life in the present, and I tend to get bent over the littlest things. It is ingrained in the human psyche to be selfish and look out for number one. We must be aware of and fight against it daily. It never crossed my mind then how crushing it would be on my son to cut down what he built up.

Now that David is gone — killed in an auto accident in December of 2020, I choose not to dwell on my selfish act of destroying my son's project, but rather on the stump that is flush to the ground and embedded in concrete. I wish the pull-up bar and zip line were still there, but I am OK with having little reminders that recall fond memories and those I am not so proud of.

What stumps or zip lines do you have in your life? In my conversations with grieving loved ones through the years, I have heard many different takes on memories. Some cherish and hold on to every memory of their loved ones. Others are too afraid to be confronted with memories, so they practice avoidance. I have seen this come into play with selling a house, closing a bedroom or closet, removing past friends from their lives, and more. While I am not one to give unsolicited advice these days, I would venture to express that these conversations have helped me look at the stumps in my life and evaluate if they are something that I want to keep compartmentalized in a part of my memory for easy recall, or if they are something I would prefer to store away in a deep recess and throw away the key.



When the pull-up bar was still standing, I had to stop my mower and go around it. Even after cutting it down, I hesitated to cut over the stump for a while — like the concrete was some sort of barrier, a roadblock. Another roadblock for my wife and me is Colorado, where our son died — we haven't been back since his death, it's just too hard. In time, we may be able to move around the figurative concrete barrier keeping us away from Colorado, or we might simply let it be what it is. Either way, just having self-awareness about what I need to accept and work on is essential.

Take inventory of the stumps and zips in your life. Show yourself grace when needed, just like I do when I think about cutting down David's pull-up bar. Rejoice when the synapses in your brain start firing with memories of your loved ones, and allow yourself to pause life to express love toward your loved one and their memories. When you're ready, share your memories and your story with others — doing so might help create a sense of normalcy on your grief journey. Most of all, know that you are not alone, each one of us has stumps and zips!

Source: <https://www.taps.org/articles/31-1/stumps-zips>

RADM BILL MERLIN DECEMBER LUNCHEON RAFFLE WINNER! CONGRATULATIONS!!!

—Photo Credit: Sara Marks and Ben Ritter



JANUARY 2026 MOAA TAMPA LUNCHEON GUEST SPEAKER

CHARLES E. KLUG, GENERAL COUNSEL FOR THE PORT OF TAMPA

Charles E. Klug is the General Counsel of Port Tampa Bay, having served as the general counsel since 2004. Mr. Klug was a shareholder with the law firm of Gray Robinson, P.A., before his appointment as General Counsel. In 2012, Mr. Klug served as the Interim Port Director of Port Tampa Bay. He was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1986 and has been certified by the Florida Bar as specialist in Real Estate Law since 1993 and as a specialist in City, County and Local Government Law since 1998. From 2016 through 2021, he served on the Florida Bar's Real Estate Certification Committee. Mr. Klug was recognized as the "Top Corporate Counsel for Government" by the Tampa Bay Business Journal in 2014 based on leadership, ethical standards, and exemplary professional skills. He currently is a member of numerous committees, boards and councils including Bay Area Youth Services, Urban League of Hillsborough County, Hillsborough Commission on Human Trafficking, Tampa Bay Harbor Safety and Security Committee, USF World Advisory Council, Tampa Bay Area Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.



Drug Interdiction in the Caribbean

— Submitted by Robert F. Sawallesh, LTC, USA, Retired
Photos by Robert F Sawallesh



Many, many years ago my wife and I were on a Caribbean Cruise. As we pulled into a port in the morning there was a lot of loud hammering on the hatch of a submarine. Evidently, some type of minor repair. The submarine was on the other side of the dock. One of the sailors said that they were involved in drug interdiction. The submarine soon departed port.

Today, there has been a big change in Narco-Terrorism tactics by the US.



TAKE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julie McRee, Director of Instructional Design & Online Learning
817-569-3156
jamcree@fcef.com

TAKE COMMAND® Online Financial Readiness Program Expands College Accreditation Eligibility

FORT WORTH, TEXAS (February 2025) — First Command Educational Foundation (FCEF) announces expanded accreditation of its TAKE COMMAND® online financial readiness program by The American College of Financial Services. Now, all learners with a high school diploma (or equivalent) who meet admission requirements can earn college credits at no cost while strengthening their financial security.

Designed for service members (active, guard, reserves, veterans) and their families, TAKE COMMAND educates enrollees to make smart, informed financial decisions and effectively pursue long-term financial security from the time they enter military service until separation or retirement. Most courses take no more than an hour to complete and are accessible 24/7 via computer, smartphone, or tablet. Those successfully completing the program have an opportunity to earn up to three FREE college credit hours in consumer finance education. All TAKE COMMAND courses may be taken FREE of charge.

"Financial readiness is the basis for economic mobility. The American Dream is still alive and well, but only if you know the rules of the game. Programs like TAKE COMMAND provide so much more than just basic financial education, they empower individuals, families, and communities to achieve goals and unlock the lives they want to live," Timi Joy Jorgensen, PhD, Assistant Vice President, Financial Education & Wellbeing, The American College of Financial Services.

Tom Kuhar, CEO and President of FCEF shares, "Among the many challenges facing service members and their families, the need for foundational financial education is critical. TAKE COMMAND equips learners with the financial knowledge to shield them against uncertainties associated with a military career such as deployments, frequent relocations, changing pay and allowances, and other challenges. This knowledge helps them develop solid financial behaviors to propel them onto a path of financial security amid the rigors of military service."

For additional information on the news that is the subject of this release (or for course details, demo, or enrollment), contact Julie McRee or visit <https://fcef.com/military-financial-readiness/#take-command>. TAKE COMMAND is a registered service mark.

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Established in 1983, First Command Educational Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity that provides exceptional financial readiness programs and, with like-minded partner organizations, scholarships for our nation's service members (including federal civilian employees and veterans) and their families. FCEF does not endorse or favor any commercial supplier, product or service, or promote the services of a specific financial institution. All information provided is intended for educational purposes and is not to be considered financial advice. All personal information is kept strictly confidential. <https://fcef.com/>

December Luncheon Photos

Photo Credit: Ben Ritter and Sara Marks



MEDICAL CORNER

—Submitted by Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret)

Foods for Your Mood: Nutrition Helps with Emotional Well-Being

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs/Military Health System

Story by Robert Hammer

Date: 07.25.2025 Posted: 07.25.2025 13:24 News ID: 543848

Mental well-being is as crucial to a warfighter's medical readiness as physical fitness. While nutrition is well known for its contributions to physical fitness, it's often lesser known for its cognitive benefits.

"Overall dietary pattern is more important than any one singular food for mental performance and emotional well-being," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Tanisha Currie, associate director of Center for Enabling Capabilities located at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research.

Through psychological, social, nutritional, spiritual, and physical fitness resources, the Consortium for Health and Military Performance at the University of Uniformed Services—otherwise known as CHAMP—has tools to fuel for the fight, guides for optimal nutritional fitness, and a food journal to give you insight into your nutrition intake. The resources also provide advice on what to eat to perform at your best—both in body and mind.

Eating Habits to Support Emotional Well-Being

According to Currie "A strategy that warfighters can incorporate in their day-to-day routine is to 'eat the rainbow,' a simple phrase that refers to eating colorful fruits and vegetables which can contribute to your mental well-being."

