



Officers' Call

Newsletter of the Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
April 2026

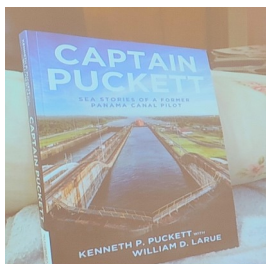


Presidents Message

LTC Don Hansen, USA (Ret), Chapter President

Welcome to April 2026, a month that will see Passover (1st), Good Friday (3rd), and Easter (5th), and did see the Okinawa Landing in WWII (1st in 1945), the Bataan Death March of WWII began (9th in 1942), the Doolittle Raid in WWII (18th in 1942), and the link up of Russian and US forces at Torgau, GE, in WWII on April 25, 1945.

Our speaker last month was CWO4 Kenneth Pucket, USA (Ret.), who spoke to us about the military history of the Panama Canal and the Axis plans to destroy the canal during WWII. Ken was a Panama Canal Pilot and later a Canal Port Captain retiring in 1996. A great talk by a knowledgeable presenter.



This month we will hear from member Dan Cagle, former Air Force and Marine pilot, who will give us a taste of living and working in Saudi Arabia for 27 years including during Gulf War I (Desert Shield/Desert Storm). It should be extremely interesting, especially with what is going on today in that theatre.



(Continues on next Page)

OUR NEXT MEETING

**Wednesday
April 8th
11:30 a.m.**

Location
Eisenhower Recreation Center
3560 Buena Vista Blvd
Wildwood, FL 34785



OUR MEAL

Our caterer will again be Mission BBQ who will be serving pulled pork and chopped brisket along with Maggie's Mac-N-Cheese, green beans, and slider & cornbread combo.

COST

Meals are **\$20.00/person** if you **register and pay** online. Meals are **\$20/person** following the deadline and **\$20/person** if you pay at the door.

RSVP

**No Later Than, 10:30
a.m. on Friday
April 3rd**

[Click Here](#)

or contact Marv Sherrill at
msherrill45@gmail.com or
813-495-2894.



Check out the Florida Department of Veteran Affairs for Florida Veteran Legislation.

Presidents Message Continued

Our caterer will again be Mission BBQ who will be serving pulled pork and chopped brisket along with Maggie's Mac-N-Cheese, green beans, and slider & cornbread combo.

We are now just two weeks out from our Military Charities Golf Tournament and although we have a maximum of 108 players in the tournament, we invite all of you that wish to come to the dinner at 5 at the Harbor Hills Golf and Country Club and enjoy bidding on the fantastic silent & live auction items being offered. Just call me at (352) 461-0624 and tell me you will be there and you can pay the \$20 meal fee at the door. We will also be pulling the winning ticket from our Raffle for the "Free Meal (up to \$25) a Week for 52 Weeks" Certificate offered by the Suleiman Family Restaurant's Havana Restaurant which is worth \$1,300. All our 250 raffle tickets have been sold and now we just await the name of the lucky winner. Last year's winner was our Surviving Spouse Liaison Cathie Stevens. The big ticket seller this year was Chris Paddock and he is now enjoying our chapter flask for his efforts!



And talking about the tournament, our premier sponsor for last year's tournament, Blackston Financial Advisory Group, invited me over to their offices last week and interviewed me about MOAA and the tournament to show their clients. You can catch the interview at <https://youtu.be/KXrZeVndOxo>. Hopefully I didn't embarrass you or myself too much. Even nicer, they presented us with a check for \$2,000.00 to sponsor our tournament again this year. Thank you David Blackston.



Well that's about it for now. Hope to see you at our luncheon meeting Wednesday, March 8th (11:30 at Eisenhower RRC), and at our tournament dinner on Friday, March 10th (5 p.m. at the Harbor Hills Golf and Country Club). Until next time, **NEVER STOP SERVING!**

2026 MOAA 18th Annual Golf Tournament Update

Capt. Dan P. Cagle, USAF (Ret), Golf Committee Chairman



The MOAA 18th Annual Golf Tournament is just around the corner. Our Team Leaders have done an exceptional job organizing their teams, as well as coordination with our other leaders. As a result, we all have a better understanding of how our individual efforts support the entire MOAA team. We are running ahead of last year's sponsorship funding and still may have one more "big one" coming aboard. Thanks to all of you that have or will soon contribute to these efforts.

