

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT COL CHARLES DALCOURT USA RET

GREETINGS!



Greetings to all! I begin with a special thanks to our members that are staying engaged...virtually active and decisively involved across the many areas of interest to MOAA. Our MOAA Tampa Chapter has an incredible core team that continues to pour into every effort and line of business the Chapter pursues. I sincerely appreciate your sacrifice and commitment. We could not operate without your time and talent!

As many continue to navigate and overcome the challenges and constraints posed by the ever evolving COVID-19 crisis, so too our MOAA Tampa Chapter has diligently pressed forward. Your advocacy and support of key legislative issues and initiatives are impactful, and the local support

given by our members resonates across the city. I am excited to see the positive consequences of a mission focused team. I also remain optimistic that we will continue to attract new talent that is committed to both bettering our communities and achieving our mission.

Again, thanks to all within our chapter that continue to make a difference and quietly execute our chapter's business. Jeanne Richard, Tom South, Geoff Harrington, Sara Marks, Bernard Lieving, and Carol Zieres work arduously to move our chapter forward. Please take a moment and share your appreciation of their efforts when able. Thanks again!

Areas of Interest

As we near the end of 2020, there are several routine and special interest items I would like to ensure you are tracking. Several of these are included in different communiques you receive from MOAA. They are also covered by our committee leads in other sections of this newsletter. I offer the following:

- MOAA Tampa Chapter 2021 membership renewal window opens this month;

- Office of Personnel Management has posted the 2021 Federal employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) pricing schedules online;

- 2021 Military Retiree and VA Disability pay increases are published (Survivors receiving Survivor Benefit Plan payments are included); and

- Florida Council of Chapters will host a Leadership Forum in Orlando, FL from 8-9 January at the Rosen Centre.

Please take an opportunity to review these activities/announcements and act as appropriate.

We have arrived...

We are excited to host our November luncheon from the Columbia Centennial Museum on 12 November. It will be both in-person and virtual. If you haven't reserved your seat, you may want to do so soon. There are only 60 spaces available and many are already taken.

We will honor Mr. Ben Ritter (USMC, Honorary) as our Member of the Month. Ben has been an incredible asset to our chapter and a staunch advocate in our community. (continued page 2)

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, our luncheons at the Surf's Edge Club MacDill AFB have been suspended until further notice. Luncheon updates will be disseminated to chapter members via e-mail, newsletter, website and Facebook postings as needed. We appreciate your patience.

Mark your calendars now for the following luncheon events:

12 NOVEMBER, 11:30 AM

COLUMBIA CENTENNIAL MUSEUM IN YBOR CITY (see page 6)

17 DECEMBER, 11:30 AM

IN-PERSON CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON AT PALMA-CEIA GOLF COUNTRY CLUB (Note date change to the 3rd Thursday of December)

REMINDER:

PUBLICATION DEADLINE FOR THE DECEMBER ISSUE IS 25 NOVEMBER 2020

LEGISLATIVE LOWDOWN

BY LTC REGINALD WILLIAMS, USA RET

For more information, visit MOAA National's Legislative Action Center



This month's update will focus on benefits ranging from changes to interment eligibility at Arlington National Cemetery, launching of the VA Caregiver Program, and military retiree and VA Disability pay raise. This article contains several links which may serve as useful references for you.

Act Now: Don't Let Arlington Cemetery Changes Move Forward Without Your Voice

The public comment period on the Federal Register to address dramatic reductions for eligibility to Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) opened Sept. 15 and will close Nov. 16. As of mid-October, there were roughly 700 comments made with a month left to address proposed changes that are discriminatory in nature.

Some members of Congress are watching the volume of comments to gauge interest, making it even more important to make your voice

heard.

ANC is running out of room for interments, and the proposed eligibility changes for interment and inurnment at ANC are designed to extend the life of the cemetery. Unfortunately, if the eligibility changes are approved, many who had planned for an in-ground burial at ANC will have to change plans.

ANC staff are eager to point out that VA cemeteries are available. However, full military honors with caisson are not available at most VA cemeteries.

The fiscal 2019 National Defense Authorization Act directed the Army secretary to establish revised eligibility criteria to keep the cemetery functioning as an active burial ground for 150 years. The proposed changes to eligibility are service- and mission-discriminatory and do not account for all-important military honors for those who would be forced to use a different cemetery.

Non-contiguous federal land is available for expansion of the cemetery, and continuation of military honors as noted above will matter intensely to families who maintain the rare propensity to serve.

The nature of ANC eligibility changes is a matter of national conscience. This challenge is more than a math and geography problem, and it's bigger than the Army. In a financial environment where DoD seeks to prioritize modernization over legacy systems, it is not surprising that the Army would choose a course of action to push more of the memorial mission to the VA. The greater problem is that a national cemetery is an enduring mission that will require non-contiguous expansion; expansion of ANC to other federal property will require funding from Congress ... and your engagement.

(con't page 2)

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT cont'd:

You can enjoy his bio a few pages later. We will also provide our past members of the month their gifts at the luncheon.

Finally, I want to assure you that the Columbia restaurant is prepared to host us in accordance with current guidelines, at all echelons, emplaced to protect us all from the effects of the COVID-19 virus. At the same time, we will exercise prudence on-site and monitor the environment to ensure all remains compliant. Don't forget to log in virtually if unable to attend in-person. We want you to attend and enjoy the luncheon as well. I look forward to seeing you on the 12th.

Wrapping up:

I have mentioned before that it is during times of pain, drought, loss, and uncertainty that both individual and organizational vulnerabilities tend to manifest themselves and seize the thoughts of leaders shaping policy and processes, strategies and plans. This has not been our challenge. I am very proud of your Board of Directors. They have aggressively sought ways to respond, not react, to this crisis and have engaged people and organizations across Tampa to ensure them we are still here...in the fight.

I ask that you continue to support MOAA's advocacy, our Chapter, and get ready for Opera-

tion Helping Hand's relaunch. Jim Griffin has been working hard in coordination with James A. Haley's leadership to reestablish the monthly dinners. Again, an incredible example of our team's resilience and perseverance.

Please stay connected via our website and this newsletter to all that is happening in our sphere of influence. Let's not be distracted by the current crisis but propelled into action on behalf of those we represent.

I pray that God's grace covers you, His strength enables you, and His joy excites you all. Thanks again for all you do. All the best!

LEGISLATIVE LOWDOWN cont'd:

MOAA will continue to encourage our members and others to comment. [Click this link](#) to go directly to the comment page, or you can read the full proposed rule [at this link](#) and make your comments there by clicking the "SUBMIT A FORMAL COMMENT" button in the upper right corner.

It is important for your comments to be yours alone, not the product of mass mailings. Use your own words - if applicable, explain what the changes will mean to you or to your family's future plans.

What Is Next?

When the Federal Register public comment closes, it will take over a year to reconcile and resolve legal challenges before approval. Existing ANC standards will remain in effect during that time.

Intervention from elected officials may be required to change course for reduced eligibility for our national cemetery. Congressional staff members have already indicated it is not too early to reach out to your elected officials and voice your concerns.

[TAKE ACTION: [Submit a Comment](#) | [Contact Your Lawmaker](#)]

Long-Awaited VA Caregiver Program Launches

After a yearlong delay, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) launched its new Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) on Oct. 1, starting the clock for expanding the program to veterans of all eras as mandated in the VA MISSION Act, which took effect in June 2019.

VA will roll out the program in two phases. October starts the first phase for eligible veterans who served before May 7, 1975. The second phase goes into effect two years later, capturing the remaining eligible veterans.

The old PCAFC program was open only to caregivers caring for post-9/11 veterans who sustained a serious injury as a result of their service - an injury limiting the veteran's ability to perform regular activities of daily living.

The new program is expected to provide more standardization and transparency for those applying for or enrolled in the program. One of the most significant changes to the program is the definition of eligibility for veterans: The new regulation expands PCAFC eligibility to include veterans with a 70% or higher disability rating assigned by VA that involves either a single or combined service-connected rating, no matter what the service-connected injury, illness, or disease.

Some readers may remember VA suspended discharges and reduced support under PCAFC in late 2018, including reducing stipends for households who relied on the support for income. MOAA and other veteran and stakeholder organizations pressed VA for improvements to program administration and to address ongoing inconsistencies in determining program eligibility. The secretary heard the message, and his staff has worked hard the last two years to gather feedback from stakeholders to develop and implement the new program to be more user-friendly and transparent to caregivers.

