



The RETROSPECT

TAMPA CHAPTER — A FIVE STAR CHAPTER OF MOAA NATIONAL

January 2022 VOLUME 28, NUMBER 1



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: COL CHARLES DALCOURT USA RET

GREETINGS!



Happy New Year and greetings to all! It is a pleasure to usher in 2022 after experiencing myriad successes across the Chapter in 2021. I pray that all found joy in this past holiday season and in its midst, you were able to carve out some short respite from the busyness that accompanies the holidays. I hope the exuberance from our Inaugural Winter Gala last month flows into 2022 and that our Chapter will experience the joy of growth, progress, and participation throughout the year. We have high expectations for the future and look forward to an incredible year for our Tampa Chapter.

I extend very special thanks to our members that remain actively engaged across Tampa Chapter's many areas of interest. 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 our MOAA Tampa Chapter continues to diligently press forward, I remain optimistic that we will continue to attract new talent that is committed to both bettering our communities and achieving our mission. The Chapter's initiatives are impactful, and the local support

given by our members resonates across the Tampa Bay metropolitan area. I am excited to see the positive consequences of a mission focused team.

Key Highlights

As we enter 2022, there are few things I would like to ensure you are tracking. Many of these are covered by our committee leads in other sections of this newsletter. I offer the following:

- MOAA Tampa Chapter 2022 membership renewal window is open;
- Florida Council of Chapters will host a Leadership Forum in Orlando, FL from 7-8 January at the Rosen Centre; and
- We are seeking volunteers to fill critical openings in our administrative and outreach areas such as assistants for the surviving spouse liaison, treasurer, and speaker's bureau. We are also in need of members for our Veterans Affairs, Communications, and Outreach Committees.

Please consider these announcements, the import and impact you can make, and act immediately.

Looking forward to lunch...

We are excited to begin the year at the Columbia restaurant on 13 January. It will be both in-person and virtual. If you haven't reserved your seat, please do so soon. We will have a great guest speaker, Dr. David Warren, and will induct the elected MOAA Tampa Chapter Officers for 2022.

As is our custom, we will honor our Member of the Month at the luncheon. This month, serves as a very special follow-up to The Board of Officers and Directors' announcement that BGen Henrik Larsen, has been conferred Honorary Member status in the Tampa Chapter. He is our January 2022 Member of the Month.

BGen Larsen's contributions, both tangible and intangible, to our organization have been incredible. He loyally attends and invites Coal-

ition Officers to every function – luncheons, Operation Helping Hand dinners, and fundraisers; he provides routine updates on Coalition member actions and activities in support of U.S. Central Command; and routinely publishes articles for this Newsletter, *The Retrospect*.

Beyond those things, BGen Larsen is an incredible soul. Inspiring, uplifting, and a true warrior friend, this Chapter... Tampa Chapter, is truly blessed to have him amongst our ranks. Come join us as the Chapter honors him and distributes the Member of the Month certificates to those unable to attend the Winter Gala. Don't forget, you can log in virtually if unable to attend in-person. I look forward to seeing you on the 13th.

Wrapping up:

Please stay connected via our website, Facebook page, and this newsletter to all that is happening in our sphere of influence. I ask that you continue to support Operation Helping Hand. They have reestablished the monthly dinners. Again, an incredible example of our team's resilience and perseverance. Please reserve a seat to attend a dinner soon and find out how you can stand with them in helping servicemembers and families in need.

Again, welcome to 2022. I am honored to continue serving as the Chapter President and look forward to another year of progress. I remain very proud of our Board of Officers and Directors and am humbled to lead the Team. They respond, not react, to challenges in an engaging, encouraging, enlightening, and enthusiastic manner and have remained connected with people and organizations across Tampa to ensure them, we are in the fight.

Thanks again for all you do. I pray that God's protection covers you, His strength enables you, and His joy propels you throughout the New Year.

All the best,
Charles

UPCOMING EVENTS

6 Jan
10:00 AM
Board of Directors Meeting

13 Jan
Chapter Luncheon
11:30
Installation of Chapter Officers
Columbia Restaurant Siboney Room
(See page 6)

7-8 Jan 2022
FCoC Leadership Conference
Rosen Centre Hotel
Orlando, FL

20 Jan 2022 – 6:00PM-8:00PM
OpHH Dinner
USF Embassy Suites
(See page 5)

31 Jan 2022
Membership Renewal Due
(See page 15)

15 Feb 2022 - 9:00AM - 4:00PM
"Thriving After Military Retirement"
Transition Seminar.
FIVE LABS 4115 W Spruce St.
Tampa, FL.

REMINDER:

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
FOR THE FEBRUARY 2022
ISSUE IS

20 JANUARY 2022

Please submit articles in a Word Document and photos in JPEG

NOTICE: if you have a change of address, please notify our membership team--Bill Schneider at 813 977-2572
geowillyl@aol.com or Tom South
813 975-5025 tsouth1811@gmail.com

LEGISLATIVE LOWDOWN



BY LTC REGINALD WILLIAMS, USA RET

Happy and Prosperous New Year to All! As Congress returns and sworn in, our legislators will start with their respective agendas. We want to make sure our voice is heard to ensure our servicemembers, veterans, retirees, family members, and sur-

vivors issues are addressed and medical care and benefits are protected. Now we're in the legislative version of overtime, and while Congress has passed another CR keeping the federal lights on through February, the NDAA has cleared the Senate chamber (S. 1065).

With a general consensus as to the importance of getting a final bill the President would support and sign, the Senate sponsored the idea of an agreed-upon bill using the House's version, with some modifications. Please be ready to engage in those areas still needing attention as outlined below. At the state level, there are several initiatives that our chapter will support FCOC in advocating for affecting servicemembers, their families and veterans. Let's move out!

Pay Raise, TRICARE Changes, and More: What Made the Cut in This Year's NDAA¹

With the distant sounds of sabers rattling from the borders of Ukraine and the Taiwan strait, the Senate passed the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on Dec. 15 by a 88-11 vote. The importance of a strong national defense to deter conflict is notable by the increased appropriations despite the end of 20 years of war in Afghanistan.

The bill, which passed the House 363-70 on Dec. 7 and is in route to the President's desk for signature, authorizes \$768.2 billion – 5% increase from last year, keeping pace with Inflation – and is \$25.1 billion more than requested by the president. Rising inflation, competing economic priorities, and a pandemic that

continues to create new uncertainties and fears will make MOAA advocacy for our uniformed community more challenging in the coming years.

This NDAA did not follow the regular congressional process, where amendments are offered and voted on in each chamber before the bill proceeds to a joint conference committee and a final up-or-down vote in the House and Senate. This year, the Senate ran out of time and chose to accept the House-negotiated version to avoid a vote on amendments.

Negotiations occurred behind closed doors, unlike in previous years, leaving less opportunity for organizations like MOAA to influence lawmakers during the decision-making process. However, much of what is in the NDAA is supported by MOAA and The Military Coalition (TMC), a group of organizations representing nearly 5.5 million members of the greater uniformed services community.

What's in the Bill?

Pay raise: A 2.7% raise for servicemembers keeps pace with the Employment Cost Index (ECI), but does not address the 2.6% gap behind ECI from previous years. The House Rules Committee asked the House Armed Services Committee to look for further increases in the next NDAA, given concerns over junior enlisted family financial problems.

Basic Needs Allowance (BNA): A version of the MOAA-supported BNA is included, but it is not the proposed automatic payment for junior military families falling within a band of the poverty line. The bill's version places a bureaucratic burden on service-

continued on next page

members and their families who often want to avoid the stigma of seeking help and the risk of losing a security clearance or damaging a career. It also does not address the use of the basic housing allowance when computing eligibility, a move which significantly reduces who may apply for support. More advocacy will be needed next year to support vulnerable families as some experts seek to cut personnel costs.

Enhanced parental leave: Primary and secondary caregivers for the birth, adoption, or long-term foster placement of a child will be authorized up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave. This is a significant increase for Navy and Marine Corps secondary caregivers, who currently only have two weeks of parental leave.

New leave category for bereavement: Servicemembers will have access to two weeks of bereavement leave following the death of an immediate family member. Those who have less than 30 days of leave will be provided the two weeks at no charge; those with a balance of over 30 days will be charged only to the point that their leave balance remains at 30 days.

Child care: This NDAA authorizes an expansion of the in-home child care pilot program, which is currently only available in five locations. Additional locations have not yet been identified. Additionally, the bill requires DoD to conduct safety inspections at all child development centers and develop a 10-year facility improvement plan for these centers.

Impact Aid: Federal Impact Aid provides financial assistance to local school districts that have lost property tax revenue due to the presence of tax-exempt federal property. This bill authorizes \$50 million in DoD Impact Aid to assist local educational agencies. An additional \$10 million is authorized to support local educational agencies with higher concentrations of military children with severe disabilities.

Military spouse employment: A pilot program designed to provide direct hire authority for spouses of uniformed servicemembers at OCONUS locations supports First Lady Jill Biden's Joining Forces initiatives to make "the federal government the employer of choice" for military spouses. The bill also includes language to develop a pilot program to establish employment fellowship opportunities for military spouses.

National Guard and Reserve special pay parity: The NDAA eliminates disparities of incentive pays for hazardous duties and aviators. Servicemembers performing these duties have historically earned pay at a rate of 1/30th of their active duty counterparts. However, the implementation of this is delayed until a report is submitted and Congress and the Secretary of Defense certifies the change won't cause a detrimental effect on the force structure. MOAA will continue to follow this closely to ensure this disparity is finally closed.

Temporary one-year halt to military medical billet cuts: This NDAA requires a Government Accountability Office (GAO) evaluation of the DoD analyses used to support any reduction or realignment of military medical manning. DoD is also required to report to Congress on the number of uniformed and civilian personnel assigned to a military treatment facility (MTF) as of Oct. 1, 2019, and a comparable accounting as of Sept. 30, 2022. If the number in 2022 is less than the number in 2019, DoD must provide a full explanation for the reduction to demonstrate compliance with past provisions halting medical billet cuts.

Support for mental health appointment scheduling: Consistent with recommendations from the DoD Inspector General's report on mental health access, this provision requires a minimum one-year pilot to provide direct assistance to beneficiaries with mental health appointment scheduling for both direct and purchased care components of the military health system.

Autism care demonstration program: The bill requires DoD to enter into an agreement with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct an analysis on the effectiveness of the TRICARE Autism Care Demonstration. MOAA believes this is the appropriate next step to help evaluate the significant changes recently implemented to the demonstration.

Suicide prevention: This NDAA seeks to improve the ability for those in uniform to seek mental health support; 580 servicemembers died by suicide in 2020, and the numbers continue to increase each year. The bill includes a self-initiated process enabling a servicemember to request a mental health evaluation by asking for one from a commanding officer or supervisor. Although treatment and access to care is important, Congress and DoD still must tackle the harder problem of improving the quality of life for servicemembers and their families to address the issue using a more complete, effective approach.

Improvement to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) to address sexual harassment and assault: Sexual harassment will become a punishable offense in the UCMJ as DoD seeks to implement the findings of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Harassment and Assault. Adding sexual harassment as a punishable offense, creating specialized military prosecutors, and placing decision authority to refer a case to courts-martial with a military prosecutor are good provisions only if DoD can properly resource the manpower for legal and investigative functions.

Afghanistan study: The bill requires a study on the war in Afghanistan. MOAA will track the progress of this study, which will review the whole-of-government role in this 20-year conflict, to include its tragic end.

