



Houston Area
PO Box 18372
Sugar Land, TX 77496
www.moahoustonarea.org

~ Five Star ★★★★★ Chapter ~

President's Message...

March 2023 Issue

Greetings Friends,

As many of you know, the Texas Legislature meets every two years and currently is in session. The Texas Council of Chapters (TCC) went to the State capitol on March 16th to advocate for on behalf of the military community and veterans for the passage of several military/veteran bills. Our Chapter Vice President Dan Gutierrez represented our Chapter and his report is in this newsletter. Thank you very much Dan.



Our Chapter lunch meeting this month will be at the popular Kelly's Country Cookin' in Meadows Place near Sugar Land. Our Speaker will be LTC Melissa Comiskey, the current PMS at U of H. Her team also supports eight other colleges and universities in the greater Houston area. It will be nice to get an update on all the Army ROTC programs in the area.

Lastly we can use your assistance in keeping our chapter dues current. Dues and Chapter support donations are our primary source of revenues and enable the Chapter to continue to support the ROTC and JROTC programs in the area.

Respectfully,

Rob
Robin P. Ritchie, COL, USA (RET)
President

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March 2023...Chapter Events:

Saturday, March 25th, 2023 @ 1:00pm-2:30pm
MOAA HA Chapter Meeting

Kelley's Country Cookin'
11555 W Airport Blvd.
Meadows Place, TX 77477
RSVP to Rob Ritchie at rpritchie@earthlink.net

Tuesday, March 28th, 2023 @ noon
MOAA HA BOD Meeting

Rudi Lechner's German Restaurant
2503 S Gessner Rd
Houston, TX 77063

Retired Army Major General Steps Into Key DoD Health Care Role

By: Karen Ruedisueli
MARCH 01, 2023

The retired two-star Army general who took over a top DoD civilian health care position last month will bring not only decades of experience in uniform to the new role, but a set of priorities in line with MOAA's work toward protecting health care benefits for servicemembers past and present, and their families.

The Senate confirmed Maj. Gen. (Dr.) Lester Martinez-Lopez for the role of assistant secretary of defense for health affairs on Feb. 16, a year and a day after his 2022 confirmation hearing. Martinez-Lopez, a Life member of MOAA, entered the Army after graduating medical school in 1978 and retired in 2005; his roles included time as the head of Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, the first Latino to serve in that role.



Maj. Gen. (Dr.) Lester Martinez-Lopez, USA (Ret), testifies during his his Senate Armed Services Committee confirmation hearing in 2022. (Photo by Tom Williams/CQ-Roll Call, Inc. via Getty Images)

During his confirmation hearing, Martinez-Lopez touched on several critical Defense Health Agency (DHA) issues that have been part of MOAA advocacy efforts in recent months and years.

- **Military Health System Reform.** Martinez-Lopez stressed his commitment to ensuring changes to the MHS would keep readiness at the forefront while improving benefits and services for all beneficiaries. This has been a key concern for MOAA and other stakeholders since news of the proposed cuts first emerged.
- **TRICARE Parity.** Martinez-Lopez told senators he would work to bring the MHS beneficiary experience more in line with those using commercial plans, and specifically addressed coverage for dependents up to age 26. MOAA has worked hard in recent years to bring awareness to the problems associated with the TRICARE Young Adult Program, to include premium increases of 10% or more. MOAA continues to seek a legislative fix for this issue, championing bipartisan legislation through multiple sessions of Congress.
- **Servicemember Suicide Prevention.** MOAA has been part of several initiatives designed to reduce suicide rates among servicemembers and veterans. Martinez-Lopez said he would “come with energy... to tackle this issue” and seek new ways to address the problem. He also pledged to improve the servicemember handoff between DoD and the VA, limiting the chance of a lapse in care or needed services.



