



OFFICERS CALL



Military Officers Association of America Saint Petersburg Area Chapter

MARCH 2025

MOAA-Saint Petersburg Area Chapter
PO Box 40353
Saint Petersburg, FL 33743
www.moaastpetearea.com



— DFAS

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— AARP

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1-888-687-2277

— ELIZABETH DOLE FOUNDATION

<https://www.elizabethdolefoundation.org/>

— TAPS

<https://www.taps.org/>
1-800-959-8277

— MOAA

MOAA.org
1-800-234-6622

— VA

<https://www.va.gov/military.com>
www.militarycoalition.org

— Health Care Committee-Survivors

www.militaryonesource.mil

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St Petersburg High School JROTC Program Partner Update

—By John Rummel, CDR (ret), 1st Vice President

The St Petersburg MOAA Chapter has teamed up with the Raymond James Veterans Inclusion Network (VALOR) to support our five local high school JROTC units. The Raymond James VALOR team is a key advocate for Veteran's education, professional development and community outreach. VALOR represents all service branches, fostering camaraderie, networking, and community involvement by providing career development, training and outreach opportunities.



Last year, our chapter was selected by VALOR to be a community partner for the next five years. This relationship provides financial resources to support our JROTC engagements and connects us to other veteran support organizations within the VALOR network. For 2024, the VALOR team graciously donated \$10,000 that will be used to cover equipment gaps for each of these high school programs. High school JROTC programs rely on limited school funds and community donations to support material requirements, to include drill team uniforms, rifles, etc. The JROTC unit leaders are providing the Executive Council with a prioritized list of requirements to assist in fund distribution.

We are honored to work with the Raymond James VALOR team and look forward to having them join us at upcoming JROTC award ceremonies so VALOR leadership can see firsthand the impact their support is having on these future leaders.

A little about Valor...



Since 2018, Valor offers members and allies the opportunity to exchange information and ideas and give back to our community. Currently, many members and allies work closely with a variety of organizations serving communities throughout the United States. The Valor network has local leaders in the St. Pete, Southfield, Memphis, New York, and Branches nationwide. It's important to note that you do not have to be a service member or veteran to join the Valornetwork. We welcome everyone with an interest and respect for the military/first responder community.

From the Desk of the Editor



Dave Warren
Editor OC

From the Desk of the Editor

Key Leadership from the St Peterburg Chapter attended the Florida Council of Chapters of MOAA (FCOC) Leadership Training Seminar (LTS) and Convention in Orlando from 17-19 January. Along with myself, John Kieffer, Tony Clark, and Fran Chancy were also in attendance. The highlights of the weekend were, updates, feedback and training sessions provided by key officers from other chapters, COL "Niche" Patxot, USA (Ret), West Central Area VP, FCOC, and the President of MOAA National LTG Brian Kelly, USAF (Ret). I found one of the more enriching aspects of attending this statewide meeting for the first time was meeting other Chapter Officers from the many chapters attending from around the state. Best practices were shared by all and key contact lists from National, State and individual MOAA chapters were developed.

We are still catching up with dues from members for 2025. It is encouraging many members are using the website to "re-up" via credit card instantly. Not only are dues being paid through this medium, but also general and specific donations are being made as well. For the time being credit card fees are being absorbed by MOAA National, so your entire dues and donations go straight to the chapter. If you haven't tried this out, please try it via the chapter's secure website at <https://www.moaastpetearea.com/>.

As you read in our headline article this month, the chapter's sincere thanks go to the Valor Foundation for a \$10,000 donation to the chapter in support of JROTC units at various high schools in Pinellas County. Learn more about The Raymond James National Veterans Inclusion Network at <https://rjvalor.org/>.

The Board is looking for two Executive Advisory Board members to serve with the Chapter Board this year. The Advisory Council position is typically a 2-year position and is part of the EC that advises the Board on issues. One Advisory Board position is available for a term that expires in December 2025 and another position expires in 2026. Anyone who has questions or would like to help as part of the Executive team please contact John Kieffer. The time commitment is minimal as EC meetings are held once per month.