PCAFC Overview

The PCAFC is a subset of a larger program of caregiver support services VA provides to veterans, but it is more specifically targeted at caring for and supporting the needs of caregivers. Under the PCAFC, caregivers receive:

- Monthly stipend paid directly to the caregiver

- Access to CHAMPVA health care (if eligible)
- Mental health counseling
- Caregiver training
- Enhanced respite services
- Certain beneficiary travel
- Ongoing monitoring of caregiver and veteran's needs

VA General Caregiver Services and Other VHA Services

The broader program of caregiver support services generally available to all veterans includes:

- Training and education
- Caregiver support line
- Diagnosis of specific programs for caregivers
- Caregiver support program website
- Peer support mentoring
- Email listserve
- REACH VA for veterans with ALS, dementia, MS, PTSD, or spinal cord injury/disorders
- Self-care courses
- Home telehealth
- Respite care
- Home hospice care
- Home-based primary care
- Homemaker and home health aids
- Veteran directed care
- Adult day health care centers
- Skilled home care
- Other services

MOAA will be monitoring the PCAFC implementation and will look to our members, veterans, and caregivers for feedback so we can share the information with the secretary and his staff to let them know whether the program is working. Share your feedback by sending an email to legis@moaa.org.

Resources and Information

More information on the PCAFC and caregiver resources can be found at the [Caregiver Support website](#), including information on eligibility, how to apply, the program stipend, and other program information and services. Click these links for details:

- [PCAFC website](#)
- [FAQs on PCAFC Expansion](#)
- [FAQs on PCAFC Changes for Current Participants](#) (legacy participant/applicant)
- [FAQs on PCAFC Eligibility](#)
- [FAQs on PCAFC Monthly Stipend](#)
- [Find a Caregiver Support Coordinator](#) in your area

Here's Your 2021 Military Retiree and VA Disability Pay Raise

Military retirees, those who receive disability or other benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, federal retirees and Social Security recipients will see a 1.3% increase in their monthly checks for 2021.

The annual Cost Of Living Allowance (COLA) is slightly less than the 1.6% increase from last year but in line with the historical increases seen over the last 10 years.

Each year, military retirement pay, Survivor Benefit Plan Annuities, VA Compensation and Pensions, and Social Security benefits are adjusted for the rate of inflation.

Military retirement pay is one of the top three benefits of military service, along with medical and other benefits. Understanding how to calculate military retirement pay involves understanding the final pay and high 36-month average methods.

Retirement Pay Increase

As a result of the increase, retired military members will see a \$13 increase for each \$1,000 in military retirement pension they receive each month.

Retirees who entered military service on or after Aug. 1, 1986, and opted for the Career Status Bonus (CSB/Redux retirement plan) have any COLA increases reduced by 1%, so they will see a smaller increase in 2021. They should see a monthly increase of only \$3 per \$1,000.

Survivors receiving Survivor Benefit Plan payments will see the same increase of \$13 per \$1,000 in their monthly payments.

Related content at Military.com:

- [Military Retirement & Survivor Pay Dates](#)
- [Get the Military.com Pay App](#)
- [Active-Duty Members on Track for 3.0% Pay Raise in 2021](#)

VA Disability Increase

Disabled veterans will also get a bump. The average VA disability check will go up about \$1.85 per month for those with a 10% rating, and \$19.68 for those rated at 100%.

MILITARY.COM: [See the Current VA Disability Compensation Rates](#)

Other Federal Retirees and Beneficiaries

Military retirees and VA beneficiaries aren't the only ones who benefit from the COLA increase. Civil Service retirees and Social Security recipients will also see the 1.3% jump in their monthly checks.

For Social Security recipients, the monthly increase will mean an extra \$18.07 per month for the average beneficiary.

How the COLA Is Determined

The Department of Labor determines the annual COLA by measuring the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is a measurement of a broad sampling of the cost of consumer goods and expenses. The CPI is compared to the previous year; if there is an increase, there is a COLA. If there is no increase, there is no COLA.

The COLA affects about one in every five Americans, including Social Security recipients, disabled veterans, federal retirees and retired military members.

In 2020, the COLA increase was 1.6%; in 2019, retirees saw a 2.8% increase.

I hope you've enjoyed this month's article as we strive to provide updates that impact our community. Please remember your voice matters and it can be heard by utilizing the link below.

Take action now! [MOAA Take Action Center](#)

Sources:

- 1) www.moaa.org, article by Mark Belinsky, October 14, 2020
- 2) www.moaa.org, article by René Campos, October 1, 2020
- 3) www.moaa.org, article by Jim Absher, October 20, 2020 (Originally on Military.com)

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

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS



OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT: COL CHARLES DALCOURT USA RET

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JUNIOR CHAPLAIN: CDR RICHARD HELVESTON CHC USNR RET

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, Public Health Service, or MOAA and their surviving spouses.

Tampa Chapter



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:

The Tampa Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America
 Post Office Box 6383
 MacDill AF Tampa, FL 33608-0383
 E-Mail: TampaMOAA.Secretary@gmail.com



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November Luncheon Guest Speaker: COLONEL COURTNEY D. FINKBEINER



Col Courtney D. Finkbeiner is the Commander, 6th Medical Group, MacDill Air Force Base (AFB), Florida. As the Commander, she is responsible for providing world-class healthcare, surgical, dental and specialty services to a rapid global air refueling wing, two Joint combatant command headquarters, 31 mission partners and representatives from 47 international coalition nations with an operations and maintenance budget exceeding 56.5 million dollars annually. Col Finkbeiner oversees the Department of Defense's largest single-

unit catchment area supporting more than 241,000 Active Duty and Reserve military personnel, military retirees and their families providing more than 145,000 clinic visits, 19,000 dental visits and 816,000 ancillary visits annually. She accomplishes this with an assigned staff of 650 military, civilian and contract personnel operating primarily at MacDill's Ambulatory Clinic and the Sabal Park Clinic some 18 miles from MacDill. Additionally, the 6th Medical Group provides diagnostic imaging support to Air Force Bases in nine states respectively while providing surgical services at five civilian hospitals throughout the Greater Tampa Bay area. Furthermore, she oversees a 350,000 dollar Air Force Tier 1 Medical Simulation Center to meet training requirements of six medical units across the base, an Air Force's Nurse Transition Training Program in partnership with Tampa's only Level-1 Medical Trauma Center and the Air Force's Saint Petersburg College Dental Hygiene Training Program.

Col Finkbeiner entered the Air Force in March 1991 as a Traffic Management Serviceman. After completing her degree at the University of Central Arkansas, she received her direct commission in the United States Air Force Nurse Corps as a Registered Nurse in 1997. She then went on to serve numerous positions in the fields of nursing and executive leadership.

As a Defense Institute for Medical Operations (DIMO) Instructor, she has led multi-national cadres in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Ghana and the Philippines teaching First Response for Disasters and Trauma Nursing. Prior to her current position, Col Finkbeiner returned from a 365 deployment as the Commander of the 386th Expeditionary Medical Group (EMDG) at Ali Al Salem Air Base and Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait. As the Commander, she led multiple Air Force and coalition medical teams delivering healthcare to over 4,000 joint and allied warfighters in support of Operations INHERENT RESOLVE and FREEDOM'S SENTINEL.

