



The RETROSPECT

TAMPA CHAPTER — A FIVE STAR CHAPTER OF MOAA NATIONAL



February 2026 VOLUME 32, NUMBER 2

GREETINGS!

From the Vice President's Desk



Subject: Strengthening Our Ranks: Connection, Advocacy, and Commitment

As we move further into 2026, our chapter remains a vital anchor for those of us who shared a life in uniform. The transition from active duty to civilian life—whether it happened last year or thirty years ago—is a journey best traveled with peers who understand the weight of the rank and the value of continued service. This month, we focus on three pillars that keep our organization strong: personal connection, national advocacy, and the logistical support that keeps our

chapter operational.

We're working hard to reach out to everyone for leadership positions both on and off the board of directors. Several people have requested roles for the board that we will be vetting, but we still need others to volunteer for the roles of president, vice president and secretary/assistant secretary. We hope to have these roles filled in February and will have voting by the membership at the February luncheon. More volunteers are needed to help with the operations of this chapter to include chaplain, assistant luncheon reservations management, assistant treasurer, speaker coordinator, assistant to editor (includes copy editor roles), assistant for website review, assistant for Buddy Calls, assistant for scholarship application review to name a few. Reach out to either me at membership@moaatampa.org, Lewis VanDyke at treasurer@moaatampa.org or Sara Marks at coms@moaatampa.org.

Reconnecting the Long Gray Line

First, I have a personal challenge for every member reading this. Think back to a past meeting, a project, or a lunch from a year or two ago. Is there a fellow chapter member you haven't seen in the "chow line" lately? Life has a way of getting busy, and sometimes our colleagues drift away from chapter activities not out of a lack of interest, but simply because the habit was broken.

Pick up the phone or send a quick email this week. Reach out to that person you haven't spoken to in a while. Don't just ask how they are—invite them to sit with you at our next luncheon. A personal invitation is often the only thing standing between a dormant member and a rejuvenated one. Our strength lies in our camaraderie; let's make sure no one in our local ranks is left behind.

Advocacy Alert: The Major Richard Star Act

While we look out for one another locally, MOAA National is engaged in a critical battle on Capitol Hill. Our top legislative priority for 2026 remains the **Major Richard Star Act**.

Currently, an unjust offset forces approximately 52,000 combat-injured, medically retired veterans with fewer than 20 years of service to forfeit their hard-earned Department of Defense retirement pay to receive VA disability compensation. This "Concurrent Receipt" battle is about fairness. These veterans earned their retirement through their service and their disability pay through their sacrifice. They should not be forced to fund their own disability benefits.

MOAA is making a massive push for congressional support to pass this bipartisan legislation. We need you to add your voice to the chorus. You can find specific instructions, talking points, and a direct link to contact your Member of Congress by visiting the MOAA National Advocacy page. Please take five minutes to advocate for those who sacrificed their health in the line of duty.

The Final Push: Annual Dues

Finally, we must turn to the "housekeeping" that allows us to fund our local scholarships, community outreach, and monthly gatherings. We are currently at **60% completion** for our annual dues renewal. The firm deadline for renewal is **January 31st**. If you haven't yet settled your dues for the year, please do so within the next week to ensure you remain on the active roster and continue receiving our communications. You have three ways to pay:

1. **By Mail:** Send a check to the Chapter Treasurer (address listed on page 4).

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LEGISLATIVE LOWDOWN



BEN RITTER, SGT USMC
(FORMER)/HONORARY MBR

Capt NORM BILD,
USAF RET

On December 18, 2025, President Trump signed into law the **National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)** for Fiscal Year 2026 (S. 1071). This legislation authorizes approximately \$901 billion in defense spending and national security programs.

Key features include:

- * **Military Pay Raise:** Authorizes a 3.8% to 4% basic pay increase for service members.
- * **"Peace Through Strength" Agenda:** Codifies over a dozen executive orders, including funding for the "Golden Dome" national missile defense shield.
- * **Department of War:** Supports the administration's renaming of the Department of Defense back to the Department of War.
- * **Social Policy Changes:** Eliminates funding for "woke" programs, including Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Critical Race Theory (CRT), and climate initiatives.
- * **Acquisition Reform:** Implements significant reforms to

streamline the defense acquisition process and eliminate regulatory barriers.

* **Border Support:** Fully supports the deployment of National Guard and active-duty troops at the southwest border.

* **Foreign Aid and Strategy:** Includes \$400–\$800 million in aid for Ukraine over two years and restricts U.S. investment in China.

According to a recent article in the Military Times, 1.5 million troops who received an unexpected \$1,776 so-called "warrior dividend" payment in December won't have to pay taxes on that money, according to confirmation by the Internal Revenue Service. In a December 17 speech, President Donald Trump announced the payments, which he described as a "warrior dividend," would be made to 1.5 million troops, and said they were funded by revenue from tariffs and \$2.9 billion in the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" enacted last July. The Associated Press later reported that the payments weren't being funded by tariffs.

Active-duty service members in pay grades O-6 and below, and eligible Reserve Component members, received the payments, which were described by the Pentagon as "supplemental basic allowance for housing payments." In a recent news release, the IRS said that basic allowance for housing payments is "qualified military benefits," and are specifically excluded from gross income in federal tax law, so they are not taxable.

"The tax-free Warrior Dividend places \$1,776 directly in the hands of our warfighters and their families," Pentagon press secretary Kingsley Wilson said in a Defense Department release on January 16. According to the IRS website, the agency will start accepting tax returns on January 26. The deadline to file federal tax returns for 2025, and to pay any taxes due, is April 15, although there are certain extensions available for

service members, such as those stationed or deployed overseas.

Federal W-2 tax statements are scheduled to be available on DOD's website (<https://www.war.gov>) for active-duty Army, Navy, Air Force and Space Force. They are already available for active and Reserve Marine Corps; Reserve Army, Navy, Air Force and Space Force members; and military retirees. Service members and their families have access to free military-specific tax preparation software as well as free one-on-one help by tax consultants, all provided through Military OneSource. Those eligible can file their federal return and up to five state returns for free. Active-duty service members, eligible family members, survivors and recent veterans up to 365 days after their separation or retirement date can file their taxes for free through this benefit. Some installations may also offer tax preparation services through their military legal assistance offices, on a space-available basis.

MOAA Joins Other Advocacy Groups on Capitol Hill to Support Women Veterans: MOAA joined a cohort of military and veterans service organizations on January 13 on Capitol Hill to advocate for bills that would bolster veteran and military health care providers' understanding of menopause, strengthen mental health support for veterans, and address concerns related to military sexual trauma (MST).