Then-Army Maj. Gen. Lester Martinez-Lopez, left, commander of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command and Fort Detrick, Md., visits a prototype of the Army's Future Medical Shelter System. (Photo by Dave Rolls/DoD)

[RELATED: MOAA Staff Meets With White House Officials to Discuss DoD, VA, TRICARE Priorities]

MOAA looks forward to working with Martinez-Lopez in his new position and helping him secure the goals outlined above along with other key priorities. Keep up with the latest advocacy news from MOAA at our [Advocacy News page](#). ★



ADRIAN GARCIA
COMMISSIONER



VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK
VIETNAM WAR VETERANS MONUMENT
1800 Tidwell Road
Houston, TX 77093

PARKING LOCATION:

Northeast Community Center
10918 Bentley Street Houston, TX 77093
Shuttling Starts @ 10 AM

MOAA Chapter Luncheon
March 25, 2023
1300 - 1430

Guest Speaker:
LTC Melissa Comiskey
Professor of Military Science
University of Houston

Meal Options:
Fish Strips or Grilled Chicken Breast
Meal includes main, sides, dessert and coffee/tea
Cash Bar

Price: \$30.00 per person

Kelley's Country Cookin'
11555 W Airport Blvd.
Meadows Place, TX 77477



Please RSVP to Rob Ritchie
Email: rpritchie@earthlink.net
Phone: 713-818-0408

Military Coalition and Lawmakers Rally as Star Act Support Expands in Congress

By: Tony Lombardo
MARCH 01, 2023



CW4 Jack Du Teil, USA (Ret), president of The Military Coalition and a Life member of MOAA, calls for swift passage of the Major Richard Star Act during a Feb. 28 press conference in Washington, D.C. He is flanked by supporters of the bill, Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.), left, and Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.). (Photos by Sean Shanahan/for MOAA)

Veteran advocates converged Tuesday on Capitol Hill to fight for the Major Richard Star Act, a bill that would correct an injustice and provide earned pay to more than 50,300 combat-injured veterans.

“Supporting our combat injured is a national imperative,” said CW4 Jack Du Teil, USA (Ret), president of The Military Coalition, comprised of 35 veteran and military service groups including MOAA. “We will not stop until we get it done.”

[TAKE ACTION: [Urge Your Legislators to Support Concurrent Receipt](#)]

Coalition members met with lawmakers and staffs throughout the day and were joined by Sen. John Tester (D-Mont.) and Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.) in a Tuesday press conference calling for swift passage of the bipartisan legislation, which would allow combat-injured veterans to receive both vested longevity pay and VA disability. The retirement pay of these veterans is currently subject to an offset, reduced by a dollar for every dollar of VA disability received. The bill is named after Maj. Richard Star, an Army combat engineer [who died of cancer in 2021](#). He dedicated his final months of life to calling for a change to this unjust law.

“He worked so very hard. May his memory be eternal,” Bilirakis said. “We’ve got to get this done for him and the rest of the heroes, all the heroes that worked so very hard and really wanted to go the full 20 years but, through no fault of their own ... they were not able to continue.”

The Star Act gained momentum in late 2022 with more than two-thirds of the 117th Congress supporting it. Service groups are leveraging that support with the new 118th Congress. Tester and Sen. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) reintroduced the bill in the Senate as [S. 344](#), and Bilirakis and Rep. Raul Ruiz (D-Calif.) reintroduced it in the House this week.

MOAA and other veterans groups are seeking at least 290 co-sponsors in the House, said Lt. Col. Mark Belinsky, USA (Ret), MOAA’s director of government relations for currently serving and retired affairs. At 290, the bill could be prioritized and listed on the House Consensus Calendar.



Dozens of advocates from service groups in The Military Coalition met with lawmakers and their staffs on Feb. 28 in Washington, D.C., to garner co-sponsors for the Richard Star Act.

[MARCH 14 MOAA WEBINAR: [Concurrent Receipt Programs](#)]

Some lawmakers have expressed concern over the bill’s estimated cost of [\\$7 billion over 10 years](#).

“If we’re going to send them off to war, we’re going to take care of them when they get back,” Tester said, noting the Star Act is a top priority for 2023.

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Military Coalition and Lawmakers Rally as Star Act Support Expands in Congress

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MOAA Member Makes Long Trip to Support Star Act

Maj. Allen Acosta, USA (Ret), is a Life Member of MOAA and Purple Heart recipient. Before Tuesday's events on the Hill, he heard via Facebook that plans were in the works. He decided he needed to be there, booked a plane ticket and traveled 2,500 miles from his home in Lacey, Wash., to Washington, D.C.

