

OFFICERS CALL

ST. PETERSBURG AREA CHAPTER,

Military Officers Association of America
P.O. Box 7054 St. Petersburg, FL 33734



VOL IV No II ★★★★★ **Five Star Chapter - 2002, 03 & 04** ★★★★★ February 2006
Winner 2003 Newsletter Contest–Print & Electronic Media & Web Site !!

President's Message

CAPT Don Freese, USNR (Ret)

We have all heard the expressions "If it wasn't for the last minute, nothing would happen" and "Everybody's job is nobody's job." Well unfortunately those expressions are affecting your chapter right now. That may be hard to believe for a chapter that has just won it's third straight "National Five Star Chapter Award" but it is true.

Florida Council of Chapter Convention

First case on point. The Florida Council of Chapters Convention is less than four months away. Not exactly the last minute but very late to still have four key Sub-committee chairs open. We desperately need four people to step forward and take responsibility for the following Committees: Souvenir Program, Military Ball, Theme Party and Equipment/Audio Visual.

In addition we need people to sign up to attend. There are 47 Florida Chapters. Average attendance at the Annual Convention is 300. There were 350 attendees at the 1999 Convention hosted by our Chapter with over 50 of the attendees from our Chapter. So far only 8 have signed up with only 4 from our Chapter. The Committee has done a great job setting up a Resort Hotel on the Beach at an affordable rate with a great program. Please do not wait for the last minute, sign up now!

Chapter Officer Vacancies

Second case on point. The Elected 1st Vice President and Secretary both declined to be installed for medical and personal reasons. These two positions are critical to the long term success of our chapter. Short term we first need to fill the Convention Committee Chairs as I and Al Neville can fill in for the 1st VP and Secretary but long term we need two people to step forward. This is your Chapter and it is everybody's job to support it but so far no body has come forward. We are blessed with a lot of talented people in the Chapter. We need a minimum of six people to come forward!

I hope this is not my typical president's message but it is important that everybody knows what is needed to continue the success so many have worked so hard to achieve for many years. We are a Five Star Award Winning Chapter



•• Program ••

Metro Crime Prevention of Florida

Friday, February 17, 11 AM

Banquet Masters, 8100 Park Blvd.

Our speaker will cover its Mission & Q&A:

Our primary mission is to achieve a heightened awareness by the public of the current criminal threat facing everyone in today's society. We will help others recognize potential danger when it exists, teach strategies for avoidance and introduce non-lethal techniques for defense and survival.

–By adopting a sensible anti crime approach to these issues, we can realize a significant risk reduction.

–Personal protection begins with personal responsibility, and a proactive approach to the issues of crime and violence.

–Saving lives, preventing personal injury and/or property loss are our goals.

If You can't Answer these Questions Now, You will know them after our crime prevention Program

- What is the file of life?
- How should you react to purse snatching?
- What is the most cost effective way to protect your home during a hurricane?
- How could a cell phone save your life?
- How could a burglar learn the password for you home security system?
- Is your security system invulnerable?
- What is Mace? Is it Effective?
- What leads a burglar to avoid your house because he thinks you will return any moment?
- What targets you as a potential victim?
- Is a stun gun a good defense weapon?
- Can you be arrested for speeding?
- What time of day do most burglaries occur?
- How can Campbell Soup help protect your valuables?
- What should a female do if she sees blue lights in her rear view mirror on a dark desolate road?
- What defense weapons are recommended by law enforcement agencies nationwide?
- When is a woman most vulnerable?

and we want to repeat again this year for the fourth straight year. A successful convention is critical to that success. We need everybody to get involved and members (and spouses) to take responsibility for the four critical convention openings; and also for the two officer positions!

Don Freese



Officers Call

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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- President- Don Freese** CAPT, USNR (Ret) 360-3102
 1st VP- TBD
 2nd VP- Al Neville Col USAF (Ret) 522-5685
 Secretary- TBD
 Treasurer- Peter Dawson, Maj USAF (Ret) 894-3761

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 Lt Col Gary Gilchrist, USAF (Ret) 595-5543
 TBD

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

- LCDR Paul Finley, USNR (Ret) 367-9050

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Advertising | Lt Col Gary Gilchrist, USAF | 787-3447 |
| Chaplain: | COL George Brown, USA | 866-6859 |
| Convention 2006 ... | Maj Pat Tamalis | 392-1066 |
| Data Base | Col Al Neville, USAF | 522-5685 |
| Electronic Info | Lt Col Larry Fernald USAF | 522-6237 |
| Historian: | LTC Marie Lorence, USA | 595-1342 |
| Law: | Lt Col Alan Christner, USAF | 596-3383 |
| Legislative: | COL Roger Shields, USA | 392-4323 |
| MacDill Liaison | Mrs Violet Smith, SpMbr-A | 595-5543 |
| Master at Arms | CWO4 Basil Burrell, USCG | 821-7365 |
| Membership | Col Al Neville, USAF | 821-7365 |
| Memorial | Mrs Violet Smith, SpMbr-A | 595-5543 |
| Newsletter | COL Roger Shields, USA | 392-4323 |
| Personal Affairs | Mrs Violet Smith, SpMbr-A | 595-5543 |
| Programs | TBD | |
| Publicity: | Lt Col Dick Koch, USAF | 522-5676 |
| ROTC | CAPT Tom Harrow, USNR | 367-9050 |
| ROWC Liaison | Mrs Violet Smith, SpMbr-A | 595-5543 |
| Scholarships: | CAPT Tom Harrow, USNR | 367-9050 |
| TOPS | TBD | |
| VA Vol Svc | LCDR Hazel McGrath, USN | 545-3884 |
| Vet Liaison | LtCol Fred Edwards, USMC | 360-2936 |
| Visitation | LCDR Hazel McGrath, USN | 545-3884 |