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) changes: A House Armed Services Committee (HASC) report on the NDAA expresses the committee's concerns regarding proposed eligibility changes and "directed the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit a report to congressional defense committees no later than March 1, 2022, on potential locations of the next national cemetery."

[What's Not in the Bill?](#)

More forceful ANC language: A halt to ANC eligibility changes with a directive to designate the next national cemetery that will afford full military honors was not included in the bill, though it was proposed as a Senate amendment. This issue will require continued advocacy as the HASC report is pending.

[TAKE ACTION: Ask Your Lawmakers to Preserve the National Cemetery Benefit]

Concurrent receipt: Language from the Major Richard Star Act was not included in the NDAA. It would support over 48,000 combat-injured military retirees with concurrent receipt of medical retired pay and VA disability. These combat-injured (and often seriously disabled) retirees currently are subject to an offset where their medical retirement pay is reduced for every dollar of VA disability received. Retired pay is for completed years of service paid by DoD, while disability compensation is for lifelong injury paid by the VA. Two different payments for two different purposes. To reduce retirement pay because of a disability is an injustice. Support for the Star Act is bipartisan and has grown to 54 Senate co-sponsors and 148 House co-sponsors; the bill has very good potential to reach a tipping point next year. The Star Act is part of MOAA's incremental strategy to achieve concurrent receipt for all retirees.

[TAKE ACTION: Ask Your Lawmakers to Support the Major Richard Star Act]

Women for Selective Service: A provision requiring women to register for the Selective Service was omitted from the final NDAA although the language was in both House and Senate versions. The final report from the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service recommended women should register for Selective Service. Although MOAA remains committed to protecting the all-volunteer force and not returning to the draft, the report highlighted many important recruiting challenges. For example, the commission estimated 70% of 18-to-26-year-olds in the U.S. cannot meet the physical and psychological standards for service and provided important perspective to sustain and improve benefits for the all-volunteer force. This issue likely will return as a problem Congress cannot avoid.

TRICARE Young Adult (TYA): Ensuring military kids have the same health care protections as their civilian peers as they transition to adulthood remains a priority for MOAA. Direct spending impacts were the main barrier to getting this bill in the NDAA, and MOAA will not support a solution that raises fees on other beneficiaries. We will continue our efforts to achieve a TYA parity fix next year.

Florida Legislative News

Pending State Legislation Affecting Servicemembers and their Families who Reside in Florida²

This legislation has been introduced during the preliminary work sessions of the Florida Legislature. The bills are to be considered by the assigned committees and voted on in the regular session of 2022: January 11th -March 11th. The FCOC strategy for supporting these bills will be discussed at the Leadership Conference in January 2022.

SB 0358 Professional Counselors Licensure Compact Ana Maria Rodriguez; R-39

Creating the Professional Counselors Licensure Compact; providing for recognition of the privilege to practice licensed professional counseling in member states; specifying that licensees practicing in a remote state under the compact must adhere to the laws and rules of the remote state

HB 0559 Occupational Licensure of Military Spouses Christine Hunschofsky; D-96

SB 0562 Military Occupational Licensure Janet Cruz; D-18 Requires DBPR or applicable board to expedite professional license applications submitted by **spouses of active duty members** of Armed Forces; requires DPBR to issue temporary professional licenses under certain circumstances; requires DOH or applicable board to issue professional license to **spouses of active duty members** of Armed Forces if certain requirements are met

SB 0430 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children Tom Wright; R-14

HB 0153 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children Thad Altman; R-52

Extends the scheduled repeal of the compact and related provisions (affecting Military Children enrolled in Florida schools)

SB 0896 Educator Certification Pathways for Veterans Danny Burgess; R-20

HB 0573 Educator Certification Pathways for Veterans John Snyder; R-82

Expands eligibility to seek educator certification to specified **military servicemembers** who have completed a specified education requirement; authorizing the Department of Education to issue a temporary certificate to military servicemembers who have completed a required education requirement; specifying the duration of a temporary certificate for **military servicemembers**

Governor Ron DeSantis' Freedom First Budget Strongly Supports Florida's Veteran Community³

Tallahassee, FL – Governor Ron DeSantis' Freedom First Budget provides timely and vital support to the state's 1.5 million Veterans, their families and survivors. †

Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Executive Director James S. "Hammer" Hartsell said: "I'm thankful for Governor Ron DeSantis' steadfast support of FDVA. As a Navy combat deployed Veteran, he and his administration have committed millions of dollars in funding to Florida's Veteran community over the past three years, helping to ensure a positive future for our nation's heroes. Together, we'll ensure Florida continues to be the most Veteran sought-after and Veteran-friendly state in the nation. †"

One of the biggest responsibilities within FDVA is its network of award-winning State Veterans' Homes. The State of Florida boasts six state veterans' nursing homes and one state veterans' domiciliary.

Additional state veterans' nursing homes in Port St. Lucie and Orlando are slated to open to residents in 2022.

Governor DeSantis has proposed funding for the completion and staffing of the additional state veterans' nursing homes in Port St. Lucie and Orlando, and capital improvements and replacement of equipment and furniture for the state's operational veterans' nursing homes and domiciliary.

Other state veterans' home funding includes additional dollars for contract services to cover increased costs and utilization in agency staffing, housekeeping, therapy, medical and pharmacy services. There is also funding to improve the efficiency of veterans' homes staff by upgrading information technology used to track both facility medical equipment and resident medical needs.

The budget provides \$350,000 for continuation of a veteran suicide prevention outreach program. Florida is a role model and leader in the "Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families," a national call to action asking state, military and civilian interagency teams to embark on a process of collaborating, planning and implementing suicide prevention best practices and policies for service members, veterans and their families statewide.

The Governor's Freedom First Budget also continues funding for Florida is for Veterans, Inc. (Veterans Florida). Veterans Florida is a non-profit created by the State of Florida to help military veterans transition to civilian life and to promote Florida's status as the nation's most veteran-friendly state.

Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) and The Fire Watch Team Up To Launch Innovative Veteran Suicide Prevention Program⁴

Watch Stander program trains community members to learn warning signs of veterans in crisis and how to take action.

Jacksonville, FL – Each year more than 6,000 U.S. Veterans take their own lives, including more than 500 here in Florida. Veterans are dying by suicide at a rate nearly 1.5 times higher than that of their civilian counterparts. This tragedy covers all age groups and demographics. It is time to take a new approach toward ending it.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is calling on individual states to accept the challenge of decreasing suicide rates among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families by implementing community-led prevention programs – and Florida has accepted this challenge. The "Florida Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families" will deliver on this promise – to end veteran suicide by preventing veteran suicide. This effort is being led by the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) and implemented by The Fire Watch, a Jacksonville-based non-profit founded on the core belief that if we can help veterans find the community resources they need before considering hurting themselves, then we can reduce, or even potentially end, veteran suicide in our communities.

The Fire Watch's cornerstone prevention initiative is called the [Watch Stander Program](#), an early intervention, life-saving network of community members trained to identify risk factors of veterans in crisis and direct those veterans to the resources they need. Effective 15 November 2021, the program is made available to all Floridians. It is free, on-line and available to everyone by clicking [here](#). At the same time, The Fire Watch maintains non-identifiable, county-specific data on veteran suicides from 2010 through 2019 for the entire State of Florida. This data is also now available to the Florida community on The Fire Watch website at [Firewatch Data](#). Visitors can view the veteran suicide count, the veteran suicide rate, and the number of veterans within any Florida county. Results can be sorted by age, gender, and ethnicity.

When used together, the Veteran Suicide Data and the Watch Stander program allow The Fire Watch – and the community – to identify hot spots throughout our state and focus on building a strong community support network in those areas.

"Think about our program like CPR," says Fire Watch Executive Director Nick Howland. "When CPR training was launched in the 1970s, deaths by heart attack started to decline. Neighbors, colleagues, friends and co-workers all learned the warning signs leading to heart distress and knew to get help quickly. The Watch Stander program is designed to achieve the same result. By having thousands of Floridians aware of the risk factors of veterans in crisis and knowledgeable about how they can help, we will be well on our way to ending the tragedy of veteran suicide here in Florida."

"We are excited to partner with The Fire Watch to end veteran suicide," said retired Marine Corps Major General James S. "Hammer" Hartsell, executive director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. "The Watch Stander program teaches us to identify veterans in crisis and to call 911 or the Veteran Crisis Line in an emergency. This is crucial to saving lives. But, we also want to help veterans before they descend into crisis. That is why, after the initial training video, Watch Standers are asked to spend a few minutes glancing over some key resources that are available to help veterans. One of those resources is the Florida Veterans Support Line at 855-MyFLVet. Any veteran in Florida – at any time – can call 855-MyFLVet or call 2-1-1 and on those lines a Veteran can talk to experienced attendants – generally veterans themselves – who are standing by 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to connect veterans to the resources they need. Together, we will end veteran suicide."

The Fire Watch is Florida's fight to end veteran suicide. You can learn more about us by visiting: [Who We Are and What We Do](#) or texting VETS to 72797.

Remember to take action! [Visit MOAA's Take Action Center](#)

Sources:

- 1) [www.moaa.org](#), article by MOAA Government Relation Staff, December 15, 2021
- 2) [www.moaafl.org](#), Communiqué article by Robert Bienvenue, December 1, 2021
- 3) [www.floridavets.org/news](#), articles dated December 9, 2021
- 4) [www.floridavets.org/news](#), article dated November 15, 2021

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



2021 OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT: CHARLES DALCOURT COL USA RET

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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.

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



This marks my first anniversary of taking over as the editor of The Retrospect! So many changes since my first newsletter! What's been so wonderful since then is that as a chapter we've had in person luncheons, and then were able to come to luncheons without masks, if one was comfortable not wearing a mask, and in spite of this crazy pandemic, have continued to grow as an organization. Case in point,

we had our first fundraiser with the Inaugural Winter Gala December 2, 2021! And if you read my request for your stories, I'm happy to say that this edition will share many of your stories, especially about the Winter Gala! Note that a picture can say a thousand words, so lots of pictures of the Gala for you, too. I'm working with my website manager to put more of the photos of the Gala for you to view on the website coming soon in early January, so keep an eye out for the website. More exciting updates coming to the website in 2022, so stay tuned!

Back to the articles! If you don't think you make an impact on our younger generation, then read the comments from the Freedom High School NJROTC Color Guard and POW/MIA Ceremony. For those who attended the Gala, I think you'll agree that hope for our Nation's future shines brightly in these young men and women. Also, see who made music at the Gala from our Chapter and from the University of Tampa. In the two pages of photos from the Gala, you'll see many of the winners of the Silent Auction and Raffle Sales that were part of the fundraising efforts of the MOAA Tampa Chapter. Note in this edition the many sponsors of the Gala and those who donated auction and raffle items. I am happy to report that did we made money to support our Chapter initiatives: scholarships, transition, and veterans' affairs programs to name a few.

There are other articles that I hope you find interesting in this month's issue: A belated Happy Birthday the Space Force, our newest service; National Guard Support to those affected by the tornados in the Midwest; several articles in the Medical Corner about vaccine advancement that the Army is working on and how to maintain your COVID vaccine card, and mental health among our military teens. These are just a few of the articles, but I do want to thank Bill Mitchell for writing about a recent case involving military reservists and a large corporation on following the law on pay while activated to active duty. And of course, read about our

Member of the Month and Chapter Spotlight.