EDUCATION

- 1995 Bachelor of Science in Nursing, University of Central Arkansas, Conway 2005 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), Ala.
- 2007 Master of Science in Nursing, East Carolina University, Greenville, N.C.
- 2011 Master of Military Operational Art & Science, Air Command & Staff College in-residence, Maxwell AFB, Ala. 2012 Air War College, by correspondence, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2014 Nuclear Weapons Certification, Basic Course, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Kirtland AFB, N.M.
- 2015 Nuclear Surety Inspectors Course, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Kirtland AFB, N.M.
- 2018 Master of Strategic Studies, Air War College in-residence, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

PUBLICATIONS

- "Revitalizing the Squadron: Returning Fairness & Search for Truth in Addressing Sexual Assault in the Military" Published by Air University, won AWC Senior Leader Innovation Award, Feb 22, 2018
- "Commanders & Cyber Chat: Should More Guidance be Provided for Social Networking Sites?" Published by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Research & Technology, Apr 16, 2012

ASSIGNMENTS

1. March 1991–April 1997, Traffic Management Serviceman, 188th Fighter Wing, Fort Smith, Ark.
2. April 1997–December 2000, Nurse Manager Same-Day Surgery Unit; Chair, Breast Cancer Initiative, 2nd Medical Operations Squadron, Barksdale Air Force Base (AFB), La.
3. December 2000–October 2002, Clinical Nurse, Family Practice Clinic; President, 36th Wing Company Grade Officers Council, 36th Medical Operations Squadron, Anderson AFB, Guam
4. October 2002–July 2005, Clinical Nurse, Family Practice Clinic; Chair, Nurse Practice Council, 10th Medical Operations Squadron, Peterson AFB, Colo.
5. July 2005–May 2008, Air Force Institute of Technology Scholarship, East Carolina University, Greenville, N.C.
6. May 2008–August 2010, Aerospace Medicine Flight Commander; Health Care Integrator; Deputy Chief Nurse, 66th Medical Group, Hanscom AFB, Maine.
7. August 2010–October 2011, Student Flight Commander, Air Command & Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
8. October 2011–May 2012, Deputy Director, Defense Institute for Medical Operations, United States Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.
9. May 2012–September 2013, Nurse Administrator, United States Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.
10. September 2013–June 2015, Chief Nurse Executive, 377th Medical Group, Kirtland AFB, N.M.
11. June 2015–June 2017, Commander, 341st Medical Operations Squadron, Malmstrom AFB, Mont.
12. June 2017–June 2018, Student, Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
13. June 2018–June 2019, Deputy Commander, 99th Medical Group, Nellis AFB, Nev.
14. June 2020–Present, Commander, 6th Medical Group, MacDill AFB, Tampa, Fla.

DEPLOYMENTS

- March 2009–August 2009, Case Manager, Op CONTINUING PROMISE, U.S.N.S. COMFORT, Atlantic Ocean.
- October 2012–May 2013, Medical Operations Flight Commander, Op NEW DAWN, 386th Expeditionary Medical Group, Ali Al Salem Air Base (AB), Kuwait.
- June 2019–June 2020, Commander, 386th Expeditionary Medical Group, Ali Al Salem AB & Al Jaber AB, Kuwait.

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

- Legion of Merit Medal
- Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters
- Air Force Commendation Medal with four oak leaf clusters
- Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with four oak leaf clusters, "V" device
- Air Force Good Conduct Medal with oak leaf cluster
- Humanitarian Service Medal
- Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters
- Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with gold border and two oak leaf clusters

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2011 Dean's Research Award on Leadership, Air Command & Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2011 Outstanding Performer, Air Command & Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2012 Excellent Graduate, Air War College, by correspondence
- 2014 USAF Outstanding Excellence in Nursing Leadership Award, Air Force Medical Service
- 2018 Senior Leadership Innovation Award, Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

- Staff Sergeant March 30, 1995
- Second Lieutenant May 14, 1997
- First Lieutenant May 14, 1998
- Captain May 14, 2000
- Major August 1, 2008
- Lieutenant Colonel October 1, 2013
- Colonel September 1, 2018

(Current as of August 2020)

Notes from the Editor: Col Carol Zieres USA Ret



Two corrections to the October 2020 Retrospect newsletter should be noted:

1. On the first page in the upper right hand corner, correction is made to the location of the 12 November, in-person luncheon: should read, Columbia Centennial Museum (address: 2029 E 7th Avenue in Ybor City) vs. Columbia Restaurant.

2. The Chaplain's Corner article (Page 10) was authored by our junior Chaplain, CDR Richard Helveston, USN (Ret).

The highlights of this month's Retrospect feature articles commemorating the US Marine Corps 245th birthday and a brief summary of the origin of the USMC land force authored by LtCol. Ken Martin, USMC (Ret).

Our **Member of the Month**, voted by the chapter's board of directors, recognizes "excellence of service" of individuals in the MOAA Tampa chapter. Our November Honorary Member is Ben Ritter (former Sgt-E5) for his patriotism and outstanding service in support of the local Veterans community. For several years, Ben has been actively involved with the Tampa Chapter, Operation Helping Hand, and other local Veterans with Disability groups such as Paralyzed Veterans of America. He is the recipient of the Florida Medal of Merit for his legislative initiative that successfully came to fruition in 2014 in getting telephone number decals placed on all gas station pumps in the state of Florida to assist persons with disabilities. He was subsequently inducted into the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame by Governor Rick Scott in 2017.

Member Spotlight column. LtCol. Ken Martin USMC (Ret) has a long and distinguished career in Criminal Justice, both as a Defense Counsel and Prosecution Attorney in the US Marine Corps as well as in his own private practice in Criminal defense. In addition to his volunteer duties as Tampa Chapter Treasurer, Marine Corps Toys For Tots coordinator, and JROTC awards program, he gives generously of his time

applying his legal prowess as a Mentor for the Tampa Bay Veterans Treatment Court.

This month, we also welcome the introduction of four Senior National Representatives from the Coalition whose brief bios and photos are included.

November Luncheon: We are honored to have the Commander, 6th Medical Group from MacDill AFB, Col. Courtney Finkbeiner, as our 12 November luncheon guest speaker. Concurrent to this in-person luncheon, we are offering a virtual Zoom-link alternative for those who are unable to attend in person. Look for other details regarding the luncheon to be sent via e-mail distribution.

I'd like to personally thank all who have contributed photos and articles to this edition of the Retrospect newsletter. It has been great to learn interesting facts about our chapter members and staying more connected during a time when most of us have been confined to our homes during this pandemic. We look forward to seeing you on November 12th and remember to set your clocks back one hour on November 1st which is Daylight Savings Time.

Please continue to stay healthy and safe - NEVER STOP SERVING!

Carol Zieres, COL, USA (Ret)

Editor

THE RETROSPECT is published monthly by the Tampa Chapter of the Military Officer's Association of America (MOAA), P.O. Box 6383, MacDill Air Force Base, FL 33608-0383. The Tampa Chapter is a 501-©19 tax exempt veterans organization not associated with the Department of Defense and is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).

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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.

OUR EDITORIAL 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 the month, unless otherwise indicated. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, all luncheons at the Mac Dill AFB, Surf's Edge Club, have been suspended until further notice. Stay tuned for announcements of luncheon locations and other updates to be disseminated to chapter members via e-mail, newsletter, website and Facebook postings as needed. We appreciate your patience as we continue to navigate the challenges of this global pandemic.

ON THE WEB:

Tampa Chapter <http://moaatampa.org>

Communications directed to specific board members may be made by accessing their contact Information listed under "ABOUT MOAA TAMPA CHAPTER" and "LEADERSHIP:"

A password protected MEMBER DIRECTORY is posted on the website under the "MEMBERSHIP" category

FL COUNCIL: www.moaafl.org

MOAA NATIONAL: www.moaa.org

OPERATION HELPING HAND: www.operationhelpinghandtampa.com

TAKE ACTION: <http://www.moaa.org/Content/Take-Action/Top-Issues/Top-Issues.aspx>.

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.

UPDATE OPERATION HELPING HAND



LTC JIM GRIFFIN
Chairman, OPHH

"As long as we are needed, Operation Helping Hand will be there..."



Well, we have been under the shadow of the pandemic for eight months. I sincerely hope that you and your families are safe and healthy and continuing to follow the guidelines to the letter.

All of the OPERATION HELPING HAND vital programs of service to our wounded and injured and their families have continued without any interruption. We continue to provide assistance for the requests submitted by the social workers, we continue to update and add gift cards and coupons for the WELCOME BAGS, and the EXECUTIVE COUNCIL stands ready to act upon any requests received. Unfortunately, we are still unable to have our monthly dinners. Be assured,

that as soon as some form of our monthly dinners can be planned, it will be done! Once we can safely conform to all of the many requirements in place, we will begin our dinners on whatever limited basis that safety dictates, but we SHALL RETURN!

OPERATION HELPING HAND needs your continued support to allow us to continue our vital program of service to our wounded and injured and their families. This support can be through donations by checks or by using our website (OPERATIONHELPINGHANDTAMPA.COM)

We are planning another one of BOB AHERN'S fantastic BBQS ON

NOV 7. DETAILS WILL BE FORTH-COMING !

I must close on a sad note. We lost a very strong supporter of Operation Helping Hand from the beginning, MR. GENE GULLET. Gene was responsible for raising money and preaching the gospel of Operation Helping Hand to large group of folks who have continued to follow in this footsteps. Our sincere condolences to Donna and his family. He will be missed.