Dave Warren, Editor

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President's Note



John Kieffer
Major, USA (Former)
President
St Petersburg
Area Chapter
Text: 813-919-9161
Email:
johnkieffer1234@aol.com

In January, the Florida Council of Chapters ("FCOC") held their annual Leadership Training Seminar and Mini Convention at the Rosen Center Hotel in Orlando. Our chapter was well represented with five of our chapter officers in attendance: 1st Vice President John Rummel, 2nd Vice President David Warren, Secretary Tony Clark, Surviving Spouse chair Fran Chancey and me.

Among the themes stressed was the importance of members to sign up and participate in MOAA's Advocacy in Action. This is especially important as our FCOC Legislative Affairs Chair, Pierre Louis, will be heading to Capitol Hill April 7-10 to meet with this session's Congressional officials. Paramount to the success of Pierre's mission is his ability to reference all your emails of support for current legislation affecting our military and veteran communities.

For those who have not yet participated in the Action Center platform, I urge you to try this effortless way to connect and communicate with your elected officials. The platform does all the work from determining your U.S. Representative and Senator, to generating a personal email of your support of MOAA's position on a given legislative matter.

The key to being able to smoothly move through the legislative issues on the site is to first register. As long as you don't clear cookies, the site will remember your login details and provide a super easy, streamlined experience every time you visit the site to take action.

The link to MOAA's Advocacy in Action can always be found on the front page of our website. But here it is so you can sign in and start today: https://moaa.quorum.us/sign_in/

Never stop serving!

John Kieffer
Major, USA, Former
Chapter President

Dates to remember

The MOAA Ladies Luncheons:

*Time 12:00 noon

March 13 – Harvey's 4th Street Grill
3121 4th Street N.
St. Petersburg, FL 33704

May 8 – Location to be announced

July - No summer meetings.

A reminder will be sent by email prior to each function.
These luncheons are open to all MOAA ladies and friends!

Any questions email Denise Pederson at:
p3teach@gmail.com

IMPORTANT DATES IN MARCH

March 3: U.S. Navy Reserve Birthday
March 13: K9 Veterans Day
March 25: Medal of Honor Day
March 29: Vietnam War Veterans Day

IMPORTANT DATES IN APRIL

April 5: Gold Star Spouses Day
April 14: Air Force Reserve Birthday
April 23: U.S. Army Reserves Birthday

Current Board Officers

President: John Kieffer MAJ USA FMR
1st VP: John Rummel CDR USN Ret.
2nd VP: Dave Warren, LTC, USA Ret
Treasurer: Dave Warren, LTC, Acting Treasurer
Secretary: Tina Manley
Spouse Liaison: LTC Pauline Mallory

VA Office of Survivor Assistance

<https://www.va.gov/SURVIVORS/FAQs.asp>

Executive Advisory Board, Term Expires 31 Dec 2025

Peter Gunderson CAPT USN Ret.
 Richard Dusincki LTC USA Ret.

Term Expires 31 Dec 2026

Tom Pederson Maj USAF Ret.
 Anthony Clark COL USA Ret.

Contact Information

Committee	Chairperson
Advertising/Website	MAJ John Kieffer
Awards	CAPT Pete Gunderson
Help our Troops & VA Volunteer Service	LTC Fran Chancey
Hospitality & Reservations	Maj Thomas Pederson Mrs. Denise Pederson
Law	Maj Bert Carrier
Legislative	CW5 Tom Hofer
Membership	CPT Tina Manley
Personal Affairs	LTC Pauline Mallory COL Tony Clark
ROTC & JROTC	CW5 Tom Hofer
Scholarships	CAPT Pete (Halvor) Gunderson
Surviving Spouses	LTC Pauline Mallory
Transition	Vacant
Visitation	Vacant