As I prepare for each edition of The Retrospect, I always love talking to our members highlighted each month in our newsletter. Our chapter wouldn't be successful without you. 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 honorary January, Member of the Month, is BG Henrik Larsen, Senior National Representative of Denmark, and Coalition Chair. He's also a newly minted Honorary MOAA Tampa Chapter Member which, to his great surprise, was awarded to him at the Winter Gala. General, you have been a staunch supporter of our Chapter's luncheons and Operation Helping Hand's monthly dinners, and I personally appreciate your support of The Retrospect, providing a monthly update to the Coalition Corner that adds so much to the newsletter! Our readership values your updates and learning more about many of our Coalition Partners.

This month the Chapter Member Spotlight is the MOAA Tampa Chapter's Inaugural Winter Gala Planning Committee! I'm proud to say that I had the privilege of being a member of that committee, and in the good company of our Chapter President Charles Dalcourt, Tom Kuhar, Kellie Kuhar, Reggie Williams, Bob Sawallash, Geoff Harrington, Paula Stewart, Nicky Siegman and Dick Siegman, Chairman and the man who said, let's have a Christmas luncheon and with excitement and energy the next thing we knew, we had a wonderful Winter Gala! Congratulations to a job well done!

Chapter Members, this is your newsletter so please share your stories, including such topics as military history, individual biographies, the role of military spouses, special events of interest to members, any vignettes of military or veterans service, holiday, commemorative, or celebratory themes, etc. I challenge all of our Chapter Members to send me your stories!

The start of a new year is often the time to reflect, but also a time of hope and a fresh start. I would offer that each day is time for a fresh start. I don't know what the new year has in store, but I do know that it is full of possibilities. I'm excited for the accomplishments of our chapter and the possibilities ahead, especially for growing our chapter. I challenge everyone of membership to reach out in some way, whether to join in on one of our initiatives or to bring in new members so that they don't miss out on amazing ways to contribute to our veteran population and our population at large.

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." --- Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)

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 Officer's Association of America (MOAA), P.O. Box 6383, MacDill Air Force Base, FL 33608-0383. The Tampa Chapter is a 501-C19 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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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 each month at the Colombia Restaurant Sibodney Room in Ybor City and available to attend via Zoom.

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."

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

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

A password protected MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY is posted on the website under the "MEMBERSHIP" category. FL COUNCIL of CHAPTERS: 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>

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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.

Military Teens & Mental Health: Here Are Resources That Can Help

—By Katie Lange, DOD News

If you're a military teen, you know there are ups and downs to living the lifestyle that comes with your parents' career. While some of the challenges are standard for a teen, others — such as duty-station moves, school transitions and deployments — can really put a strain on your mental health.

While DOD Military Community and Family Policy experts acknowledge that challenges will always exist for military teens, there are programs and resources available to help them get through tough times. Since not all military families know about these resources, we thought we would highlight some important ones here. We'll also detail coping mechanisms some military teens have told us they used on their own mental health journeys.

Elena Ashburn, a high school senior based in Florida, moved to a new high school for her sophomore year. It wasn't easy.

"It was so hard for me to go from a place and people I loved so much to a totally new and different environment that didn't feel as accepting," the 18-year-old said. "I've moved four or five times before that, and I've never struggled as much as I did with that one."

Ashburn's family sought out a therapist for her through a private practice; however, parents can also get nonmedical counseling for their teens through military resources, regardless of whether they live on- or off-base. Teens can be connected with mental health providers through Military OneSource and with the help of Military and Family Life Counselors. MFCLs are professionals trained to help recognize teens who are struggling and help them make meaningful connections.

"Quite often, we find that the challenges that teens using these services are facing are around relationships and behavioral issues," said Eddy Mentzer, the acting director for DOD Military Community Support Programs. "[MFCLs] can really get to the heart of the challenges that they're facing."

MFCLs work at installation family support centers, child development centers and within many youth and teen programs. They're also available at DoDEA and public schools that have a high concentration of military-connected students. They have a duty to warn others if they



think an individual might cause harm to his/herself or others. Outside of that obligation, though, meetings with MFCLs are confidential; they don't keep notes or report the people with whom they meet.

Ashburn was not aware of the MFCL program; however, she said her therapist has done wonders for her mental health. She's also found that art, music and writing have been avenues to help her cope by expressing herself and collaborating with friends.

Meanwhile, Ashburn met Matthew Oh, another high school senior, their freshman year at a public school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Both are outspoken, but they believe they're in the minority as teens.

"Elena and I are very confident when it comes to talking about ourselves and talking about what's going on in our

lives, but for a lot of people, that's not the case," Oh said. "A lot of our peers are the type who would just keep it to themselves if given the option and try to deal with it themselves."

While MFCLs and other professionals are trained to identify, understand and respond to various mental health conditions, the DOD is looking to expand that training to others. Ganote said a youth mental health first aid course will be implemented across the force in early 2022. It will teach front-line youth development professionals how to recognize signs and symptoms of mental health issues and how to start nonjudgmental conversations with those who might be at risk.

"We're going to be providing them with the training to give our staff the confidence and the tools to ask a very powerful question: How can I help?" explained Dianna Ganote, a program analyst for the DOD Office of Children, Youth and Families.

Regardless of the avenue used to get help, Oh said it's important for teens to find their voice. "Expressing yourself and releasing your emotions is crucial to surviving military life," he said. "Don't bottle up your troubles. Release them in a form that's comfortable to you."

To read the full article:

<https://www.defense.gov/News/Feature-Stories/Story/Article/2843081/military-teens-mental-health-here-are-resources-that-can-help/>

UPDATE OPERATION HELPING HAND



LTC JIM GRIFFIN
Chairman, OPHH

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OUR TREMENDOUS GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS MAKE ALL OF THIS POSSIBLE!

First of all, special thanks to DICK and the GALA COMMITTEE for a spectacular evening. The planning, presentation, and venue were memorable. If you missed this one, be sure to sign up for next year.

We look forward to beginning 2022 with our OPERATION

mission to provide assistance to veterans of all wars who utilize the JAMES A HALEY VA SCI for their primary source of rehabilitation. OPERATION HELPING HAND will continue to provide support and assistance to the MUSIC, ART, AND VIRTUAL REALITY THERAPY PROGRAMS. This, of course, includes the POLYTRAUMA

JANUARY CHAPTER MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MOAA Tampa Chapter INAUGURAL WINTER GALA PLANNING COMMITTEE
Charles Dalcourt, Dick Siegman, Nicky Siegman, Tom Kuhar, Kellie Kuhar, Reggie Williams, Bob Sawallash, Geoff Harrington, Carol Zieres, Paula Stewart, Sara Marks

It was an amazing undertaking!

Congratulations to everyone who participated in helping to make MOAA Tampa Chapter's Inaugural Winter Gala a wonderful success, but especially to the Inaugural Winter Gala Planning Committee. They had numerous meetings, spent countless hours and some blood, sweat and tears to put this beautiful event together, even when some worried it couldn't be done.

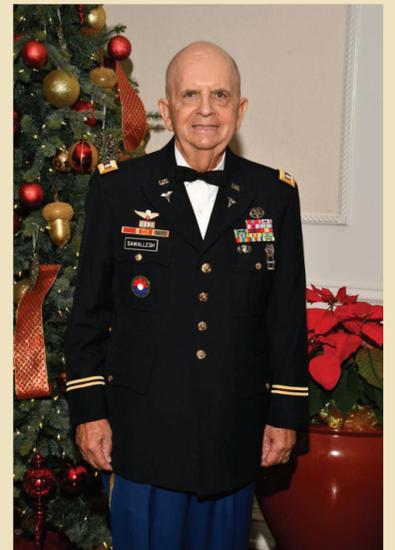
Somebody Said It Couldn't Be Done

—By Edgar Albert Guest

Somebody said that it couldn't be done
But he with a chuckle replied
That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it!

Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;
At least no one ever has done it;"
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure,
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing
That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.





JANUARY LUNCHEON MEETING

EVENT: Chapter Monthly Luncheon Meeting
DATE: Thursday, 13 January **TIME:** 1130 hours
LOCATION: Columbia Restaurant, Siboney Room 2117 E 7th Ave, Ybor City
RESERVATIONS: Call 813-676-4676 and follow prompts OR via email at:
bab@digital.net



REMEMBER a reservation made is a reservation paid.
 Reservations must be made by NOON Friday, 7 January. Reservations are limited to 60.
CANCELLATIONS must be made by NOON Monday, 10 January by calling 813-676-4676
COST: Event cost \$30 payable by check or with cash. **MASKS:** Masks are optional.
DRESS CODE: During periods when Daylight Savings is in effect, proper attire is business casual (slacks.shirts with collar).
MENU: 1905 Salad, Cuban bread and butter, Ropa Vieja, Shrimp & Yellow Rice, Black Beans, Fresh Broccoli Alioli and Seasonal Fresh Vegetables, Coffee, Iced Tea, Soft Drinks and Dessert
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 813-374-3309 or send an email to bab@digital.net to be added to the distribution list.

Or by Zoom:

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Meeting URL: <https://triple-strand-global-solutions.zoom.us/j/89708292982?pwd=UG1rQ2RGWVlpRnBZRDRXRtFnTVJZdz09&from=addon>

Meeting ID: 897 0829 2982 Passcode: 206251

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

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Do you ordinarily order from Amazon.com? Want to do some good while you shop? Use Smile.Amazon.com (not Amazon.com) and let Amazon contribute to The MOAA Foundation. Why The MOAA Foundation – because it provides assistance to over 100,000 military and veteran families and their survivor each year! All you do is go to smile.amazon.com, enter your

Amazon email address or your mobile phone number and your password, select The MOAA Foundation as your charity, and place your order as usual. Not a different password to remember!

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If you want to see more about the Foundation, go to the MOAA site, www.MOAA.org (at the home page, go to the bottom and select the Site Map to find the MOAA Foundation).

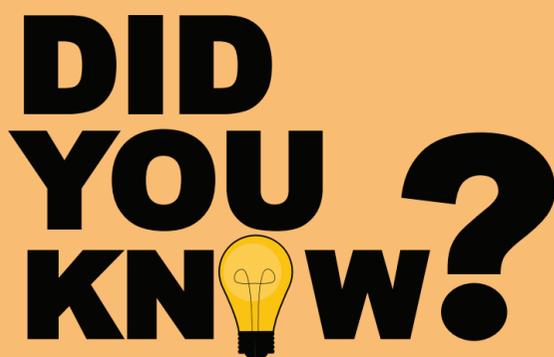
IMPORTANT DATES IN JANUARY 2022

1 New Year's Day

17 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

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Somebody You Know May Be Entitled To More Pay

—By Bill Mitchell, J.D.

Gerard Travers was a FedEx employee who served in the US Navy and Naval Reserve. He fulfilled his reserve duties by taking leave from FedEx. He did not receive compensation from FedEx for his military related leave even though FedEx paid its employees who missed work for reasons such as jury duty, illness, and bereavement. Travers challenged this policy and this Fall of 2021 an important federal court agreed with him. The court decided that under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 ("USERRA") employees who are on short term military leave may be entitled to paid leave from their regular employers if that employer provides paid leave for other absences such as such as jury duty, illness, or bereavement. This decision is important because FedEx is a massive employer and reflects the policies of other large employers.