Speaking of contributing, there are still personnel positions needed for each of our support groups. Our team leaders and their area of responsibility are below:

Bruce Hacker	Logistics
Dennis Storey	Finance
Al Arnold	Tournament Check-in
Debbie Cagle	Auctions (Live & Silent)
Don Hansen	Marketing
Jim O'Hagan	Sponsorship

If you are not already on one of our teams, please reach out to a team leader.

In addition, Debbie Cagle (Auction lead) has almost forty big, beautiful baskets either completed or in their final stage. In many cases the final stage is just "WINE". If you wish to contribute wine or even a basket, there is still time. Please let Debbie know your plans, and she will make arrangements to collect your contribution. You can reach Debbie at (864) 247-5137 or 2746. Or email: dan.p.cagle@outlook.com

Other opportunities to bring your contribution are:

MOAA General Membership Luncheon: April 8th

MOAA Golf Committee Meeting, April 2nd @ 3:00-4:30pm at the home of Don Hansen, 3607 Enterprise Drive, The Villages.

OUR NEXT MOAA GOLF TOURNAMENT CMEETING WILL BE ON THE 2nd OF April @ 3:00PM. (3 April is good Friday)

3607 ENTERPRISE DR.
THE VILLAGES, FL

We have the below listed documents still available for your use. Just let me know when and where you need them.

Sponsor Letter:

Fact Sheet:

Registration/Entry Form

Organizational Chart

Silent Auction Flyer

That is all for this edition; hope to see you on the 10th of April.

Hit 'em long and straight!

Dan

Membership and Recruiting

COL Al Arnold, USA (Ret), Membership Chairman

A **heartly welcome** to the following member who recently joined our Chapter:

Christopher Lestochi, COL, USA, retired

Timothy Lucero, MAJ, USA, retired

John Rohe, LT, USN, former officer



We currently have 300 Chapter members. All Chapter members are also members of National MOAA!!

Thanks to all of you that have renewed your 2026 Chapter membership. Your continued support is really appreciated!!! At the beginning of January, we had 95 folks who had not renewed. As of last week, we only had 3 folks who did not renew; one moved out of our area and two just decided to not renew. But we still have 17 folks who have not yet renewed. If you are one of these and do not intend to renew, we'd like to know why so we can make our Chapter better. Please call or email me. Thanks, Al.

Over the course of the last couple months, I called or emailed those of you who had not renewed your Chapter dues for 2026. Or so I thought. When doing some extensive research, I found out that in late 2024, our system did not recognize multiple year dues payments. Hence those of you that paid for more than one year in late 2024, only got credit for one year. I have since corrected that error and given you the multiple year credit. The vast majority of these errors were for a 2-year payment and thus, I gave you credit for 2025 and 2026 dues. Sorry for the inconvenience.

As always, if you have questions or need more information, call or email me.

Stay safe.

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President

LTC Donald Hansen, USA (Ret)

Past President

CAPT Paul Hauser, USN (Ret)

First VP

Lt Col Bruce Hacker, USAF (Ret.)

Second VP

Capt. Danny Cagle, USMC (Former)

Historian

Pam Fillmon Sherrill

Treasurer

CWO3 Dennis Storey, USA (Ret)

Secretary

SMSgt Rhonda Storey, USAF (Ret)

Chaplain

Maj Daryl DesJardin, USAF (Ret)

Legislative Liaison

Lt Col Bob Bienvenue, USAF (Ret)

State Legislative Liaison

Col William Wojciechowski, USAF (Ret)

Membership

COL Al Arnold, USA (Ret)

Personal Affairs

LtCol James O'Hagan, USMC (Ret)

Community Affairs

Col Marcus Sherrill, USAF (Ret.)