AND: Life Members Emeritus and Past Presidents

Chapter Statistics

Total Membership - 316
 Regular Members - 227
 Auxilliary Members - 88

Military Services:

Army - 88	USMC - 12
USAF - 74	USCG - 7
Navy - 47	

From the Editor

COL Roger J. Shields, USA (Ret)

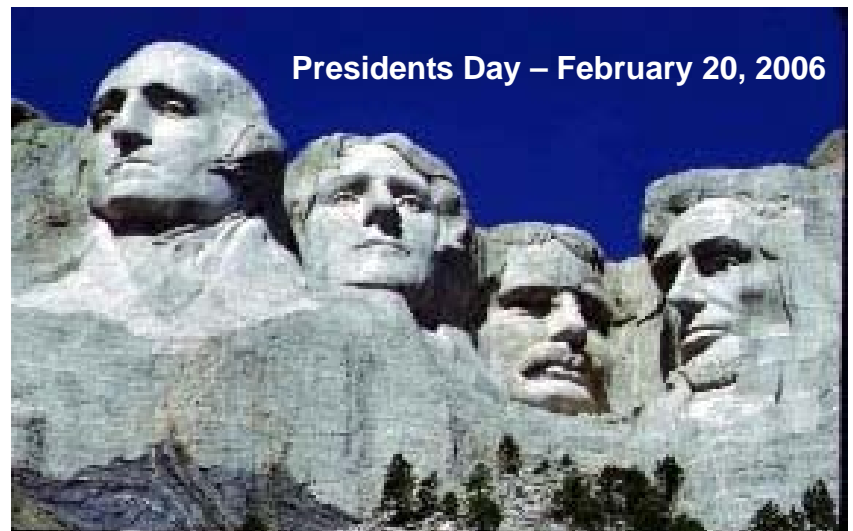
Welcome Auxiliaries – Congratulations to our former Special Members who are now known as Auxiliaries. This change of name better identifies our brave lady members who contribute so much to our Chapter. Until this change was made our chapter was one of two in all of MOAA who identified their widows as other than Auxiliaries. We hope to meet and greet more of our Auxiliaries at our monthly luncheons and we invite them to more fully participate in Chapter activities and to volunteer for leadership and other positions in **Your Chapter!**



New Chapter Leaders – Those of us who attended the annual Installation of Officers ceremony at the St Pete Yacht Club are aware that our newly elected President is CAPT Don Freese, USNR (Ret), 1st Vice President is vacant at this writing, 2nd Vice President is Col Al Neville, USAF (Ret), the Treasurer is Maj Pete Dawson, USAF (Ret) and the Secretary office is open. We can hope to announce that the remaining vacant positions will soon be filled.

Convention 2006 – The time is fast approaching for you to complete your application to attend and to send in your check. Annual Conventions are a major source of funding to operate the Florida Council of Chapters. As you might guess, the Council officers do a great deal of traveling in Florida and to DC each year. They are reimbursed for travel in their own cars at the munificent rate of \$0.12 per mile! If the US Govt rate is \$0.38 per mile, they lose \$0.26 per mile or \$52 per 200 mile round trip which is typical. (Your editor attended a four month DoD Military Comptroller Course but what does he know!) Rather than shed tears for the Council officers, please attend Convention 2006.

Betrayed! – Apparently our President and the Secretary of Defense believe that buying military hardware is more important than providing affordable healthcare for those of us who have served or will serve to go in harms way to protect our nation. In the pages to follow you may read what is happening as the Administration pushes the Congress to do the unthinkable. Tricare is a target! We must stay alert, follow the proposals and take action to protect our hard earned entitlements. **RJS**



Presidents Day – February 20, 2006

Attend our Convention 2006

Installation Dinner

St. Petersburg Yacht Club

January 20, 2006



LCDR Paul Finley USN (Ret), outgoing president, looks on as (from right to left) National MOAA's Col Chris Giaino swears in CAPT Don Freese, USNR (Ret), incoming President; Col Al Neville, USAF (Ret), 2nd Vice President; and Maj Pete Dawson, USAF (Ret), Treasurer.

Notice of Bylaws Change

These changes to our bylaws will be presented for approval to members present at the February 17 luncheon meeting.

The Executive Committee is proposing three changes to the bylaws, which will be submitted to the membership for a vote at the February 17 Membership Meeting. This constitutes notification of the proposals as required by Article XII of the bylaws. The proposals follow.