Women veterans are more likely to experience early menopause due to service-related stress and toxic exposures, and the VA notes exposure to burn pits may negatively impact ovarian function. "What we've learned through research is that menopause impacts women who served in the military, both with an earlier onset — so the symptoms come on much earlier than you would expect — as well as much more se-

continued on page 2

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT'S DESK cont.

2. **Online:** Use our secure portal on the chapter website.
3. **In Person (Preferred):** While the deadline is the 31st, we highly encourage you to bring your payment to our upcoming meeting. Paying in person at the **February luncheon** is our preferred method, as it allows us to thank you face-to-face and ensures our records are updated instantly.

LEGISLATIVE LOWDOWN cont.

vere symptoms," said Maureen Elias, a deputy director with the **Wounded Warrior Project**. The symptoms of menopause, which include hot flashes and mood changes, affect readiness, retention, mental health, and long-term well-being.

"Menopause is something that impacts everyone, not just women. There are the people that live with us that have to deal with it as well," Elias said. "And so, making sure that there is good, robust, solid research around how to treat, how to recognize, and how to help women live with these symptoms is going to make the world better for everyone."

Preventing Repeated Trauma: MOAA and its partners met with lawmakers from both parties on both the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs committees to discuss how MST survivors are often retraumatized during exams and through delays in claims processing. MST affects 6.8% of women and 1.3% of men on active duty, according to an FY 2024 Pentagon report. That same fiscal year, the VA received more than 57,000 MST-related claims - up 18% from the previous year.

"We want to make sure that those men and women who have survived military sexual trauma feel comfortable engaging in the VA and having the appointments that are necessary," Elias said. The MOAA-backed legislation would enhance training for all VA employees and contractors handling MST-related claims; expand veteran services and improve infrastructure in support of suicide-prevention programs; and make clearer the paths for MST survivors to provide evidence, choose their preferred medical professional for exams, and reach claims decisions.

"Servicemembers and veterans deserve timely, evidence-based care and a benefits system that works for them, not against them," said Major General April Vogel, USAF (Ret), vice president of Government Relations for MOAA. "This legislation addresses long-standing gaps that directly affect readiness and retention. We urge Congress to move these bipartisan reforms forward and ensure our servicemembers and veterans receive the care, dignity, and support they earned."

NOAA officers navigated hurricanes without clarity on their paychecks.

Ask Your Lawmakers to Protect ALL Servicemember Pay During Future Shutdowns: As another federal fiscal cliff approaches on January 30, the only thing certain for servicemembers and their families is continued uncertainty. Without defense appropriations or last-minute budget moves similar to those used during the latest shutdown, military members would continue to serve without receiving a paycheck. Members of the Coast Guard and of the commissioned corps of the U.S. Public Health Service and NOAA face a future that's just as murky. Last year USPHS and NOAA officers missed checks, including some officers who were serving alongside others in uniform.

While lawmakers continue their budget debates, they can lend at least some clarity to a shut-

down process that has, unfortunately, become a regular occurrence. The Shutdown Fairness Act ([S. 3168](#)) would allow the Pentagon and the Department of Homeland Security to continue paying servicemembers during any future funding lapse. The Shutdown Fairness Act notes the protection of National Guard and Reserve members, who would be compensated for both active service and inactive duty training. It does not specify protections for USPHS and NOAA officers; MOAA will continue outreach efforts with lawmakers, who should add such protections before the legislation reaches a vote.

The best solution remains a timely appropriations process, but Congress has failed to pass a full slate of appropriations bills on time for nearly three decades. Agencies are funded piece-meal, adding even more confusion for those in uniform. This year is no different - no votes are planned for defense appropriations, for example, but the Senate could move this week on a funding bill that includes money for the Department of Commerce. This would allow NOAA Commissioned Corps members (and retirees) to receive their pay moving forward while the vast majority of those in uniform received no such guarantee - a reversal from last year, when NOAA officers navigated hurricanes without clarity on their paychecks.

MOAA believes in protecting the service-earned compensation for *all in uniform* - ongoing uncertainty not only shows a lack of commitment to the well-being of the all-volunteer force, it also puts retention at risk, as servicemembers facing regular financial disruptions may consider other career options. The Shutdown Fairness Act - with adjustments to cover all who serve - would prevent servicemembers from becoming pawns in future budget negotiations. Ask your lawmakers to support this legislation and end what's become a vicious circle. Those in uniform continue the mission despite funding delays. They deserve our support, no matter their branch.

Take Action: You can support some of these efforts and more by writing to your lawmakers using MOAA's Legislative Action Center (www.moaa.org). Among the bills that MOAA is backing are:

- * The Shutdown Fairness Act ([S. 3168](#))
- * Servicewomen and Women Veterans Menopause Research Act ([H.R. 2717 | S. 1320](#))
- * Improving Menopause Care for Veterans Act ([H.R. 219](#))
- * Building Resources and Access for Veterans' Mental Health Engagement (BRAVE) Act ([H.R. 6024 | S. 609](#))
- * Improving VA Training for Military Sexual Trauma Claims Act ([H.R. 2201](#))
- * Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act ([H.R. 2576 | S. 1245](#))

Sources:

- (1) Legislative Action Center: <https://moaa.quorum.us/>
- (2) Advocacy News: <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/news-listing/?cat=10>

Space Forces Southern activated at Davis-Monthan AFB

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

Story by [Andrea Jenkins](#)

Date: 01.21.2026 Posted: 01.21.2026 20:18 News ID: 556497

DAVIS-MONTHAN AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. — The U.S. Space Force and U.S. Southern Command officially marked the activation of Space Forces Southern (SPACEFOR-SOUTH) during a ceremony at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Jan. 21, 2026, formalizing the command's role in integrating space capabilities across the Western Hemisphere.

Although SPACEFOR-SOUTH became operational effective Dec. 1, 2025, the ceremony formally recognized the activation with the assumption of command by Col. Brandon P. Alford, and the digital unveiling of the Space Forces Southern emblem, symbolizing the command's mission and regional focus.

SPACEFOR-SOUTH serves as the space component to U.S. Southern Command, responsible for integrating space power with joint, interagency and multinational partners to support regional security, deterrence and stability across Central America, South America and the Caribbean.

"This new organization reaffirms our commitment to address local threats of all shapes and sizes, ranging from malign state actors to violent extremist organizations and to transnational criminal organizations," said Chief of Space Operations Gen. Chance Saltzman. "Space Forces Southern will continue to be a force for good in the region, using space to maintain peace and stability, and defend the homeland."