CHAMP provides simple guidelines to be mindful of what you eat to meet your mental and physical occupational and training demands, such as:

- Eat small, well-rounded meals throughout the day to provide your brain and body with steady energy to avoid hypoglycemia and be prepared to handle stressors.
- Follow the anti-inflammatory Mediterranean diet, which is high in unsaturated fats, omega-3 fatty acids, colorful fruits and vegetables, and high-fiber whole grains.
- Include prebiotics and probiotics in your day. Prebiotic foods include apples, artichokes, asparagus, bananas, berries, green vegetables, onions, tomatoes and garlic. Sauerkraut, miso, tempeh, pickles, yogurt, milk, kefir, and kombucha are just a few foods that include probiotics.
- Choose foods for what they can do for you, rather than how they make you feel. Nutrient-dense foods build stress resilience.
- Boost your intake of magnesium to regulate muscle and nerve functions, blood sugar levels, and blood pressure. Foods like legumes, nuts, seeds, whole grains, green leafy vegetables fortified breakfast cereals, milk, and yogurt, are high in magnesium.
- Eat plenty of foods high in B vitamins. These nutrients support metabolism, brain development, blood and nerve cell health, DNA production, and the development of serotonin, which affects mood, memory, and emotions. Foods like poultry, fish, potatoes, noncitrus fruits, beef, liver, clams, fish, and milk are all high in B vitamins.
- Fuel your body consistently. Balance meals and snacks with whole grains, lean protein, fiber, and healthy fats to help keep your blood sugar steady. Avoid skipping meals.
- Rethink your meal choices on the night shift. At night, your body's metabolic processes slow down. Eating at night has been shown to be bad for your health, though the right type and number of foods and beverages can help keep up your blood sugar to stay alert.
- Be aware of foods or beverages with stimulants or hidden caffeine sources.
- Get a caffeine boost, but not too much. Caffeine improves alertness, vigilance, attention, and reaction time when taken in small to moderate amounts. Caffeine may also help mental perfor-

mance in sleep-deprived situations.

- Drink enough water. Water is the most abundant component of the human body—around 50–70% of your weight—so your body needs fluids regularly to function properly.
- Increase Vitamin D in your diet. Foods with naturally occurring vitamin D include fatty fish, fish oils, egg yolks, butter, and liver. You can also get vitamin D from "fortified foods," which is where vitamins or minerals are added to foods during processing to increase their nutritional value. Vitamin D keeps bones healthy and has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant benefits.
- Talk to your doctor about any nutrient deficiencies you may have, as these can affect feelings of stress and mental well-being. Too little energy, carbohydrates, and micronutrients can increase your vulnerability to stress.

Foods to Alleviate Stress

Foods to combat stress include the minerals, zinc and magnesium, and vitamins C, B, and E, according to CHAMP. The B vitamins and magnesium are involved in the production of serotonin, which helps regulate mood and relieve stress. Foods high in these nutrients are the foods of choice.

Also, "foods rich in antioxidants such as fruits, teas, and dark chocolate can help to reduce oxidative stress, provide neuroprotection, and mood regulation," said Currie. "Particularly, berries offer great sources of vitamin c and potent antioxidants. Bananas, which are rich in vitamin B6, and tryptophan are also known to promote positive mood."

To alleviate or prevent some of the consequences of chronic stress, CHAMP recommends the following food list to minimize weight gain due to overeating and excess intake of high-fat or high-sugar foods. These foods include:

• Almonds	• Beets	• Blueberries
• Broccoli	• Cantaloupe and other melons	• Goat cheese
• Carrots	• Garlic	• Grapes
• Green and herbal teas	• Green beans	• Peas
• Kiwi	• Lemon water	• Whey
• Salmon and other cold-water fish	• Sushi	• Whole-grain rice
• Sweet potatoes	• Tomatoes	
• Zucchini		

CHAMP also recommends avoiding the following foods that may add to stress, including:

• Caffeine	• Hard liquor	• Tobacco
• Trans-fats from fried foods, red meats, and highly processed foods		

"Warfighters can benefit greatly by understanding the basic elements of foods that can bolster their cognitive health and mood. However, they do not have to go at understanding the basics of nutrition alone. There are terrific and credible Department of Defense resources such as CHAMP, Armed Forces Wellness Center, Operation Supplement Safety, and registered dietitians and healthcare providers to assist them navigating their personal well-being journey together," said Currie.

Additional Resources

For more about optimizing mission performance and health through nutrition, visit the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Consortium for Health and Military Performance. Here you can explore dozens of nutritional fitness tips, articles, and other references for better nutrition to enhance readiness. To take your nutrition goals to the next level, contact your local military hospital or clinic and request a consultation with a nutritionist or a dietitian.

Source: <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/543848/foods-your-mood-nutrition-helps-with-emotional-well-being>



NAVY MEDICINE FAST FACTS

Special Edition 7
2025



NAVY MEDICAL CORPS LEGENDS

PHYSICIAN-ASTRONAUTS

For over 60 years, Navy physicians have played vital roles for NASA serving as key advisors, scientists, medical monitors, and—beginning in 1965—astronauts. A total of 8 Navy physicians have served as astronauts.

In June 1965, Capt. Joseph Kerwin became the first Navy physician chosen for NASA's nascent scientist-astronaut program. And when Skylab launched in May 1973, Capt. Kerwin earned the distinction as the first American physician in space.



From May 1973 to March 2025, Navy physicians astronauts have logged more than 218 days and 70 minutes in space.

On April 8, 2025, Lt. Cmdr. Jonny Kim boarded the International Space Station (ISS) becoming the eighth Navy physician to serve in space.



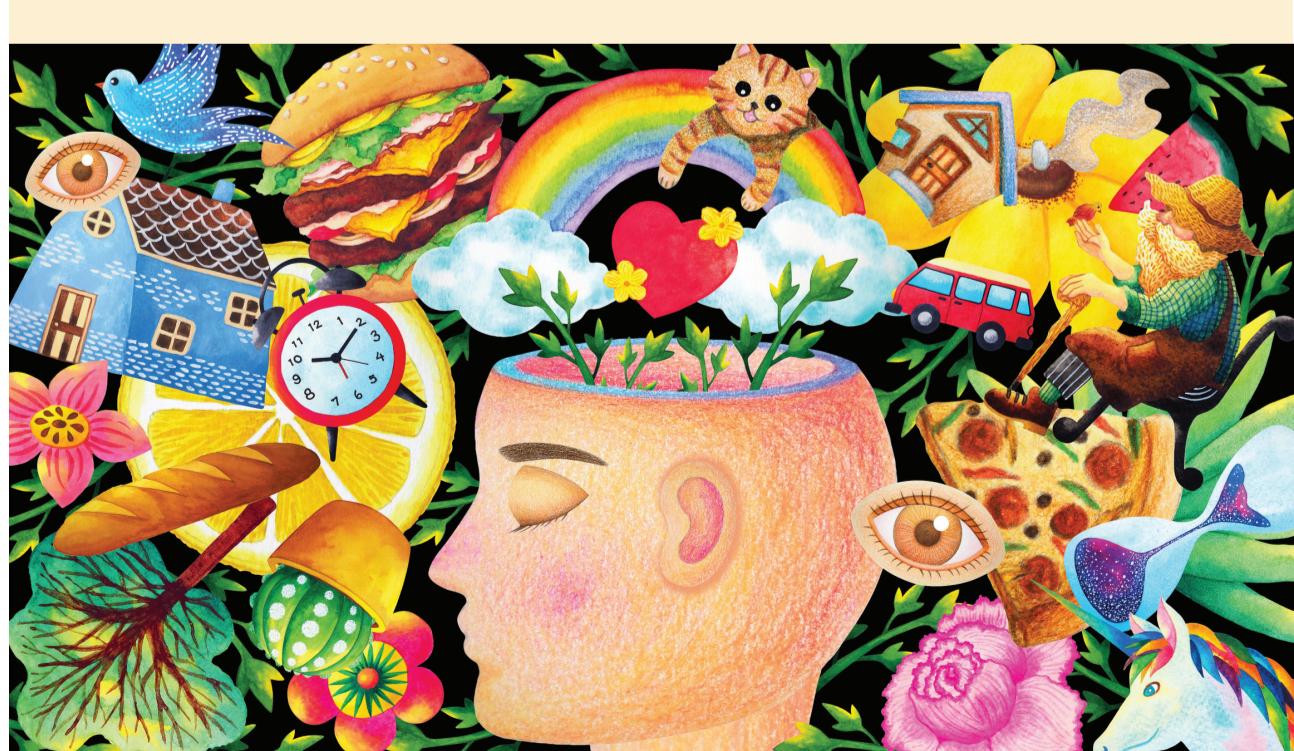
Source links:

- (1) <https://www.dvidshub.net/search/2.0?q=NAVY+MEDICINE+FAST+FACTS&type=publication+issues>
- (2) https://d34w7g4gy10ej.cloudfront.net/pubs/pdf_72954.pdf

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN ...

1. Booking a seat on an airplane you had choice of a smoking or non-smoking section? And how did the smoke know to stay only in the smoking section?
2. Dropping your film at the drugstore and waiting week to see your prints?
3. Dialing a rotary phone? And not knowing who was on the end when you answered the phone?

What else do you remember that the younger generations have only heard about ... maybe? Email coms@moatampa.org so more can be shared in the February edition of *The Retrospect* NLT January 20, 2026.



Notes from the Editor: CAPT Sara Marks, NC, USN (Ret)



Here we are starting another new year, and if you're like me there is hope and promise for all things good and wonderful that spring forth from my heart for the new year ahead. Last month's luncheon I felt a lot of renewed energy as our chapter forges ahead in 2026. Our chapter Vice President sent out a survey via email and hope that you've had a chance to respond and provide us

feedback on our chapter. The link is provided on page one in the Vice President's message if you haven't responded yet. Thank you to those who have responded and thank you in advance for those who will take the time to provide your valuable feedback.

The encouraging news is that several people have expressed interest or have stepped up to fill some of our board positions that will need to be voted on. There are other ways to contribute that aren't board positions but enhance our chapter. We also need assistants for the Treasurer, Buddy Calls, Newsletter, and Luncheon Reservations. Additional positions include Website Content Editor and Speaker Coordinator to name a few positions. More to come to update each of you at the next luncheon and via email for those unable to attend the January luncheon.

I'm delighted to announce that we have Charles Klug, the General Counsel for the Port of Tampa as our guest speaker for this month's luncheon. Please see his bio in this edition of *The Retrospect*. There are several articles that I hope you'll enjoy that include one story about a Donut Dolly and a reflection of a soldier who guards the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. I want to also thank COL Pedersen, the Chair of the Coalition and Senior National Representative from Denmark who wrote about Christmas traditions in Denmark in the Coalition Corner. These are just a few highlights of the articles in this edition of *The Retrospect*. Due to copyright issues, I'm not able to publish many articles without permission but have five links to several articles that I hope you'll take the time to "click" the links and read. Five of the links include articles about National Guard GI Bill benefits and studies about successful treatments of Alzheimer's in mice that have promise for people with this disease.

We also are looking for new members so tell everyone about our chapter. It's also time to renew your membership no later than January 31, 2026. There renewal and new member forms are in this newsletter, or you can click on the link that takes you to an online payment site. Another announcement is that the application for MOAA Tampa Scholarship money is now available in this edition of *The Retrospect* and will be updated on the website shortly. As a MOAA Tampa member in good standing your children or grandchildren can apply.

Chapter Members, this is your newsletter and your chapter so please share your talent and the leadership you displayed while on active duty and help MOAA Tampa Chapter continue to lead the way to a promising and adventurous future, especially for our JROTC students who look to us for our leadership and all we serve with scholarship funding and for supporting each other during and after our active duty service time.

Know your MOAA Tampa Leadership is working hard to keep our chapter involved in our many endeavors, and that we need each and every one of you to help our chapter continue its vibrant programs. Will you be the leaders to help MOAA Tampa? You can contact me as the Director for Communications via email: coms@moaatampa.org; Lewis VanDyke via email: treasurer@moaatampa.org or Matt Mularoni via email: membership@moaatampa.org to apply or ask questions.

It is always my pleasure and honor to serve as your Editor for *The Retrospect* and work on our chapter's website. My role as your editor continues to be an enriching and rewarding learning experience, but one that I don't do alone. In the meantime, I'll continue to share my travel adventures and would love to hear about your travels as well as your community involvement. Please send your stories to my MOAA Tampa email: coms@moaatampa.org.

Wishing everyone a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible." – St. Francis of Assisi

Let us never forget. - NEVER STOP SERVING!

Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret)

THE RETROSPECT is published monthly by the Tampa Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), P.O. Box 6383, MacDill Air Force Base, FL 33608-

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OUR EDITORIAL POLICY:

MOAA National, the Florida Council of Chapters, and the Tampa Chapter are non-partisan organizations. The views expressed in individually signed articles and the advertisements that appear in this publication/website do not reflect an endorsement by MOAA or this affiliate. Articles in the newsletter/website are the opinions solely of the individual authors and do not necessarily express the policy or opinions of the newsletter's editor or publisher, nor do they reflect an endorsement by the Tampa Chapter or the National organization of the Military Officers Association of America, unless so indicated. The views expressed in individually signed articles do not necessarily reflect Chapter policy. MOAA National, the Florida Council of Chapters, and the Tampa Chapter are nonpartisan organizations. Our chapter membership is open to all Military officers (Commissioned and warrant), including Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve, former officers, and spouses/surviving spouses of military officers.

Our luncheon meetings are held 1130 hours every second Thursday of each month at the Columbia Restaurant in Ybor City.

ON THE WEB:

Tampa Chapter <https://moaatampa.org>

Communications directed to specific board members listed in the main menu ABOUT US then LEADERSHIP may be made by emailing secretary@moaatampa.org or going to the main menu to CONTACT and email us using the form provided.

FACEBOOK: [MOAA Tampa Chapter](https://www.facebook.com/moaa_tampa)

INSTAGRAM: https://www.instagram.com/moaa_tampa

A password protected MOAA Tampa MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY is posted on the website under the "MEMBERSHIP" category.