• **Proposed Change 1.** Change the chapter's name from "St. Petersburg Chapter, MOAA, Inc.," to "St. Petersburg Area Chapter, MOAA, Inc."

<**Rationale:** Our members reside in as many as two dozen communities in the St. Petersburg area. The Executive Committee believes the change will more accurately reflect this demographic composition and will enhance recruiting within the area.

• **Proposed Change 2.** Replace the terms, "Special Member" and "Special Members" throughout the bylaws with "Auxiliary Member" and "Auxiliary Members" respectively.

<**Rationale:** MOAA's national bylaws refer to "Auxiliary Members" rather than "Special Members." In addition, MOAA's Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee is mandated to represent the nearly 60,000 auxiliaries in the organization without reference to "special members." The change in terms will parallel MOAA national and will have no effect upon

membership qualifications.

• **Proposed Change 3.** Change nominating committee appointment date:

ARTICLE XI - ELECTIONS,

Section 1 current states: "Officers shall be elected at the Annual Membership Meeting of the Chapter. The President shall appoint a Nominating Committee of not less than three members, whose names shall be announced at the regular meeting **three** months preceding such election. This Nominating Committee shall submit its proposed slate of candidates to the membership-at-large, and receive any additional nominations of candidates from the floor at the Regular Membership Meeting one month preceding the election."

Proposed Change is to replace that part of the second sentence that says "three months preceding such election" with "**eight** months preceding such election." No other change is recommended

<**Rationale:** The Nominating Committee sometimes encounters difficulty in selecting qualified members for elected positions in the chapter. The Executive Committee believes this is partly due to the limited time the committee is given to canvas nominees for elected office.

Changes prepared by:
LtCol Fred Edwards, USMC (Ret)



Chapter Installation Dinner

20 January 2006

Reported by **Basil Burrell**

Attended—71: Members—45, Wives—15, AuxMbrs—2; Guests—6, Walk-ins—0, No shows—2, Cancellations—5

By 1700 hours many of our members had arrived early in anticipation of an evening of social revelry and good company. We were not disappointed.

After an hour of smoozing and pressing flesh, Maj Gen Earl Peck smacked the podium with his gavel and brought the evening's business to order. General Peck asked our Chaplain, COL George Brown to give the Invocation and then we were led in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag and Country by Maj Gen Peck. Lt Col Carroll Andrews performed his musical duties with the piano as we sang "God Bless America."

General Peck made a few remarks and jokes and then welcomed our members, their guests, MOAA Board Members, their guests and MOAA Officers to our Installation Dinner. We had quite a collection of Board Members and MOAA Officers. It must be cold in Washington but that isn't fair for me to say since we had one MOAA Board member Col Bill Gavitt USAF (Ret) from sunny California. Other distinguished guests included: Col Chris Giaimo USAF (Ret), Director of Councils and Chapters, Col Ron Buchert USAF (Ret) Chairman of Councils and Chapters Committee, National Board, Mrs. Shirley Buchert, our LtCol Fred Edwards USMC (Ret) National Board, Mrs Pauline Edwards, Col Bill Gavitt USAF (Ret) National Board, Mrs Shirley Gavitt, Col Jim Pauls USAF (Ret) Deputy Councils and Chapters, Mrs Marvella Pauls, and last but by no means least our Mrs Violet Smith, National Auxiliary Advisory Committee.

Other guests included CAPT Ed Good USN (Ret) and LTC Terry Carr USA (Ret) and Paulette. One more guest whose rank and affiliation I do have and we were very pleased to welcome was Maj Laurie Lanier USAF (Ret). Because her surname resonated in my alleged memory I was moved to recite a couple of lines from Sidney Lanier's poem about the Chattahoochee River. Lanier is not a very well known dead poet probably due to some extent to being on the losing side during the late war between the states. (Major Laurie Lanier is our newest member)

After General Peck completed the introductions he called CAPT Tom Harrow to the podium and asked Col Chris Giaimo to stand up to receive a physically and fiscally large check from our Chapter to National MOAA's Scholarship Fund. Col Giaimo expressed the thanks of MOAA for our support of the Scholarship fund. We hope to do better next year.

We then got down to the main business of the evening: Eating chicken and key lime pie. Both of which were excellent.

After the dinner General Peck re-assumed his role as MC and called Carroll Andrews front and center. He was presented a gift honoring his long and arduous service to our Chapter, a

well deserved recognition.

After another joke or two, General Peck introduced Col Chris Giaimo as our featured speaker. Col Giaimo gave a rousing and informative speech. His main subject was the need to recruit new members in all MOAA chapters and for Chapter members to exercise their political power with their congress persons.

Col Giaimo then invited our newly elected officers to come forward to be installed in their respective offices: CAPT Don Freese USN (Ret) President, Col Al Neville USAF (Ret) 2nd Vice President and Major Pete Dawson USAF (Ret) as Treasurer. Unfortunately, we do not have a 1st Vice President or Secretary nominee. Hopefully we can muddle through until we can persuade someone to take on these vacant positions. In the meantime, the responsibilities of the positions will be taken by Al Neville and Basil Burrell.