Surviving Spouse Liaison

Cathie Stevens

Provost

COL Kevin Harvey, USA (Ret.)

Public Information Officer

MAJ Thomas Lutes, USA (Ret.)

Newsletter

LTC Luke Emerson, USA (Ret)

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www.lakeandsumtermoaa.org

Information:

info@lakeandsumtermoaa.org

[Follow us on Facebook](#)

Mailing Address:

Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter –
MOAA

P O Box 666

Lady Lake, FL 32158-0666

Chapter Awards



2024



2024

Chaplain's Corner

Maj Daryl DesJardin, USAF (Ret), Chaplain



Tax Day. April 15th. A date that strikes fear into the hearts of brave men and women who once stared down adversaries without flinching, who led troops through chaos, who navigated the fog of war — and who now sit at the kitchen table surrounded by W-2s, muttering darkly at a laptop screen.

You survived. Barely.

There is something deeply humbling about a retired O-6 who once commanded hundreds of souls, signed million-dollar equipment accountability documents without breaking a sweat, and briefed four-star generals — now completely undone by the question, "Was that home office deduction for the whole room, or just the corner where the desk is?"

The answer, apparently, involves a formula. Nobody warned us about that in OCS.

What Military Service Taught Us About Taxes (Whether We Wanted to Learn or Not): The military, in its infinite wisdom, actually prepared us for Tax Day better than we realize. We just didn't know that's what was happening at the time.

It taught us to keep records. Remember the hand receipts? The property books? The end-of-tour inventories where someone always came up short one night-vision monocular? The military turned us into documentation fanatics. Those skills translate directly to April 15th. The difference is that in the military, losing accountability of a \$4,000 piece of equipment meant paperwork and a very uncomfortable conversation with your commander. With the IRS, the stakes feel somehow higher. At least your commander had a face. It taught us that the regulation always wins. We learned early that arguing with AR 670-1 about boot shine standards was a fool's errand, no matter how right you were. The Tax Code is simply AR 670-1 written by people who went to law school instead of Ranger School, and who were consequently far less interested in brevity. The Internal Revenue Code contains approximately 2.8 million words. The average soldier's attention span during a tax brief is approximately eleven. We were outmatched from the beginning.

It taught us about the mission briefing you didn't receive. In the military, you occasionally showed up to a formation without any idea what was happening — but you stood tall, looked confident, and figured it out. Tax Day is exactly the same, except the formation is a CPA's office and the person standing at the front is charging \$300 an hour to explain why your pension is taxable in the state you moved to but, thankfully, wasn't in Florida.

It taught us humility. And this, perhaps, is the most valuable lesson of all. There is a particular kind of humility that comes from being a decorated, experienced military leader who has to call your adult child and ask, "Wait — what is a 1099-R again?" That child, who once asked you how to tie their shoes, now explains things like "qualified dividends" with a patience that borders on condescending. The circle of life is a beautiful thing.

A Word of Grace for the Season: Here is what we need to remember on April 15th, when the mood around your house has turned the color of a bad OPORD: You paid taxes because you earned something. Your retirement check — that modest reward for two or three decades of service, deployments, moves, missed birthdays, and the permanent inability to sleep past 0530 — represents a life lived in commitment to something larger than yourself. Caesar gets his cut. That's always been the deal.

But what Caesar cannot tax is what you actually built. The young lieutenants you mentored who are now generals. The families that stayed together because a chaplain or a commander created a culture of care. The quiet pride of a life spent in service — the kind that doesn't show up on a 1040 and can't be audited. So file your taxes. Take your legal deductions. If you haven't filed yet, breathe — there are extensions for a reason, and the IRS has heard worse than your situation. And then, on the other side of April 15th, pour yourself something appropriate for the hour, look at your retirement certificate on the wall, and remember: you did something that most people never will.