Please stay safe, healthy, and resilient.

OUR TREMENDOUS GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS MAKE ALL OF THIS POSSIBLE!



Chapter Member Spot-light Lt Col. Ken Martin, USMC (Ret)

Ken Martin has been our chapter’s treasurer for 5+ years. Ken served in the Marine Corps from 1983 to 2003. He was a lawyer and spent most, if not all his time, in the courtroom. In the military, he was a defense counsel, trial counsel and judge and involved in every type of case from murder to misdemeanor crimes. The movie “A Few Good Men” was based on a case Ken prosecuted in Cuba with actor Kevin Bacon playing him. He was also the first judge that ruled that an order to a Marine to take the anthrax shot was a lawful order.

Ken recently retired from his law practice where he specialized in military and civilian criminal defense and currently enjoying full retirement with his wife, Chris. He is a native Floridian born & raised in Pompano Beach and attended Florida State where he earned both undergraduate and law degrees. When he is not watching the Seminoles, he enjoys spending time with his family particularly his grandsons, Landon (2) and Theodore/Teddy (5 months). His daughter, Lauren and husband, Zach, and his daughter, Katie, and husband Dave, all reside in the Tampa area which he is very grateful for.

Toys for Tots helps bring the joy of Christmas to less fortunate children. Our Chapter will collect unwrapped toys, cash and checks at our December luncheon to present to the Marine’s Toys for Tots program. Please bring your donation to the December luncheon. If you are writing a check, please make payable to Toys for Tots.



If you are unable to attend the December luncheon but would like to donate, please send your check to MOAA, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 6383, MacDill AFB, FL 33608.

Thank you for your consideration to making a child’s Christmas a little happier.

NOTICE: CHAPTER DUES FOR 2021 ARE DUE NO LATER THAN JANUARY 1, 2021. YOU WILL RECEIVE A DUES RENEWAL FORM IN THE MAIL. THE DUES WILL REMAIN AT \$25.00.

NOVEMBER LUNCHEON

November 12th will be an in-person luncheon.

Luncheon Location: Columbia Centennial Museum in Ybor City. Corner of 21st Street and 7th Avenue. Parking is behind the Museum building.

Additional Columbia parking is available: 2 lots behind the Columbia and 1 lot in front of the Columbia. Columbia will provide signage the day of the luncheon restricting parking in the Museum lot to luncheon attendees.

Masks will be required at all times except when eating.

The Luncheon will begin at 1130 hours - the Museum will open for those with reservations at 1100 hours.

Cost of the meal = \$30.00 payable by check or cash.

There will be no Chef’s Salad or Fruit Plate options.

There will be no bar service.

Only one table can proceed to the buffet line at a time. Servers will be behind shields and will dish up food for attendees - the plated food will be offered at the end of the buffet line.

Dress code: Business casual (coat with tie optional required for the men)

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 CDR Geoff Harrington USNR Ret at (813) 926-7988 so that he may call or send cards to let them know they are missed. Alternatively, you may send an e-mail to:

TampaMOAA.Secretary@gmail.com

CDR Geoff Harrington USNR, Ret, Sick Call Chairman

IMPORTANT DATES IN NOVEMBER 2020

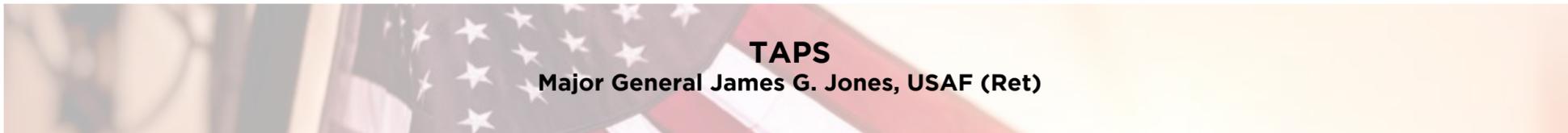
01 - DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ends - set your clocks back one hour.

03 - ELECTION DAY - The general election is always the first Tuesday in November.

10 - BIRTHDAY OF THE US MARINE CORPS - November 10, 1775.

11 - VETERANS DAY honors all members of the Armed Forces who honorably served our country.

26 - THANKSGIVING DAY - The first Thanksgiving was celebrated by the Pilgrims and the Native American Indians in 1621.



TAPS

Major General James G. Jones, USAF (Ret)

COALITION CORNER

Submitted by: BGEN Henrik Larsen



Dear MOAA members,

We trust you are all doing well out there in spite of the various side effects related to the still on-going COVID pandemic.

The international Coalition members are all doing great, though we did see a positive COVID case a couple of weeks ago. However, the family is doing great and on the path for a speedy recovery. As you are probably aware Europe and other nations around the globe are struggling with a second (or third) wave, which we are obviously very closely monitoring.

However, we must and we will continue our mission here at MacDill AFB. We simply have to find a way to navigate through this hopefully interim turmoil looking ahead for the post-COVID timeframe allowing us to get back to all the good things about living – a situation normal if you will.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce some new members of the team here at USCENTCOM (BG Mizon from France, BG Hein from Germany, BG Garshol from Norway, and BG Castilla from Spain). We have recently seen some rotations among the Senior National Representatives (SNR). I am aware that they are all looking forward to engaging with you. A vital part of us being here is of course to reach out to as many as possible both on and off base – all our very good friends in the surrounding community. MOAA is for sure a core element in this regard. Stay safe.

BGEN Henrik Larsen

Danish Senior National Representative to US CENTCOM
Chairman of the Coalition

The Senior National Representative from France

Brigadier General (French Army) Loïc Mizon is the new French senior representative in Tampa. Officer from the French Marines, he has been repeatedly deploying for the last 30 years, in Africa (Ivory Coast, Liberia, Chad, Central African Republic, Rwanda,...), Balkans & Levant as well as serving at a POL-MIL level (Foreign affairs, Joint operations center, security forces assistance)
First French liaison officer to the Joint Staff (the Pentagon) between 2014 & 2017, He is glad to start a new tour in the US with Delphine, his wife, and Berenice his last daughter of four children.
He is awarded of the US Defense meritorious service Medal.



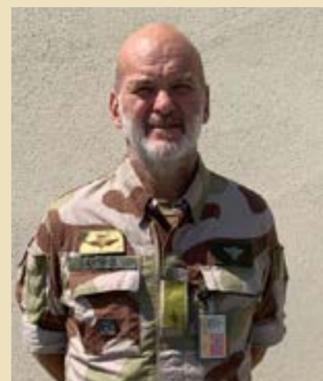
The Senior National Representative from Germany

Dear MOAA family,
It gives me a great privilege to introduce myself as the new German SNR to US CENTCOM. My name is Martin Hein, and I am the replacement for Andreas Delp. My background as an Army General is Armor, and my previous assignment was Commandant of the German Army Officer School in Dresden. Joining the coalition family at US CENTCOM for a two years tour I am very much looking forward to contribute to a common understanding as well as to meet friends and allies.
Me and my wife Sabine live in Hyde Park which gives us the opportunity to gain many new insights in the American way of life in a vivid quarter.
Looking forward to seeing you soon!



The Senior National Representative from Norway

My name is Dag Garshol, and I am the new Norwegian SNR to US CENTCOM here in Tampa. After serving with US forces in Europe and in South Asia on several occasions over the years, I am very happy to have the opportunity to work alongside with colleagues from both US and the Coalition, and represent my country in a very professional US Combatant Command.
Me and my family (wife and two children) came in July, and will stay in Tampa for two years. All the best.



The Senior National Representative from Spain

BG Fernando Rocha y Castilla (ARMY) Infantry man, Special Forces background, spent most of his military career in Special Forces Units, having the chance to deploy 4 times abroad:
Bosnia and Herzegovina (1994, 1998), Afghanistan (2005) Lebanon, (2014). He also was assigned to a NATO Command in Italy (NATO Rapid Deployable Corps) 2005 - 2008 and commanded a Special Force Regiment in North Africa (2016-2018). Among other courses he has specialized in: Paratrooper, Special Forces Course, Combat diving, and Staff Course. Married and has three kids.



TAMPA MOAA VIRTUAL LUNCHEON PHOTOS OCTOBER 8TH



CHAPTER MEMBER OF THE MONTH BEN RITTER

Ben Ritter was born in Towanda, PA. After his father passed away at the age of 42, his mother moved her family of three children to Upper Montclair, New Jersey. He graduated high school from the Hatch Preparatory School in Newport, Rhode Island. After attending two years at Boston University, he



joined the Marine Corps in 1963. He attended boot camp at Parris Island, SC and was subsequently trained as a combat engineer at Camp Lejeune, NC.