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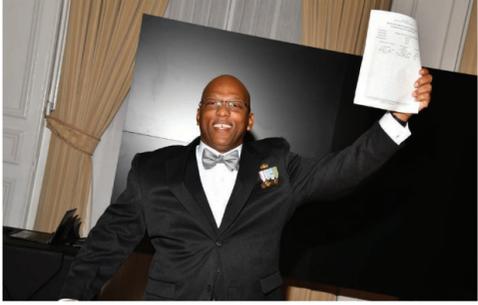
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E-Mail: TampaMOAA.Secretary@gmail.com

Winter Gala Photos

Photo credits: Joe Photo Tampa





CHAPTER MEMBER OF THE MONTH BRIGADIER GENERAL HENRIK LARSEN, ROYAL DANISH AIR FORCE

Henrik Larsen is a Brigadier-General in the Royal Danish Air Force with more than almost 40 years of service. He has held multiple national and international senior and command positions including several NATO Headquarters assignments, the United Nations and also Commanding Officer of the Danish Air Tactical Wing, the Air Force Training Center and Division Head of Joint Operations at Defence Command in Denmark. He also served as the aide-de-camp to the Danish Queen for two years. Been deployed as the Senior Military Advisor to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan from 2011 to 2012. He is a 1997 US Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama graduate.

His decorations include Commander of the Order of Dannebrog, Denmark, Danish Defence Distinguished Air Service Medal, Knight of First Class of the Order of the White Rose, Finland, Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, Officer's Cross of the Order of the Crown, Belgium, United Nations Special Service Medal, and the Danish Defence International Service Medal

As a Senior National Representative, he is currently directing the Danish Liaison Element as part of the United States Central Command Coalition, whose work includes promoting peace and stability in the Central Command area of responsibility. He also serves as the Coalition Chairman and his leadership and coordination actions on behalf of Denmark contribute directly to international coalition efforts to address destabilizing issues in the Middle East region and around the world.

Henrik Larsen is married to Sanne with three children (Julie, Catrine, and Nikolai) and three grandchildren.



MOAA TAMPA CHAPTER SELECTS BRIGADIER GENERAL LARSEN AS AN HONORARY MEMBER

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

Brigadier General Henrik Larsen was honored at the Winter Gala as an Honorary Member of the MOAA Tampa Chapter for all the support that he has provided to MOAA Tampa supporting our luncheon and Operation Helping Hand dinners by bringing Coalition Partners. During the pandemic when the MOAA Tampa Chapter held virtual luncheons he was our guest speaker. He's also been a regular contributor to MOAA Tampa monthly newsletter, The Retrospect for the last year and half providing input from the Coalition. It was a great pleasure to present BG Larsen this most esteemed award. Welcome to our chapter!



The MOAA Tampa Board of Directors welcome new Honorary Chapter Member, BG Larsen.

ARTISTS DISPLAY THEIR TALENT AND CREATIVITY



Featured in the November 2021 edition of The Retrospect, Rebekah Lane, father and brother served in the Marine Corps, Craig Gross, a Gold Star Father, COL Carol Zieres, USA (Ret), Andrew Miller, teaches painting and volunteers at Bay Pines VA Hospital, COL Bob Sawallesh, USA (Ret), and Kelly Kowall, a Gold Star Mother all graced the MOAA Tampa Winter Gala with displays of their paintings adding to the elegance of the evening.



FREEDOM HIGH SCHOOL NJROTC AT THE MOAA TAMPA WINTER GALA!

—By LCDR Pettis Sims, USN (Ret)
Senior Naval Science Instructor, Freedom High School

How do the youth of today learn about those who paved the road before them? How often do they truly get the chance to sit down and listen to their stories and learn from their advice? These opportunities are, too often, few and far between. A handful of cadets from the Freedom High School NJROTC program were given this opportunity during the MOAA Christmas Gala on December 10th.

During the event cadets were responsible for the Color Guard as well as the POW/MIA table ceremony. Cadet Paola Ortiz-Ortiz mentioned "It was an honor to be there that night and be part of such an important ceremony for us the Cadets and everyone who attended." This exposure to events honoring our vets, those who are still with us and those who aren't, is a wonderful learning opportunity for these young adults. The chance to sit down with veterans who served this nation is not lost on these young men and women. When asked to share something about her experience at the gala, Cadet Carlaen Ross shared the following, "I really enjoyed talking to the veterans that were at my table and listening to some unique and interesting stories. They passed on a lot of life advice that I am going to consider following."

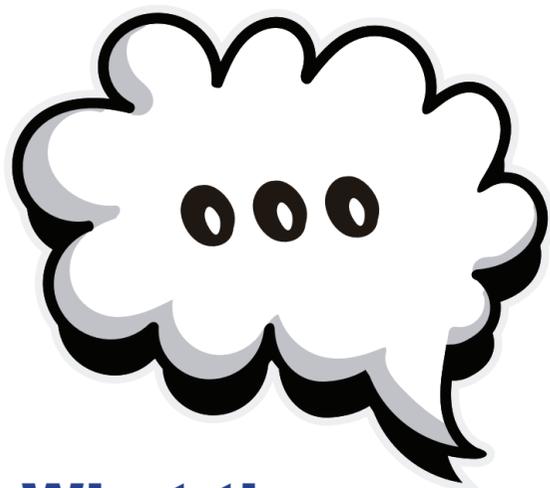
For some of these cadets this was the first time attending a formal event such as this. For other cadets, it was one of many they have attended. They all felt honored to be part of it and welcomed by all the members of MOAA. Cadet Ana Rico, a 12th grader, said she enjoyed meeting new people and "A lot of people that served in the military and had years of experience and stories to share with us. I kept thinking how amazing it was what these people did and how they're willing to help students. I loved doing the POW/MIA table and love what it represents and means for everyone." The food received rave reviews as well, although the cadets seemed to be far more impressed by the people they met and the event they were a part of.

In the NJROTC program there is of course a concentration on patriotism and honoring our servicemembers and veterans. However, sitting down and having the opportunity to speak to members of the MOAA organization and listen to their life experiences is something many of these cadets have never had a chance to do. It was indeed an honor for them. Some of these students come from military families, while others do not. Sitting down and experiencing a gala like this gave ALL of them a new perspective and respect for our military and our veterans, for the camaraderie amongst them, and for the sense of purpose that people in the military feel. When asked about her overall thoughts on the evening Cadet Stephanie Burgos Vazquez remarked, "I felt comfortable, I felt welcomed and that made the night beautiful I am glad the MOAA program exists and that it is there to give a voice to the people, to our veterans, and the ones we should never forget."

The students and staff of Freedom High School NJROTC appreciate our relationship with the Tampa Chapter of MOAA and are honored to provide the color guard and other ceremonial personnel for events such as the gala. For our cadets it is a chance to learn from those who have gone before them, those who have blazed trails, and those who have life advice to give. This kind of opportunity is priceless for them and appreciated beyond measure. Thank you to each and every member of MOAA that made this night possible. Thank you to those veterans who took the time out of their night to speak to the cadets and offer life advice. Thank you to Colonel Dalcourt for the opportunity to be a participant in the program honoring our country and our veterans. Many might assume that average teenagers couldn't possibly find a night like this more enjoyable than whatever it is they normally do on a Friday night, but this was not a group of average teenagers...it was teenagers that think things like this:

"It definitely wasn't the typical Friday night you'd think a high school senior would be doing but I wouldn't change it. That was one of the best experiences I've had in my life and I'm forever grateful for it."





What the NJROTC Cadets said about their experience at the Winter Gala:



Cadet Paola Ortiz-Ortiz 11th Grade

On the 10th of December I had the chance to participate in POW/MIA ceremony at the MOAA Inaugural Gala. This event was an amazing experience for me since it was my first Gala. The Country Club was nicely decorated, and the people were amicable. I also got the opportunity to talk to multiple veterans and people that were still on active duty, which was very intriguing. It was an honor to be there that night and be part of such an important ceremony for us the Cadets and everyone who attended.

Cadet Carlaen Ross 9th Grade

Last Friday I had the opportunity to participate in a POW/MIA ceremony. I was a super awesome experience to represent Army veterans and the rest of the branches, especially those that we have lost. I really enjoyed talking to the veterans that were at my table and listening to some unique and interesting stories. They passed on a lot of life advice that I am going to consider the following. The presentation was phenomenal and I'm sure it really touched everyone's hearts. The decorations were so pretty, and I felt good knowing I helped put up the Flags up. The food was amazing, and I enjoyed every bit of it. I loved seeing everyone dressed up and having fun. Overall, I had an amazing night, and I am so thankful and happy to have gotten the opportunity to go to the 2021 MOAA Gala.

Cadet Eden Dalcourt 12th grade

I really enjoyed the experience that this event gave me. It was really cool to see all of the officers and other military personnel from all the different services together. It gave me an insight on what people don't normally see when they think of the military. I liked the food and being able to sit with experienced soldiers and other people who have been in the service. I was able to make connections with people that can help me in my future too. I don't think there was anything I didn't like about the gala.

Cadet Ana Rico 12th Grade

What I liked about the MOAA Gala was how we were able to meet new people. A lot of people that served in the military & had years of experience & stories to share with us. I kept thinking how amazing it was what these people did & how they're willing to help students. I loved doing the POW/MIA table & I love what it represents & means for everyone. And, personally for me, it's a way of saying thank you & that you're remembered. I loved the food that they had; it was spectacular & the dessert was amazing. I didn't have anything that I disliked about it. It definitely wasn't the typical Friday night you'd think a high school senior would be doing but I wouldn't change it. That was one of the best experiences I've had in my life & I'm forever thankful for it.

Cadet Taylor Lance 12th Grade

Friday was quite enjoyable. The mission at-hand for our detachment of cadets was to provide a Color Guard, as well as a POW Detail. We were dispatched in our dress-blue uniforms to complete both tasks, then once finished we sat down in our assigned seats at different tables. The opportunity to speak with Veterans or Active Personnel is always one which I look forward to, as this can help me broaden my horizons about my career choice or even just give me some wisdom or advice. The food was excellent, especially the Salmon option. COL Dalcourt was an exemplary host at the event and gave a good speech. I felt proud to serve the MOAA Organization with an astonishing Team of Cadets right by my side, and I would do it again if we get the chance.

Cadet Ana Gonzalez-Rodriguez 9th Grade

What I really liked about the 10 December Gala was how I got to talk with new people and listen to their backstories when they served in the Military and how

they enjoyed serving our country. I learned a lot about their jobs and how many years they served. Besides sitting separately at each table, I still enjoyed it a lot, and I learned from their past. During the POW/MIA table I was nervous, but even that I still got through it and had a lot of fun and I am happy I got to experience this event and had a great time. The food and dessert were amazing. I loved every bite of it. There are no dislikes about Friday Nights Gala, it was super fun, and I was incredibly happy to be there with everyone, talk to new people and listen to stories.

Cadet Stephanie Burgos Vazquez 12th Grade

I would like to begin by saying thank you for an amazing night. I loved every single moment of the Gala, especially the treatment that we received from the people. From the moment I arrived, everybody received us with open arms and made us feel welcome. Just because we were High School students, we weren't treated any differently, and that made me enjoy the Gala to its extent. The food was delicious, and I enjoyed it very much, especially the dessert that was served. I have no bad comment or something that I did not like because as I expressed myself earlier, I felt comfortable, I felt welcomed and that made the night beautiful. I am glad the MOAA program exists and that it is there to give a voice to the people, to our veterans, and the ones we should never forget.

Cadet Maria Lopez 12th Grade

I consider that MOAA organization is great tool that ensures the rights of retired soldiers, veterans, active-duty soldiers, reserve soldiers, the national guard and especially MOAA is the for the families of these great heroes, supporting them in every single stage of their career.