Acosta was a logistician who served in Iraq in 2004-2005 at Forward Operating Base Warhorse in Diyala Province. Those were "hard times" in Diyala, Acosta said, and he was injured by indirect artillery fire. He's medically retired and would benefit from passage of the Star Act. But he didn't travel those miles to D.C. to fight for himself.

"For me, it's my brothers at arms," said Acosta. "It was a promise we made to each other that if we didn't come home, they would take care of our families. This is an extension of that promise."

Stopping for a moment and overcome with emotion, Acosta added, "We are going to keep that promise."

More than 9,000 letters have been sent to lawmakers in support of the Major Richard Star Act via MOAA's Take Action Center in less than three months. Add your [voice to this grassroots effort today](#), and share the link – MOAA.org/StarAct – with your network. ★



Maj. Allen Acosta, USA (Ret), at left, traveled 2,500 miles to join the Feb. 28 advocacy efforts.



MOAA Testimony to Joint Congressional Panel Outlines Key Priorities for Veterans

By: Kipp Hanley
MARCH 08, 2023

MOAA presented its legislative priorities for veterans in front of a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees on March 8, stressing the need to implement toxic exposure reforms, modernize and fully fund the VA, preserve and expand servicemembers' consumer protections, and help reserve component members access the benefits they've earned.

The testimony offered MOAA an invaluable opportunity to convey MOAA's commitment to servicemembers across the nation. MOAA's Cory Titus, director of Government Relations for Veteran Benefits and Guard/Reserve Affairs, testified on the same day as representatives from several veterans service organizations, including the VFW, the Wounded Warrior Project, and Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS).



*MOAA's Cory Titus, director of Government Relations for Veteran Benefits and Guard/Reserve Affairs, testifies before a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees on March 8 in Washington, D.C.
(Photo by Mike Morones/MOAA)*

[WRITTEN TESTIMONY: [Read MOAA's Message to These Key Committees](#)]

Titus praised the 117th Congress for passing the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act last year, and reminded members of the 118th Congress that further work is needed, including VA modernization efforts, to ensure its reforms take shape.

"MOAA is always grateful for the chance to present our priorities to these critical committees, and laws like the PACT Act show lawmakers are listening," Titus said after the hearing. "But there's always more work to be done on behalf of veterans, servicemembers, and their families, and our presence on the Hill -- both in these hearings and through grassroots support from our membership -- ensure that work continues."

More Work to Be Done

While the PACT Act "was comprehensive, it was not complete," Titus told lawmakers, encouraging them to take an active role in ensuring the VA is timely and fair in its assessments of veterans' claims.

Titus cited a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report that found only 8% of 130,000 Agent Orange claims for nerve damage, skin cysts, and blistering were granted by the VA between 2003 and 2021.

"We need Congress to ensure a grant rate better than 8%," he told the joint committee. "MOAA recommends Congress add strict reporting requirements to ensure effective oversight on the grant rates of these conditions. If Congress or the VA creates a presumption, we must ensure it works as intended."

[RELATED: [VA.gov/PACT](#) | [MOAA.org/PACTResources](#)]

Guard and Reserve Strength

Congress can take steps to improve the lives of reserve component members as a way to make Guard and Reserve service more desirable, Titus told lawmakers, citing the fact that five of the six service branches failed to meet their 2022 recruiting goals.

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MOAA Testimony to Joint Congressional Panel Outlines Key Priorities for Veterans *Continued from previous page...*

In addition to wanting Congress to review the consumer protections and rights provided by the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) and Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), MOAA would like to see more SCRA interest rate reductions for auto and personal loans and a fairer way to compensate service time for those seeking higher education.

“A Consumer Financial Protection Bureau report found very few eligible Guard and Reserve servicemembers received SCRA interest rate reductions,” Titus said. “...When less than 10 percent of eligible troops are receiving a benefit, we must reexamine how we implement that benefit.”

MOAA also will continue its efforts to ensure all service time counts equally toward earned benefits. This is not the case for many in the reserve component, where conflicting orders may affect what service counts toward programs such as the GI Bill.

Titus also expressed MOAA’s annual desire for a more predictable source of funding for the VA instead of relying on temporary budget fixes.

[RELATED: [Late Start to Budget Process Puts Your Pay and Benefits at Risk](#)]

“Continuing resolutions impede the department’s ability to fulfill our promises,” Titus said. “The VA needs timely and predictable funding to implement this historic legislation and other Congressionally mandated bills.”