Saltzman emphasized that space capabilities are not just support elements for the Joint Force, but a fully integrated and critical component in their own right.

"As we clearly saw in recent operations in the SOUTHCOTM [area of responsibility], without space, kill chains don't close, our strategic advantage evaporates, and we can't complete our joint missions," Saltzman added. As the first commander of Space Forces Southern, Alford said the activation reflects the growing operational importance of space to missions conducted daily in the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility.

"Today marks the beginning of a future that is more connected, more informed, agile, and more united in building together to be more capable," Alford said. "As the first commander of Space Forces Southern, I accept this responsibility with humility and optimism. I am confident that together we will shape a space domain that reflects our shared values and shared aspirations."

"We are not just standing up a command today," added Alford. "Together, we are shaping the space domain so that what lies above us strengthens everything we value below."



—Photo By Tech. Sgt. Rachel Maxwell | U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. Evan L. Pettus, left, U.S. Southern Command acting commander shakes hands with Col. Brandon Alford, right, U.S. Space Forces Southern commander during an activation ceremony for U.S. Space Forces Southern at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Jan. 21, 2026. SPACEFOR-SOUTH serves as the space component to U.S. Southern Command, responsible for integrating space power with joint, interagency and multinational partners to support regional security, deterrence and stability across Central America, South America and the Caribbean. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Rachel Maxwell)

A career space professional, Alford brings extensive experience across the enterprise, including operational, instructional and staff assignments supporting missile warning, space control and joint space integration. Prior to assuming command, he served in senior leadership roles aligned with U.S. Southern Command, providing continuity between the command's initial operational capability and its formal activation.

The ceremony included a digital unveiling of the official Space Forces Southern emblem. The design features the Southern Cross constellation to signify that Space Forces Southern is the space component focused on South America, and a lightning bolt symbolizing the speed and responsiveness of space-enabled support to joint and partner forces throughout the region.

In the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility, space-enabled capabilities support operations across vast distances and complex environments. Guardians provide positioning, navigation and timing; secure satellite communications; and space-enabled awareness supporting counter-illicit trafficking operations, multinational exercises, partner-nation capacity building and crisis response—strengthening regional stability and deterrence.

"The activation of Space Forces Southern affirms a simple and powerful idea: we are one hemisphere, stronger together," Alford said.

"Bound together by geography, values, and a shared future above us—connected by shared challenges and shared opportunity."

The ceremony was attended by senior leaders including Lt. Gen. Evan L. Pettus, acting commander of U.S. Southern Command; Maj. Gen. David Mineau, commander of Air Forces Southern; and Under Secretary of the Air Force Matthew Lohmeier, underscoring the importance of space integration in support of joint and departmental priorities.

Headquartered at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, SPACEFOR-SOUTH will work closely with U.S. Space Command, U.S. Southern Command, U.S. Northern Command, the Air National Guard's State Partnership Program and international partners to enhance interoperability and strengthen space domain awareness throughout the region.

The activation of SPACEFOR-SOUTH marks another significant step in formally establishing space as a warfighting domain critical to joint operations, reinforcing security and stability across the Western Hemisphere.

Source: <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/556497/space-forces-southern-activated-davis-monthanafb>

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

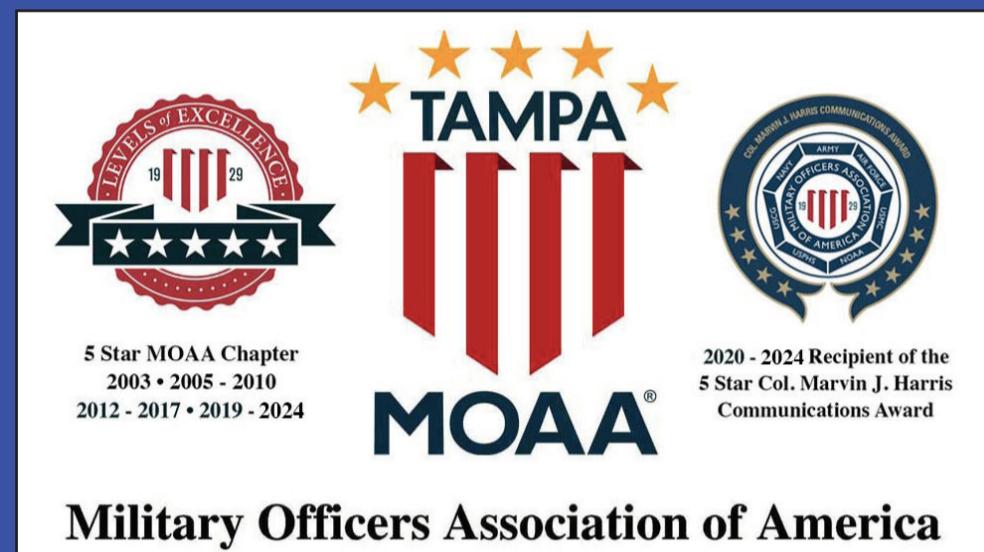
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS: BEN RITTER, SGT USMC
(former)/HONORARY MEMBER

Volunteer Leaders have applied for positions and will be notified pending Board of Directors approval.
Still need other positions filled for President and Vice President.



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
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E-Mail: Secretary@moaatampa.org





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FIRESIDE CHAT WITH GENERAL DAVID H. PETRAEUS

—By Carol Zieres, COL USA (Ret)

When I first joined MOAA Tampa Chapter back in 2012, I remember my first luncheon that drew me into the chapter fold was the keynote speaker; then, Director of the CIA, General David Petraeus (US Army Retired). I remember quite well, the Chapter President, then, LTC Jim Griffin, standing before this large crowd at MacDill AFB Surf's Edge dining room and relaying the news, "Sorry folks, the General couldn't make it today due to an unexpected contingency situation." So, when the opportunity to hear General Petraeus speak rose again on December 18, 2025, I gladly accepted the invitation from AUSA Suncoast Chapter President, Marilyn Westropp, to attend the Fireside Chat!