At about 2000 hours General Peck asked COL Brown to give the Benediction and then adjourned our meeting.

Special thanks to our host and SPYC member, Lt Col Dick Koch, USAF (Ret). The dinner was a very nice evening.



**Our program speaker,
National MOAA's Chris Giaimo**



**Paul Finley, Don Freese, Chris Giaimo; finding
the correct pin – past president or president**



Tom Harrow presents a “large” check to Chris Gaiamo for National’s Scholarship Fund



General Peck presents chapter’s gift to Carroll Andrews for his long service to the chapter



First lady, Sherry with son Marc Freese & wife Melody



National’s Marvella & Jim Pauls with our newest member, Maj Laurie Lanier, USAF (Ret)

THE BUZZ

COL Roger J. Shields, USA, (Ret)

• **New Members** – We are very pleased to welcome our new members and we hope to meet and greet you at our next luncheon meeting. You are also most welcome to attend our monthly business meetings which may give you an insight to the way our Chapter functions. You may even find the meetings entertaining and sometimes hilarious. Welcome!

• **Thank You Letters** – We are in receipt of thank you letters from the Dept of Veterans Affairs at Bay Pines for our chapter’s recent donation of \$1,134.00 to them. We also received a thank you letter from the Embassy of Pakistan for our chapter’s donation of \$300.00 to the Pakistan President’s Relief Fund to aid the victims of the devastating earthquake which killed and injured thousands of Pakistanis. You may recall our most interesting visit and lecture by a Pakistani Brigadier stationed at our CentCom.

• **Guard of Honor** – Our chapter has had a Guard of Honor for many years. Their function is to attend funerals and

ceremonies in honor of our members who have passed on. The Guard also leads an annual Memorial Service in conjunction with a monthly luncheon. The Guard also participates in civic parades and ceremonies in the military uniform of their service.

Recent members are COL George Brown, COL Roger Shields, CAPT Monroe (Jim) King, Col Bill Clark, LtCol Fred Edwards, Lt Col Carroll Andrews, MAJ Mike Tomasulo, and LCDR Hazel McGrath. Parade attendees are also Maj Gen Earl Peck and CAPT Tom Harrow. If you have a military uniform and wish to join us, you are most welcome.

• **Convention 2006** – Are you planning to attend? Of course you are. You look forward to seeing friends from other chapters as well as our own and to making new friends who are also attending our convention. Do you have a souvenir convention shirt? Please order one from Pauline Edwards. Support your chapter as well as the Florida Council of Chapters. We need you (and your spare change!) to make this event a big success.



Pentagon targets military retirees With friends like this, who needs enemies

South Pasadena, Fla. Jan. 20, 2006. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his deputies are complaining about the cost of medical care for military retirees. The Pentagon contends that retirees, their spouses and survivors are siphoning money needed to fight the war in Iraq. The implication is that every time a retiree orders a pill it is likely to cost a bullet an American soldier needs on the battlefield. The latest scheme would impose draconian health care costs upon retirees who are not Medicare-eligible. The Defense Department would more than triple annual enrollment fees for officers in TRICARE Prime and double the fees for enlisted retirees by 2008. Fees for under-65 officer retirees would skyrocket over three years from \$240 a year for individual coverage to \$750, and from \$450 annually for family coverage to \$1,500.

Costs for TRICARE Prime for enlisted retirees over the next three years would jump from the current \$230 per individual and \$460 per family to \$300 per individual and \$600 per family in 2006, \$375 per individual and \$750 per family in 2007, and to \$450 per individual and \$900 per family in 2008. In addition, the deductible for TRICARE Standard go up, and a first-time-ever annual enrollment fee would be imposed. Medicare-eligible retirees also would take a hit, with co-payments for TRICARE retail generic drugs jumping from \$3 to \$5 and for brand name drugs from \$9 to \$15 retail and \$10 by mail order. The department needs help from Congress to pull this off, so here's it's a two-prong plan of attack.

First, it enlisted the Joint Chiefs of Staff to support the idea. Of course that's a no-brainer because the chairman of the chiefs reports to the Secretary of Defense, and the chiefs are fighting for their budget. Imagine the scenario: the six most senior generals and flag officers in America with a constellation of 24 stars glittering on their shoulders, sitting in front of the armed services committees, each testifying that medical costs are a critical readiness issue. Since the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan must be cared for, then the money has to come either from Congress or from the military retirees. Second, the Quadrennial Defense Review report which the chiefs are completing is expected to endorse these steep TRICARE fees for younger retirees. That report is expected to hit the street in February. Now here's what's wrong with the plan. The current defense budget of \$400 billion, while we're in a war against Islamic Fascists, represents only 3.2 percent of the gross national product.

Compare this with the average of 5.7 percent of GNP in the peacetime years between 1940 and 2000. The United States afforded it, while it watched the former Soviet Union go broke trying to best us in war making capacity. Furthermore, only 1 percent of the nation is fighting 100 percent of the war. To quote Sen. Robert Byrd, the nation is not at war; our military is at war.