Last December 10th, I had the opportunity to attend the MOAA winter Gala, a truly captivating experience, a learning experience, and an experience that allows us to expand our social network and learn about all the incredible things that MOAA does for its veterans and above all what MOAA does for future generations.

At this Gala I had the opportunity to speak with COL Carol Zieres, who through her anecdotes inspired me in an unimaginable way, in addition to recognizing her amazing talent for art. which I had the pleasure of observing during the Gala.

I believe it is a great tool for future JROTC cadets to participate in this type of event, in that way they can acquire knowledge and advice from people who one day started like us and who today can advise us.

I thank MOAA and Freedom NJROTC again for allowing us to enjoy this wonderful experience.

Cadet Taliyah Cooper 12th Grade

This past Friday I attended the MOAA, annual gala, where I was a part of their POW table ceremony in which I represented the Airforce. I had a wonderful time and the experience I had was second to none. I was able to gain quite a lot of knowledge about life and make connections with people I've never met before; it was great to hear all the stories from many of the retired officers who were in attendance. I enjoyed everything about the gala, and I wouldn't change a thing if I were to do it again. The energy in the room was immaculate and the photo ops were even better.

Cadet A Rodriguez 12th Grade

The Gala was so much fun! I loved every second of it and talking to so many people from different branches was really an experience. I was glad I was able to talk to some old officers and got some guidance and great advice! I would love to attend something like that again and I'm glad that I was a part of something that great.



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WINTER Gala



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WINTER Gala



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MOAA Tampa Inaugural Winter Gala Chairman Remarks

—By Richard “Dick” Siegman, Lt. Col. USAF (Ret)
Chairman, 1st Winter Gala

Some of the words heard about our first Winter Gala: “Knocked out of the Park, Remarkable, Marvelous, Exceptional, Noteworthy, Wonderful, Fabulous, and on and on!” I could not be prouder to have been Chairman of this our first event, with a great team that put this event together, and I’m sure it won’t be the last. I had several Ladies say, “With the casual Florida sportswear, it is hard to find someplace or something to get really dressed up for”! Well, here it is and more to come.

The evening started out with Cocktail hour on the patio with our ensemble playing in the background. Everyone started off with two drink cards to enliven the evening. With an hour to enjoy our art show and view our donated silent auction items. Then a call to the Ball Room for dinner and entertainment.

The evening started with Freedom High School NJROTC posting the colors and a fabulous singer with the National Anthem which was followed again with Freedom High School NJROTC doing a fantastic “Remembrance” at the MIA/POW table followed with the ensemble playing “TAPS”. This was followed by several toasts and introductions. Then we started dinner which featured “Filet Mignon, Salmon, Chicken and Vegetarian” meal choices. And in the background was our own Ginger playing piano with holiday music and when she took a break our ensemble took over.

With dining ending we had our Raffle and then the winners of the Silent Auction. This was followed by the stirring rendition of “Old Glory” which was ended with a standing ovation. The evening ended with our own Chaplain giving a stirring Benediction.

The evening was over “oh so soon” with moans of “encore” we want more. I’m already looking to next year’s Gala with a new team. Please make plans to attend now, tentatively set for Dec. 16th. You will not be disappointed!!!!



Beautiful Music Provided by the University of Tampa Department of Music!

—By Paula Stewart, LTC, USA (Ret)

The University of Tampa, Department of Music, sent eight talented student musicians to participate in the MOAA Tampa Inaugural Winter Gala ceremonial events and provide entertainment for chapter members and their guests. The ensemble was made up of young men and women who played violin, viola, cello, oboe, trumpet, piano and guitar. We were also honored to have a gifted mezzo-soprano! These musicians were overjoyed to be in the company of military people and they marveled at the uniforms and ceremony. All this during their finals week! Many thanks and happy holidays to them all.



- Violin, Dallis Williams
- Viola, Claire Burgazli
- Cello, Tiffany Eady
- Oboe, Skye Wright-Blevins
- Trumpet, Dylan Clark
- Piano, Lucas Glenn
- Guitar, Ethan Fair
- Mezzo Soprano, Juliana Lemos



Ginger Heath, wife of chapter member Chris Heath, provided lovely piano music for the Winter Gala.



Coalition Corner

Submitted by: **BGEN Henrik Larsen**

Dear MOAA members,

I trust you have all arrived safe in 2022 and have had a chance to spend the Christmas holidays and New Years with family and friends.

I am writing this message from a very cold Denmark. Most of Denmark is covered by snow and we are experiencing temperatures below 2 Fahrenheit. Somewhat different from the temperatures in Tampa, Florida.

It is however nice to be back and see our family and friends again although COVID is seriously impacting our possibilities to move around.

Anyway, some coalition members went home to their respective nations over Christmas now that it is possible to have people visiting us again, but most actually stayed in Florida. I am aware that a lot of my colleagues have had family members arriving in Tampa to spend a few weeks.

It was great to attend the MOAA Tampa Winter Gala in December. It is not often that I am left speechless, but I was very surprised and indeed very honored when the Tampa Chapter President, COL Charles Dalcourt (Ret) announced the decision to enlist me as an Honorary Member of MOAA. All coalition members aim to engage with the surrounding community realizing that COVID has made it very difficult to interact with our US friends both on and off base. It is a privilege knowing you all.

MOAA Tampa- to include Operation Helping Hand and other activities - offers an

excellent platform for coalition members to engage with people outside US Central Command.

I have mentioned it before, but we do not take anything for granted and highly appreciate MOAA Tampa's continued efforts to reach out to the Coalition. Thanks to all of you. It means a lot to us.

We have seen a few rotations among Senior National Representatives and other members of the delegations, but the total number of nations remains unchanged. 45 nations are still part of the Coalition, and I am not aware of any nations having plans to leave Tampa at this stage.

It is my privilege to bring along my colleagues from France and Japan to attend the MOAA Luncheon in January. Some of you have already met the Senior National Representative from Japan as he also participated in the MOAA Gala.



All the best,

BGEN Henrik Larsen
Danish Senior National Representative to US CENTCOM
Chairman of the Coalition



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

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



5 December 2021

Dear Fellow Member,

It has been another great year for the MOAA Tampa Chapter. We retained our 5-star status, won the Communications Award for our website and newsletter, and have expanded our outreach across the community. Thank you for your continued support.

Well, it is time to renew your Tampa Chapter membership and we are now accepting payments. Despite the increased cost of many services and supplies, the Board of Directors determined that the membership dues for 2022 will remain at \$25.00. This is a great value.

In addition to your Chapter membership, I need to remind you that our Tampa Chapter bylaws require all chapter members to also be members of MOAA national. If you are not already a member of the national level organization, joining is easy. When you go online at <https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa/>, you will find an application and a description of the various categories of membership. You may join as a Basic member at no charge. However, please note that the benefits provided within the Premium and Life membership categories are stellar and include career and financial resources, MOAA-exclusive publications, spouse protection, and numerous discounts on products and travel.

Your membership and engagement are foundational to our efforts. Even the smallest amount of time dedicated in support of our mission enables our success. Please continue to contribute in any way you can during this upcoming year. Your time, talents, and donations truly make a difference. Also, please stay connected to all that is happening in our Chapter's sphere of influence via our website, Facebook page, and our incredible newsletter, *The Retrospect*.

If you have any questions concerning the enclosed dues renewal form, please contact our membership chair, Bill Schneider, at the phone number or email address on the attached renewal form. On behalf of the Board of Directors and your fellow chapter members, I extend to you and your family our very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,

Charles Dalcourt
Colonel, U.S. Army Retired
President, MOAA Tampa Chapter

Website: www.MOAA Tampa.org

Email: TampaMOAA.Secretary@gmail.com

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!



MOAA Tampa Chapter Dues Renewal Form

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

Name _____

Rank _____ Service _____ Status _____

Address _____

EMAIL address _____ @ _____

Phone _____ Cell _____

Spouse _____ Phone _____

Emergency Contact _____ Phone _____

Check here if there are no changes _____

Dues may be mailed to the Membership Chairman or brought to any chapter event.

Mailing address

Colonel Bill Schneider, USA (Ret)
15888 Sanctuary Drive
Tampa, FL 33647-1076

Please consider donating to our chapter scholarship fund.

Amount enclosed:

Dues \$25
Scholarship \$ _____
Total \$ _____

Please circle the dates that apply to your time in service.

<u>Conflict</u>	<u>Dates*</u>
World War II	7 Dec 1941 – 31 Dec 1946 27
Korean War	Jun 1950 – 31 Jan 1955
Vietnam Era	5 Aug 1964 – 7 May 1975
Vietnam (in country)	28 Feb 1961 – 7 May 1975
Gulf War Lebanon, Grenada, Panama	2 Aug 1990 – 6 Apr 1991 1982 -83; 1983; 1989 – 1990
Afghanistan (OEF)	7 Oct 2001 – 28 Dec – 2014
Afghanistan (OES)	1 Jan 2015 – 17 Aug 2017
Islamic War (OIR)	15 Oct 2014 – present

OR No service during any of these periods of time

* dates are generally accurate per Congressional Research Service

You may also pay your Tampa chapter dues online at MOAA.org.

Login, Click on “Chapters” then click on “Pay Dues Online”

Deadline for renewing your membership is January 31, 2022



Surviving Spouse Corner: What to Expect in 2022 With the ‘Widows Tax’ Repeal

Submitted By Renee Brunelle

By: Nancy Mullen, November 29, 2021

Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret), President and CEO of MOAA, stands with Candace Wheeler, Senior Advisor for Policy and Legislation for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, and military widows Kristy DiDomenico, Edie Smith, and Capt. Kathy Thorp, USN (Ret), during a reception to celebrate the repeal of the SBP-DIC offset in Washington, D.C., on Dec. 17, 2019.



—Photo by Amanda Dolasinski/MOAA

We are coming up on the second year of a three-year phase out of what has been known as the “widows tax,” which required forfeiture of a dollar of Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) for every dollar of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) received. Please note this is only applicable to those surviving spouses who qualify for both DIC and SBP and are in receipt of the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA).

In Phase 1 (2021), surviving spouse SBP payments were reduced, or offset, by two-thirds of the DIC rather than the full dollar-for-dollar reduction. For many surviving spouses, this resulted in an increase in the amount of SBP paid as the gross amount of their SBP exceeded two-thirds of the DIC. Others have had to wait to see an increase in their benefit.

[MOAA Resources: [The Widows Tax](#)]

We are nearing the start of Phase 2 of the elimination of the offset for which the amount offset (or deducted) from the SBP will be reduced to one-third of the DIC payment. To estimate your benefit, subtract one-third of your current base DIC payment from your current gross SBP benefit. The result is approximately what your SBP payment will be in the second phase, plus any COLAs, which is expected to be approximately 5.9%.

Let’s look at an easy example: We will assume a COLA of 5.9% for 2022, which puts

the projected 2022 base DIC amount at approximately \$1,437.66. One-third of that new DIC amount is \$479.22. This is the amount you will subtract from your gross SBP amount. So, if your gross SBP without offset is \$1,000, then you would subtract \$479.22 from \$1,000 to give you a 2022 SBP payment of \$520.78 (\$1,000-\$479.22). You would also receive the SSIA, which is projected to be approximately \$346.

These new changes will be effective in January 2022, which you will see reflected on the payment to be received Feb. 1, 2022. If you do not know your gross SBP, you can find that on your annuitant account statements, available in your myPay account. You should also receive an annuity statement in the mail in December 2021.