The government just wants a small portion of your pension for the privilege of you having done it. Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's — and maybe pour one for yourself, too.

Blessings and balance due,

Chaplain Daryl DesJardin, MAJ (ret), USAF

SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

Please Support our Golf Tournament Hole Sponsors

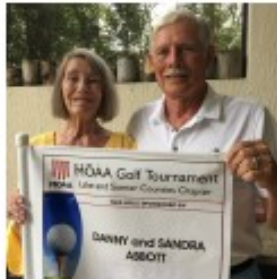


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YOUR TOTAL ADVISORS

David Blackston



Craig Curtis MD.com
Be Alzheimer's Aware



Investment Advisors

Steady as You Grow



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Unit 347



Edward Jones

Luke Emerson, CFP®, AAMSTM
Financial Advisor
1300 Page Road
Suite 200, Leesburg, FL 34748
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**Al & Phyllis Arnold
Janet Arnett
Emory & Susan Deason**

**Dennis & Rhonda Storey
Bruce & Nancy Hacker**

Legislative Update

Bob Bienvenue, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Legislative Liaison

MOAA Legislative Update:

<http://www.moaa.org/takeaction/?tab=Legislative-Action-Center#Legislative-Action-Center>



MOAA's Advocacy in Action Campaign— Status Update



MOAA's signature Advocacy in Action campaign brings our top issues directly to Capitol Hill, with a **focus on four initiatives designed to uphold our nation's commitments to our servicemembers, veterans, their families, and survivors.**

Combat-injured veterans shouldn't lose earned retirement pay because of their wounds.

Servicemembers who are medically retired before reaching 20 years of service lose some or all of their earned retirement pay because it is offset by VA disability compensation. The **Major Richard Star Act (H.R. 2102)** would correct this long-standing injustice for the nearly 54,000 combat-injured veterans affected by the current policy.

The legislation has broad bipartisan support in both chambers, but passage has been blocked by procedural issues in recent years. Correcting this injustice reinforces a simple principle: **Retirement earned through service and compensation earned through sacrifice are not the same, and both should be honored.**

Servicemembers shouldn't have to wonder whether a government shutdown will interrupt their paycheck.

Recent funding lapses have left approximately 41,000 Coast Guard servicemembers performing their duties without certainty of timely pay. This is the third shutdown within the last year, and during these funding gaps, active duty servicemembers, retirees, and their families are forced to grapple with the stress and hardships of missed paychecks.

The **Shutdown Fairness Act (S. 3168)** would provide a permanent fix, ensuring members of the armed forces continue to receive pay and benefits during funding lapses while Congress resolves broader appropriations matters. **Those who serve should not be asked to operate under the threat of financial uncertainty, especially when readiness and retention are already under pressure.**

Veterans shouldn't pay thousands of dollars to an unaccredited consultant for "help" accessing their earned disability compensation.

Unaccredited companies are charging veterans thousands of dollars to assist with VA disability claims, a service which is legally available for free through accredited representatives. Weak enforcement mechanisms have allowed bad actors to exploit veterans navigating the VA claims process. The **GUARD VA Benefits Act (H.R. 1732)** would restore penalties for unauthorized fees and strengthen oversight. **Veterans should never have to surrender a portion of their earned benefits to unregulated, for-profit intermediaries.**

No military family should struggle to access services at their military hospital or clinic

Military families frequently encounter appointment shortages, referral delays, and other barriers to access at military treatment facilities (MTFs) – often with no clear, standardized way to elevate or track access-to-care concerns.



Legislative Update (Continued)

Bob Bienvenue, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Legislative Liaison

The **Military CARE Act (H.R. 6796)** would establish a centralized digital platform allowing TRICARE beneficiaries to report access-to-care problems, route concerns to the appropriate patient advocate, and provide the Defense Health Agency and Congress with aggregated data to address widespread challenges.

What Does MOAA Want Us to Do?