FL COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS: <https://flmoaa.org/>

MOAA NATIONAL: www.moaa.org

OPERATION HELPING HAND: www.operationhelpinghandtampa.com

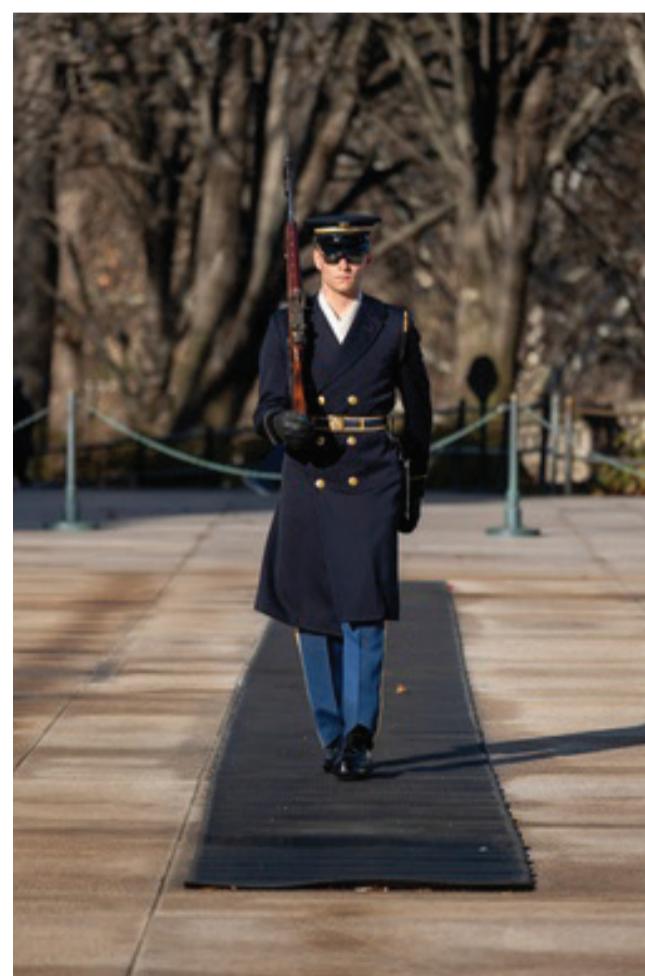
TAKE ACTION: <https://moaa.quorum.us/>

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Standing Watch at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

—Submitted by Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret)



—Photo By Staff Sgt. Oscar Toscano | U.S. Army Spc. Shane Burke, assigned to the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), walks across the black rubber mat, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., December 12, 2025. The guards currently conduct the change every hour, assuming responsibility for maintaining the ongoing vigil at the tomb. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Oscar Toscano)

"In the responsibility bestowed on me, never will I falter."

During my walk, the sun dipped behind a cloud. A shadow fell across the marble, and the temperature dropped quickly. The cold crept into my fingers, but I did not shift, fidget, or react. Discomfort was irrelevant. The creed reminded me:

"Through the years of diligence and praise and the discomfort of the elements, I will walk my tour in humble reverence to the best of my ability."

Each 21 seconds felt longer than the last. Twenty-one seconds. Twenty-one steps. Turn. Lock. Pause. It became meditation. A conversation between me and the unknown warrior beneath the marble.

A moment during that walk still stays with me. A rainstorm suddenly swept across the plaza, beating down on everyone. Ordinarily, someone might run for cover, but I stayed frozen in position and those who watched stayed with me. That discipline wasn't pride; it was reverence. My role was not to react to nature or tourists or discomfort. My role was to maintain vigilance.

"It is he who commands the respect I protect, his bravery that made us so proud."

When the relief guard finally arrived and the ceremony concluded, I marched off the mat for the last time that day. Only then did I allow myself a breath of release. Inside the guard quarters, I removed my gloves. My hands were cold and stiff, but I felt nothing but quiet pride. Being a Tomb Guard changed the way I view responsibility, honor, and silence. On that first solo walk, I realized that perfection isn't about being flawless, it's about dedicating yourself fully to something greater than yourself. The creed lived within every step I took:

"Surrounded by well meaning crowds by day, alone in the thoughtful peace of night, this soldier will in honored glory rest under my eternal vigilance."

"The Sentinels Creed," Simon, 1971.

And on that day, for the first time, I truly felt what "eternal vigilance" meant.

Source: <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/554100/standing-watch-tomb-unknown-soldier>

3d U.S. Infantry Regiment "The Old Guard"

Story by [Staff Sgt. Oscar Toscano](#)

Date: 12.11.2025 Posted: 12.13.2025 11:10 News ID: 554100

JOINT BASE MYER-HENDERSON HALL, Va. — The first time I stepped onto the black rubber mat as a Tomb Guard, the world around me seemed to fade into silence. Tourists from all over the world stood only a few feet away, but their voices soon dissolved as they approached. All I heard was my own breathing, the clicks of my heels echoing across the plaza, and the sound of my rifle moving shoulder to shoulder. I stood in silence, every muscle tight with discipline. Every 21 seconds, I took 21 steps, rifle on my shoulder, then faced the city. In that moment, I understood that:

"My dedication to this sacred duty is total and whole-hearted."

Training had built me for this, the endless hours of studying nearly 17 pages of history about the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and Arlington National Cemetery, memorizing, polishing, marching, and perfecting movements until they were instinctive. But nothing prepared me for the weight of stepping into that role alone. The mat stretched out in front of me, surrounded by the white marble of the tomb and furrowed brows. The November air was cold enough to numb my fingers. The wind pushed lightly against my cheek, but I did not blink. This moment was not about me; it was about the unknowns.

As I took my first 21 steps, line 6 of the Sentinel's Creed echoed through my mind:

"My standard will remain perfection."

The creed had become more than words I memorized. It had become my duty, my honor, my every movement. I repeated its phrases silently as I walked. Every step carried the weight of those whose identities remain unknown but whose sacrifices are eternal. When I turned to face the crowd, I caught the eyes of many veterans looking up at me. They did not look away once and watched in silence. It reminded me of why precision mattered, not for applause, but for teaching silent respect. I kept my eyes forward, not allowing even a flicker of distraction. The rifle rested firmly on my shoulder, and the metal felt cold, steady, and familiar.



JANUARY LUNCHEON MEETING

EVENT: Chapter Monthly Luncheon Meeting

DATE: Thursday, 8 January **TIME:** Social time 1130 hours, Meeting time 12 noon – 1330 hours

LOCATION: Columbia Centennial Museum, 2029 E 7th Ave, Ybor City

RESERVATIONS: Reservations must be made by NOON Friday, 2 January. Call 321-258-7388 OR via email to LunchReservations@moaatampa.org. Reservations are limited to 60. A Reservation Made is a Reservation Paid.

CANCELLATIONS: Cancellations must be made by NOON Monday, 5 January, by calling 321-258-7388 OR via email to LunchReservations@moaatampa.org.

COST: Event cost is \$35 payable by check or cash, \$36 by credit card (includes service charge).

MASKS: Masks are optional.

DRESS CODE: Proper attire is business casual for all (i.e., for men, slacks/collared shirts)
Military uniforms are always appropriate.

MENU: 1905 Salad, Cuban Bread and butter, Boliche, Polo Salteado, White Rice, Black Beans, Coffee, Iced Tea, Soft Drinks and Flan

PARKING: Across the street from the Columbia Restaurant and behind the Columbia Restaurant

Luncheon reminders are sent via email. If you are not receiving the reminders, please call 321-258-7388 or send an email to LunchReservations@moaatampa.org to be added to the distribution list.