His first duty station was at the First Engineer Battalion at Camp Pendleton, California, where, to his surprise, he was assigned as an office clerk. While preparing for his battalion to be sent to Vietnam, he responded to a request for volunteers

for US Embassy Duty. He applied, was accepted and transferred to the USMC HQ in Arlington, VA where he was trained as a U.S Embassy Security Guard

After serving one year at the US Embassy in Khartoum, Sudan, he was transferred to our embassy in Cairo, Egypt, where he enjoyed visits to the Egyptian Pyramids in Giza and other ancient antiquities. Unfortunately, his service in Cairo abruptly ended as a result of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. After being evacuated to Athens, Greece for one month, he took leave and visited Paris and London. He concluded his military career in January, 1968 as a legal clerk in Camp Lejeune, NC.



Ben reached the Rank of Sgt-E5 in the U.S Marine Corps during his 4.5 years of military service. He received a Personal Commendation from the Commandant of the Marine Corps for Outstanding Performance of Duty for guarding the American Embassy in Cairo, Egypt at a time of crisis during the 1967 Six-Day Arab Israeli War and for assisting with the successful evacuation of over 400 American citizens from Cairo to Athens, Greece.

legs, due to an unsuccessful back operation. Using a manual wheelchair and driving a minivan with hand controls, with the help of an able-body assistant he became a specialist in accessible homes with Weichert. He involved himself with local disability organizations, joining the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). On July 26, 1990, along with 3,000 guests, he attended the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by President George H.W. Bush on the South Lawn of the White House. In 1997 he accepted an offer from the PVA and moved to Tampa, Florida where he became the Regional Government Relations Director for the Florida Gulf Coast PVA for fifteen years until 2012.



In 1997, while looking for an accessible house to purchase in Tampa, he met with retired USAF fighter pilot, Major Bill Ryan, a MOAA member and a real estate agent with Weichert who also used a wheelchair. Exchanging stories, Ben told Bill about how he had stood on top of the American Embassy at 7:45 am on the last day of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and watched two squadrons of Israeli jet fighter planes fly overhead as they proceeded to drop their bombs and destroy Egyptian fighter planes that were sitting on the ground at the Cairo Military Air Force Base. Bill turned to Ben and said: "Those were not Israeli planes. They were American F-14's. I led the first squadron of jets that took out the entire remaining Egyptian Air Force." Becoming good buddies, Bill sponsored Ben as an Honorary Member of the Tampa MOAA Chapter. In return, Ben sponsored Bill as the Vice President of the Tampa Florida Gulf Coast PVA Chapter.

Subsequently, in 1998, Bill introduced Ben to MOAA members Captain Bob Silah and Lt. Col Bob Sawallesh who were involved with local efforts to bring the retired USS Forrestal aircraft carrier to Tampa for conversion to a floating military Sea, Air and Space Museum. They became good buddies. Ben was eventually placed on the MOAA Operation Helping Hand Committee. In 2003, twisting his arm, Bob Silah got Ben to attend the October 11 U.S Navy Ball in Tampa. Needing a date, Ben asked Alder Allensworth to come with him to the ball. She accepted. They dated and got married 18 months later in 2005 at the MacDill AFB Officers' Club. They are now living comfortably in a wheelchair-accessible home in the North Forest Hills section of Hillsborough County.

Ben has received many awards for his volunteer services in the Tampa Bay community. Notable are The Florida Medal of Merit, presented by Florida Governor Rick Scott on June 14, 2017 for initiating the 2014 Florida "Telephone Numbers on Gas Pumps" legislation, and induction into the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame by Governor Scott on November 27, 2017.

Ben continues volunteering his services with Operation Helping Hand and with local disability organizations, serving as Chairman of the Tampa Mayor's Alliance for Persons with Disabilities. He began working on October 1, 2020 as Outreach Consultant for the Self-Reliance Center for Independent Living, a non-profit organization in Tampa that provides free assistance and donations of durable medical equipment to qualified persons with disabilities of all ages – veterans and non-veterans.

For Immediate Release
November 27, 2017

Contact: GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

media@eog.myflorida.com
(850) 717- 9282

Excerpt:

George (Ben) Ritter

George (Ben) Ritter is a Marine Corps veteran who actively serves the interests and needs of others. A Governor's Medal of Merit recipient, his passionate advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities is highly respected in Florida's veteran community. His tireless efforts to help drivers with disabilities resulted in Florida being the first state in the nation to have gasoline stations display their phone numbers on gas pumps for pumping assistance.

After his discharge, he returned to school at Columbia University in NYC. He became a successful real estate broker with Weichert Realtors in rural NW Hunterdon County, NJ, specializing in historic homes. In 1988 he lost the use of his



MOAA Tampa Chapter Join Form

Name _____

Rank _____ Service _____

Status _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone_(_____) _____ - _____ cell (_____) _____

Date of Birth Month _____ Day _____

Spouse _____

Emergency contact: Name _____

Phone _____

MOAA National Member Number _____

Tampa Chapter annual dues: \$25.00 (There is no dues requirement for active duty personnel or surviving spouse)
MOAA National annual dues: \$48.00. You can join National MOAA at their website: moaa.org

MOAA National Lifetime dues: Based on age.

Range: \$851-\$0

You can bring the completed form to any event or you can mail it with the \$25.00 check made out to:

“MOAA Tampa Chapter”, to:

Bill Schneider

15888 Sanctuary Dr.

Tampa, FL 33647

Mourner's Bill of Rights: Part Two

Information shared by Ms. Renee Brunelle - Tampa Chapter Surviving Spouse Liaison

MOURNER'S BILL OF RIGHTS

by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.



The pandemic has created unusually complicated death and grief circumstances for many people personally affected by COVID-19. **If someone you love has died from the novel coronavirus, you have certain "rights" that no one can take away from you.** This list is intended both to empower you to heal in ways that work for you, and to decide how others can and cannot help.



You have the right to make use of ritual

Death rituals such as funerals not only help you truly acknowledge a death and express your necessary feelings, but they also bring friends and family together to support one another. Funerals are especially important in circumstances in which you could not be with the dying person or view the body. If pandemic restrictions prevented a meaningful funeral shortly after the death, you have the right to have one or more gatherings in the months to come.



You have the right to embrace your spirituality

If faith is a part of your life, express it in ways that seem appropriate to you. Allow yourself to be around people who understand and support your religious beliefs. If you feel angry at God, find someone to talk with who won't be critical of your feelings of hurt and abandonment.



You have the right to search for meaning

You may find yourself asking, "Why did he or she die? Why this way? Why now?" Some of your questions may have answers, but some may not. And watch out for the clichéd responses some people may give you. Comments like, "It was God's will" or "Think of what you still have to be thankful for" are not helpful, and you do not have to accept them.



You have the right to reach out for support

During the pandemic, many families and close friends have been separated from one another. This has made death and grief even harder than they already are. You have the right to reach out for support with video calls, phone calls, and other forms of technology every day. You also have the right to gather in person as soon as it is safe.



You have the right to move toward your grief and heal

Your grief has been complicated by extremely difficult circumstances, and reconciling it will not happen quickly. Be patient and gentle with yourself, and avoid people who are impatient and intolerant with you. The more you actively embrace and express your grief—bit by bit, day by day—the more momentum you will achieve toward healing.



About the Author

Dr. Alan Wolfelt is an author and educator on the topic of healing in grief. He is a member of the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) Board of Advisors and he serves as Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition. He is also on the faculty at the University of Colorado Medical School's Department of Family Medicine. Dr. Wolfelt has written many compassionate, best-selling books designed to help people mourn well so they can continue to love and live well, including *Healing Your Grieving Heart After A Military Death*, co-authored with TAPS.

Visit taps.org and centerforloss.com to learn more about the natural and necessary process of grief and mourning.

TAPS
in partnership with
Center for Loss
& Life Transition®

HAPPY 245TH BIRTHDAY TO THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS!