An official from the Military Officers Association of America stated, "Military retirement benefits are virtually the only offset for extreme service conditions that few Americans are willing to endure for two or three decades." That same official added, "Politicians who claim that the richest country in the world can't afford to pay for both military health care and essential weapons programs are just flat wrong. And putting the Joint Chiefs in the position of having to choose between the two is even more wrong." So let's not balance the defense budget on the backs of the military retirees. Since less than 1 percent of the American population is fighting this war, if it's time to cough up more dollars, let's turn to the other 99 percent.

The entire scenario of socking it to the retirees smacks of another take to Rudyard Kipling's lines. Let's just name the military retiree "Tommy."



O it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy, go away"

But it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins", when the band begins to play.

The band begins to play, my boys, the band begins to play.

O it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins", when the band begins to play.

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Chuck him out, the brute." "

But it's "Saviour of 'is country" when the guns begin to shoot.

An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything you please.

An' Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool — you bet that Tommy sees.

Fred Edwards, LtCol USMC (Ret)

Visit: <http://www.frededwards.net> **Subscribe** to his excellent military web site. **RJS**



Fred Edwards & Jim King

Attend our Convention 2006



Selected Legislative Goals for 2006

Fully fund the Defense Health Care Program

- Protect against health benefit cuts and cost-shifting to beneficiaries
- Upgrade TRICARE to attract more providers and reduce administrative burdens
- Upgrade seamless healthcare coverage options for National Guard and Reserve members
- Fix Medicare/TRICARE payment rate formula to promote provider participation
- Ensure a broad TRICARE pharmacy formulary
- Authorize pre-tax payment of health, dental and long-term care premiums
- Improve seamless transition efforts and cooperation between DoD and VA
- Provide full funding for veterans enrolled in the VA health care system.

Retirement/Survivor Issues

- Preserve full-inflation Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs)
- Eliminate the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset to SBP
- Authorize full concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation
- Accelerate effective date (currently 10/1/08) for 30-year paid-up SBP coverage
- Authorize concurrent receipt for medical retirees with less than 20 years



New member, Navy CAPT Bill Bolin & Lynn



Dorothy & George Brown



Welcome our new Members

Maj Laurie T. Lanier, USAF (Ret)
6672-C 31st Way, S
St Petersburg, FL 33712 727 867-8453

Lt Col David Poulin, USAF (Ret)
1132 45th Ave, NE
St Petersburg, FL 33703 727 525-8569

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (23 JANUARY 2006)

OPERATING ACCOUNT:

Income: \$1,890.00 (\$1,840.00)
Expenses: \$2,767.09 (\$1,746.01)
Cash Flow out: \$877.09 (\$93.99)
Operating cash on hand: \$6,902.56 (\$7,693.00)

SCHOLARSHIP FUND:

January 1: \$0.
Donations: \$100
January 23: \$100

BASEBALL FUND: (no activity)

Balance: \$410.21 (\$589.21)

Maj Pete Dawson, USAF(Ret)
Treasurer

In 2005 these Chapter members donated **\$2,490** directly to national MOAA's Scholarship Fund. This amount plus our local donations totaled **\$5,635.41**

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Andrae, William, | Palmer, Samuel, Col USAF |
| Apter, Barbara, Mrs. AuxMbr - | Perkins, La Trelle, Mrs., AuxMbr - N |
| Bowley, Carl, Col USAF | Prall, Thomas, LTC USA |
| Burrell, Basil, CW4 USCG | Simon, June, AuxMbr - A |
| Chanberlain, Helen, Mrs. AuxMbr | Smith, Violet, AixMbr - A |
| Flynn, Martin, CAPT USN | Steinilber, Marion, LTC USA |
| Foutz, Delores, Mrs. AuxMbr | Talbitzer, John, LT USN |
| Free, Nettie, Mrs. AuxMbr | Tugman, Elsie, AuxMbr - |
| Harrow, Tom, CAPT USN | Wildes, Ron, Lt Col USAF |
| March, Christian, Col USAF | |

2006 Officers Call BOOSTER

\$60 – Through — 26 January 2006

- Brown, George, COL USA
- Gudmundson, Brent, LTC USA
- Neville, Al, Col USAF



Minutes: Executive Committee Mtg St Petersburg Chapter, MOAA; 9 January 2006

President LCDR Paul Finley called the meeting to order at 1147 hours. In the absence of our Chaplain, COL George Brown our senior member, Major Mike Tomasulo gave the Invocation. President Finley led us in recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag and Nation. Col Al Neville moved to approve the minutes of our last Business Meeting as published in our newsletter, Officers Call for January 2006. Motion was seconded and passed.

Major Peter Dawson, our Treasurer, gave the financial report for Dec 2005. The Scholarship and Helping Hand funds were depleted in December 2005 so both show a zero balance. Our annual totals show that we spent \$1,172.31 more than we received for a negative cash flow for all of 2005. Not to worry though, more is coming in! Basil moved to approve the financial report. Seconded and approved. Al Neville reports that the 2005 Scholarship fund has been closed and future contributions will go to the 2006 fund. The 2006 fund starts in January 2006 and will be reported in our Feb 2006 Officers Call. CAPT Tom Harrow reports that we will present physically huge check for in excess of \$5,000.00 to Col Chris Giaino at our 20 Jan 2006 Installation Dinner for the MOAA Scholarship Fund.