There are no changes to the post-9/11 active duty survivor child-only SBP option until 2023, and these changes do not impact the retiree child-only SBP option.

Thankfully, many resources are available to help you understand the basics of your benefits. If you are not already a member, please join the [Military Widows: SBP-DIC Offset](#) or the [MOAA Surviving Spouses and Friends](#) Facebook groups. These pages contain various important files you can use to read up on this and other issues as well as additional posts that might be of interest to you. You can also visit the [Defense Finance and Accounting Service \(DFAS\) website](#) for the most up-to-date information and other guidance, including the June 2021 survivor SBP newsletter, *The SBP-DIC Offset Phased Elimination: What to Expect in the Upcoming Phases*, as well as a helpful frequently asked questions section. Visit the [DFAS website](#) to learn more.

Source: <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2021-news-articles/surviving-spouse-corner-what-to-expect-in-2022-with-the-widows-tax-repeal/>

MEDICAL CORNER

Should You Get Your COVID-19 Vaccination Card Laminated?

Tips for safeguarding the paper record of your coronavirus vaccination

by Katherine Skiba, [AARP](#), April 22, 2021

[En español](#) | Congratulations, you’ve been inoculated against the [coronavirus](#) — and you have an official COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card to prove it.

You should keep the card, which bears your name, date of birth, vaccine type and vaccination date, in a safe place. You may need it in the future. You should also take a photo of the card as a backup, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises.

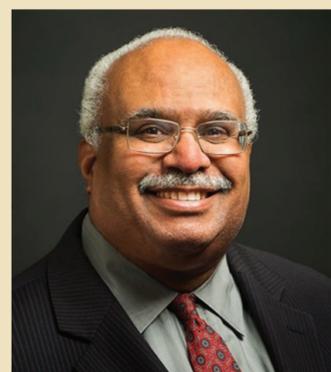


—GRANT HINDSLEY/AFP via Getty Images

Here’s what you shouldn’t do with your vaccine card: Laminate it.

Georges C. Benjamin, 68, executive director of the [American Public Health Association](#), counsels against laminating your vaccination record. That’s chiefly because that card has blank spaces to record future shots, whether the second dose of a two-dose regimen or a booster shot should one become necessary. Sealing the card in plastic would prevent the vaccine provider from adding such information to the original card.

Dr. Georges C. Benjamin, who leads the American Public Health Association, says there’s no need to laminate a vaccination card.



—Courtesy American Public Health Association

Protect your vaccine record

As for his vaccine card, Benjamin followed CDC advice and recorded a digital picture on his mobile phone. He placed the paper card in a drawer where he keeps his passport and the yellow international vaccine card he uses, as needed, for foreign travel.

But what if you want to protect your card from coffee stains or smudges from Flamin’ Hot Cheetos? Benjamin says you can keep it safe and stain-free in a plastic sleeve — like the ones used for ID badges. A set of [five plastic sleeves](#) could be had for \$4.99 on Amazon.

Another way to protect your vaccination record? As AARP has urged, [do not post your vaccine card](#) on social media because it contains sensitive information. Doing so is waving red meat in front of a sharp-fanged identity thief. Instead, treat your hard-earned vaccine card like you would your Social Security card. It’s important, private and uniquely yours.

How to get a replacement vaccine card

If you have already laminated your vaccine card, don’t panic. Some big-box stores have been promoting free lamination of COVID-19 vaccine cards — in an apparent bid to drive foot traffic. Should you need a COVID-19 booster in the future, you can ask for another paper record to prove it.

If you lost your vaccine card, or never received one in the first place, [the CDC recommends](#) contacting the site where you got your first shot. If you are unable to reach the original vaccine provider, try your state health department’s Immunization Information System (IIS). Vaccine providers are required to report all COVID vaccinations to the state. The CDC has [contact information for the IIS in your state](#).

Katherine Skiba covers scams and fraud for AARP. Previously she was a reporter with the Chicago Tribune, U.S. News & World Report and the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. She was a recipient of Harvard University’s Nieman Fellowship and is author of the book Sister in the Band of Brothers: Embedded With the 101st Airborne in Iraq.

More on Vaccines

[Frequently asked questions about the COVID vaccines](#)

[Real-world data affirm effectiveness of vaccines](#)

[Here are the vaccines you need after 50](#)

Source: <https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2021/vaccine-card-safety.html>

Happy Birthday, Space Force!

— Submitted by: Jeanne Richard, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

It is a great honor to wish the United States Space Force a Happy 2nd Birthday. These Guardians have accomplished so much in just their first 24 months of service.

We look forward to watching and reporting all future accomplishments and discoveries that will surely come from this new service branch.

The U.S. Space Force: Two Years After Launch The 6th Dimension of Warfare

On December 20, 2019, the National Defense Authorization Act established the **U.S. Space Force (USSF)**, America's 6th military service branch. This was the first time in 73 years that a new military branch was created.

The U.S. Space Force Mission

"The USSF is responsible for organizing, training, and equipping Guardians to conduct global space operations that enhance the way our joint and coalition forces fight, while also offering decision makers military options to achieve national objectives."

The purpose behind the creation of the USSF was to create a military branch that would focus solely on the space domain, which is the fastest growing area of conflict among developed nations. Everything we do every day runs through space. From our cell phones, GPS navigation systems, financial markets and economic information, all depend on the capabilities of our space-borne infrastructure.

Space Force Organization

The USSF is headquartered at the Pentagon along with its sister services. As a new military service, the Space Force *"will leverage the Department of the Air Force for more than 75% of its enabling functions."* This reduces costs associated with standing up a new service.

Currently, **General John W. Raymond** serves as the Chief of Space Operations and reports directly to the Secretary of the Air Force.

As of now, personnel from the other services are in the process of transferring over to the Space Force. The process is highly selective and takes a lot of time to complete. The snags that current service members are running into while transferring to the Space Force were expected, and hopefully they can be ironed out as more service members apply for future openings.

Space Force Locations

So far, there are a few locations around the country where the Space Force can operate. In addition to their headquarters at the Pentagon, the Space Force maintains bases in Colorado, California, and Florida.

It is unknown at this time where the Space Force will expand next, if at all. What we do know is that they already have a training base for new Guardians in Colorado. Additionally, the Space Force has taken over what used to be Patrick Air Force Base in Satellite Beach, Florida. Renamed to **Patrick Space Force Base**, this location gives the Space Force access to the launch pad at Cape Canaveral, which seems fitting for this new service.

Symbols & Symbolism of the Space Force

Despite popular belief, the Space Force symbol is not a knock-off of the Star Trek

symbol. The Delta symbol was first used in 1961 and pays homage to the US Air Force and its Space Command.

The Space Force motto, **Semper Supra**, means *"Always Above"*. It signifies their mission and the importance it plays to the success of every other warfighting capability in the US military.



The solid **silver border** of the Delta represents defense and protection from threats in the space domain.

The **four beveled elements** signify the support the Space Force receives from the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps.

The **two spires** inside the Delta signify the action of a rocket launch and the role the Space Force has in the space domain.

Polaris is the star in the center of the Delta which represents the core values and how they guide the mission of the Space Force.

To Infinity, and Beyond...Eventually

While it's easy for us to imagine the Space Force expanding into things like Star Trek, Star Wars, StarGate, or Toy Story, the reality is much different than our expectations during the first few years.

Yes, the USSF is focused specifically on warfare in the space domain. However, they still need to get their personnel numbers up. They need to establish their lessons-learned and best practices to bridge the gap between where they are and where they need to be.

Most importantly, the Space Force needs to do all this at warp speed to maintain the tactical advantage necessary to our National Security.

Source: <https://www.mymilitarybenefits.com/military-life/space-force-birthday/>

MacDill will become main base for new KC-46A Pegasus, as military works to replace aging tankers

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

Author: Courtney Holland

TAMPA, Fla. — MacDill Air Force Base will become home to the new KC-46A Pegasus aircraft.

The Department of Defense chose MacDill AFB as the sixth main operating base for the new fueling tankers, U.S. Rep Kathy Castor announced at a news conference.

There will ultimately be 24 new modern tanker aircraft at the main operating base in Tampa.



This decision came after site surveys were conducted assessing locations based on "factors related to mission, infrastructure capacity, community support, environmental considerations and cost," the base wrote in a [news release](#).

The DOD will begin infrastructure improvements and later confirm MacDill AFB as the new main operating base over the next year, Castor explained.

"We will be able to maintain the mission of MacDill Air Force Base for decades to come..." she said.

Crews and mechanics from the AFB will also have to go through new training for the tankers, Commander of MacDill AFB, Colonel Ben Jonsson, explained.

The base has been reportedly using 24 KC-135 Stratotankers since the late 50s when former President Dwight D. Eisenhower was in office and needed an upgrade.

These new tankers replacing the old is the "first phase in recapitalizing the U.S. Air Force's aging tanker fleet," the [U.S Air Force](#) explains on its website.

"With greater refueling, cargo and aeromedical evacuation capabilities compared to the KC-135, the KC-46A will provide next-generation aerial refueling support to Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and partner-nation receivers," the AF wrote.

Within the next few weeks, there will be a site activation task force coming to MacDill AFB doing an "in-depth study" for military construction and specific requirements to bring in the new aircraft, Jonsson explained.

So what exactly does the KC-46A Pegasus do?

It is an aircraft used for refueling.

According to the Air Force, the Pegasus will be able to refuel most fixed-wing, receiver-capable aircraft at full operational capability.

The aircraft has a refueling boom which is driven by a fly-by-wire control and can also accommodate a "mixed load of passengers, aeromedical evacuation and cargo capabilities," the AF wrote on its website.

When comparing the KC-135 Stratotanker to the KC-46A Pegasus, the newer tankers offer "significantly increased cargo and aeromedical evacuation capabilities," Aeroweb explains. The KC-46A is equipped with the "latest and most advanced technology."

Read more information about the [KC-135 Stratotanker](#) or the [KC-46A Pegasus](#) on the [U.S. Air Force's website](#).

Source: <https://www.wtsp.com/article/news/national/military-news/macdill-afb-new-main-operating-base-pegasus-aircraft/67-9d904a48-c2de-4957-b8e2-4195e4674c93>

9 New Year's Traditions From Cultures Around The World

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

Happy (almost!) New Year!

Whether you're ringing in [New Year's Eve from some exciting foreign country](#) or at home with family and friends, you probably have a New Year's tradition or two. Common traditions throughout the [United States](#) include singing "Auld Lang Syne" to greet the New Year, and eating black-eyed peas for good luck.

Around the world, cultures welcome the change of the calendar with unique New Year's traditions of their own. Here are some of our favorite New Year's traditions around the world (we're especially fans of Colombia's!).

Spain

In [Spain](#), it is customary to eat 12 grapes – one at each stroke of the clock at midnight on New Year's Eve. Each grape represents good luck for one month of the coming year. In bigger cities like Madrid and Barcelona, people gather in main squares to eat their grapes together and pass around bottles of cava.

Colombia

In hopes of a travel-filled new year, residents of [Colombia](#) carry empty suitcases around the block. That's one New Year's tradition we can get behind!

Denmark

Residents of [Denmark](#) greet the New Year by throwing old plates and glasses against the doors of family and friends to banish bad spirits. They also stand on chairs and jump off of them together at midnight to "leap" into January in hopes of good luck.

Finland

In [Finland](#), people predict the coming year by casting molten tin into a container of water, then interpreting the shape the metal takes after hardening. A heart or ring means a wedding, while a ship predicts travel and a pig declares there will be plenty of food.