Your Executive Board for 2024



President
MAJ John Kieffer



1st Vice President
CDR John Rummel



2nd Vice President
LTC David Warren,
USA Ret



Secretary
CPT Tina Manley



Treasurer
Dave Warren Acting
Treasurer



Spouse Liaison
LTC Pauline Mallory



Hospitality & Reservations
Denise & Maj Tom Pederson



Chaplain
COL Tony Clark



Veteran Representative
LTC Fran Chancey

Hospitality and Reservations



Denise & Maj Tom
Pederson

Membership Meeting - 21 March

11 AM Social; 11:30 Call to Order; 11:45 Meal served.

Bayou Club, 7979 Bayou Club Blvd, Largo, FL 33777, Seminole 33777 <https://www.bayouclubgolf.com/>

*Menu:

Salmon Caesar Salad – Romaine lettuce tossed with Caesar dressing with croutons and fresh sliced parmesan cheese

or

Southern Fried Chicken Salad - Mixed greens, grape tomatoes, cucumbers, shredded cheese, croutons, and honey mustard dressing

or

Steak Bowl - Char-grilled skirt steak prepared medium rare with wild rice, tomato, avocado, red onion, carrots, and chimichurri sauce

All served with coffee, ice tea, rolls and dessert.

Cost is \$25 per meal. There will be drawings for wine/liquor. Also 50-50 Raffle; 3 tickets for \$5

Reservations/meal requests: Email: mtgfoodstpete@gmail.com or Text: 727-688-9908 (Tom Pederson)

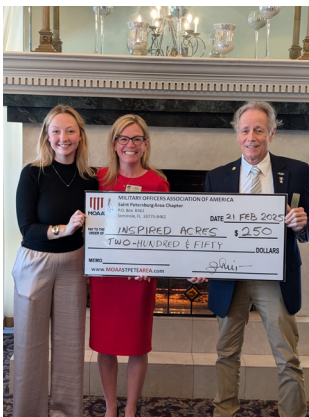
Please have requests in by Tuesday evening.

Luncheon Guest Speaker



Thank you Molly Longmire!

Excellent Bayou Club luncheon today, Feb 21, and thank you speaker Molly Longmire, CFRE, Executive Director, Inspired Acres: *"Transforming Lives Through Therapeutic Recreation."* Inspired Acres' programs include equine therapy, arts and crafts, outdoor activities, community events, and more. Click the Inspired Acres link below for more information: <https://inspiredacresfl.org/>



Surviving Spouse

Surviving Spouse Virtual Opportunities Right On Your Computer or Phone!



LTC Pauline
Mallory,
USA, Retired

Did you know that the National MOAA website (moaa.org) has a monthly article in the Surviving Spouse Corner? Every month there is a new article relating to Surviving Spouses and/or those preparing for the future as they grow more “mature”.

Previous articles have included: What to Know About National Cemetery Burials, What you Need to Know about Reserve-Component Benefits, and Avoid These Surprises During Your Time of Loss.

In this article I'd like to focus on the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter and encourage you to become a member. The article, titled “Join our Virtual Chapter”, was written by Gail Joyce. I hope it inspires you to check it out.

“Our virtual chapter provides a place for surviving spouses and surviving spouse liaisons to learn important information, share ideas, and form new relationships with friends who share a common bond. **A member recently commented that she got the most useful and important information from this group that she could not find in other places.**

We meet once a month on the third Tuesday of each month; however, we do not meet in November or December due to busy holiday schedules.

Once you join, you will receive a notice each month with a link for joining the meeting. In odd-numbered months, beginning with January, meetings are more formal, with an agenda and a guest speaker.

In even-numbered months, meetings are more informal and are primarily for information sharing. In both meetings, there is always the latest information provided about important advocacy issues that affect spouses, surviving spouses, and families.

In addition, there is a book club that meets once a month on the third Monday of the month. Books are chosen by the participants and include both fiction and nonfiction.

The Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter, chartered in 2018, began with 10 members and has grown to 250 members from almost every state — but not all 50 yet. Florida and Texas lead the way with the most members.

For additional information or to join, contact mssvc02@gmail.com or find us on MOAA.org. (Surviving Spouse Corner) Here, you can also find links to critical advocacy issues and helpful resources and benefits.

As many members have noted, one of the biggest benefits of joining this virtual chapter is the camaraderie and friendships with so many others who share their problems and concerns. So, don't delay — join today! I promise you will be glad you did.”