BULLETIN BOARD

CARING FOR OUR "SHUT-IN" MEMBERS

Our Chapter wants to become aware of members who are hospitalized, homebound, in care facilities or just plain sick and has provided a way for you to inform us. Please contact Lt Col Kiley Stinson, USAF Ret, Sick Call Chairman 813-957-1127 so that he may call or send cards to let them know they are missed.

Alternatively, you may send an e-mail to: Secretary@moaatampa.org

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

Norm Bild is the MOAA Tampa contact for the highly successful Veterans Treatment Court in Hillsborough County. Contact him at (813) 205-1476 if you are interested in being a veteran mentor. He will also serve as an escort if you want to attend court sessions as an observer.

Keep Your MOAA Contact Updated

Please email any email address changes to membership@moaatampa.org or go to your account at moaa.org and update mailing address, phone number, email address under the "Profile Info" once logged into your account.

Florida Veteran's Benefit Guide for 2025 Link:

<https://www.flipsnack.com/qcausamagazine/fdva-benefits-guide-2025/full-view.html>

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Buddy Call Program

Let's check on our chapter members over the holidays. Volunteers need to assist making calls!

Please contact CAPT Angie Nimmo, NC USN RET at (760) 401-9718

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS AVAILABLE

You'll hear the Chapter President frequently mention "Never Stop Serving," and you'll see it sprinkled throughout this newsletter. This Chapter depends on that volunteer spirit from you its members to accomplish so many great things.

Everything the Chapter does is accomplished by volunteers, and there are currently several volunteer positions open, including: Surviving Spouse Liaison, Director of Outreach, Assistant Editor for the chapter newsletter *The Retrospect*, Assistant Secretary, Assistant Membership, Historian/Archivist, Public Affairs, Guard and Reserve Liaison, Scholarship Committee, Buddy Calls, Photographer, Fundraising and Advertising, 6th Medical Group Liaison, and VA Hospital Liaison.

If you would like to volunteer for or learn more about any of these positions, please contact the Secretary at Secretary@MOATampa.org.

IMPORTANT DATES IN JANUARY

1 New Year's Day

19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day



OCS Connect was developed to support the families of high school seniors enlisting in the military by providing timely, reliable, and emotionally-grounded resources. We have built a trusted platform that bridges the communication gap between civilian families and the military structure, helping loved ones feel more informed and less alone during the enlistment journey.

To view upcoming Events & Podcasts: <https://www.ourcommunitysalutes.org/ocs-connect>

6th Medical Group, MacDill wants YOU!

WHAT:

Red Cross Volunteer(s) to man the front entrance information desk at the 6th Medical Group.

WHEN:

M-F, 0700-1630. Several individuals could make this very doable.

WHY:

Currently Active Duty troops are manning the desk which means they are not available for other clinic duties.

POINT OF CONTACT:

Diana Pagan - 813-827-9785



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2024-2025



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The RETROSPECT

TAMPA CHAPTER – A FIVE STAR CHAPTER OF MOAA NATIONAL



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This award-winning, informative monthly newsletter, The Retrospect, is available on-line at www.MOAA Tampa.org and published on the MOAA Tampa FaceBook site. This publication is packed with information addressing our community based projects and updates readers on the national and local initiatives that improve the quality of life for all servicemembers, their families, and survivors. It also includes myriad non-political articles that are of interest to both military and civilian communities.

DIGITAL PUBLISHING

Ad Deadline Inserts

Dec. 20 (2024)	Jan. 1
Jan. 20	Feb. 1
Feb. 21	Mar. 1
Mar. 21	April 1
April 20	May 1
May 20	June 1
Jun. 20	July 1
July 20	Aug. 1
Aug. 19	Sept. 1
Sept. 20	Oct. 1
Oct. 20	Nov. 1
Nov. 21	Dec. 1

Cost

(Artwork supplied)

(Ad creation)

Half page (12.95" wide x 9.75" tall)	\$1,000.00	+\$75.00
Quarter page (6.5" wide x 6.25" tall)	\$500.00	+\$50.00
1/8 page (6.5" wide x 3.5" tall)	\$250.00	\$35.00

DIGITAL AD FORMAT: Digital ads **must be** submitted in PDF, JPEG or EPS formats.

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Help provide skills to help military families cope with military life, especially deployments. *Must be mental health professional, holding a current license*	Provide assistance with tasks in a clinical setting such as surgical prep; runner; charting; reception; prepare patients for treatment and administrative tasks.	Provide assistance with a specific service or treatment to designated clients in an urgent care, outpatient/inpatient unit, or other health care settings.	Provide assistance with tasks in a clinical setting as well as support staff in a variety of direct and indirect patient care activities.

Additional security clearance may be required in compliance with government regulations

**Some positions such as clinic professional volunteer require a valid and current license in their field.

To learn more, visit redcross.org or contact:

Molly Gallagher, Senior Volunteer Recruitment Specialist

molly.gallagher@redcross.org



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*Discount is only applicable to new residents of a Brookdale independent living, assisted living, or memory care community admitting under an executed residency agreement. Discount applies only to the monthly fee/basic service rate, excluding care costs and other fees and is calculated based on the initial monthly fee/basic service rate.

**Discount is only applicable to new clients of personal assistance services by a Brookdale agency under an executed service agreement.

***Discount is only applicable to new residents of a Brookdale assisted living or memory care community admitting under an executed respite agreement. Discount applies to the daily rate.

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Articles of Interest Found on the Web

—Submitted by Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret)



1. The Stealth Tactics Bosses are using to get you back to the office
<https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/other/the-stealth-tactic-bosses-are-using-to-get-you-back-to-the-office/ar-AA1Th37K?ocid=hpmsn&cvid=27eb953b5f844ac98424ca7364e33b81&ei=29>
2. Remains of WWII Medal of Honor Recipient, Killed as a POW, Finally Comes Home
<https://www.military.com/daily-news/investigations-and-features/2025/12/23/remains-of-wwii-medal-of-honor-recipient-killed-pow-finally-comes-home.html>
3. Gold Star Family Receives Life-Changing Gift Through Service Dogs | Military.com
<https://www.military.com/daily-news/investigations-and-features/2025/12/23/gold-star-family-receives-life-changing-gift-through-service-dogs.html>
4. How National Guard Service Qualifies for GI Bill Benefits
<https://www.military.com/feature/2025/12/24/how-national-guard-service-qualifies-gi-bill-benefits.html>
5. New Alzheimer's Treatment Clears Plaques From Brains of Mice Within Hours
<https://www.sciencealert.com/new-alzheimers-treatment-clears-plaques-from-brains-of-mice-within-hours>

Support for All Who Serve

The Military Crisis Line is a free, confidential resource for all service members, including members of the National Guard and Reserve, and Veterans, even if they're not enrolled in VA benefits or health care.

Website: <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help-now/military-crisis-line/>



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In Afghanistan

Call [00 1 800 273 8255](tel:0018002738255) or DSN 111

In the Philippines

Dial #MYVA or [02-8550-3888](tel:02-8550-3888) and press 7

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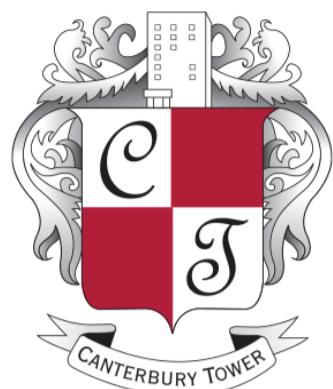


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Coalition Corner



Dear MOAA members,

In light of the Christmas holidays this time I will tell you about our family and Danish Christmas and New Year's traditions.