Other MOAA legislative priorities for the 118th Congress outlined in written testimony include:

- Transforming a national cemetery to provide full military burial honors as a companion to Arlington National Cemetery as it approaches capacity.
- Increasing Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) for surviving spouses.
- Securing funding, staff, and other resources to accelerate delivery of home- and community-based services, long-term care, and caregiver support.
- Fully implementing VA’s [Whole Health initiative](#) and related services across the Veterans Health Administration.
- Eliminating disparities in health care delivery and research programs for women, minority, and underserved veterans.

[RELATED: [Bill Would Preserve Full Burial Benefits as Arlington Cemetery Nears Capacity](#)]

Learn more about MOAA’s legislative priorities [at this link](#). See how you can contact your lawmakers to express your support for these priorities via [MOAA’s Legislative Action Center](#).

Watch the full hearing below, or [click here](#) to jump directly to MOAA’s testimony. ★



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[Click here](#) to access the Perks Marketplace page and start saving!
Having problems logging in, or have other questions?
Email msc@moaa.org or call our Member Service Center at 800-234-6622.



Surviving Spouse Corner:

Bill Would Preserve Full Burial Benefits as Arlington Cemetery Nears Capacity

By: Mark Belinsky

MARCH 08, 2023



Servicemembers conduct military funeral honors with funeral escort in Section 7 of Arlington National Cemetery on Jan. 9. (Photo by Elizabeth Fraser/Arlington National Cemetery)

A significant piece of legislation protecting full uniformed services burial benefits introduced March 7 offers a long-term solution to Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) inevitably running out of room.

The Expanding America's National Cemetery Act (H.R. 1413), introduced in the House by Reps. Lisa McClain (R-Mich.) and Chrissy Houlahan (D-Pa.) is designed to preserve the option for full military honors now available at ANC. The legislation would authorize designating the next national cemetery location with equivalent honors to continue these benefits, rather than reducing eligibility at ANC.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your House Member to Support the Expanding America's National Cemetery Act](#)]

The bill comes as a draft rule is looming in the Federal Register proposing [a significant ANC eligibility reduction](#). If enacted, the move would break a promise and commitment to our uniformed services community, reducing eligibility for in-ground burial with full military honors to those awarded a Silver Star and above or a Purple Heart. The plan marks just one more reduced benefit for those who've served – one that could affect end-of-life plans in place for decades and discriminates against women veterans and others who served long careers in roles where combat-related honors weren't accessible.

The planned reduction has cleared the [comment stage](#) of the federal rule process and is now undergoing staffing at the Secretary of Defense level. DoD is still required to comply with language in the FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act directing the department to ensure ANC operations could continue "well into the future."

[RELATED CHART: [The Federal Rulemaking Process](#)]

MOAA's Position

It is a matter of national conscience to protect the benefit of in-ground burial with full military honors. With the current eligibility standards, ANC will not run out of room for another 42 years, affording time to develop a longer-term solution. A gradual transition to the "next ANC" will allow our nation to continue to honor families for lifetimes of service and sacrifice.

Continued on next page...

Surviving Spouse Corner:

Bill Would Preserve Full Burial Benefits as Arlington Cemetery Nears Capacity

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[ISSUE PAPER: [Download MOAA's Fact Sheet \(PDF\) and Share With Your Lawmakers](#)]

The proposed eligibility reduction would result in unthinkable repercussions for those who for decades have planned on interment with full military honors. MOAA asks that members of Congress protect this important benefit for those currently eligible and for future servicemembers.

“Military honors serve to comfort the grieving and instill pride in families who witness our nation’s final respects for their loved ones,” said MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret). “MOAA is proud to support the Expanding America’s National Cemetery Act and the steadfast work from Representatives McClain and Houlahan to ensure we keep our promise to our veterans and sustain this honor for future servicemembers. Continuing to honor service and sacrifice is essential to maintaining trust and increasing personal participation in our nation’s defense.”

Organizations across the uniformed services and veterans community will also weigh in again this year on a legislative solution.