Other online opportunities:

- [Facebook.com/moaaspouse](https://www.facebook.com/moaaspouse)
- MOAA's [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#)
- <https://www.moaavirtualchapters.org>

Chaplain's Message



COL Tony Clark
Chaplain

My morning protein bar wrapper reminds me of two great truths about our human condition: "We are all builders. And we're better when we work together."

These two great truths flow from the Judeo-Christian teaching that ALL humankind is created in the image of God - the Imago Dei.

This image is not understood in a physical sense, rather, our creation in the image of God means that "we are free to make choices: to love, to create, to reason, and to live in harmony with creation and with God." (*The Book of Common Prayer* 1979, p. 845)

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, God created or "built" the universe, our solar system, our earth, the earth's flora and fauna, and the first human beings. We bear the image of this creating and

building God, and we are called to be creators and builders in our various life roles (spouse, parent, sibling, employee, manager, volunteer, etc.) as well.

With my role as a builder in mind, I'm reminded of one question in Rotary International's Four Way Test "of the things we think, say, and do:" Will it build goodwill and better friendships? In other words, how can we build up, raise up, and encourage those around us? When we are a "lifter" of those around us (thank you, John Maxwell), we model the image of god.



"We are all builders. And we're better when we work together." When we work together, we model the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - the Trinity. The Trinity worked together in Creation and we model the Imago Dei when we work and play well with others to reach a common goal or purpose at work, in play, or as a member of MOAA working as advocates and supporters for our total military family.

O God, you made us in your own image to love, to create, to reason, and to live in harmony with you, one another, and your creation: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne. (Prayer adapted from *The Book of Common Prayer* 1979, p. 815)

A Look Back...



A Look Back to 12 March 1947

In a dramatic speech to a joint session of Congress, President Harry S. Truman asks for U.S. assistance for Greece and Turkey to forestall communist domination of the two nations. Historians have often cited Truman's address, which came to be known as the Truman Doctrine, as the official declaration of the Cold War. In February 1947, the British government informed the United States that it could no longer furnish the economic and military assistance it had been providing to Greece and Turkey since the end of World War II. The Truman administration believed that both nations were threatened by communism, and it jumped at the chance to take a tough stance against the Soviet Union.

Source: <https://thisdayinusmilhist.wordpress.com/2014/03/12/march-12/>

Legislative Action

—By: SPA MOAA Immediate Past President - CW5 Tom Hofer USA Ret.

Greetings - fellow Officers. I would like to begin this newsletter starting with our State government. In Florida, there is an estimated Veterans population of 1.4 million. We also have a dedicated Florida Veterans organization at the state level – Florida Department of Veterans Affairs (FDVA). It has an informative website as well, where you can take note of the benefits to veteran, retired and former military officers which accrue because of Florida residency.

I want to highlight for you the proposed 2025-2026 Florida state budget for FDVA totaling \$17.5 million.

The Governor's Focus on Fiscal Responsibility Budget invests \$12.3 million to support capital improvements for the State Veterans' Nursing Homes. The budget includes \$3 million for renovations of the 120-bed Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes, which opened to residents in 1999.

The budget also invests \$2.2 million to support enhancing safe and secure medication management for residents in State Veterans' Homes.

The Governor's Budget continues a \$2 million investment to assist veterans in securing meaningful skills-based employment, provide employers a skilled talent pipeline, and to assist veterans in creating and operating a small business.

The budget includes \$1 million for the Veterans Dental Care Grant Program, which expands access to dental care services for veterans through committed nonprofit organizations.

As you can see from the above, the focus is on the state-run veterans residence facilities as well as training for skill-based employment and improving dental care.

I recommend that you encourage our state representatives to implement the proposed budget which fills a gap that local government and the VA is hard pressed to fill. Here they are:

Florida Senate: Nick DiCeglie (R)

E-mail: DiCeglie.Nick.web@flsenate.gov

Phone: 727-563-1910.

Representatives: Kimberly Berfield (Dist. 58); Lindsay Cross (Dist. 60); Michele K. Rayner (Dist. 62); Benny Jacques (Dist. 59) Linda Chaney (Dist. 61)

Our 119th Congress has now been in session for nearly two months. Please take note of the fact that nearly 100 members have military experience, the largest number in eight years. Nearly 1/3 have served since January 2000. Naturally, they represent a significant shift from those of us who served prior to that time.