As MOAA advocates prepare to bring these priorities to Capitol Hill on April 15th, lawmakers are now listening closely to the voices they hear back home. They want to know these issues don't just matter in Washington – they matter in their districts and states, to the constituents they represent. Our messages are **One Powerful Voice** for military community of 770,000+ who live in Florida.

This year's Advocacy in Action effort includes a focused digital campaign designed to generate a strong, coordinated wave of messages in the coming weeks. When our Florida AiA team members walk into congressional offices on April 15th, they should be reinforcing what lawmakers have already heard from you, their constituents. As I wrote in last month's Newsletter, chapter members will be asked to send messages in advance of the AiA meetings with members of our Congressional Delegation on Capitol Hill, before they return from their spring recess.

In addition I have requested a meeting here in the district during that recess with Congressman Webster and possibly Rick Podliska his Policy Advisor on legislation affecting Military Families. Our objective is to gain co-sponsorship on those bills and a **buy-in on advancing them through the legislative process**.

You can download the MOAA Issue Papers on all four topics here [MOAA - Advocacy in Action](#). If after reading them you would like to attend the meeting in his District Office please contact me – the sooner the better ... there will be just a short window of opportunity to schedule that meeting after this Newsletter is published.



What's the Hold-Up on the RICHARD STAR ACT?

The Major Richard Star Act, as envisioned by advocacy groups like MOAA and other supporters, would ensure *medically retired veterans with combat-related disabilities* receive full retirement pay AND VA disability compensation. Doing so would cost \$13 billion over 10 years, [according to the CBO estimate](#). That figure could end up lower, as some retirees may choose to keep their existing tax-free CRSC benefit rather than receive Concurrent Retired and Disability Pay (CRDP).

The Major Richard Star Act has been introduced in multiple congressional sessions with adjustments made to legislative language over time. In its current draft, the bill would not only address the offset for combat-injured medical retirees, BUT it also would extend CRDP eligibility to a significantly broader population of Chapter 61 retirees. **This is the ROOT OF THE PROBLEM to getting it passed** Specifically, the current draft would also eliminate the offset for:

[Chapter 61 military retirees](#) with fewer than 20 years of service

Chapter 61 retirees with at least 20 years of service and a 40% or lower disability rating

This broader application extends beyond combat-related disabilities and would cover approximately 255,000 more retirees, accounting for an **additional \$65 billion** above the initial CBO projected cost.

While this expanded scope is reflected in the latest CBO estimate, **it does not align with the original, longstanding objective of the Major Richard Star Act: to correct the inequity faced by medically retired veterans whose disabilities are directly tied to combat.**

Legislative Update (Continued)

Bob Bienvenue, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Legislative Liaison

Earlier versions of the legislation – and recent amendment language proposed to both the FY 2026 National Defense Authorization Act and appropriations legislation – have reflected this more targeted approach by limiting eligibility to combat-injured medical retirees. Those versions have consistently received significantly lower cost estimates, generally \$10 billion to \$13 billion over 10 years.

Clarifying the scope of eligibility will be key to **ensuring the bill delivers relief to combat-injured veterans** without introducing unintended expansions that drive up cost and complicated passage.

MOAA will continue to advocate for a solution that fully removes the offset for medically retired veterans with combat-related disabilities and fully restores the benefits they earned through their service and sacrifice. Given their profound sacrifices, those with combat-related injuries must be the first priority.

While individuals with non-combat disabilities are deserving of support, they should be addressed through a separate framework distinct from the remedies reserved for those wounded in service to their country.

MOAA members can help by adding their voice to the cause: The Major Richard Star Act is one of four key priorities we'll bring to Capitol Hill on April 15 as part of **Advocacy in Action**, our signature advocacy event.

The more messages we're able to **SEND TO LAWMAKERS**, the greater the effect of our visits to hundreds of congressional offices.

State Legislative Update

William Wojciechowski, Col, USAF (Ret), State Legislative Liaison



STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Two significant pieces of legislation affecting veterans and military retirees were HB 275 and HB 1329. HB 275 expands the eligibility for spouses of veterans in Florida Veterans Nursing Homes. This assures that their applications will be approved and bed space will be guaranteed.