History of the US Marine Corps

by Lt Col. Ken Martin, USMC (Ret)

The history of the United States Marine Corps (USMC) begins with the founding of the Continental Marines on November 10, 1775 to conduct ship-to-ship fighting, provide shipboard security and discipline enforcement, and assist in landing forces. Its mission evolved with changing military doctrine and foreign policy of the United States. Here are some interesting USMC facts:

1. The first Marine Corps recruitments took place in a bar. Marine tradition holds that the Corps was formed in a bar. The story dates to late-November 1775, when newly commissioned Captains Samuel Nicholas and Robert Mul-lan organized the first Marine Corps muster at Tun Tavern, a popular watering hole in Philadelphia. The two officers are said to have lured potential Marines with mugs of beer and the promise of adventure on the high seas, and their recruits later made up the first five companies that served aboard Continental Navy ships.

2. The Marines' first battle took place in the Bahamas. The first amphibious landing in Marine Corps history came on March 3, 1776, when a force under Captain Samuel Nicholas stormed the beaches of the British-held island of New Providence in the Bahamas. The 220 Marines had journeyed to the Caribbean with a Continental Navy flotilla in search of military supplies. After landing unopposed near Nassau, they captured the town and took possession of its two forts, both of which surrendered after a token resistance. New Providence's British governor managed to ship more than 150 barrels of gunpowder out of the town before the Marines arrived, but Nicholas and his band successfully seized several brass cannons and mortars that were later put to use by George Washington's Continental Army.

3. The Marine Band is nicknamed "The President's Own". First formed in 1798, the Marine Corps' military band is famous for having performed at the inauguration of every American president since Thomas Jefferson in 1801. Jefferson nicknamed the Marine Band "The President's Own," and since then, its main purpose has been to provide music for the commander in chief at state dinners, parades, and other functions.

4. The Marines first won fame for fighting pirates. Following a brief disbandment after the American Revolution, the Marine Corps was revived in July 1798 and later sent into action against the Barbary pirates, a group of North African corsairs that had spent years raiding American merchant shipping and extorting costly ransoms and tributes. In 1805, Lieuten-

ant Presley O'Bannon and a small contingent of Marines arrived in Egypt and assisted American naval agent William Eaton in assembling a mercenary army to overthrow the Barbary ruler of Tripoli. They then took their soldiers-for-hire on a grueling 50-day march across the desert to Derna in modern day Libya. With the help of a bombardment of U.S. Navy ships, the Marines participated in a daring assault on April 27 that successfully seized the city and its fortifications. The victory was the first ever battle fought by the United States on foreign soil and helped lead to a favorable peace deal in the First Barbary War. The Derna campaign has since been enshrined in the Marines' Hymn with the famous line "to the shores of Tripoli."

5. The Battle of Okinawa was the bloodiest battle in USMC history. U.S. Marines invaded Iwo Jima on February 19, 1945, after months of naval and air bombardment. The Japanese defenders of the island were dug into bunkers deep within the volcanic rocks. In thirty-six days of fighting on the island, nearly 7,000 U.S. Marines were killed. Another 20,000 were wounded. Marines captured 216 Japanese soldiers; and the rest over 17,500 Japanese soldiers were killed in action. The island was finally declared secured on March 26, 1945. It had been one of the bloodiest battles in Marine Corps history. The famous flag-raising atop Mt. Suribachi took place on February 23, 1945; five days after the battle began. Three of the five flag raisers were killed in action. Twenty-seven Medals of Honor (our country's highest military award for bravery) were awarded for action on Iwo Jima—more than any other battle in U.S. history.

Semper Fi and Happy Birthday Marines!



Happy Birthday to The United States Marine Corps! Photos of our MOAA Tampa Chapter United States Marine Corps Members



Rudy Salas
AVAST Honor Guard



Ken Martin



Ken Martin



Bild, Norm



Tinsley, Dick



Tinsley in Viet Nam
with his
A6 Intruder



Ben Ritter



2nd LT Jim Healan



Jim Healan



Luis Jaramillo
AVAST Honor
Guard

‘Marines Make Excellent Soldiers’: Over Half a Marine Tank Company Just Joined the Army National Guard

Over three-dozen former Marine Corps tank company members became soldiers last weekend, after their prior unit disbanded under a broader plan to redesign the service for more agile naval warfare.

The Marines, dressed in that service’s digital camouflage, gathered Sunday at Gowen Field airport in Boise, Idaho, where they raised their right hands and became Idaho Army National Guardsmen, an online photo and caption showed.

All 39 of those transferring were reservists who’d served in Company C, 4th Tank Battalion, which disbanded a month earlier, the Idaho Army National Guard said in a statement. Ten more from the company joined other states’ National Guard units, it said. A tank company typically has about 80 Marines.

“We tried to match their Marine skill sets to an Army military occupational specialty as much as possible,” said Brig. Gen. Farin Schwartz, commander of the Idaho Army National Guard. “We’ll continue to pay them special attention for the foreseeable future to ensure their transition is as smooth as possible.”



More than three dozen former Marine Reservists enlisted into the Idaho Army National Guard on Sept. 13, 2020 at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho. (Becky Vanshur/U.S. National Guard)

Most were tankers, maintainers or other support personnel, the statement said. About one-third switched to the Guard either to continue working on or in tanks, or to remain in the local area, said 1st Sgt. Craig Wilcox, a Marine quoted in the statement.

The Marine Corps tank company operated M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks, which the service began shipping to logistics hubs to be stored, demilitarized, retired from service or sold to other branches earlier this year. The Idaho National Guard’s 116th Brigade Combat Team operates updated M1A2s.

As the Corps began divesting its three tank battalions in a new 10-year force restructuring effort, some 800 Marines in tank-related job fields were given the option to switch jobs and units in the Corps, transfer to a new branch or, in the case of those with at least 15 years of service, retire early.

Staff Sgt. Kyle Dycus switched to the Guard to stay close to family. After initially wanting to stay in the tank community, he chose to try “a more real-world option for my future,” and switched to information technology.

“I am looking at this from a positive aspect and I am thankful for this new opportunity,” Dycus said in the Guard statement. “Change can often be a good thing.”

Marine Commandant Gen. David Berger announced in March that in order to prepare for adversaries like China, Russia, Iran and others, the Marine Corps would close its tank and law enforcement units, while slashing other cannon artillery, infantry and manned aviation units.

The service, which also plans to trim its strength numbers by about 12,000 over the next decade, will instead invest in light armored reconnaissance units, drone squadrons and rocket artillery, among other changes meant to reshape the service to be lighter and faster for naval engagements. Company C, which was formed on July 22, 1942, had been based at Gowen Field, the state’s National Guard base, before its Aug. 14 deactivation.

The company fought in the Pacific theater during World War II and in the Korean War. It returned to Boise as a rifle company in 1954, a statement said, and was designated a tank company in 1962. It saw action during Desert Storm and extensive combat in Iraq in 2005, a statement last month said.

A small number of Marines will remain at Gowen Field until a decision is made about future units to be assigned to the site, officials said, and they will continue to host the annual Toys for Tots program and conduct funeral honors for Marine veterans. The influx of former Marine tankers into the Idaho Army National Guard boosted its total strength by more than 1%, Sunday’s statement said.

“Marines make excellent Soldiers,” Schwartz said in the statement. “They each have the potential to make an immediate impact to their new unit and have already proven to be successful in the military.”

by Chad Garland Source: Stars and Stripes, 16 September 2020

USS Tripoli Arrives in San Diego, Will Carry Marine Corps’ New Age Fighting Aircraft



After a trip around South America, the USS Tripoli has arrived in San Diego and will be used to deploy Marines and their aircraft worldwide.

The America Class amphibious assault ship -- the only one of its kind in San Diego -- was virtually commissioned July 15 at its shipyard in Pascagoula, Miss. The ship arrived in San Diego on Sept. 18.

“Our sailors did an outstanding job in getting Tripoli safely to our new home port,” said Capt. Kevin Meyers, the Tripoli’s commanding officer. “Now, we shift our focus to preparing this ship for her future mission: supporting combat operations and providing humanitarian assistance around the globe, in the air, on land, and sea.”

With the ship comes 1,100 sailors and their families.

The ship joins other Wasp-class, large-deck amphibious assault vessels including the USS Essex, the USS Boxer and the USS Makin Island. The USS Bonhomme Richard was also being retrofitted in San Diego to carry the Marine Corps’ aircraft, when fire broke out on July 12 in its lower vehicle storage area and damaged 11 of the ship’s decks. Investigations are

ongoing.