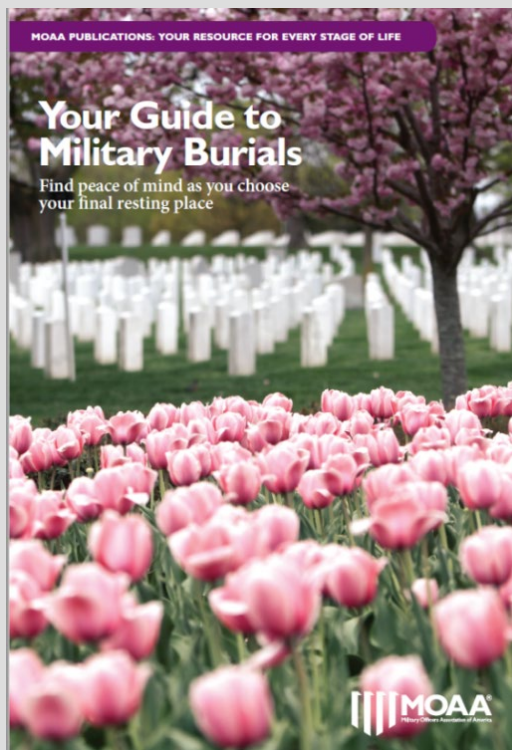
[FOR PREMIUM AND LIFE MEMBERS: [Your Guide to Military Burials \(PDF Download\)](#)]

“The Military Coalition, representing 5.5 million servicemembers, veterans, and their families and survivors, thanks Representatives McClain and Houlahan, for the Expanding America’s National Cemetery Act,” said Jack Du Teil, president of The Military Coalition, which is made up of nearly three dozen member organizations including MOAA. “This important legislation will help ensure our nation executes its duty to properly honor those who pledged their very lives in its defense. Moreover, by ensuring all who served receive the full, proper final respects they deserve will provide the loved ones they leave behind with the pride and comfort they should likewise be entitled to.”

The Military Women’s Memorial Foundation, which represents some 3 million women who have served in, and with, the U.S. military, also supported the legislation. “Women have served this country honorably and courageously since the Revolutionary War, and this legislation ensures their service and sacrifice affords them the privilege of a full military honors funeral in a National Cemetery.” Foundation President Phyllis J. Wilson said.

Add your voice to these organizations’ efforts by contacting your House member [at this link](#).★

The death of a servicemember can leave family members overwhelmed with many decisions to make. Your Guide to Military Burials will guide you through eligibility for burial; locations of federal, state, and post cemeteries; burial at sea; deaths abroad; and more.





TCC ADVOCATES IN AUSTIN

By Dan Gutierrez
March 17, 2023

On March 16, 2023, the Texas Council of Chapters (TCC) of MOAA, supported by various chapter members of the TCC, advanced upon the state capitol in Austin to advocate on behalf of the military community and veterans. The team was comprised of seventeen members from chapters as far west as El Paso, as far east as Houston, as far north as Wichita Falls and as far south as San Antonio.

The TCC developed three overarching priorities and married - up several bills to each. The task of the team was to visit the offices and staffs of each of the 37 senators and 150 representatives in one day. The mission was accomplished.

The three priorities were (1) improve transition support from the uniform to civilian for military members leaving the service, (2) improve mental health services and availability of service by expanding the workforce of trained and certified/licensed professionals, and (3) improve the quality of life and economic conditions of vulnerable veterans and surviving spouses who reside in Texas.

Several bills were identified that support each priority. The bills were also prioritized and presented to legislators as key items in supporting the main objectives above. Success will only be determined at the end of the legislative session when bills are passed, or not. At any rate, I am glad to report that the Houston chapter played its part. Yours truly visited with the chiefs of staff, legislative counselors, and veterans' affairs staffers of seven senators and five representatives.

The effort was led by **Si Simonson, President of the TCC**, and **TCC Executive Vice President for State Legislative Affairs, Ginger Simonson**. Planning was initiated on March 2022 and consisted of several regular and special meetings of the TCC board of directors and much personal research and individual preliminary meetings with members of the legislature and their staffs. The TCC conducts this project every two years when the legislature is in session.





Impact A Hero

Impact A Hero is a 501(c)(3) organization
Michael Acuff, Chairman
Constance White, Executive Director



Impact A Hero Golf Tournament

Monday, April 3rd, 2023

The Woodlands Country Club (Palmer Course)

100 Grand Fairway Drive, The Woodlands, Tx. 77881

Impact A Hero mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of Military Veterans, active Service Members and their Families through advancing leadership and personal development, strengthening community and encouraging esprit de corps.