HB 1329 creates the program Florida is for Vets to help veterans and retiring military transition into civilian life. The bill also creates grant funding for training leading to certification and licensure. Also tacked onto the bill is fee exemption for fishing and hunting licenses for veterans with service connected disabilities.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

MOAA's status as a tax-exempt veterans organization precludes it from participating in political activities, which are defined as intervening directly or indirectly in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. We all need to be particularly attentive to this *non-partisanship restriction* during this very active political campaign season, when we are wearing our MOAA hat either individually or on behalf of our Chapters.

MOAA is a registered **lobbyist** with Congress. This legal designation pertains to the nature of communications with elected officials and staff. Maybe a better term to describe their effort is **advocacy**:

the association does play an active role in the field of military personnel matters and especially proposed legislation affecting the career force, the retired community, and veterans of the uniformed services and advocates for a strong national defense it does not, as an association, become involved in matters pertaining to military strategy or individual weapons systems of the various services. The association believes that such decisions can be made only by those who have all of the facts available to them: today's actively serving military leadership.

MOAA has been recognized for 19 consecutive years by **The Hill News** as a TOP Lobbying Organization based on its effective advocacy on the issues defined in its governing documents and resolutions, presenting and supporting legislative proposals that provide for the fair and equitable treatment of members of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves, military retirees, family members, survivors, and veterans as defined in its federal Charter in 36 USC, chapter 1404.

The Editorial Policy of this Newsletter is consistent with the discussion above.

Surviving Spouses Corner

Cathie Stevens, Surviving Spouse Liaison



Thank you to Col Paul Loschiavo USMCR (Ret) for the following information on continuing to get organized.

Do not store your Will, Trust or other important documents in your bank safety deposit box unless one of your children has access to the box. The bank will seal your box when they find out you have passed on. Have one of your children or executor store your Will in their safety deposit box. It's wise to also include a few copies of the DD 214.

Check and make sure beneficiaries on all life insurance policies, bank accounts, and retirement accounts are current. This is very important to review every so often.

Be sure and have some immediate cash available. It takes a few weeks for estate accounts to be opened and your survivors will need cash available to pay for funeral expenses and bills that come in after your passing.

Shred old tax forms. Don't keep a lot of paper around! Check with your accountant on recommended time to keep your tax document and then shred the rest. The local UPS Stores will shred your papers for just a couple dollars a pound. Most of us keep too much paper!!!!

Make sure someone in your family has your passwords! This includes all passwords for accounts, social media, Facebook, utility companies etc.

It's a good idea to get a large three ring binder and store all your important documents in the binder so they are all located in one place. And don't forget to let a family member or executor know where the binder is located!



Chapter Shirts & Name Tags



3451 Wedgewood Lane

The Villages, F: 32162

Tel 352-750-1600



Editorial Policy

MOAA is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. It is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization. It is our Chapter responsibility to adhere to MOAA standards in all regards. Membership is open to anyone who has served as a commissioned or warrant officer in any of the eight military services, or is the surviving spouse of an individual who was a member or was eligible to be a member of MOAA.

This newsletter is a publication of the Lake and Sumter Counties Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America. It is intended for wide distribution to all MOAA members in Lake, Sumter and Marion Counties, Florida.

Input for **Officers' Call**, including text and pictures, can be emailed to the editor:



The Council Communiqué

Florida Council of Chapters
Military Officers Association of America

Click above to see what's going on in the state!



The Army Officer Candidate School Database: Preserving the Legacy of Commissioned Leaders



The Army Officer Candidate School (OCS) Database stands as a landmark resource for OCS graduates, their families, and historians. Built to honor more than eight decades of service and sacrifice, the database is dedicated to preserving the lineage and accomplishments of those who earned their commissions through the U.S. Army's OCS programs.