A nice reception complete with hors d'oeuvres, preceded the formal panel discussion in the auditorium of the Joint Military Leadership Center at the University of Southern Florida campus. I was pleased to visit with some of our coalition friends from USCENTCOM and each of us was given an autographed copy of General Petraeus' book, "Conflict, The Evolution of Warfare from 1945 to Gaza." Rather than summarize, I'll reiterate a few words from the book and some of the insights that General Petraeus shared during his talk:

The four Pillars of Leadership:

1. Get the big ideas right (Vision)
2. Communicate those ideas with the chain of command and key stakeholders
3. Oversee the execution
4. Make necessary adjustments

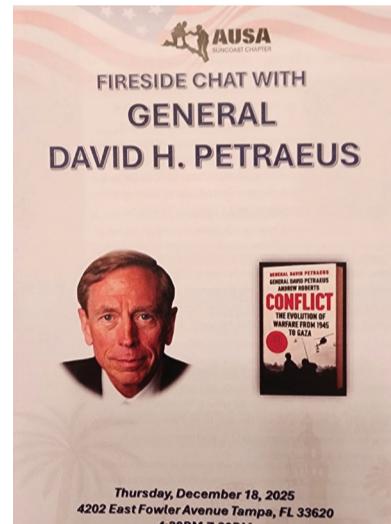
While these pillars are discussed in relation to various wars in the book, they can also be applied broadly to organizations and everyday life. One such comparison was made between the withdrawal of armed forces from the Vietnam war and Afghanistan: "Many hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese were left behind - an outcome that would presage a similarly chaotic and incomplete withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021." (P. 79).



GEN Petraeus



GEN Tan and GEN Petraeus



Thursday, December 18, 2025
4202 East Fowler Avenue Tampa, FL 33620
4:30PM-7:30PM

The US Strategy and conduct of war in Vietnam obviously had some shortcomings that included, not getting the big ideas right, that dramatically undermined the prospects of success. "America's experience in Vietnam was costly, frustrating and ultimately unsustainable and unsuccessful" (P. 79). He often quoted, Prussian Army General, Carl von Clausewitz, and the classic book the Army War College uses as part of their curriculum, "Sun Tzu's - The Art of War," that stresses the moral and political aspects of waging war – "War is the continuation of policy with other means."

Vietnam may be viewed as the transitional war between the use of conventional forces (as in WWII and Korea) and counter-insurgency military operations (dubbed, Guerrilla warfare), which the US military was not accustomed to fighting in such foreign territory at that time in our nation's history. "Military operations in a counter-insurgency campaign must strive first and foremost, to achieve security in the areas of focus – security in the foundation that makes all else possible; without it, nothing else is attainable (P. 82). Winning the hearts and the minds of people means having a deep understanding of the culture, traditions, religions, societal organizational structures, economy, governance, legal system, security forces, etc, is as essential as are the relationships built with the people themselves." (P. 89).

The United States has a long-standing history of involvement in wars throughout its' 250 years of existence. These principles are truly the crux of Petraeus' book on the evolution of war, which transcends any military campaign or war. This is a book that I wish I had in my reference library while I was attending the US Army War College in 2006. I would encourage anyone to obtain a copy to read; especially of note, the interesting collection of detailed lessons learned in the evolution through the ages of the US Military's strategy and operational prosecution of war.

Source: Petraeus, D., & Roberts, A. (2024). *Conflict: The Evolution of Warfare from 1945 to Gaza*. HarperCollins.



Pictured L to R: Colonel Leo De Lange from Netherlands, BrigGen Atle Braaten, Norway, and Colonel Allan Pedersen, Denmark



Marilyn Westropp, President of Suncoast AUSA



Pictured L to R: Glenn Adkins, US Army (Ret), Carol Zieres, and Norm Bild.

General David H. Petraeus
Fireside Chat Guest
Partner and Chairman, KKR Global Institute
General Petraeus joined KKR in 2013 and serves as Partner Chairman of the KKR Global Institute, and Chairman of KKR Middle East. He is a co-chair of the New York Board of Directors of the New York City Board of Education. He is a board member and advisor to leading companies, and a LinkedIn Top Voice.

Conflict
The Evolution of Warfare from 1945 to Gaza

AGENDA

4:30 PM - 5:30 PM
Registration and Networking with light hors d'oeuvres

6:00 PM - 6:30 PM
Opening Remarks by AUSA Suncoast Chapter President Ms. Marilyn Westropp

6:30 PM - 7:30 PM
Fireside Chat with General Petraeus moderated by Dr. Peter Tan

7:30 PM
Closing Remarks by Ms. Marilyn Westropp

Dr. Peter Tan, US Army (RET)
Fireside Chat Moderator
Dr. Peter Tan is a retired civilian Maxillofacial Surgeon and a US Army retired Colonel who served in the United States Army for 40 years, 36 in the highest levels of the DOD and Legislative branches.
He is the former Civilian Advisor to the Secretary of the Army for Tampa Bay (3 Star Protocol) that served the Secretary at the highest levels of the DOD and Legislative branches.
Dr. Tan served as a military clinician, Surgeon General for the Pacific Region and for the European Region; he was the 14 DOD Dental Corps Chief at the Office of the Surgeon General/Pentagon.
A former JROTC and Army Commissioned Officer (DCO) graduate, his family has served our nation for four generations to include his parents currently. Both of his parents were WWII veterans, his cousin and niece are members of the Long Gray Line at West Point, and his uncle and grandfather were Bataan Death March Survivors (POW). His family was awarded 4 Congressional Gold Medals for WWII.
He is currently the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, HCA Florida Oak Hill Hospital, a 300-bed acute care hospital treating patients in Hernando, Pasco, and Citrus counties in Florida.
He was honored to receive the Humanitarian Award in 2023 by the American College of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and has been selected for the 2023 class of the US Veterans Hall of Fame and the 2025 class of the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame.

JANUARY LUNCHEON RAFFLE WINNER

—Photo credit: Ben Ritter



David Zallo, LTC USA (Ret) won two tickets to the Florida Orchestra donated by Bill Merlin, RADM USCG (Ret). Pictured with Barbara Brotherton, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

MOAA
5 Star MOAA Chapter
2003 • 2005 • 2010
2012 • 2017 • 2019 • 2020
5 Star Col. Morris J. Harris
Communications Award
2015, 2017, 2019, 2020

Tampa Chapter Military Officers Association of America

MOAA Tampa Chapter Mission Statement:

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

The MOAA Tampa Chapter is dedicated to supporting our military community in the following ways through our Community Outreach missions:

- Veterans Affairs
- Transition Program
- Support of the Veterans Treatment Court
- Scholarship Programs
- Guard and Reserve Support
- Protecting Military Benefits

U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Space Force, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NEVER STOP SERVING

January Luncheon Photos

Photo Credit: Ben Ritter and Sara Marks



MEDICAL CORNER

New clinical practice guideline recognizes insomnia and sleep apnea can occur together

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

Defense Health Agency
Story by [Janet A. Aker](#)

Date: 01.22.2026 **Posted:** 01.22.2026 08:55 **News ID:** 556510

Getting regular restorative sleep on a regular basis is essential to good health — yet studies have shown that [lack of sleep has left the military less combat ready](#). To address this urgent issue, the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs revised the [Clinical Practice Guideline for the Management of Chronic Insomnia Disorder and Obstructive Sleep Apnea](#) on July 29, 2025.