Panama

To drive off evil spirits for a fresh New Year's start, it is tradition to burn effigies (muñecos) of well-known people such as television characters and political figures in [Panama](#). The effigies are meant to represent the old year.

Scotland

During [Scotland's](#) New Year's Eve celebration of Hogmanay, "first-footing" is practiced across the country. The first person who crosses a threshold of a home in the New Year should carry a gift for luck. Scots also hold bonfire ceremonies where people parade while swinging giant fireballs on poles, supposedly symbols of the sun, to purify the coming year.

Philippines

You'll find round shapes all over the [Philippines](#) on New Year's Eve as representatives of coins to symbolize prosperity in the coming year. Many families display piles of fruit on their dining tables and some eat exactly 12 round fruits (grapes being the most common) at midnight. Many also wear polka dots for luck.

Brazil

In [Brazil](#), as well as other Central and South America countries like Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela, it is thought to be lucky to wear special underwear on New Year's Eve. The most popular colors are red, thought to bring love in the New Year, and yellow, thought to bring money.

Greece

An onion is traditionally hung on the front door of homes on New Year's Eve in [Greece](#) as a symbol of rebirth in the New Year. On New Year's Day, parents wake their children by tapping them on the head with the onion.

How will you ring in 2022?

DOD Personnel, Families Can Renew Passports Online

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

By [David Vergun](#), DOD News

Active-duty, reserve and retired service members, and Defense Department civilians and contractors and their families will soon be able to renew their U.S. passports online, according to the State Department.

The online portal, which becomes available Dec. 23, will enable customers to renew their passports from the convenience of their homes 24/7 without having to go to a post office to mail their application and supporting documents, an official said.



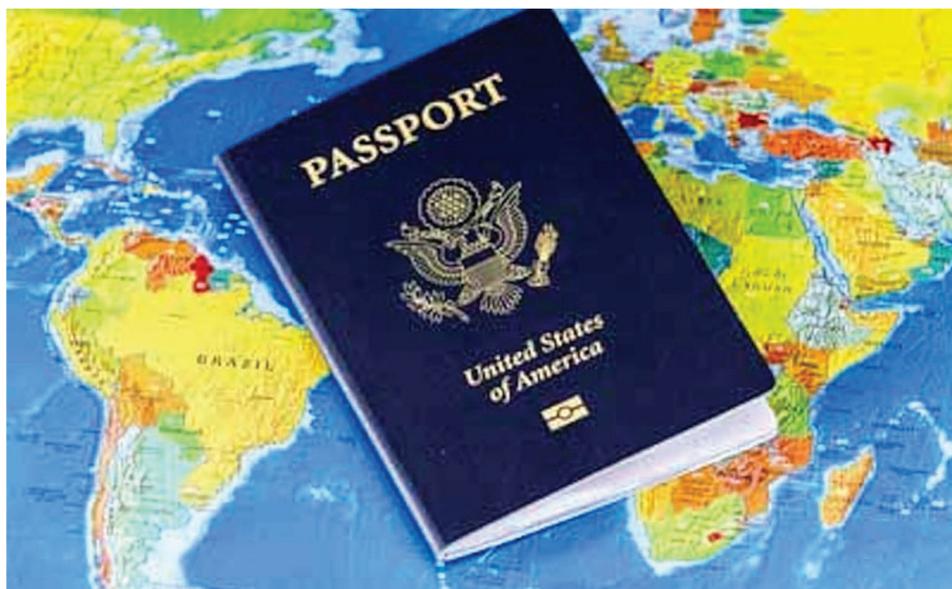
The requirements include:

- The most recent passport is or must have been valid for 10 years. It's OK if the passport is expired.
- Children under the age of 16 cannot renew their passports.
- The passport was issued over nine years ago (2012), but less than 15 years ago (2006).
- No changes were made with respect to name, gender or other personal information, such as date or place of birth.
- No travel internationally can be made within three weeks of the date of renewal. The State Department will offer routine (8-11 weeks) and expedited processing (5-7 weeks).
- Online applications may be for a passport book only; passport cards may not be requested online.
- Applications must be for regular (tourist) passports only. Special issuance diplomatic or official passports may not be renewed online.

- Applicants must live in the United States.
- Applicants must have the passport in their possession, and it cannot be damaged or mutilated.
- An applicant can pay for a passport using a credit/debit card or an automated clearing house payment transferring funds from a bank account.
- Applicants can upload a digital photo in the .JPEG file format.

Applicants who don't meet all of these requirements may still be eligible to renew by mail or in-person, the official said.

The State Department will send a confirmation email with more instructions after those interested [preregister](#).



Preregistration does not obligate those interested to renew online. Registrants will receive email updates and a customized link based on a registrant's individual email address to access the online portal.

Interested parties will have the flexibility to renew online over a six-month period through June 30, 2022, the official said.

For any additional information, contact the State Department at pptmandi@state.gov.

Source: <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2880945/dod-personnel-families-can-renew-passports-online/>

US, Ukrainian Army medics train together during Combined Resolve XVI

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

By Sgt. Tommie Berry

HOHENFELS, Germany — Medical procedures may vary throughout the world, but the need to help others is universal.

During Combined Resolve XVI, a U.S. Army Europe and Africa directed, 7th Army Training Command conducted, Joint Multinational Readiness Center hosted multinational training event involving 1st Infantry Division's 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, U.S. and Ukrainian soldiers compared emergency medical procedures to find efficient ways to quickly and safely treat one another's patients at a moment's notice.

"We're working on how we're going to be doing our patient transfers from the battlefield with our notional patients," said U.S. Army Spc. Guillermo Guzman, a combat medic specialist with 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment "Iron Rangers". "In a real-world event that we're with our allies, we have a general place where we can start from and go step by step."

The role of the combat medic is to provide the first echelon of care and to correctly communicate the level of treatment needed as wounded personnel are evacuated to receive further treatment during both training and deployments.

"We have to have that trust between teams to make sure that they know our process, and even with the language barrier, that we are able to treat whatever casualty - whether Ukrainian, Romanian, American, etc.," said U.S. Army Sgt. Jong Han, a combat medic specialist in 1-16IN, 1/1ID. "We're all able to do our job, get them treated and get them evacuated out to the next level of care."

The teams were given the opportunity to practice relocating patients between the U.S. Army M113 armored personnel carrier and Ukraine's BMM-4S armored medical vehicle, which often has different methods of securing patient litters for movement. Soldiers of both nations provided opportunities to ride in each other's vehicles to further understand how patient care can differ between the two.

"It's important to have that familiarity with each other, with our vehicles, with our equipment, how they run things and how we run things," Han said.

During CBR XVI, getting these details worked out in garrison will help maximize their time together in the field and also build camaraderie between the two armies as they train together.



—U.S. Army combat medics with 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment "Iron Rangers," 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, and the Ukraine Army's 92nd Mechanized Brigade medics come together for a photo following medical training as part of Combined Resolve XVI (CBR XVI) at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, Dec. 2, 2021. Approximately 4,500 soldiers from 12 nations are participating in Combined Resolve XVI, with participation from Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and the United States. (Sgt. Tommie Berry)

"The training was great," Guzman said. "It was a big eye-opener to see the Ukrainian medics work, and it's something new. We may have our different platforms, but we get to see how they operate. We get to incorporate each other's strategies into our medical platforms."

Even before the major events of CBR XVI kicked off, medics of both nations were already one step ahead and ready to work together.

Approximately 4,500 soldiers from 12 nations are participating in Combined Resolve XVI, with participation from Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Source: https://www.army.mil/article/252528/us_ukrainian_army_medics_train_together_during_combined_resolve_xvi

National Guardsmen Deploying to Aid Tornado-Hit Kentucky

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

By Jim Garamone, DOD News

Nearly 500 personnel from the Kentucky National Guard have been called to duty to aid their fellow citizens affected by the tornadoes that hammered the state Dec. 10-11.

The unprecedented wave of tornadoes killed scores of people and spread damage over a wide area.

National Guardsmen are supplementing local and state emergency response personnel. "Roughly 80 of them [are assisting in] recovery support, another 50 for assisting the Department of Forestry with debris clearance," said Pentagon Press Secretary John F. Kirby during a news conference today.

Spotlight: Helping Hands

In addition to National Guardsmen, members of the Army Corps of Engineers are also deploying to help those affected, Kirby said.

Military assets helped with aerial storm damage assessments. There are about 90 National Guard military police personnel helping along with 100 personnel providing traffic control.

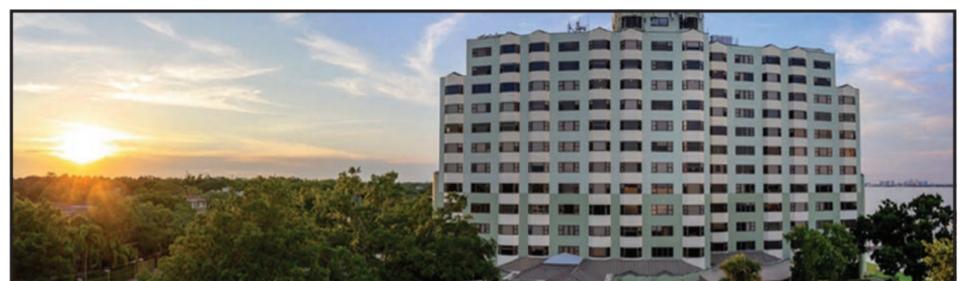
The Corps of Engineers personnel are providing support for debris removal, critical public facilities, infrastructure assessments and for engineering and public works," he said. The Corps has also sent members of the 249th Engineer Battalion to the area to help provide temporary power to the recovery mission. The unit also has "additional subject matter experts to assist with generator staging assessments and installation."



most 90 percent with at least one dose. Fully vaccinated stands at just under 75 percent.

"So, the vast majority of our people ... are doing the right thing and did the right thing even before the vaccine was mandatory," Kirby said. "They're getting the shot. I think it's important to keep that perspective."

Kirby encouraged all who qualify, to get the booster shot. He said officials are debating whether to make the booster mandatory.



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Reporters asked Kirby about reports that the Air Force and Navy discharged some service members who refused to take the COVID-19 vaccines. The Air Force has discharged 27 members who refused the life-saving vaccine.

He noted there are very few service members who are in this position. "Just to put it in some perspective for you: Active duty personnel with at least one dose is now over 97 percent," he said. "Active duty personnel that are fully vaccinated stands at almost 91 percent. Of the total force, including reserves and the Guard with ... at least one dose, it's al-

Littoral combat ships in Mayport make the most of a year of restricted operations

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

By [Megan Eckstein](#)



—The Freedom-variant littoral combat ships USS Sioux City (LCS 11), USS Wichita (LCS 13), USS Billings (LCS 15), and their embarked aviation detachments participate in a maritime training exercise, July 4, 2021. This exercise marks the first time three Freedom-variant littoral combat ships are deployed and operating together. (MC2 Marianne Guemo/US Navy)

NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. — The Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 2 (LCSRON 2) is, in one way, coming off a rough patch: Two of its Freedom-variant LCSs suffered major engineering failures at sea in 2020 and had to limp home from deployments to U.S. Southern Command. As the U.S. Navy realized the severity of a combining gear flaw in the propulsion system, it [stopped accepting deliveries](#) of new ships from Lockheed Martin early this year and imposed operating restrictions on the ships already in the fleet to avoid another at-sea breakdown.