Unlike the 20-year-old Bonhomme Richard, the Tripoli comes with an enlarged hangar deck and aviation maintenance facilities.

A year ago, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger laid out his plans for a leaner and meaner Marine Corps. He has emphasized returning the Marine Corps to its forward-deployed expeditionary roots with the Navy.

The USS Tripoli, now the largest amphibious ship on the waterfront, will help with this mission and accommodate the Marine Corps’ F-35B Lightning II and MV-22 Osprey.

The USS Tripoli is also likely to appear at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, but probably not before 2025. The weapon station is currently undergoing a \$150 million renovation project in which its ammunition pier, where U.S. Navy ships load and unload ammunition, is being relocated.

“Once we finish out replacement project, she (USS Tripoli) will be able to fit into the harbor,” said Gregg Smith, spokesman for the Naval Base. by Erika I. Ritchie, Orange County Register, 16 September 2020

Marines activate Camp Blaz on Guam, the Corps' first new base since 1952

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

The Marine Corps has activated a new base on Guam for 5,000 members of III Marine Expeditionary Force set to move there over the next five years from Okinawa, Japan.

Camp Blaz, near Andersen Air Force Base, is the first new Marine installation since Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany was commissioned in Georgia on March 1, 1952, according to a Marine Corps statement announcing the activation this week.



"As the Marine Corps presence on Guam grows, I am confident that we ... will honor the history of the island of Guam, we will have the courage to defend it, and we will remain committed to preserving its cultural and environmental resources," the camp's first commander, Col. Bradley Magrath, said in the statement.

The activation comes at a time of rising tensions in the Pacific as China presses claims to sea territory and builds military forces that threaten U.S. forces stationed in the region.

"Blaz' legacy reflects the strong relationship that the Marine Corps and the people of Guam have shared since the establishment of the Marine Barracks [on Guam] in 1899," the Marines said in their statement.

The new base is still under construction in an area known as Finegayan on land that, until recently, was covered in a thick jungle full of snakes and littered with World War II-era bombs and bullets.

The Japanese government is funding \$3 billion worth of projects for the Marines' relocation, with the U.S. government spending another \$5.7 billion, Navy Cmdr. Brian Foster, who is helping oversee construction for the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, told Stars and Stripes during a tour of the new base in February.

Only 1,300 Marines will be permanently stationed on Guam, with another 3,700 coming to the island as a rotational force in the same way a Marine Air Ground Task Force deploys to Australia's Northern Territory to train each summer, he said.

The heart of Camp Blaz, where six-story barracks will be built for unaccompanied Marines, is next door to Naval Computer and Telecommunications

Station Guam, just west of Andersen. Families of Marines working on Blaz will live on Andersen, where another 300 housing units will be built, Foster said.

The facility will include several new ranges, including a "multipurpose" machine gun range along Guam's northwestern coast. An abandoned housing area, known as Andersen South, is being turned into an urban training compound for the Marines, he said.

Facilities for the Marines' aviation element are being built at Andersen's North Ramp, Foster said.

The formal establishment of Camp Blaz secures a Marine Corps posture in the region that is geographically distributed and operationally resilient, the Marines said in their statement.

"Camp Blaz will play an essential role in strengthening the Department of Defense's ability to deter and defend and is also a testament to the strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance," the Marines said.

The Marines will hold an activation ceremony for the base in spring 2021, the statement said.

Source: <https://www.stripes.com/>

Marines Weigh Closing Parris Island and San Diego to Open New Coed Boot Camp

Submitted by: COL Carol Zieres, USA (Ret)

The Marine Corps is considering a plan in which it could close its two existing boot camp locations and funnel all recruits to a new base where men and women would train together.

Marine entry-level training is a long way off from being able to meet a congressional mandate to make its East and West coast training bases both able to support gender-integrated training in the coming years, the Corps' top general said on Thursday.

That is leading the service to study the option of opening a third training base in a new location to which all new recruits would ship, rather than spending cash on construction projects at aging training bases.

"Nothing, the way we're organized right now, lends itself to integrated recruit training," Commandant Gen. David Berger said on Thursday. "If that's our start point -- and it is -- we have to get to a place on both coasts, or at third location or whatever we end up with, that ... there are male and female recruits around."

Both the Marine Corps' recruit training depots have storied pasts -- particularly Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island in South Carolina, which was first used by Marines in the 1890s. Hundreds of thousands of Marines have stood on the famous yellow footprints on each base at the start of their careers before earning the coveted eagle, globe and anchor and title of Marine.

But with a new law bearing down on the service to make both locations support coed training -- within five years at Parris Island and eight at San Diego -- the Marine Corps is exploring different options, Maj. Eric Flanagan, Berger's spokesman told Military.com.

"The question becomes, 'Are we better off just using [military construction] dollars to create a new third site, or put that money into our existing sites?'" he said. "No decisions have been made. We're not investing any money anywhere else. It's just an option we're talking about."

The Marine Corps hasn't yet identified a state where the new boot camp location might be

located, Flanagan said. In assessing the possible change though, he said they're considering a lot more than just the need for coed squad bays and other facility changes to support gender-integrated boot camp.

Parris Island sits on South Carolina's coast, just north of Hilton Head, leaving it susceptible to hurricanes. And in California, recruits leave the recruit depot, which butts up against San Diego International Airport, to complete some of their needed training at nearby Camp Pendleton.

Having two boot camp sites also creates redundancies, Flanagan said. Historically, all female recruits and men who live east of the Mississippi River train at Parris Island. Male recruits west of the Mississippi ship to San Diego.

"If you have to update a lot anyway, do you save manpower, resources and personnel by just combining the two into one?" Flanagan said.

If the Marine Corps were to move boot camp away from its fabled training bases, Kate Germano, a retired Marine lieutenant colonel who led Parris Island's female 4th Recruit Training Battalion, said leaders must explain their reasoning in full. Otherwise, she said she worries male Marines would blame women for the loss of tradition. "There would be so much animus there, as if there isn't already enough," Germano said.

Women first began training at Parris Island in the 1940s, but it wasn't until last year that the training base saw the first-ever coed company graduate. The Marine Corps continues to fight to keep its platoons segregated by gender, though it has trained several more coed companies.

Germano said she's concerned plans to create an all-new training base would slow boot camp gender-integration efforts.

"The way the Marine Corps has kicked this can down the road consistently, it's a delay tactic in my view," Germano said. She was relieved of command in 2015 for what she says was an effort to push for better, more equitable training for women. Marine officials contended at the time she was relieved because she was a toxic leader.

There can be a years-long lag between a planned military construction project, Germano said, and "shovels in the dirt."

"The big question that I have is, where is this on the Marine Corps' list of priorities, and why isn't it at the top?" she said.

A Marine Corps memo on the service's plans to make boot camp gender-neutral released last month referred to it as such.

"Gender integration at Marine Corps Recruit Training remains a top priority," the plan submitted to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services states. "The outcome the Marine Corps desires for gender integration is for every male recruit to train alongside a female recruit within the same company."

But for a service that has struggled to embrace coed training, Richard Kohn, a history professor who studies the U.S. military at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, said a new training site could serve as a fresh start.

"If they build something from the ground up, they'll be able to make it exactly as they want to facilitate integrated training," Kohn added. "And second of all, if they get rid of Parris Island, it might dilute the traditionalist emotions."

Kohn said the move is likely to face pushback from members of Congress interested in keeping the bases -- along with their associated workforces -- in their states.

Flanagan said it's too early to say whether a new boot camp site would mean the Marine Corps would get rid of its two coastal-area bases. Closing military bases can take years, but the real estate in California and South Carolina could prove valuable.

Ultimately, Kohn said, the decision could come down to cost. "The bean counters usually [decide] these things," he said.

by Gina Harkins

Source: Military.com September 28, 2020

Coming Soon to a Military Base Near You: 24/7 Prescription Refills

Submitted by: COL Carol Zieres, USA (Ret)

You may soon be able to pick up your prescriptions at the commissary or exchange without waiting in line in a room full of sick people.

The Military Health System recently announced an expansion of the prescription pick-up locker, or



“ScriptCenter” program, nearly doubling the number of locations that offer the self-service option.

The new ScriptCenter dispenses your medications while you wait. The units will also have video ca-

pabilities one day, allowing a patient to communicate directly with a pharmacist if necessary.

Patients at participating locations will be given the option to get their medication either from the pharmacy or ScriptCenter when they order refills. The ExpressScript mail-order home delivery pharmacy option will still be available.