The lack of restorative sleep is known as chronic insomnia disorder. Obstructive sleep apnea is characterized by repetitive snoring, choking, and awakenings. These two conditions often go together, resulting in sleepiness that affects service member duty performance and overall readiness, and can lead to serious physical and mental health consequences.

The [CPGs](#) are designed to help primary care health professionals use the most up-to-date and evidence-based disease identification and treatment options. They are revised as new information comes in and are created by a working group of cross-functional health care experts in the CPG's particular topic.

The 2025 guidelines combine discussions of insomnia and apnea sleep disorders "because they're important individually, but there's often overlap," said Col. (Dr.) Matthew Brock, a physician and chief of the Sleep Disorders Center at the U.S. Air Force's [Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center](#), Joint Base San Antonio, Texas.

Key highlights for screening and treatment recommendations

The 2025 CPG's updates include:

- Critical need for recognition that insomnia and apnea commonly co-occur
- Addition of nine new recommendations
- Screening integration into routine assessments
- Need for increased attention to screening results
- Challenges of conducting a thorough evaluation of sleep complaints

The CPG recommends more training of front-line providers in sleep medicine and better understanding of the cause of chronic insomnia disorder.

For sleep apnea diagnosis, the CPG recommends in-lab sleep testing, the current gold standard, but at-home testing can be used in certain circumstances.

Those recommendations are in line with what is commonly accepted and used in the civilian sector and are consistent with other guidelines on the topic with few exceptions, said Col. (Dr.) Vincent Capaldi, a U.S. Army physician and psychiatry department chair at the [Uniformed Services University](#) in Bethesda, Maryland, who worked on the CPG.

Insomnia and sleep apnea can go together

Patients with both insomnia and sleep apnea report worse symptoms of fatigue, judgment and reaction impairment, and psychiatric disorders compared to those with insomnia or sleep



—Photo By Airman 1st Class Christopher Morales | An Airman wears a continuous positive-air pressure mask in the 673d Medical Group Sleep Disorder Clinic at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Hospital, Alaska, Oct. 30, 2015. The CPAP is the primary tool to prevent chronic sleep apnea by keeping the airway open and stop snoring. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Christopher R. Morales)

apnea only, according to the CPG.

Insomnia causes more combined illnesses and health conditions than sleep apnea "despite very few people being on profiles or duty limitations for insomnia," Brock explained, adding that insomnia and sleep-related breathing disorders are "vastly under-addressed."

Treating insomnia traditionally has focused on finding the initial cause or underlying condition. "We really wanted to focus on insomnia as its own condition that needs to be addressed without an underlying cause being considered," Brock said, adding that with the updated guidelines, "any patient with sleep complaints is screened for both [conditions] as opposed to assessing for each individually." Screening separately has led to the under-reporting of insomnia, he noted.

Health care providers should integrate these screenings into routine assessments, "particularly for individuals presenting with symptoms of sleep disturbance, excessive daytime sleepiness, or conditions linked to sleep disorders such as hypertension and obesity," according to the CPG.

The guidelines include nine new recommendations for insomnia medications, with [cognitive behavioral therapy](#) — problem-solving specific misconceptions about sleep thoughts and behaviors — remaining as a priority treatment.

The CPG also recommends sleep medications for those who have tried and failed cognitive behavioral therapy, Capaldi said. These include daridorexant (brand name Quviquq), the tricyclic antidepressant doxepin, eszopiclone (Lunesta), and zolpidem (Xanax).

Positive airway pressure given via PAP machines that cover the nose or face, and [mandibular advancement devices](#), or mouthguards, are first-line therapies for mild to moderate OSA, according to the 2025 guideline.

The CPG "uniquely suggests the use of educational, behavioral, and supportive interventions to improve PAP adherence, including telehealth and in-person appointments," Brock pointed out.

The guideline's working group added weight management for sleep apnea along with other OSA treatments, recommending primary care professionals follow the [Clinical Practice Guideline for the Management of Adult Overweight and Obesity](#).

Military sleep issues are widespread

Military service itself may lead to distinct types of insomnia, apnea, or combined sleep disorders in men and women to similar degrees, the working group suggested.

In a select group of service members and veterans reported in 2021, 16% said they had symptoms consistent with insomnia disorder. Service members in combat have reported insomnia symptoms as high as 41%, as have 25% of those not deployed, according to a 2016 study cited in the CPG.

Preparing for deployment also can cause insomnia. A 2016 study found 19.9% of service members reported insomnia as referenced in the CPG.

Source: <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/556510/new-clinical-practice-guideline-recognizes-insomnia-and-sleep-apnea-can-occur-together>

U.S. Forces Metal Detecting in Germany: Finding a Lost Pioneer 52nd Fighter Wing

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

Story by [Airman 1st Class Gretchen McCarty](#)

Date: 01.23.2026 **Posted:** 01.27.2026 08:52 **News ID:** 556855

SPANGDAHLEM AIR BASE, Germany –

10-year-old Gideon was heartbroken when they moved to from Idaho to Germany. Germany was nothing like Idaho. There were no trout-packed rivers that coiled through rugged mountains and plains. There was no gold to be scavenged from the region in which they now lived. He had loved metal detecting with his father for naturally occurring gold by streambeds and riverbeds that wound through 'The Gem State,' but those times were gone.

His father, U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Bradley Graves, the 52nd Fighter Wing inspections manager, knew there was other chances to go metal detecting. In fact, he would have never discovered an important World War II artifact he found in December 2025 if it weren't for his son's passion for the hobby. Artifacts, from Europe's vast history, are scattered around the countryside and can be found everywhere.

"I asked for permission, I did my research, and I found out we were allowed to go metal detecting," Graves said. "I bought a metal detector just so I could go out with him, because it was a good way to keep us both active and outdoors. Now, over the years, we've gotten a lot better and more involved with it."

Graves ensures he is always respectful to the environment and the local population when he goes metal detecting. He always returns the ground back to how it was before he dug there and picks up trash whenever he finds it.

"Metal detecting gets you involved with the local history," Graves added. Learning about the story of the land teaches you about the area we live in, and the community we're a part of. He believes that respect for history and the environment is vital to maintaining a strong positive relationship with host nations.

"We're guests," he said, "We should show the respect of caring about Germany and its history. Many of these families have lived here since before the United States was founded, and they're proud of that."