But, the squadron commodore said, the formation also has seen its greatest operational achievements during that same time, conducting seven successful deployments to U.S. 4th Fleet that took hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of drugs off the market, interrupted trafficking networks across SOUTHCOM, supported partners throughout Central and South America and pushed back against excessive maritime claims.

Capt. David Miller, who has led the squadron since late 2019, told Defense News in a Dec. 2 interview he's confident the Freedom-variant LCS has found its place in the fleet and will expand that role as the recently approved combining gear fix is installed on ships. Asked what it's been like operating the eight ships in his squadron under restrictions this year, Miller said, "It really hasn't affected us as much as people may think."

"Yes, it lowered the overall top speed" for the ships, he said. But when the LCSs were out for training or deployments, the impact was, "from a ship's perspective, not too much. And from an operational commander's perspective, diesel engine is your most economical mode, so you just have to watch the operational employment of the ship more to make sure that you're managing your fuel consumption" as the ships relied less on the diesel engine and more on the gas turbine.

—The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Wichita (LCS 13) top, and Jamaica Defence Force Coast Guard patrol vessel HMJS Cornwall conducted a live-fire exercise April 9, 2021. Wichita is deployed to the U.S. 4th Fleet of operations to support Joint Interagency Task Force South's mission, which include counter illicit drug trafficking in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. (AG1 Keith Mitchell/US Navy)



Seven of his ships are currently conducting fleet operations or training. (The newest one, St. Louis, is in its post-shakedown availability, the first maintenance period following a ship's commissioning.) Though they are forbidden from operating in two modes to achieve top speeds — operating both the gas turbine and the diesel engine for full power, and using the diesel engine in "boost mode" — Miller said his ships have been "operating successfully under those restrictions. We inspect those gears at periodic intervals to make sure we've got no problems with them, and they're looking great. So we really have confidence in the current operating model."

The Freedom-class combining gears have a history of problems, with LCS Milwaukee suffering a propulsion casualty later linked to the combining gear and having to be towed back into port in 2014.

In 2020, Little Rock departed Mayport in February for its maiden deployment and had to return about six weeks later due to propulsion problems. After the Navy put some operational restrictions in place while it investigated the issue, Detroit suffered a similar failure in late October and had to return home.

"Initially when we had the failure on Little Rock, the answer was, hey, we restricted the use so you're no longer going to operate in a combined mode. And we thought that was sufficient to stop the failures as the engineers were going in to figure out exactly what was failing. What we found out then later after that was, when Detroit had the failure, is that it was more than just that combined mode; it was actually the torque on that clutch when the diesel engine was operating under the higher loads, causing the same degradation and failure," Miller explained.

He said Billings, which commissioned in August 2019 and was undergoing its post-shakedown availability at the time, was key to identifying the source of the design flaw. The bearings in Billings' combining gear had degraded during at-sea trials but not failed yet, helping point the engineers to the specific source of the problem.

Aside from a short standdown after the Detroit failure, Miller said operations have continued uninterrupted. Under the LCS blue-gold crewing model, the ships go down to 4th Fleet with one crew and spend several months conducting counter-trafficking missions with Coast Guard law enforcement detachments, as well as conducting training and presence missions in locations the Navy typically hasn't been able to access.

Due to the ships' size, "we're taking LCS into ports down there that we haven't pulled into in decades, in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic and some other areas," Miller said.

The ships then come back to Mayport, swap out crews, and go back to 4th Fleet for another few months.

Still, with some uncertainty and risk involved, the Navy decided not to push any Freedom LCSs forward to the Middle East. Earlier plans called for a 2018 first deployment to Bahrain, the U.S. 5th Fleet headquarters, a date that has been repeatedly pushed back.

Miller said LCSRON 2 had been preparing for a 2020 deployment through U.S. 6th Fleet and into 5th Fleet, but that deployment was put on hold as the Navy worried about having Freedom hulls

too far from home with potential combining gear failures looming.

Now, he said, the squadron is dusting off that work — potential locations for ship maintenance in the region, potential sources of logistics, and so on — and will resume that preparation work in 2022 to inform a final decision on when to make that first deployment to the Middle East.

Despite missing out on the move into Bahrain, Miller said the squadron has kept busy in local waters as it awaits the combining gear fix. The Navy said it would look hull-by-hull to determine the right time to install the fix, which involves removing a significant amount of equipment from engineering spaces to access the combining gear, and it's unclear how quickly some of the ships in the fleet will get that repair made.

During the pause in ship deliveries in 2021, Miller said LCSs weren't waiting idly at the Fincantieri Marinette Marine Shipyard in Wisconsin where the Freedom LCSs are built. The Navy has begun conducting work that would typically be done during the post-shakedown availability, ensuring the ships will have a shorter PSA once they get to Mayport and be ready for fleet tasking sooner, Miller said.

As for the crews of those ships stuck in Wisconsin, Miller said they've not only had more time to train at the LCS Training Facility in Mayport and are therefore more mature than most pre-commissioning unit (PCU) crews, but he said he's also used some of those personnel to fill any gaps in the crews of ships about to go on deployment.

LCS has a minimal manning model, with a core crew of about 73 sailors, plus an aviation detachment of about 20 sailors. While larger ships ensure about 95% of billets are filled for deployment, that has to be 100% on LCS because of the already-high workload for each sailor in the small crew.

"Providing even a ship of 73 core people, having 100% of that crew onboard and ready to deploy is a challenge. So those pre-comm crews that are out there that have gone through the training; that becomes a primary pull that we use to help augment those deploying ships," Miller said, which then gives some sailors at-sea experience that they can take back to their own ships and use when it comes time for their own pre-deployment workups.

Additional readiness concerns

Though the combining gear failures were the most visible challenge to LCS readiness, they were not the only ones.

"It's no secret that LCS has had reliability challenges," Miller said. Even before the surface navy [stood up an LCS Task Force in June](#), LCSRON 2 was working with Naval Sea Systems Command and the Program Executive Office for Unmanned and Small Combatants to address some problems through an LCS Strike Team.

Defense News reported in June the LCS Strike Team, alongside the newly established LCS Task Force, had identified 32 reliability problems and were focused on five for the Freedom-variant ships. In addition to the combining gear, that list included issues related to the diesel generator rigid mount, fuel lines, water jets and boat davits.

"We've had a lot of successes on that front," Miller said.

But he's not stopping there.

—The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Sioux City (LCS 11) is moored pierside during a planned maintenance availability in Ponce, Puerto Rico, Nov. 11, 2021. Sioux City is deployed to the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations to support Joint Interagency Task Force South's mission, which includes counter-illicit drug trafficking missions in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. (MC3 Juel Foster/US Navy)



"The other half of that is, we increase the frequency of some of our system grooms, some of our system checks, to make sure that those systems that we still know can be a little bit troublesome and need some more attention are ready to go when the ships go downrange. And really a combination of both those efforts is what's making us highly successful in our recent deployments: we're able to operate the class and really get the most out of them," the commodore said.

Additionally, LCSRON 2 had started looking at alternate maintenance models even ahead of the LCS Task Force, and that effort is taking on a more formal nature now, Miller said.

Due to the small crew size, the original maintenance model for LCS called for monthly maintenance events, each about a week long, which would be done at the pier by contractors. While that plan made sense from a manning perspective, Miller acknowledges that it takes away from the operational availability of the ship: not only is the ship sidelined for a week a month, but it also can't stray too far from its maintenance hub to keep transit times short to and from the monthly maintenance.

Miller described two efforts to address this challenge.

First, when Billings was tasked with supporting the disaster relief effort in Haiti following a 7.2 magnitude earthquake in August, it was accompanied by Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport Burlington with an LCS maintenance team onboard. Even as Billings was at sea supporting the earthquake victims, Burlington and the maintenance team were alongside and conducting the monthly maintenance work in stride.

Second is a look at new periodicities for the scheduled monthly maintenance. Squadron officials had wondered if they could move some actions to every other month, according to Miller. Would that provide greater operational availability and would it hurt the ships' readiness, he asked.

Miller said the squadron used LCS Wichita to start getting answers. Because Wichita is designated a training ship and therefore has a larger single crew, as opposed to the 73-sailor, blue-gold crews, it switched to a model of doing formal maintenance availabilities at the pier every other month and doing certain checks informally on the off months with the crew. It began that model while in port and carried it through a deployment from February to July.

That effort has since been formalized through the LCS Task Force, with NAVSEA and research group CNA helping determine the risks and benefits of this model. Miller said the task force is considering implementing this new maintenance model across all the Freedom LCSs, though nothing has been officially decided yet.

Source: <https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2021/12/15/littoral-combat-ships-in-mayport-make-the-most-of-a-year-of-restricted-operations/>

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

CHAPLAIN (COL) BERNARD H LIEVING JR USA RET



We are still in the holiday season as I write this article but Hanukkah and Christmas are now past. 2021 is fresh in our memory with all that has happened to make it a year that we will remember for a long time. I will leave it to you to recall in your minds what has most impacted your life, negatively and positively, during this past year.

As we now face 2022, the question is: how can we prepare ourselves for facing the whirlwinds that we will face in the New Year? What will inspire us to change our circumstances or ourselves over the next twelve months? Some of us will write our resolutions, making a list or lists of what we hope to accomplish – being healthier with exercise and weight loss; managing our finances more closely; or managing our family relationships to heal brokenness, for example.

Perhaps one way of living a better life in 2022 would be to follow the guidance that the Apostle Paul wrote to the Colossians in his letter to their faith community. In the words of his letter as put

into modern English by Eugene Peterson in The Message, what a difference it could make in our lives if we were to “dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive quickly and completely... And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It’s your basic, all-purpose garment. Let peace...keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other...Cultivate thankfulness...Instruct and direct one another using good commonsense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God.”

Can you even begin to imagine how 2022 can be different from past years if we were to include the Apostle Paul’s guidance in our New Year’s resolutions? His guidance, after all, is God’s deepest hopes for us. We need only to claim them for our lives as we work to practice them daily in our relationships with those with whom we live, work, and others with whom we come in contact on a daily basis or just accidentally.

Operation Volunteer! Are You a Volunteer?



TC Bob Sawallesh, US Army, Retired, above, a James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital volunteer, was very proud to be part of the VA’s Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic at the Yuengling Center Drive-Thru at the University of South Florida in Tampa in 2021. He helped to direct traffic at the center. Thousands received their COVID-19 Vaccine at the Drive-Thru VA Clinic.

Research has Shown That Volunteering Offers Many Health Benefits, Especially for Older Adults

by Angela Thoreson, Clinical Social Worker
Contributed by LTC Bob Sawallesh, US Army, Retired

1. Improves physical and mental health.

Volunteer activities keep people moving and thinking at the same time. Research has found that volunteering among adults, age 60 and over, provided benefits to physical and mental health, and volunteers report better physical health than do nonvolunteers. Research also has shown that volunteering leads to lower rates of depression and anxiety, especially for people 65 and older.

2. Provides a sense of purpose and teaches valuable skills.

The work that volunteers provide is essential to everyday activities, which gives volunteers a sense of purpose, especially when volunteering in the areas they find meaningful. Older volunteers experience greater increases in life satisfaction and self-esteem.

3. Nurture new and existing relationships.

Volunteering increases social interaction and helps build a support system based on common interests. One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to participate in a shared activity. Dedicating time as a volunteer helps expand social network and practice social skills with others.

Source: *Angela Thoreson is a licensed independent clinical social worker in Psychiatry & Psychology in Austin, Minnesota.* Speaking of Health, September 16, 2021; Mayo Clinic Health System. See <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/3-health-benefits-of-volunteering>.

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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!

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