LtCol Fred Edwards also has arranged for Maj Gen Earl Peck to be the Master of Ceremonies at our upcoming installation dinner. MG Peck has a medical problem and couldn't make today's meeting. Mrs Violet Smith will be attending the Commander's Meeting at MacDill AFB at the end of this month (Jan).

COL Roger Shields pointed out that "The Affiliate" published by MOAA has an article featuring Mrs Violet Smith who is a Special Member Delegate to MOAA.

Again our newsletter needs short stories of interest to our membership. These stories can be Sea Stories, War Stories, Home Front Stories, School Stories, or anything of interest to you or our members. Roger's wife, Carolyn has volunteered to lead an organization to send packages of goodies to our troops overseas. Maj Gen Peck has provided an address to which the care packages can be sent. A list and details will appear in the March 2006 Officers Call. Roger thanks Paul Finley for his encouragement, Ron Merritt for information and Maj Gen Peck for his work to obtain an overseas address.

Roger passed on some disturbing information that the plans for the Ladies Luncheon at our Convention on Tuesday 16 May is no longer scheduled. At this time the reason isn't known but, cost may be a factor. Betty Finley had enlisted John and Mary Wilson, well known local entertainers to appear and they agreed to charge whatever our Chapter could afford. Embarrassing! Al Neville commented that our incoming president, CAPT Don Freese is concerned about the paucity of sign-ups for the Convention and the Convention Program.

Roger Shields, who reports on legislative affairs reports that the SBP fix that was overwhelmingly passed by the Senate is held up in a House Committee. Please SEND your CONGRESS PERSON a request to sign a DISCHARGE



**Violet Smith, Mike Tomasulo & his
guest, Georgia French**



Our door hosts, Maggie and Bob Eynatten

PETITION to get it out of committee for a vote! MAJ Jim Hughes reports that our new Webmaster will be Lt Col Larry Fernald USAF (Ret). We understand that Larry is a real expert in the field of computers. Roger suggests a round of applause for Jim who has done an outstanding job. Too bad he has to move out of the area to a place known for snow and ice!

Pete Dawson works for H & R Block during the tax season and reports that H & R Block has a program for non-profit organizations (we are one of them) that will give an individual who is a member of such an organization a \$10.00 discount on the member's tax preparation and donate \$20.00 to his non-profit organization. If you go to H & R Block for your tax work, call Pete for a certificate for the discount and donation to our Chapter. At 1145 hours President Finley asked Chaplain George Brown for the benediction and the meeting was adjourned.

The following members were at today's Meeting:

Marie Lorence, Violet Smith, Jim Hughes, Brent Gudmondson, Fred Edwards, Al Neville, Roger Shields, Tom Harrow, Mike Tomasulo, Hazel McGrath, Pete Dawson, Paul Finley, Bob Eynatten, George Brown, Basil Burrell

Respectfully submitted: **Basil Burrell**

Attend our Convention 2006



MOAA Legislative Update

Edited for brevity by
COL Roger J. Shields, USA (Ret)

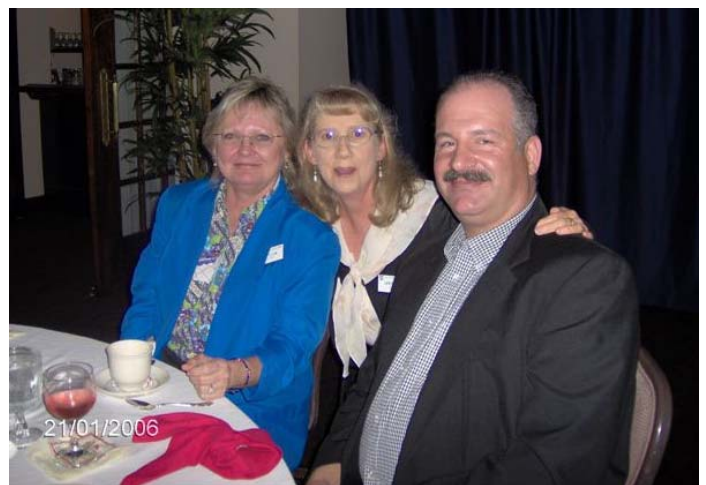
Weapons vs. Health Care Debate Kicks Up a Notch Your efforts are starting to have some effect, as several senior leaders on the House minority side have sent a letter to the White House urging President Bush to reject Pentagon plans to impose large health fee hikes on military retirees to help pay for weapons programs. Our hope is that there will be a bipartisan effort in Congress to recognize that people programs are as important as weapons programs, and that the former shouldn't be a bill-payer for the latter. But we need a barrage of grassroots inputs to Congress to make that happen. Send your legislators a message. In addition, please sign, stamp and mail the four tear-out letters that appear in the February MOAA magazine (reaching your mailboxes shortly). For those complaining about growing health care costs, MOAA notes that there have been similar or larger increases in the cost of many weapons systems. Military people are a weapon system too - the only weapon system that has never let the country down in any way. The Pentagon needs to acknowledge its own management responsibility for rising weapons costs rather than trying to stick military retirees with the bill for them.