COMMANDER IN CHIEF SPONSOR: \$15,000
[CLICK TO SPONSOR](#)

Recognition as Tournament Sponsor
4 – Foursomes
Hole Sponsorship
Social Media and Printed Materials
Special Hero Gift

Table – 10 persons IAH Legacy of Freedom Gala (Veterans Day)

OFFICER'S CLUB SPONSOR: \$12,500
[CLICK TO SPONSOR](#)

Recognition as Reception Dinner Sponsor
4 – Foursomes
Hole Sponsorship
Social Media and Printed Materials
Special Hero Gift

FOUR STAR SPONSOR: \$7,500
[CLICK TO SPONSOR](#)

Recognition as Beverage Sponsor
3 – Foursomes
Hole Sponsorship
Social Media and Printed Materials
Special Hero Gift

THREE STAR SPONSOR: \$5,000
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Putting Contest Sponsor
2 – Foursomes
Hole Sponsorship
Social Media and Printed Materials

MESS HALL SPONSOR: \$5,000
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Lunch Sponsor
2 – Foursomes
Hole Sponsorship
Social Media and Printed Materials

TWO STAR SPONSOR: \$2,500
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1 – Foursome
Hole Sponsorship
Social Media and Printed Materials

VETERAN SPONSOR: \$1,000
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1 – Foursome of veterans identified by Impact A Hero or sponsor

PATRIOT SPONSOR: \$1,000
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1 – Foursome identified by sponsor

HOLE SPONSOR: \$500
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INDIVIDUAL PLAYER: \$250
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GENERAL DONATION



Seeing with God's Eyes

**“He has made everything beautiful
in His time. He has also set eternity in
the human heart.”
Ecclesiastes 3:11**

This week my wife and I have the good fortune to spend time in Lake Lure, North Carolina. We enjoy travelling in the Spring and Fall since the weather is usually a bit more temperate than the extremes. Lake Lure is in a beautiful valley in the Appalachian Mountains. As I look out our balcony window I see a bunch of barren tree branches and a few sparsely leafed pine trees struggling to reach the sky...That sounds like a complaint...perhaps. It depends on how I look at my view. If I look beyond the barren branches however, I can easily see the beautiful mountain top above the valley! If the leaves were on trees, I wouldn't be able to see the mountain.

Life is like that. Our circumstances often determine our perspective. Faith helps us see beyond the perspective. Our spirituality, our communication skills, our lives are all gifts that give us our being...In the image of God. Our perspective is part of who we are and how we view our lives and our faith. That is all part of the free will which God has given to us. “He has put eternity in the human heart.” Our faith is determined by how we respond to what God has given us. Our circumstances are what happens to us and our plans for any given day.

During the stages of our lives, we begin as infants then go through the stages of childhood, teens, early, mid and senior adulthood. Each of these stages is guarded and guided by our parents, our choices, our experiences, and our responses to those choices. Faith tells us that every one of those experiences are also guarded and guided by God if we choose to let him be that guard and guide. We call that God's Will.

I pastored a small church in South Dakota for two years. We had given our home back to the bank so I could attend seminary and follow what I felt was God's calling to the pastorate. As my first pastorate it was mostly a good environment and experience until the end of that period. When I resigned that pastorate, I was not able to find another pastoral position so I went back to teaching. I was devastated. Shortly after that resignation I answered a calling for chaplaincy in the Army Reserve. It took over seven years before I came out of the depressive slump from my “failed pastorate.” The failure was my response, not God's. His plan was always in place. The ministry, the friendships, the experiences that came after were all part of that plan. For seven years all I could see was the barren branches. Saint John of the Cross called that “Seven Year Funk” of mine the “Dark Night of the Soul”.

The Dark Night is a part of God's plan to wean us from our own devices and support and everything else to a relationship and dependence on God Himself who is always there to support us. Jesus says, “if you do not give up everything you have you cannot be my disciple.” Once you have given up everything, you do not have anything left to give...but you also have nothing more to lose. By giving that up to God we rely on his promises and support which He has given us. His love never fails and His promises are sure. That is what faith and God does for us. He does not leave us alone.