—Photo By Airman 1st Class Gretchen McCarty | U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Bradley Graves, 52nd Fighter Wing inspections manager, holds his metal detector and shovel at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, Jan. 22, 2026. Graves recently found a World War II German dog tag, a potentially significant historical artifact that could lead to the discovery of a missing service member. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Gretchen McCarty)

Coins, buttons, shrapnel, buckles, and pins make up just part of the various things he and his son have uncovered. All are signs of trade, agriculture, travel, and war with the earliest examples able to be traced back to well before the times of Julius Caesar.

There is one recent piece that Graves discovered recently that stood out to him: a small, unsuspecting, seemingly broken shard of metal. It was German dog tag dating back to WWII. A dog tag is an identification chip that is carried by service members to keep track of their identity in case they are wounded or killed in action.

"It was a cold day, and there was heavy frost on the ground. We had only been out for about an hour and had already found a few small buttons, but nothing super unique," Graves recalled, "All of a sudden, I got a really strong signal, and when I dug it up, it took me a moment for it to sink in what I found."

Stamped in the tag was a series of letters and numbers to identify the original owner. An 'L' for Luftwaffe, the letters 'P' for Pioneer, 'KOL. 16, 52' for his unit and identity, and an A for blood type.

"The half I found is the half that is supposed to stay with the person, so there is the potential for the remains to still be there or otherwise missing," he added. "I was humbled by the fact that I found this."

Graves expressed that by finding a piece of lost history, like this dog tag, he's helping prior servicemembers, giving them the same respect he would want for himself. "We are great allies with Germany, and we owe them this respect for their fallen," he said.

"I hope we can reunite this tag to the family members, and that by doing that we can grant them some type of peace in their mind. Whether the tag was lost, or he was lost, making sure he isn't forgotten will hopefully give them some sense of closure."

If the family is not identified, Graves included that he would likely give it to a local museum. He encouraged people to try metal detecting, as well as other hobbies that increase involvement in the local off-base community, stressing the importance of having a positive presence with host nation partners.

Source: <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/556855/us-forces-metal-detecting-germany-finding-lost-pioneer>

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



Can you believe that we're starting into February already? 2026 is already moving quickly. I'm encouraged about our chapter, but we're still solidifying roles that members have offered to step into. It will require board of director input and your vote at our luncheon this month. I look forward to engaging with those who are expressing interest but also want to follow up on the VP's message in

engaging others to assist in filling other roles. We still 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.

Due to the holidays, I've been delayed in reaching back to potential guest speakers. Hoping that we'll have someone for this month but know that follow-up is happening (and if you know of potential guest speakers let us know). In the meantime, anticipate voting participation by February luncheon attendees for future board members.

Thank you Father Tim Corcoran for your contribution for the Chaplain's Corner, Bob Sawallesh for his article about the Reese Code and Carol Zieres for sharing her experience at the AUSA sponsored Fireside Chat with General Petraeus. I want to also thank COL Pedersen, Coalition Chair and Senior National Representative from Denmark who has updates on his relief 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 six links to several articles that I hope you'll take the time to "click" the links and read. These links to articles include updates on the Space Force and US Coast Guard. Finally, I've added another theme to our newsletter and looking for your input to "Where Did You Travel To?" Please share your travels in the newsletter. Of course, I started it off with my trip to the Arctic Circle in Finland last month. So, where did you travel to?

The deadline for renewing your membership ended on January 31, 2026, however the forms remain in this edition in case you still need to renew by using the forms provided or clicking on the link that takes you to an online

payment site. Another reminder is that the application for MOAA Tampa Scholarship money is 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 and 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!

"Sometimes good things fall apart so better things can fall together."

Romans 8:28 – "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him..."

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 33608-0383. The Tampa Chapter is a 501(c)(19) tax exempt veterans' organization not associated with the Department of Defense and is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).

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/>

MOAA'S NEWS LISTING - Click for the latest news and resources from MOAA www.moaa.org

As a member of MOAA, you are entitled to exclusive member benefits and discounts. Find out more about our member-only services and offers or explore the topics that most interest you.

WHERE DID YOU TRAVEL TO?

FINLAND ADVENTURE IN HELSINKI AND THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

—By Sara Marks, CAPT NC USN (Ret)

Recently returning from Antarctica, I had the proper clothing to visit the Arctic Circle a few weeks ago in Finland. What an adventure it turned out to be! It was a Winter Wonderland with dog sledding, snowmobiling, reindeer sleigh rides, meeting the Finnish people as well as connecting with friends living in Finland and a chance meeting with Santa Claus. At one point it was warmer in the Arctic Circle than in Tampa! Though I'm sure more sunshine in Florida. It was mostly cloudy during my time in Finland, so I'll have to find another time to hopefully see the Northern Lights. So much more to say about my trip, but it was truly a fun and memorable experience that I am still reveling in.





FEBRUARY LUNCHEON MEETING



EVENT: Chapter Monthly Luncheon Meeting

DATE: Thursday, 12 February **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, 6 February. 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, 9 February, 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, Roast Pork, Arroz con Pollo, Seasonal Fresh Vegetables, Platanos Maduros, Coffee, Iced Tea, Soft Drinks and Strawberry Creme Cake

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

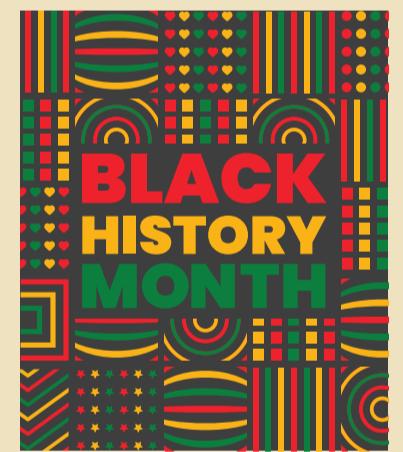
You'll hear the Chapter President frequently mention "Never Stop Serving," and you'll see it sprinkled throughout this newsletter. This Chapter depends on that volunteer spirit from you its members to accomplish so many great things.

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 FEBRUARY

Black History Month
2 Ground Hog Day
3 Four Chaplains Day
4 USO Birthday
8-14 National Salute to Veteran Patients
14 Valentine's Day
16 President's Day
17 Feb – 19 March Ramadan
19 Coast Guard Reserve Birthday



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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The RETROSPECT

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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	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

Advertising	Cost (Artwork supplied)	Cost (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.

NEED HELP? If you do not have a digital ad, we can create one for you. See chart above for pricing based on desired ad size.

DEADLINE: See Digital Publishing table.