Our MOAA leadership has laid out priorities for the Congress to consider:

- Improving military housing for those currently serving.
- Curtailing the wait times for veterans who were exposed to toxic chemicals to ensure they receive care and benefits.
- Passing a new Military Spouse Hiring Act to increase spouse employment opportunities.
- Health care:
 - Enhancing stability in DoD health care.
 - Improving care-giving support within the VA system.

For your information, the key House and Senate Committees that consider legislation affecting the military are:

- Separate House and Senate Veterans' Affairs; Armed Services, Appropriations, Defense and Military Construction – VA subcommittee. Below are FL members of the respective committees.
 - Veterans' Affairs – None.
 - Senate Armed Services – Senator Rick Scott (R-FL)
 - House Appropriations Defense and Military Construction – John Rutherford (R-FL), Scott Franklin (R-FL), Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-FL).
 - Senate Appropriations Defense and Military Construction subcommittee – None.

2025 Legislative Action.

- 2026 military pay – pegged at 3.8%. 14.5% pay raise for E-1 thru E-4 ranks passed in December 2024.
- 2025 TRICARE raises:

continued on pg. 9

Legislative Action continued from pg. 8

- Prime from \$363 to \$372/annual individual; family from \$726 to \$744.
- Select from \$177.96 to \$191.92; family from \$355.92 to \$364.92.
- Specialty co-pays from \$38 to \$51.

Expect a 2025 “Storm the Hill” effort in April by your MOAA team in Washington DC. They will be meeting with individual members of Congress on our behalf. More details in the March and April editions of *Military Officer*, our MOAA monthly magazine.

Don't forget – Our Florida legislature meets on 3 March 2025. Visit the FDVA site at floridavets.org. If you are a recent FL resident, you should be aware of the many state-sponsored veterans benefits available to you. Use MOAA's [Legislative Action Center](#) to contact your lawmakers and urge them to support these legislative initiatives. For your convenience, there is a partially filled out form for each legislative priority. You can edit this form, adding or deleting content. You then select our representative (Ana Patricia Luna) and our Senators Ashley and Rick Scott. The email will automatically be sent to their offices.

House of Representatives:
Honorable Ana Patricia Luna (R-FL) – District13

9200 113th St. N. Office Suite: 305

Seminole, FL 33772

[\(727\) 610-3980](tel:(727)610-3980)

1017 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20515

[\(202\) 225-5961](tel:(202)225-5961)

Senate:

Honorable Ashley B. Moody

Honorable Rick Scott

Note that contact instructions are located on the Action page to recommend specific actions that we want to bring to their attention.

Regards to all.

Tom Hofer, CW5, USA, Ret.

Legislative Affairs officer.

Helpful Links and Contacts

National

<https://www.moaa.org/>

For general and Legislation Action Information.

Note: MOAA is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization!

State

<https://flmoaa.org/>

For Florida specific information about Florida Council of Chapters

Local

<https://www.moaaastpetearea.com/>

For membership eligibility and membership application as well as other chapter related information.

Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/moaa_st_pete_area/

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/925278824641972>



Surviving Spouse Advisory Council

Surviving Spouse Virtual chapter:
mssvc02@gmail.com

SSAC Chair and Board Member:
virginiagailjoyce@gmail.com

Visit your Chapter's Web page and social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram) on a regular basis. Don't forget the Florida Council and National sites. chapter web and social media accounts!

Editorial Policy

The St Pete Area Chapter of MOAA is nonpartisan in the content that is published on our website, <https://www.moaastpetearea.com/> Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/925278824641972>) and newsletter, The Officer's Call. The information presented is for both the public and members of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) in support of our military members. Our organization focuses on the protection of benefits for our service members and in keeping with a strong military.

Membership in MOAA and the Chapters is open to any Active Duty, Retired or Former officers or Surviving Spouse from those services shown below.