Active-duty military, dependents, retirees and all authorized Defense Department ID holders are eligible to use the ScriptCenter. Once requested, prescription refills will be available for pickup after three duty days and will stay within the system for 14 days. If not picked up, the prescriptions will return to the pharmacy.

The ScriptCenter offers refills on most common medications; controlled substances and refrigerated medications must still be received in-person from the pharmacist.

In use by the Air Force since 2009, the locker lets users scan their government-issued ID and enter a second personal identifier, such as date of birth or

fingerprint scan, to have their medications automatically dispensed to them.

ScriptCenters are normally located in places such as the exchange or commissary, which are generally open longer hours than the base pharmacy is; however, they can be located anywhere. The ScriptCenter machine is available 24/7, allowing convenient prescription pickup options for busy folks, shift workers and the parents of children (who tend to get sick only on weekends).

There are currently 27 units at Air Force bases in the U.S. and Europe, with plans to add more than 20 additional units throughout the Military Health System in the next year.

The expansion of the program depends on each location’s individual situation, such as safety and security, ease of access and availability of power and secure network communications.

Source: Military.com

Operation Pond Fountain

by Robert F. Sawallesh, US Army, Retired, Valrico

At Bloomingdale Avenue and Lithia Pinecrest Road in Valrico is the Creste Pointe Towne Shoppes with two very large water ponds and each one with a beautiful pond fountain.



The “AWOL” pond fountain in the foreground was returned to duty the first week of October. Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission corresponded with the plaza management to assist and those efforts resulted in timely action and repair of the fountain.

For several months one pond fountain was “AWOL.” This “AWOL” pond fountain was between the Walmart Supercenter parking lot and Wendy’s. My wife and I wondered why this “AWOL” pond fountain was “AWOL” for so long. Finally, we decided something had to be done.

Armed with an Apple iPhone 11 with fantastic camera lenses, a Canon Power Shot SX530 HS Camera with telephoto lenses and at home a Dell desk top computer with the Windows 10 Photo App, I decided to “take action.”

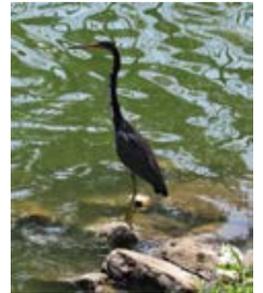
To gather some intelligence and background on these beautiful ponds and fountains, I collected the

appropriate information from the Internet. With the information and photographs, I then Emailed the Hillsborough County Commissioners and filed a complaint on this “AWOL” pond fountain.

The Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) staff then began corresponding with the plaza management to assist and those efforts resulted in timely action and repair of the fountain. This beautiful pond fountain was returned to duty the first week of October 2020.

Although the EPC does not regulate stormwater pond fountains, the EPC staff went above and beyond to assist in restoring the fountain. EPC’s mission is “to protect our natural resources, environment and quality of life in Hillsborough County.”

Extremely helpful in the overall success and support of Operation Pond Fountain, in alphabetical order, is the Hillsborough County Government, Tampa Audubon Society and the University of South Florida (School of Geosciences, College of Arts & Sciences - USF Water Institute).



A tri colored heron faces the pond fountain a few days after the pond fountain was repaired.

Lt. Carl A. Bailey 1st Black Jet Pilot in Florida

Submitted by Shirley & Richard Helveston



Lt. Carl A. Bailey was the youngest child. He was born Sept. 1, 1929 and died Nov. 23, 1957.

Carl didn’t serve in a segregated unit like his older brothers in World War II. He was a member of the integrated U.S. Armed Forces. He was one of two black jet pilots from Florida, at the time, who flew F-84 Thunderjets in the early 1950s.

He flew jet fighters at the end of the Korean War after attending Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, FL.

“He wasn’t actually in the war,” his nephew Maurice Bailey recalled. “He joined up too late.”

“Some of the older folks around town can tell you about him flying over the Punta Gorda water tower in his jet fighter back then,” his nephew added. “The water tower was right next to where his mother lived in those days.”

At 28, and still in the service, Carl was killed while on vacation in an auto accident near Fayetteville, N.C. He is buried next to his father and mother in the historic African American cemetery named in his honor east of Punta Gorda on U.S. 17.

THE BOARD NEEDS YOUR HELP

The Board of Directors have been informed the Club is no-longer an option for our monthly luncheons. It is now an active duty primary facility and can no longer be considered for our use. That means that we must find a place off-base for our monthly luncheons.

For Nov. we are using the Columbia Centennial Museum and Palma Cecilia Golf Club for our Dec. Luncheon. Beyond that date, the chapter remains “homeless” until we find another venue.

We have had a few suggestions now we must get serious. We need your help in finding a place to call home. If you have any recommendations, even if you have submitted them with the survey in the past, please send them again.

We need the name and location along with a name and phone number for us to contact. We must have adequate parking for the restaurant to be considered. The Board will form a Committee to take all recommendations in consideration and will visit and make sure the costs are reasonable for the value offered.

We have been spoiled by having an on Base Club for our luncheons, we should not expect to receive such low costs in the future. Please send all recommendations to Dick Siegman at dicknick2@msn.com as soon as possible. You will be advised as to the Boards Recommendations as soon as we consolidate and evaluate. Thank You for your assistance.

Richard E. Siegman, Lt. Col. USAFRet. Tampa Chapter, MOAA, Board of Directors



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

CHAPLAIN (COL) BERNARD H LIEVING JR USA RET

During my over twenty-seven years as an Army chaplain and my twenty-eight years as a civilian pastor I have never placed a political bumper sticker on my vehicle nor planted a “vote for” candidate sign in my yard. It was not and is not now the appropriate thing for me to do. That does not mean that I am not registered with a political party and that I do not have opinions about the critical issues we are facing in our nation during these difficult days.

Neither of the presidential candidates on my ballot today when I “early voted” is perfect. Regardless, each is the candidate selected by their political party to be on the ballot. One of them will be elected to serve as our President for the next four years. Each of us, as citizens of these United States of American, has the privilege and responsibility

to VOTE for one of them based on our understanding and feelings of which one will do the best job of putting together a competent administration and leading us as a nation to fulfill the Constitution's words: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among them are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Voting is one of the ways we can give thanks for our country in this month of Thanksgiving commemoration and celebration. During the Civil War, in his Thanksgiving Proclamation, President Lincoln wrote of the “watchful providence of Almighty God,” and of the “gracious gifts of the most high God” as he called upon his fellow citizens to “fervently implore the interposition of Almighty God to heal the wounds of the nation.” These words are just as appropriate for today as they were then. Thoughtfully and prayerfully mark your ballot for the one you believe will do the best job of healing our wounds. VOTE!!

HAVE YOU VISITED OUR WEBSITE AND ‘LIKED’ OUR FACEBOOK PAGE?

WWW.MOAAATAMPA.ORG and Facebook: [MOAA Tampa Chapter](https://www.facebook.com/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, as well as events happening with Operation Helping Hand. Click on our [Events Page](#) to check it out!

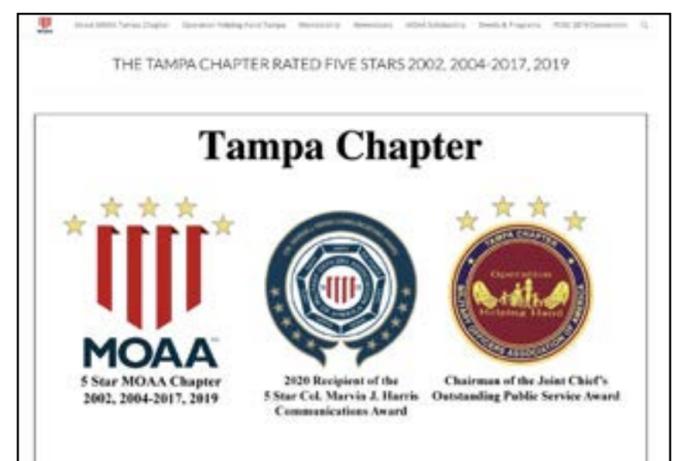
Photo Gallery of Events: This is our photo gallery, where you will see all of the photos during our luncheons, special meetings, conventions and more! If you've had your picture taken at our events, you can likely find it by scrolling through our [Photo Gallery](#)!

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”](https://www.facebook.com/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.

WWW.MOAAATAMPA.ORG



“NEVER STOP SERVING”