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Volunteers Urgently Needed in the Following Areas at MacDill AFB:

Coping with Deployment Facilitator	MacDill AFB Clinic	MacDill Clinic Professional Volunteer	MacDill AFB Pharmacy
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 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. US ARMY AND POLISH LAND FORCES CONDUCT OPERATION WINTER FALCON
<https://www.war.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4382749/us-army-polish-land-forces-conduct-operation-winter-falcon-2026/>
2. COAST GUARD CUTTER RETURNS HOME AFTER SEIZING MORE THAN 18 MILLION IN NARCOTICS
<https://www.war.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4381647/coast-guard-cutter-alert-returns-home-after-seizing-more-than-18-million-in-nar>
3. THIS MARINES FURIOUS FIGHT ON TARAWA HELPED TO SEAL THE BATTLES FATE
<https://www.navytimes.com/veterans/military-history/2026/01/20/this-marines-furious-fight-on-tarawa-helped-to-seal-the-battles-fate/>
4. SPACE FORCE SETS WEAR DATE FOR TRAINING GEAR UPDATES DRESS GUIDANCE
<https://www.airforcetimes.com/news/your-military/2026/01/20/space-force-sets-wear-date-for-training-gear-updates-dress-guidance/>
5. BLACK HISTORY MONTH TIME LINE OF MILITARY HISTORY
<https://nationalvmm.org/education/monthly-awareness/black-history-mo>
5. HISTORY OF FOUR CHAPLAINS DAY
<https://nationaltoday.com/four-chaplains-day/>

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 Korea

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In Afghanistan

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

In the Philippines

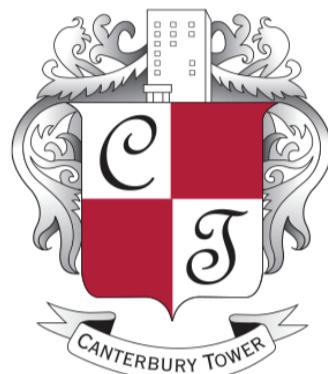
Dial #MYVA or [02-8550-3888](tel:02-8550-3888) and press 7

FLASHBACK PHOTO



Lewis VanDyke, COL USA (Ret), Barbara Brotherton, Lt Col, USAF (Ret) and Matt Mularoni, LTC USA (Ret) at the August 2023 chapter luncheon

Dining...



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Coalition Corner



Dear MOAA members,

This month it is once again time to write a few words concerning allies and partners. After all, that is why we have a coalition, and it is my job as a coalition chairman to enable cooperation and interaction between all the participating countries.

Allies and partners are central to military effectiveness, even in situations where tensions exist between members of the same coalition. While alliances are often idealized as unified and harmonious, in reality they are composed of states with distinct interests, histories, and rivalries. In a military context, allies provide capabilities that no single state can generate alone. Or in more plain terms: By working with allies and partners we want to make 2+2=5. If we only work as individual countries, and sometimes against each other, the sum will be 3 or less. If we work alongside each other the sum will be 4. But if we cooperate actively and adjust our individual plans to each other than the sum will be 5 or more.

Shared intelligence, interoperable forces, logistical support, and access to strategic geography significantly enhance deterrence and operational reach. These benefits remain vital even when one ally threatens another, because the broader alliance framework creates mechanisms for dialogue, restraint, and crisis management. Without such structures, disputes are more likely to escalate into open conflict, weakening all parties involved.

Ultimately, the value of allies and partners lies in their ability to balance cooperation with disagreement. Military alliances are not built on trust alone, but on shared interests, institutional ties, and the recognition that long-term security is better achieved together than alone, even amid internal strain.

We see this playing out all the time in the Middle East as national interests needs to be balanced against the regional security issues such as the continued fight against ISIS and other violent extremist organizations. Presently, Yemen and Syria are the most obvious examples. Hopefully, the parties involved will find a common way to balance their individual needs for security with the overall stability for the region.

As some of you already know, I will be returning to Denmark by mid-February. I still have one article to write, so expect me to look back at the past year in the next article.

For now, I would like to introduce the new Chairman of the Coalition. It will be Colonel Trent Harris from Australia. He and his family arrived in Tampa in December 2025 and are still settling in. They will stay here until December 2027 so you will get plenty of opportunity to meet him in the future.

I wish you all the best.

Regards,

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

Surviving Spouse Corner:

Parenting in Grief: Modeling Virtues That Promote Positive Growth

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

—Author: Andy McNeil

This year's Youth Programs theme is "Virtues That Promote Positive Growth After a Loss." Last year, we examined how loss transforms us and how our personal choices in the midst of grief impact that transformation. The 2025 theme builds on this concept by focusing on particular behaviors or character traits we learn, practice, and develop as we grieve. There are so many aspects of grief that we cannot fully control, but this year's theme aims to provide tangible behaviors and tools our kids can add to their lives to influence positive growth, even in the wake of tragedy. To put it another way, we cannot always choose our circumstances, yet we can choose how we walk through those circumstances. We are inviting parents, caregivers, grandparents, and other family members to join us this year by modeling virtues of growth after loss for the children in your lives and sharing some of the virtues we will highlight this year and ways you might model them for your children.



when we need to, and express our emotions when we need to are all courageous acts. Fortitude is the ability to adapt to our loss, bear the pain, and carry our grief. Fortitude is our ability to put one foot in front of the other and continue to move even when we do not feel like it.

PRUDENCE

Prudence is the act of considering your options and then acting. Another way to think about it is proactivity over reactivity. The ability to control one's actions while grieving is a virtue that will serve you and your children well. We live in a very reactive society today, which can come out as angry behaviors or outbursts — often directed at others. Grief can drain our energy, making it much more challenging to make prudent choices. This is to be expected and is normal. We can learn from those moments when we are more reactive than proactive. Though we may miss the mark many times, children will see even the small things we do to be more proactive and less reactive. If we make the effort, grief will provide many opportunities to reinforce the virtue of prudence, learn from those moments when we are reactive, and lean into opportunities to choose our attitude and behavior, no matter what our circumstances might be.

GRATITUDE

Gratitude is the ability to notice the good things in our lives regardless of what difficulties we might also be facing. Life events are most often a mix of both good and bad things; rarely is it one or the other. Loss, however, can cast a shadow over the good things in our lives, making it challenging to experience gratitude. Some of these good things might be the people in our lives, our personal abilities, work-related events, or personal life circumstances. Though it may be difficult, noticing good things for which we can be thankful can help balance our perspective, mood, and attitude. One activity we do with children often at TAPS is making a list of all the things for which we have gratitude. This is an activity you can do with your children at home.