Never Stop Serving

MOAA 2026 Calendar

	EC*	Membership Luncheon**	Ladies Luncheon***
March	4	21	13
April	1	18	X
May	6	16	8
June	3	20	X
July	1	18	10
August	5	15	X
September	2	19	11
October	7	17	X
November	4	21	13
December	2	TBA	X

*EC meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at the Bayou Club, Private Dining Room, 1830 hrs.
<https://www.bayouclubgolf.com/>

**Monthly Luncheons are held on the 3rd Friday each month at the Bayou Club, Banquet Room, 1100 hrs. social, 1130 lunch.

***Ladies Luncheons are held the 2nd Thursday every other month. Place/Time TBA

Always check with the [Chapter Facebook page](#) for update times/dates/location!!

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/925278824641972>) or website (<https://www.moaastpetearea.com/>) for location or time changes.

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Half Page Ad: \$500 Quarter Page Ad: \$250 • 1/8 Page Ad: \$125

Please contact OC editor @ editoroc1@gmail.com

In Memorium



Pat Christ Passing

We extend our condolences to John Christ. Pat, a long-time chapter member and former hospitality lead with John, passed away on Wednesday morning after four days in hospice care. Despite her aphasia, she remained cheerful until the end.

Pat had a 33-year career at the VA starting as a Registered Nurse and retiring as the Deputy Assistant Inspector General for VA Healthcare.



2025 Dues

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA SAINT PETERSBURG AREA CHAPTER



The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a professional association of United States military officers. It is a nonprofit organization that advocates for a strong national defense, but is politically nonpartisan. The association supports government policies that benefit military members and their families.

Our MOAA chapter, an affiliate of the national MOAA, cordially invites all commissioned and warrant officers of our US military, and their spouses [active duty, retired and veteran (USA, USAF, USCG, USMC, USN, USSF, NOAA and USPHS)] in the Saint Petersburg, Florida area, to join our Five Star Chapter.

Never Stop Serving



For more information about joining our chapter, text 813-919-9161

Mailing address: PO Box 8462, Seminole, FL 33775- 8462

JOIN US

CLICK TO JOIN OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP

***You can now join
or renew your 2025
dues online!***

Effective immediately members can renew their dues online via the Chapter Website.

<https://www.moaastpetearea.com/>

Go to the website on the splash page and click "Join Us" to sign up for membership OR renew. Both Annual and Life memberships are available

The website looks like this

If you have questions about joining or renewing online, text John Kieffer, Chapter President, at 813-919-9161 or email him at johnkieffer1234@aol.com



INSPIRED
ACRES



Veteran Happy Hour

*For Veterans, Providers,
Caregivers, Friends, & Family*



FREE ENTRY | DOORS OPEN 5:30PM

1743 DONCASTER RD. CLEARWATER

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St. Petersburg Area Chapter
PO Box 8462, Seminole, FL 33735-8462



Personal Data	Applicant	Spouse
Last Name		Last Name
First Name		First Name
Middle Initial		Middle Initial
Nickname		Nickname
DOB (dd/mm/yyyy)		DOB (dd/mm/yyyy)
Phone		Phone
Email		Email

May use 2050 as the year

Addresss

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Snow Bird _____ From month _____ To month _____

Military Data	Status	Applicant
Rank or Spouse	Service	Active, Former or Retired
		MOAA#

Membership Dues

Member	Spouse	Member Name Tag	Spouse Name Tag	Total Amount Sent
\$30.00	\$25.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	

Local Life Dues for Member or Spouse

Age	Under 55	56 to 70	71 to 90	over 90
Cost	\$425.00	\$375.00	\$300.00	Free

Membership is open to Active Duty, Former, Retired, National Guard and Reserve, Commissioned and Warrant Officers of the Uniformed Services and their Sur-viving Spouses. Per chapter bylaws, all chapter members must be members of MOAA (national). If not a national member please call 1-800-234-6622 to speak to a service representative or visit MOAA.org to join. Note: **MOAA is an independent, nonprofit, politically non-partisan organization!**

Note: By joining, you authorize the use of your image in official MOAA publications!

Send check payable to SPA MOAA to the above PO address