For over 80 years, Army Officer Candidate Schools have transformed prior-service enlisted Soldiers and qualified civilians into commissioned leaders. From the battlefields of World War II to modern operations around the globe, OCS-commissioned officers have played pivotal roles in shaping American military history. The creation and expansion of the Army OCS Database represents a major milestone in capturing that heritage with accuracy, dignity, and permanence.

For the first time, graduates, families, researchers, and veterans can explore a growing historical archive documenting the men and women who received their commissions through every Army branch school dating back to 1941. This living, continually expanding database currently includes more than **282,500 graduates**, with additional entries added as new records are discovered, digitized, and verified.

More than a directory, the Army OCS Database is a tribute—ensuring that the leadership, commitment, and stories of OCS-trained officers are never lost to time. It serves as a bridge between generations of Soldiers and a foundation for future historical research, education, and remembrance.

www.armyocsdatabase.com

**FORT STEWART RETIRED SOLDIER
APPRECIATION DAY**



18 April 2026

University of Central Florida – Student Union
12715 Pegasus Drive, Orlando, FL 32816

**Mark your calendars now and plan
to attend this Dynamic and
Participatory event for Retired
Military and Family Members**

More information visit:



OR

www.army.mil/stewart.retirement_services

Note: Due to the earlier government shutdown, 2026 RAD information may not be reflected on the website. Ft. Stewart Retirement Services Office will have it updated in the near future.



John Bartram Chapter, NSDAR Tri-County Women Veterans The Villages SAR Puc Puggy Chapter, NSDAR

SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE

On July 4th 2026, we are celebrating America's 250th Birthday inside the Savannah Center.

The day begins with a "March Through American History" parade at 12:00 noon. We would like to recognize your group and hope that you will accept this invitation to join us.

Please RSVP using the form below.

Will your organization join us?

Note: Due to temperatures in July, all events will be held inside.

Please reply to this email or return to the person you received it from ASAP to let us know your organization will be there.

Please include your information in the blanks below:

Org Name: _____

Contact Person & Cell Number: _____

Do you have an organization flag?: _____

Estimated # of marchers from your group: _____

In costume/uniform?: _____

Should you have any questions, please reach out to me via email.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. THE AMERICA 250 REGISTRATION NUMBER IS CH780378.



What is America 250?

Dear Potential Sponsor,

We are excited to invite you to join us in celebrating America's 250th Anniversary on July 3rd and 4th, 2026, at the Savannah Center in The Villages.

The Villages America 250 Committee is comprised of two Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Chapters (John Bartram and Puc Puggy), the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) and Tri-County Women's Veterans. This committee is established to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Also called America's Semiquincentennial Celebration!

The primary purpose of our DAR Chapters the Villages SAR, and the Tri-County Women's Veterans is to honor, remember, and celebrate our 250th anniversary through Education, Historical Preservation, and Patriotism!



America 250 Independence Gala
July 3rd, 2026, 5:30 p.m.
Savannah Center

General George Washington and his Lady, 'Martha Dear,' invite you to this celebration, with joy and cheer.

In the spirit of our forefathers, we humbly request, your presence at our Gala, as our honored guest. Return to the year 1776, where elegance and history, in grandeur, mix.

Highlights of the evening:

- * Traditional Colonial Music and Dance
- * Historical Reenactments
- * Authentic Colonial Cuisine
- * A Costume Contest
- * Dress as a Patriot, Redcoat or Dame
If you prefer, Evening Wear.

*We eagerly await your presence so fine,
For an evening of revelry, divine.*



Tribute to Our Patriots and Veterans - July 4th, 2026

Veterans Memorial Park
10:00 July 4th Ceremony

America 250 Celebration
Savannah Center

11:00 Food Trucks Set-up
11:30 Doors Open
12:00 Opening Ceremony
Posting of the Color
Indoor Parade

"March Through American History"
1:30 to 4:30 Speakers, Entertainment, Demonstrations, & Children's Activities Center
5:00 Villages Band Patriotic Concert
FIREWORKS FINALE!