First of all, concerning Christmas it really starts four weeks before Christmas Eve. The last four Sundays leading up to Christmas Eve holds special celebrations. We like to have four candle lights in a decorated Christmas wreath like in the picture. On the first Sunday one candle will be lit on the second Sunday another candle, meaning that by the fourth Sunday all four of them will be lit. In the weekends we will also enjoy Christmas markets where one of the main tasks is to find a Christmas tree. Some families decorate the Christmas tree weeks before Christmas and others decorate them the day before Christmas Eve.

During December we also have calendar lights with a count-down of the days to Christmas Eve. They will be lit during family dinners (or breakfast) when the family is together. Each day it will burn down one number.

For the kids there will be either smaller presents each day up to Christmas Eve or bigger ones each Sunday. They will put up socks on their doors or beds, and the "Nisse" will put in the small surprises.

A "Nisse" is like an elf, but it really is a Danish tradition from way back in the day on the smaller farms and in the houses. Every farm or house are said to have a Nisse that sleeps for most of the year but wakes up in December. When the kids are small, we put out rice porridge with cinnamon and butter for him. With it is served I can tell you as a farther, that I have my fair share of rice porridge as it needs to be eaten by morning when the kids get out of bed. If you fail to please the Nisse he will do tricks in the house. Kind of like the Elf on a shelf thing here in the US.

We celebrate Christmas on the eve of December 24. Usually, the kids get one present in the morning just keep the tensions low and give them something to do during the waiting time. Around 6 pm we will gather with our families



in larger or smaller groups and have a Christmas dinner. The tradition is rooted in the old Nordic ways of celebrating the darkest days of the year, and feasting on the food gathered during the year. Usually, we will have a pork roast or duck, or both. It comes with white potatoes, sugar potatoes, red cabbage and gravy. It comes in many variants as the recipes are handed over from generation to generation. At the end as dessert we will have rice à la almond (rice pudding with almonds). One un-chopped almond is placed in the bowl and whoever gets the almond will get a special gift.

After the dinner we will light the Christmas tree in the living room, sing some Christmas hymns or carols while walking around the tree. And after that it is finally time to unwrap the presents. This can be rather chaotic if the kids are just allowed to go ahead, but they can learn to appreciate each present and thank the giver. We enjoy sweets and drinks, usually Christmas ale during the unwrapping.



The following days we attend family lunches or dinners depending on family and friends' traditions. More often than not it is the exact same people we will meet day after day, and basically the same types of food we will enjoy (with the family variants off course).

New Year's Eve is usually spent with friends. Our King will speak to us at 6 pm and we will have a glass of champagne to greet him and each other. After that we have a New Year's dinner where the tradition in the coastal parts of Denmark dictates having steamed cod, but the younger generations are not following that tradition anymore. During the night young people will tour the streets and do a lot of tricks to houses, fire of smaller fireworks and enjoy the evening. At 12 pm we will gather and toast each other and wish for a happy New Year. In Denmark we have a special bell tower that will ring out and mark the exact moment of the transition to the new year. After that the partying continues into the night.

And that is it!

I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Regards,

Allan Pedersen
Colonel, Senior National Representative for Denmark and Chairman of the Coalition

Vietnam-Era Donut Dolly Dorner Carmichael Continues Service with Red Cross in Powidz

—Submitted by Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret)

U.S. Army Garrison Poland

Story by [Sarah Williams](#)

Date: 12.30.2025 Posted: 12.30.2025 06:09 News ID: 555364

POWIDZ, Poland—Dorner Carmichael grew up in rural Georgia with a curiosity about the world beyond her hometown. As the Vietnam War escalated and the draft loomed over her male classmates, she graduated from college determined to see more of the world and take part in the events shaping her generation.

Carmichael learned about the Red Cross "Donut Dollies" while volunteering in college, teaching first aid with her local chapter. Drawn by a mix of adventure, curiosity, and a desire to participate in history rather than watch it from a distance, she volunteered for service in Vietnam despite opposition from her mother and skepticism from friends.

The term "Donut Dolly" originated during World War II as an affectionate nickname for Red Cross women who staffed club mobiles. Those vehicles were outfitted with coffee and donut machines and phonographs to bring comfort and a sense of home to soldiers in Europe, North Africa, India, and the Pacific. Though the nickname carried into Vietnam, the mission evolved. Carmichael notes that during her tour, she never actually saw a donut. Assigned forward, Carmichael lived close to combat operations. At first light, she and other Donut Dollies boarded Huey helicopters carrying hot breakfasts to remote firebases. After serving the meals, they moved between artillery, mortar, and infantry positions, running fast-paced recreation programs designed to give soldiers a break from the stresses of war.

Programs ranged from game-show-style contests focused on baseball, football, and basketball to paper airplane competitions and improvised challenges meant to spark laughter and engagement. One program ended with a mechanical challenge that required a member of each team to assemble a carburetor she had checked out from the motor pool.

There was always a quiet mechanic in the back; the others called forward. One such soldier later greeted Carmichael on different bases for months, each time asking if she remembered him. She did.

By midday, Carmichael and her partner often boarded another helicopter to reach a different base or shifted to jeep runs, adjusting plans as the tactical situation changed within the area of operations.

Some of Carmichael's most vivid memories are not of combat, but of faces. She recalls arriving with another Donut Dolly, Pam, on a firebase shortly after a soldier had been killed in a firefight. The men stood in small clusters, silent and withdrawn.

Pam approached one group, introduced herself, and asked if anyone was from Georgia. When no one responded, she continued talking until a soldier quietly said he was from Kansas. Pam seized the moment, talking about cornfields and *The Wizard of Oz*. Slowly, others joined in, naming their home states.



—Photo By Sarah Williams | POWIDZ, Poland — Dorner Carmichael, a Vietnam-era Red Cross volunteer known as a "Donut Dolly," continues a lifetime of service today through her work with the American Red Cross in Powidz, Poland.

Within minutes, the men began looking up, sharing photos of dogs, homes, and plans for life after the war. In that moment, Carmichael saw how simple human connections could restore a sense of normalcy.

Carmichael served as the war wound down, a period marked by declining morale, widespread drug use, and increased tension after college deferments ended in 1971. Many of the soldiers she remembers were barely out of their teens.

Those experiences shaped her understanding of service, sacrifice, and community, concepts she says she could not fully grasp before Vietnam.

Decades later, at a Red Cross convention, a filmmaker asked Carmichael to participate in a documentary about the 627 women who served as Donut Dollies in Vietnam. After years of limited public attention, she agreed.

Revisiting those memories on camera was difficult, forcing her to confront experiences she had long buried. She believes those stories matter precisely because they are rarely told.

Today, Carmichael continues to serve with the Red Cross in Powidz, Poland. Her work includes delivering emergency messages between service members and their families, supporting resiliency efforts, and helping create spaces for rest, education, and connection.

While she notes that nothing compares to life in a combat zone, the underlying mission remains the same. Showing up when people need support.

Carmichael hopes younger generations remember the Donut Dollies as part of a broader history of women's service, including both those who traveled to war zones and those who served quietly at home caring for families. She believes many of those contributions have gone unrecognized.