Disability Commission Coming to a Town Near You. The first city to be visited will be Tampa/St Petersburg, Florida on 15 -16 February and will include participation by the entire commission. The Commission plans two sessions that will be open to the public — a “town hall” meeting the evening of the 15th and a public meeting scheduled for the 16th. The Commission then plans to visit one city per month over the next eight months. At each of their stops, commissioners will meet with VA representatives, military treatment facility personnel, and interested veterans. We'll provide the specific dates as soon as they're available. The Commission chairman, LTG James Terry Scott (USA-Ret), highly encourages interested veterans, retirees, survivors, and currently serving members to join them and be heard. Additional information on the Disability Commission and upcoming field hearings may be found at: <http://www.vetscommission.org/index.htm>

MOAA Seeking Tax Break for Health Insurance Premiums
MOAA has long partnered with the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) to seek legislation that would allow pre-tax payment of TRICARE-related health and dental premiums for active duty, Guard, Reserve and retired military members and retired federal employees. Active federal employees have had this benefit since 2000. MOAA/NARFE efforts are focused on extending this same benefit to retirees. Congressional champions Sen. John Warner (R-VA) and Rep. Tom Davis (R-VA) have introduced legislation to accomplish this (S. 484 and H.R. 994 respectively). Both bills would allow TRICARE dental premiums to be deducted from active duty pay on a pre-tax basis and allow similar deductions from retired pay for TRICARE Prime enrollment fees and the TRICARE retiree dental premiums. The bills also would allow a tax deduction for TRICARE supplemental insurance premiums. So far, S. 484 has 54 Senate cosponsors, and H.R. 994 has 290 in the House. Both bills remain stuck in the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee, respectively, despite having a majority of cosponsors in each chamber. MOAA and NARFE are focusing efforts on increasing co-sponsor support and pushing for full Committee action and a floor vote in both chambers. **Visit MOAA's Web site at:**



Tom & Anita Harrow



**Janice Mogan w/ new member
Kathy Klein & John**




Earl Peck and Ron Buchert

<http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/bills/> to urge your senators and representative to cosponsor the bills. Scroll down to “Health Care Issues” and click on the links to those bills. Then enter your zip code to send a MOAA-suggested message to your legislator.(Note: Article condensed for brevity.) RJS

NOTE: It's time to “take the gloves off!” We must fight now or suck our thumbs later. This Administration is serious about budget reduction - at our expense. Pork spending and bridges to nowhere tell us that our nation can afford guns and butter! Ed.





TAPS

Mrs. **Taima Barros**, AuxMbr - A
1/20/2006; Page 16, 2006 Directory

VADM Norb Ryan Letter to Sgt Shaft Military Health Care

Dear Sgt. Shaft: My husband served for 24 years in the Air Force. It is bad enough that we can't get the free medical care that was promised us. My husband heard a rumor at work that Tricare Prime was going to increase our premium to \$900 a year instead of the \$450 we pay now. Is this true? A lot of retirees can't afford that.

Irene R

Dear Irene: The following letter speaks to your concern. Military retirees are once again bearing the brunt of spiraling health-care costs. (**Adm Ryan, MOAA , sends**)

Dear Sgt. Shaft: By now you have probably heard that the Department of Defense (DoD) proposes to raise the Tricare fees for those military retirees under age 65. They also want to raise the pharmacy fees, and this will affect Medicare-eligible military retirees and active duty/Guard/Reserve families, as well. In some cases, the proposed fees would be double or triple what they are now. Apparently, even the Joint Chiefs of Staff support these raises because, with a politically constrained DoD budget, they believe that retiree medical care costs are keeping them from buying hardware and are becoming a readiness issue.

We are surprised that DoD leaders seem to be forgetting their history. In past years, when the leadership started cutting future retirement benefits, those on active duty — and they are very smart people — eventually ended up “voting with their feet.” People who should, and could, have stayed in got out when the DoD began playing with the REDUX retirement system, which cut benefits for those who joined the military on or after Aug. 1, 1986. You may recall that the REDUX law had to be repealed in 1999, when service leaders at that time complained that it was hurting retention and readiness.

The military is not General Motors Corp. While industry is offloading more health-care expenses on their employees, our service members have far more arduous conditions of service — deployments, hostile environments, family separations, 24-hour duty, forfeiture of some civil liberties, the inability to leave the job quickly if not satisfied and many more. Military health care, retirement and other institutional benefits are the primary offsets that our nation offers for those unique and extraordinary demands. Budget people love to go after these programs because they are easy, short-term targets. The current leaders and budgeteers focus on current problems and usually won't be around to deal with future recruiting and retention consequences caused by budgetary shortsightedness.

Congress funds what it wants to fund. The current administration advocates a strong national defense. It's time for all leadership to remember history and realize that strong national defense comes at a cost — now or later. America can afford both weapons and military health care. Political leaders should not be putting the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the position of having to choose between them.