Retire the Colors

Villages ID Card and/or Villages Guest ID Required for July 4th Activities

What 's a Feeyord ?

Rudy Martin was born in Rockcreek, Ohio, July 1921 [Look at a topographic map of Ohio- -its flat.] As war broke out with Europe, he volunteered for flight training; he qualified on the B-17 and deployed to England in 1943 as a B-17 pilot. 2nd LT Rudolph (Rudy) Martin was a pilot flying B-17 bombers with the 384th Bomber group against targets in Norway, Switzerland and Germany in WW II during 1943 and 1944.

His first combat mission was to fly into a Fjord in Norway to bomb a German Submarine base. I asked him about that mission. He smiled and said, "We stood through the mission briefing and the Ops O asked if there were any questions". "I asked, 'What exactly is a Feeyord?'; a few of the men chuckled. The OpsO looked at me to see if I was serious or just stirring up trouble.) "He explained in more detail. I could hardly imagine it. That was tricky flying; you couldn't make a "u" turn in the fjord with a formation flight of novice pilots, and the submarine base was at the narrow end of the fjord with steep mountains on each side too steep for B-17's to climb out..." As he continued, I began to realize those guys were really bold and innovative. They narrowed the width of their formation and went in 2 abreast to bomb the submarine base, then banked hard left to head back out to sea and safety. Rudy earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for flying 25 missions against opposing enemy anti-aircraft fire and hostile fighter plane air-to-air gunfire. His aircraft was seriously damaged on at least six occasions, his squadron was turned back by strong enemy fighter opposition, he ditched in the English Channel when he had engine trouble with the number 2 and number 4 engines, could not climb to altitude or maintain adequate airspeed. Rudy did very serious flying over Europe. Readers can find more information at the 384th web site <http://www.384thbombgroup.com/>

Rudy and his wife lived a full life and accrued a variety of belongings. As they moved from one place to another they had to downsize like most of us have done.

The decorations in his apartment and the possessions he managed to keep after multiple downsizing was a photo of his crew, the Distinguished Flying Cross he earned after 25 successful missions, a photo of his wife and a Christian cross. In a drawer I found a log with the names of each crewman and their status which had kept up to date for 70 years!





LAKE & SUMTER COUNTIES CHAPTER
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
OF
AMERICA
P.O. BOX 666
Lady Lake, FL 32158-0666

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Today's Date: ___/___/___

Membership is open to those who have served duty as a commissioned or warrant officer in any of the eight uniformed services of the USA, and who are members of national MOAA. Chapter membership is separate from national membership and carries its own dues. Members age 90 and over become Chapter Life Members with no dues.

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: ____
Last Name: _____ Suffix: _____

Type Membership: ___ Regular ___ Surviving Spouse

___ I am a current MOAA Member. Member#: _____ Life Annual Basic
___ I wish to join National MOAA. Please contact me with information. (circle one)

Annual Dues Fee: Regular Member: \$20 Surviving Spouse Member: \$10

This is an application for: a New or Renewal Chapter membership.
(circle one)

We are a 501(c)(19) tax deductible organization. We welcome voluntary donations to our Junior ROTC Scholarship Fund, which may be included with your dues.

Dues: JROTC Donation: Total Submitted:
Make Check Payable to: MOAA Mail to: MOAA, PO Box 666, Lady Lake, FL 32158

We are always looking for members to help out on various committees within the Chapter; if you would like more information about serving on a committee please check the box of the ones you might be interested in learning more about

- MEMBERSHIP FINANCE/TREASURER GOLF TOURNAMENT MEETING LOGISTICS
 AWARDS LEGISLATIVE SURVIVING SPOUSE SUPPORT NEWSLETTER
 SOCIAL MEDIA/PUBLIC RELATIONS WEB SITE MONITORING OTHER _____

Membership application may also be submitted at <http://www.lakesumtermoaa.org/Join?showall=0>

Need more info? Contact COL Albert (Al) E. Arnold, III, USA (Ret), Membership Chairman, 703-470-3886

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