She encourages service members stationed in Powidz to view their tour as a fixed window of opportunity, offering experiences and perspectives they may not encounter elsewhere.

To Carmichael, service is not limited to uniforms or deployments. A meaningful life, she believes, is grounded in compassion and service to others. Even small acts of kindness matter, whether it is a conversation in a grocery store, checking in on a neighbor, or offering quiet support.

"You don't have to travel far to serve," she said. "You just have to start."

Source: <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/555364/vietnam-era-donut-dolly-dorner-carmichael-continues-service-with-red-cross-powidz>



MOAA Tampa Scholarship Announcement



To: MOAA Tampa Chapter members:

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that the MOAA Tampa Chapter will award college scholarships of up to \$2,000.00 each to high school seniors who are planning to attend college during the academic year 2026-2027. Applicants must be a dependent or grandchild of a MOAA Chapter member who has been in good standing for at least one year prior to the date of application. The selection committee reserves the right to limit scholarship awards to one per sponsor. The application form and further requirements can be found at the chapter website: www.moatampa.org.

Completed applications and documentation must be submitted no later than midnight April 15, 2026 to:

Colonel (Ret) William A. Schneider, USA
15888 Sanctuary Drive
Tampa, FL 33647

Scholarship winners will be announced on May 1, 2026.

If you have any questions, please contact Colonel Schneider at (813) 977-2572 or via email at wajs33647@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
MOAA Tampa Chapter Scholarship Committee.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Be a dependent or grandchild of a MOAA Tampa Chapter member who has been in good standing for a minimum of one year prior to the date of application.
2. Have a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
3. Complete the scholarship application
4. Attend the May 14, 2026 Luncheon and Awards Ceremony. Attendance is required by the recipient or immediate family member in order to receive the award.

Required attachments

1. Submission of proof of the Military affiliation of the sponsor. (Military ID or DD form 214)
2. Submission of transcript reflecting 3.0 or higher GPA.
3. Submission of two Letters of Reference from persons other than relatives. (teachers, work supervisors, clergy, etc.)
4. An acceptance letter from an accredited college, community college or university.
5. A letter written by the student, in which he or she explains his or her goals and academic experience and extracurricular and community volunteer experience.
6. A completed Scholarship Application Form
7. A photo of the student.

The selection committee reserves the right to limit scholarship awards to one per sponsor.

Submit application and attached documents not later than midnight April 15, 2026 to:

Colonel (Ret) William A. Schneider, USA
15888 Sanctuary Drive, Tampa, FL 33647
(813) 977-2572

wajs33647@gmail.com



MOAA Tampa Scholarship Application



Date of application _____

Sponsor name _____

Date sponsor joined chapter _____

Student name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Graduating school _____

College accepted _____

Academic awards _____

School activities _____

Community activities _____

Completed application and supporting documents must be submitted no later than April 15, 2026.

How We Help and Why You Should Join!

The TAMPA CHAPTER-MOAA, one of the largest and recognized as one of the top chapters in the Nation, has a very basic and focused approach for all officers on Active duty, Reserve, National Guard, and retired officers—WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK!

Some of the local community outreach our Tampa MOAA chapter members are involved with include: Veterans Treatment Court, Operation Helping Hand, funding local MOAA Scholarships, Transition support from military life, coordinating with our MacDill AFB Coalition partners with chapter activities, our Chapter Buddy Check initiative, and supporting the local ROTC/JROTC.

NEVER STOP SERVING!



The Tampa Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, Inc.

P.O. Box 6383
Tampa, FL 33608-0383



MOAA Tampa Chapter Dues Renewal Form

Deadline for renewing your membership is January 31, 2026

Name _____

Rank _____ Service _____ Status _____ (AD, Retired, Former)

Check here if there are no changes _____

----- Please complete the form below only if there are changes from last year. -----

Address _____

Email Address _____

Phone _____ Cell _____

Spouse _____ Phone _____

Visit <http://www.moaatampa.org/> to make these changes online and to see all that MOAA has to offer.

There are 3 ways to pay your dues:

1. Online at <https://my.cheddarup.com/c/tampa-chapter/>
2. Paying in person at the monthly member luncheons (2nd Thursday of every month)
3. Mailing this dues renewal form

Please consider donating to our chapter scholarship fund and other charities - JROTC leadership camp
Thriving After Military Service Program, Tampa Veterans Treatment Court.

Amount enclosed:

2026 Dues \$ 30.00

Additional Contribution \$ _____ (Scholarships / JROTC Leadership Camp / VTC / TAPS)

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: MOAA Tampa Chapter

Mail to: MOAA Tampa Membership C/O Matt Mularoni, PO Box 6383, Tampa, FL 33608-0383

Email questions to: membership@moaatampa.org

Access our Chapter website and monthly newsletter for Updates and more Information

<http://www.moaatampa.org/>

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P.O. Box 6383
Tampa, FL 33608-0383



Name _____

Rank _____ **Service** _____ **Status (Active, Retired, Former)** _____

Street Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

EMAIL address _____

Phone (HOME or CELL) _____ **Date of Birth: Month:** _____ **Day:** _____

Spouse / Emergency Contact: Name _____

Phone _____

MOAA National Member Number _____

If not a MOAA National member, can we set up a Basic membership for you at no cost? **YES** or **NO**

I give my permission: signature: _____

Wartime Service: Please circle applicable information and provide dates of service:

World War II _____ **Korean War** _____ **Vietnam Era:** _____ **Vietnam (in country)** _____

Gulf War (Desert Shield/Storm) _____ **Lebanon, Grenada, Panama** _____

Iraq/Syria (OIF/New Dawn/OIR) _____ **Afghanistan (OEF/ORS/OFS)** _____

OR check No service during any of these periods of time _____

Tampa Chapter Annual Dues: \$30.00; ----- No fee for Active Duty or Surviving Spouses.-----

You may bring the completed form to any Chapter event, or you can mail it with your check (payable to **MOAA Tampa Chapter**) to: **Matt Mularoni, C/O MOAA Tampa, PO Box 6383, Tampa, FL 33608-0383.**

Email questions to: membership@moaatampa.org

***** The Chapter has my permission to list only my name and rank as a new member in our Chapter Newsletter, *The Retrospect*". YES _____ No _____**

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

—By Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret)

It's a New Year – What Should I Do and Do Differently This Year?

As I prepared to write this New Year's Chaplain Corner, I once again thought to myself that "I'm not the most qualified to write comments, but I am one who thinks about what is inspiring and true." There are the usual New Year's Resolutions to think about and that can be good. I do believe that there is a sense of a fresh start and new beginning, but the worry can be "what if I fail on my resolutions?" Then I turned to the Bible for inspiration. Two versus from scripture stood out to me that has always sustained me:

- *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.* – Jeremiah 29:11.
- *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.* – Proverbs 3:5-6.

But I wanted to think just a bit more about the New Year and was inspired by an article written by Father Michael Schmitz on March 1, 2023, on "How Should I Handle the New Year?" In short, we mark the passing of time with each New Year. When I was in High School and would baby sit on New Year's Eve, I would take the time to reflect on the past year in my journal. It consisted of highlights of my year and hopes for the upcoming year. As I read Father Schmitz's article, he broke down the meaning of the passing of time into Hold, Reflect and Remember.