Modeling these virtues after loss can strengthen the entire family's ability to experience positive growth even in grief. Remember, show yourself and your children grace as you navigate all the challenges of grief and loss. Begin practicing the virtues of patience, fortitude, prudence, and gratitude, and make note of the differences you see in yourself and your children as these virtues are woven into your lives.

Source: <https://www.taps.org/articles/31-1/modeling-virtues-for-positive-growth>

LUNCHEON GUEST SPEAKER

Informative Presentation By Charles Klug, General Council for the Port of Tampa at the January luncheon

—Photo credit: Sara Marks and Ben Ritter





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/>

How We Help and Why You Should Join!

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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

WE CAN CONTROL OUR OWN HAPPINESS



By Rev. C. Timothy Corcoran, III, LCDR, USNR (Ret)

For many of us, turning the calendar page at year-end offers a time of introspection. We reflect critically on the events of the past year. How did we do? What did we do right? What did we do wrong? We also look forward to the new year, considering changes we may need to make. How can we do better? For me, the shift from 2025 to 2026 was particularly thought-provoking because it marked my 80th birthday and the beginning of my 81st year.

The lives we lead are full of ups and downs. As a priest, I have walked with parishioners during the good times and shared their joys. But parishioners have sought me out more often when they need help with their sufferings. In all these interactions, I have observed some handle the tragedies of life better than others. No one welcomes the bad times. Some just deal with them better than others.

So, this year, amid my own reflections at turning 80, the question lingered: Why do some face pain and suffering with poise and grace, while others react with anger and bitterness? Can we control our own happiness?

A few observations.

Yes, we can shape our own happiness. To do so, we begin with gratitude. Tally up all the blessings we have received in life. To a person of faith, God showers us with his blessings, and we are grateful to him. But even a person with no faith can see the multitude of blessings that person has received. Even without attributing those blessings to a munificent

deity, the fact of those blessings is indisputable.

Those blessings are real – in the past, present, and future. They persist even through personal tragedy or crisis. Just look for them. One only need focus on those blessings instead of the cause of the sufferings that are also being experienced. View the cup half full, not half empty.

Picture this: A fresh cancer diagnosis sparks terror – death looms, fear sets in. "What will happen to me? What will happen to my family?" Yes, these are serious and real concerns that one cannot make go away. But you can look at your blessings. "I have enjoyed a long and happy life. Great medical advances are being made in treating cancer. I have a wonderful and empathetic physician. I have a loving and supportive family to be with me. If I must face this disease and the possibility of death, I am in a strong position to do so. Yes, I can make the best of this."

Or this: A teenage son is spiraling downward – bad calls, dim future, dashed dreams. Yes, this is gut-wrenching right now. Still, blessings abound. Think of the blessings of having him in your life. "As hard as this may be today, never having had him in my life would have been so much worse. I cannot lead his life for him. I can only hope and pray that he will get back on the right track. I must let him make his own mistakes so he can learn from them. I can trust this will sort itself out and be okay."

Suffering arrives uninvited into our lives. But we choose how we respond. Expressing gratitude – spotting blessings amid the storms of life – can steer us clear of bitterness and anger. This is how we can control our own happiness.

Fr. Tim Corcoran is Pastor Emeritus of St. Mary Catholic Church in north Tampa. As a retired priest, he helps regularly at many Tampa Catholic parishes, including Our Lady of the Bay Catholic Community at MacDill AFB Chapel.

REESE'S LAW

by Bob Sawallesh, LTC, US Army, Retired



Trying to open hearing aid batteries today is not easy. The packaging is based on Reese's Law. Search: "Reese's Law."

I went to YouTube and one advisor suggested using wire cutters which I found better than using scissors. Speaking of batteries, go to CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) and then search "Batteries."

Reese's Law (Public Law 117-171), enacted in 2022, requires the CPSC to establish mandatory safety standards for button cell and coin batteries. It mandates child-resistant battery compartments in consumer products and specific, prominent warning labels on packaging to prevent ingestion hazards, particularly in children. The law applies to products manufactured on or after March 19, 2024, and covers items like remotes, toys, and key fobs.

Background and Scope:

Named after 18-month-old Reese Hamsmith, who died after ingesting a button battery, the law aims to prevent similar tragedies. The law covers most consumer electronics that utilize these small batteries. Non-compliance can lead to recalls, lawsuits, and significant damage to brand reputation. —Source: Google search for Reeses's Law

REESE'S LAW

—Photo by Bob Sawallesh

Key Requirements of Reese's Law:

Child-Resistant Compartments: Battery compartments must be secured, requiring a tool or at least two independent, simultaneous movements to open.

Warning Labels: All packaging, including that for replacement batteries, must feature a clear, permanent warning label regarding the danger of ingestion.

Safety Standards (ANSI/UL 4200A-2023): Products must comply with new, stricter standards ensuring batteries are not easily accessible during use or abuse.

Certification: Manufacturers must certify their products comply with these standards, with specific requirements for children's products (CPC) and general-use products (GCC).

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

WWW.MOAAATAMPA.ORG and Facebook: [MOAA Tampa Chapter](https://www.facebook.com/moaa.tampa/)

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!

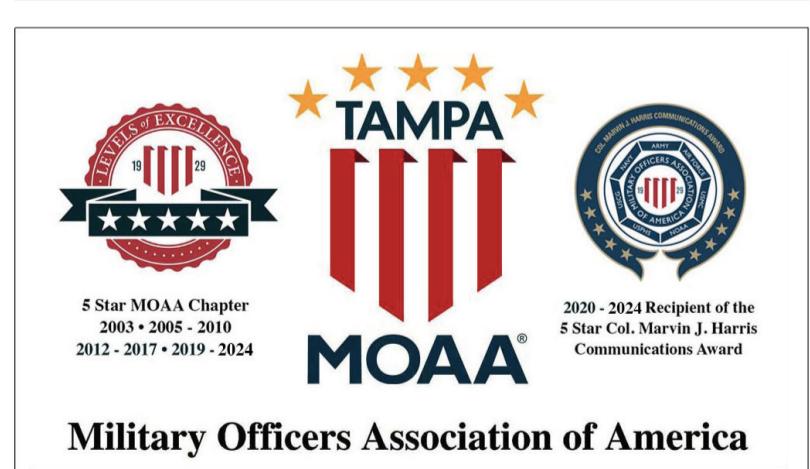
Member Directory: You can access an electronic version of our Member Directory on our website. The list is password protected for safety of our private information, but MOAA Tampa Chapter Members can be provided the pass-word to access. You can also download an Excel version of the list once permitted 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"