Experiences often determine our responses and our attitude. Will we respond positively or negatively to each circumstance. If I get ill what is my response. If I gain or lose money in a venture what is my response? If I am criticized what is my response? Will I see the barren trees or the mountain beyond? Criticism gives me the opportunity to evaluate my situation, that criticism and its response. Was it valid? What was the source? Did it come from a valued colleague or a cranky old supervisor? Never-the-less, was it a valid statement? How shall I respond?

Yogi Berra has said, “When you get to the bottom, stop digging.” Faith and experience allow us to see beyond the barren branches to the mountain beyond. Heaven is part of that mountain which God has given to us. The Gospel message is that of the new life that Christ offers to us. It leaves failure and sin (missing God's target) behind as we learn from our failures. His sacrifice and forgiveness are a beginning of that new life. God's power enables us to take the challenges, circumstances and setbacks and see with new eyes what He is setting before us.

~ David Essells, USAR, MAJ, RET

MOAA HA Chapter Meeting Saturday, February 25th, 2023



**Guest Speaker
LtCol Russell Fluker
Inspector/Instructor, 1st Bn, 23rd Marines
& Rob Ritchie**



David Essells



**Dan Gutierrez &
Kathy Frank**



Mike Martin



"Red" O'Laughlin



**Ivan Santiago
(New Member)**



Diane Kalina



Paul Brennan



**Alan Ostendorp
(New Member)**



Mike Miller



Kathy Frank



Pat & Ingrid Clark



Rollins & Pat Collins



**Kenneth Hopper
(New Member) & Mrs. Hopper**

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*We need YOU...
to remain a
MOAA HA Member!*



Debating whether to renew your chapter membership?

Talking to a potential new member?

Benefits to belonging to a chapter:

- **Camaraderie and Connections:** when you attend chapter functions, actively serve on a committee, or take a prominent leadership role, you forge lasting ties with other MOAA members.
- **Community Involvement:** Membership provide opportunities to contribute to your community in a variety of ways, from providing scholarships to local students, to supporting causes that support wounded warriors and their families.
- **Legislative Advocacy:** We advocate for the entire military community-all ranks. Members play a critical role in advancing legislation in both Austin and Washington, D.C. This grassroots advocacy is key to MOAA achieving its legislative goals.

Chapter dues reminders will be emailed/sent out in November to those members needing renewal. We are on a calendar year for our chapter dues.

Annual renewal is \$30 for one year, \$20 for each additional year paid with renewal. Surviving Spouse \$15 initial membership; \$10 annual renewal.

Membership Application on the last page!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

MOAA's Core Mission

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the country's leading organization protecting the rights of uniformed servicemembers and their families. MOAA's constituents proudly hail from every branch of the uniformed services. To them, we have made the same promise that they have made to their country: Never Stop Serving.

MOAA's greatest mission is to improve the lives of those who serve and their families, which is achieved largely through the tireless advocacy efforts taking place in our nation's capital. For more than 90 years, MOAA has supported legislation that benefits the uniformed services community and has remained equally vigilant when fighting to stop legislation that threatens our livelihood. The larger our numbers, the greater our voice. For more detailed legislative actions see [MOAA | Take Action Center \(quorum.us\)](http://MOAA | Take Action Center (quorum.us))

Name: _____
(Please print) Last First Initial Rank

Branch _____ Status _____ MOAA Nat'l ID _____ *

Spouse's First Name: _____ Tel. for Directory _____

Home Address: _____

Email: _____

Dues: Regular Membership – \$30 first year; annual renewal \$30 (Discount for multiple years if paid with renewal: \$20 for each add'l. year **paid with renewal**)
Surviving Spouse – \$15 first year; annual renewal \$10 (same discount for multiple years)

Chapter Assistance Fund

\$100.00 \$50.00 \$25.00 Other _____

Make check payable to MOAA-HA and mail to:

MOAA-HA
PO Box 18372
Sugar Land, TX 77496



For more information, call COL Robin Ritchie, 713-818-0408

**If not a MOAA national member, another benefit of chapter membership is the opportunity to become a national MOAA member at the BASIC LEVEL for free! If you would like to do so, please indicate here:*

YES NO

Signature: _____