Many times, we are so busy with the rhythm of our seasons of the year and periods of our life that we forget to **hold** on to the value of our experiences which include the people in our lives and our conversations with them. Don't assume that you'll always have another chance to have talks with your family and friends. When you are in the moment with them be more conscious of how precious that time is with them and what you each are saying to each other. In Luke's Gospel he commented about the events in Jesus' life and how "Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart."

Next, I know that I'm guilty of not taking time to **reflect** on what I do. It's as if there is a check list of things to complete each day, month and year that I haven't taken the time to contemplate on all that has happened before moving on to the next thing – in my case on to the next adventure. Reading Father Schmitz' article he encourages us to take time to reflect each day, though not necessarily as a prayer, but it can lead to bringing those reflections to our prayer life when we talk to God.

Finally, we need to **remember**. God knows us, and throughout the Old Testament He commands the People of Israel to remember what He has done. Unless we take the time to remember, then we will forget. It is good each day to remember what God has done in our lives, especially in times of trouble. To quote Father Schmitz, "But we can never afford to forget in the dark what we know was true in the light. Because of this, we need to act like Mary and **Hold, Reflect, and Remember**. If we do this, we will find that life will never simply 'pass us by.' It won't be able to, because we will actually be living."

Source: <https://faithsyndicated.org/how-should-i-handle-new-year>

DECEMBER LUNCHEON GUEST SPEAKER

SARA MARKS TALKED ABOUT HER NOVEMBER TRIP TO ANTARCTICA

Photo credits: Sara Marks and photos of Antarctica map and Shackleton slides from Atlas Ocean Voyages



Antarctica

My Seventh Continent

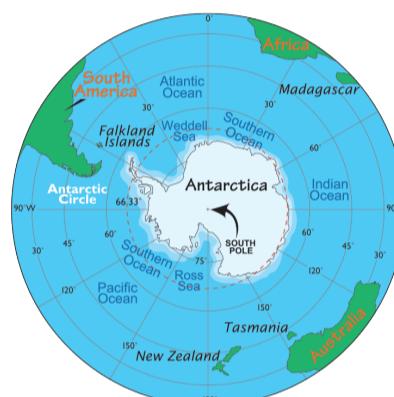


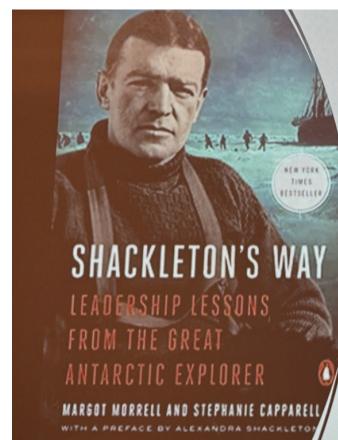
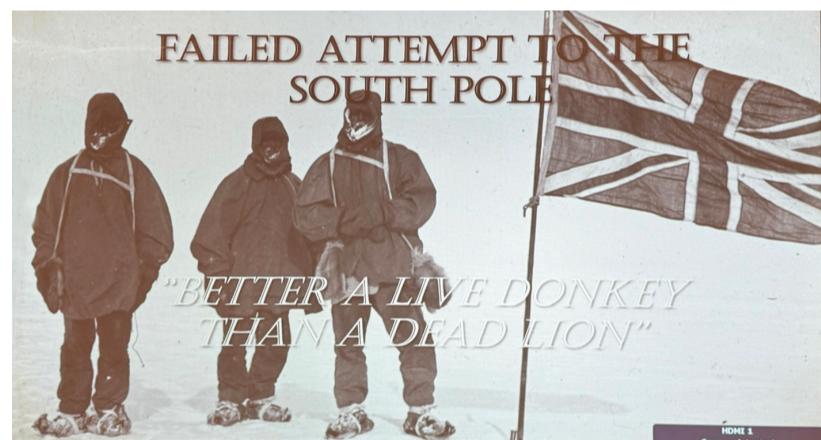
Image source: <https://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countries/an.htm>

Antarctica Exploration



"For scientific leadership, give me Scott, for swift and efficient travel give me Amundsen. But when you are in a hopeless situation, when you are seeing no way out, get down on your knees and pray for Shackleton."

--Sir Raymond Priestley,
A member of the 1907-09 Nimrod Expedition



SHACKLETON LEADERSHIP TODAY

- Prioritizing people over the original mission
- Optimism and Resilience
- Leading from the front
- Building a cohesive team
- Maintaining morale
- Adaptability and decisiveness
- Empathy and communication



HAVE YOU VISITED OUR WEBSITE AND 'LIKED' OUR FACEBOOK PAGE?

www.moaatampa.org and Facebook: MOAA Tampa Chapter

The MOAA Tampa website is a comprehensive and valuable tool that you can use to make the most of your MOAA Membership. Some of the things you can find on our website include:

Events Calendar: We have a new "Events" page where you will find an updated calendar, displaying our upcoming MOAA events. Click on our [Events Page](#) to check it out!

Photo Gallery of Events: This is our photo gallery, where you will see all of the photos during our luncheons, special meetings, conventions and more! If you've had your picture taken at our events, you can likely find it by scrolling through our [Photo Gallery](#)!

Newsletters: Here you will find the latest volume of *The Retrospect*, our award winning Tampa Chapter Newsletter. You can also access archived versions of *The Retrospect* for reference and research. In addition, you can find archived versions of the Military Spouse Newsletter, which has been merged into *The Retrospect* starting in August 2019. Visit [The Retrospect](#) page to read on!

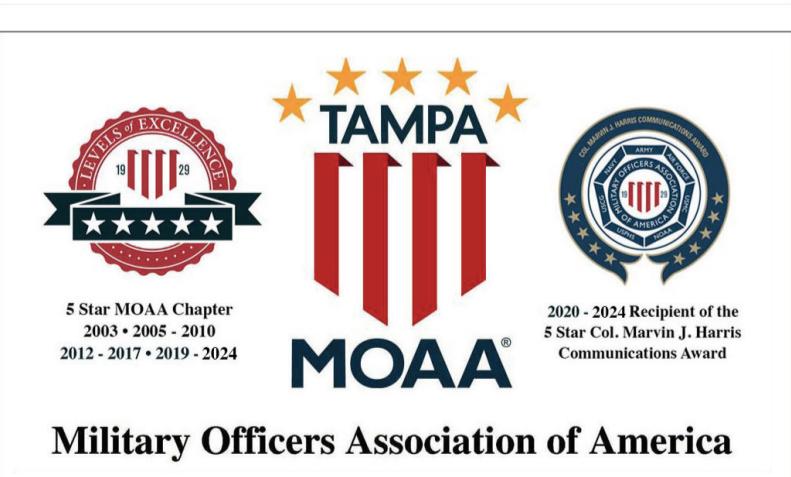
Member Directory: You can access an electronic version of our Member Directory on our website. The list is password protected for safety of our private information, but MOAA Tampa Chapter Members can be provided the pass-word to access. You can also download an Excel version of the list once permitted into the page. Check out the [Member Directory](#) now!

Facebook: Visit us on Facebook at "[MOAA Tampa Chapter](#)" where you can scroll through our photo albums, like and share our posts, and stay up to date on Tampa Chapter news and events.

Check out our NEW Instagram account!
https://www.instagram.com/moaa_tampa/



THE TAMPA CHAPTER RATED FIVE STARS 2003, 2005-2010, 2012-2017, 2019-2024



“NEVER STOP SERVING”