Sincerely,

Vice Admiral Norbert Ryan, USN (Ret)

President, Military Officers Association of America

Send letters to Sgt. Shaft, c/o John Fales, PO Box 65900,
Washington, D.C. 20035-5900;

fax 301/622-3330; call 202/257-5446; or e-mail
sgtshaft@bavf.org. Contributed, YNCS Don Harribine,
USN(ret) Edited by **RJS**

Sick List

(Contact LCDR **Hazel McGrath**, 545-3884)

- * Col **Mildred (Gene) Butler**, USAF (Ret)
13780 89th Ave, N, Seminole, 33776
- * COL **John E. Jessup**, USA (Ret)
3701 42nd Ave S, St Petersburg, FL 33711.
- * 1Lt **Robert L. Alvarez**, USMC (Ret)
6070 80th St, N, #401, St Petersburg, FL 33709
- * LTC **Richard H. Natzke**, USA (Ret)
530 59th Ave, St Pete Beach, FL 33706
- * Lt Col **Charles R. Hedrick**, USAF (Ret)
12136 Kay Dr,
Seminole, FL 33772

Your cards, prayers and thoughts are welcome.



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21/01/2006

National MOAA's Bill & Shirley Gavitt



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February Birthdays

(From 35 - 90 years)

Day	L NAME	F NAME	RANK	SVC
29	Barnum, Ralph		CDR	USN (Ret)
05	Berns, Robert		Col	USMC (Ret)
15	Bricker, Rodney		Col	USAF (Ret)
07	Carter, Nelson		WO3	USN (Ret)
07	Corbin Brennan, F.		Mrs.	AuxMbr
15	Darling, John		LTC	USA (Ret)
02	Fernald, Laurance		Lt Col	USAF (Ret)
24	Fratangelo, Paul		MajGen	USMC(Ret)
23	Freese, Marc		Maj	USMC(Res)
18	Garnhart, George		LTC	USA (Ret)
06	Jessup, John		COL	USA (Ret)
05	Kisbany, Sari		Mrs.	AuxMbr - A
26	Knab, Douglas		CAPT	USN (Ret)
13	Matkovich, Ludwig		LTC	USA (Ret)
07	Moore, Frances		Mrs.	AuxMbr
23	Mortensen, Marilyn		Mrs.	AuxMbr - N
19	Sipole, Eva		Mrs.	AuxMbr - A
19	Steinhilber, Marion		LTC	USA (Ret)
20	Tondreau, Herbert		CW4	USA (Ret)
17	Tugman, Elsie		Mrs.	AuxMbr - A
14	Vallario, Rudolph		LTC	USA (Ret)

LUNCHEON MEETING

11 AM - 1:30 PM, Friday, February 17th

Banquet Master, 8100 Park Blvd.

• Reservations by Wednesday February 15th

Your name _____

Each reservations \$10:

Prime Rib: _____

Stuffed Flounder: _____

*** CLIP and MAIL, with check to SPMOAA,

to=> **CAPT Bob Eynatten,**
507 Plaza Seville Ct, # 16
Treasure Island, FL 33706

For late reservations, call either

CAPT Bob Eynatten 360-4637

or

CAPT Don Freese 360-3102

Calendar of Events

Luncheon Meetings are on the 3rd Friday of each month—mixer 1100 - 1145; luncheon and program 1145 - 1315; at Banquet Masters, 8100 Park Blvd., Pinellas Park.

February 17th, Friday, 1100,

Metro Crime Prevention of Florida, will discuss personal security issues.

March 17th, Friday, 11:00

Col Charles Potter, commander, MadDill AFB hospital

April 21st, Friday, 11:00 TBD

May 17th, Wednesday, 5:45 - 1100 P.M., Our Chapter's monthly meeting is in conjunction with our Convention's **Military Ball** at The TradeWinds Resort, St. Pete Beach.

June 16th, Friday, 11:00 TBD

July 21st, Friday, 11:00 TBD

Business Meetings are on the 1st Monday of the month 1130 - 1230 at Perkins Family Restaurant on the NE corner of Starkey Rd. and Park Blvd. in Seminole.

February 6th Monday

March 6th Monday

April 3rd Monday

May 1st Monday

June 5th Monday

July 3rd Monday

ROWC

Luncheon—(2nd Tuesday) meet 11:30 AM, lunch 12:30 PM

•**Reservations:** LTC Rose Munchbach 397-4146

•**Membership:** Martha Willis 579-4116.

•**February 14th**, Isla Del Sol Yacht & Country Club

•**March 14th**, Dolphin Beach Resort, St Pete Beach

•**April 10th**, Banquet Master, Pinellas Park

Bridge – (1st Wednesday) of the month 10:00 AM Banquet Masters, Pinellas Park. •**Reservations:** Evelyn Hamilton 399-1272, or Margaret Peck 525-1688

2006 Convention (May 14-18, 2006) MOAA 2006 Florida Council of Chapters Convention in St. Pete Beach, Trade Winds Island Grand Resort.

More information: MAJ Pat Tamalis, phone: 392-1066 or by e-mail: ptamalis@tampabay.rr.com

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CAPT Don Freese

727 360-3102, donfreese@aol.com