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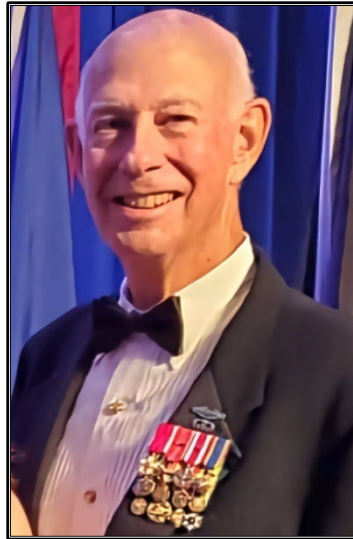
~ Five Star ★★★★★ Chapter ~

President's Message...

July 2024 Issue

Greetings Colleagues,

Happy Birthday USA! Dan has a great "Let's Not Forget" article commemorating this momentous event that changed the world. It has been a fast-moving month going from a great 4th of July to Hurricane Beryl. I trust that everyone managed to get through it safe and sound. I know that a generator is now on my "to do list".



The Chapter had a great response to replenishing the ROTC/JROTC support fund. Many thanks to all. We also will have the ROTC go fund me page operational this month.

Our guest speaker this month will be Tom Duncavage, LT Col USMC retired. Tom is a senior engineer for the Automation and Robotics Division at NASA Johnson Space Center and a Commissioner with the Texas Military Preparedness Commission as well as a former Navy test pilot. This should be a great presentation!

And as always, don't forget to get current with your 2024 chapter dues.

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

★★★★★

In this issue >>>

- *President's Message, Robin P. Ritchie, COL, Infantry, USAR (Ret)*
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July 2024...Chapter Events:

Saturday, July 27th, 2024 @ 11:30am

MOAA HA Chapter Meeting

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

Tuesday, July 30th, 2024 @ Noon

MOAA HA BOD Meeting

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



LET'S NOT FORGET!

*By: Dan Gutierrez
July, 2024*

I wonder if you walked up to the average citizen and asked what the Fourth of July is – what would be the response. Why do we celebrate that day in this country? Could they conjure up a coherent descriptive statement? I wouldn't bet on it. Although I am fully aware that the audience of this article is intimately versed in the day's significance, I nevertheless feel compelled to revisit that momentous event, not only as it applies to the history of the USA, but to the history of the world.

The response I would hope to receive from the average citizen about the Fourth, is that on July 4th 1776, the thirteen British colonies of North America declared themselves independent from Great Britain and totally absolved themselves from any allegiance to the British crown and parliament. Think on that statement a moment and see if your breath doesn't catch. The audacity, the boldness, the courage, the conviction of the moment is almost beyond comprehension. The men of the thirteen colonies who gathered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania during the summer of 1776 had to realize that with this declaration they had put their heads in the noose. As Jefferson wrote in the final sentence of the declaration, "we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor." And that is what they literally had done, pledge their lives. For had the enterprise failed, they most certainly would have been branded as traitors and most foully hung.

Consider for a moment, the gravity of the act. The United Kingdom of Great Britain was the single most powerful nation on earth. It was at that moment steadily growing into the greatest empire the world had would ever know. Its navy was supreme on the seas, its army strong and superbly trained, its economy vibrant with a strong industrial base. Any nation of that time harboring ill will towards her had to ally themselves with other nations if they were to challenge Great Britain. And yet, here was a loosely connected gathering of thirteen colonies declaring themselves free of the motherland they had known for over 150 years.

Please put yourselves in the minds of the founding fathers. Pounder the thoughts of Washington, Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Paine and Lee. What were they thinking? What impulse led them to believe they had a chance? How could they risk the wellbeing and future of their families on such an unlikely proposition? The world still stands in awe and wonder.

The fact that the American Revolution succeeded sent a blast of determination and hope to other societies still in the embryonic stage of unrest and thought. From the success of our revolution would emerge the nationalistic struggles of South America, the French Revolution, the Irish revolts, the Italian uprisings and even as recent as the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Another offshoot of our struggle was the introduction of democratic forms of governing and the idea of government by the people, for the people and of the people. Yes my friends, remember this day for what it means not just to us, but for all people. As John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail, "I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated as the Day of Deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other from this time forward forever more." I think he got his wish.

Happy Fourth to you now and in the future. God bless.

LET'S NOT FORGET!



Military Olympics

U.S. service members are setting their sights on gold when this summer's Olympic and Paralympic Games come to France, particularly when it comes to the shooting range.

Seven U.S. Army soldiers and at least two veterans qualified for the Olympic Games, held July 26 through Aug. 11 in Paris and other French cities. Another three active-duty soldiers will compete in the Paralympics from Aug. 28 to Sept. 8.

The Army Marksmanship Unit based at Fort Moore, Ga, will be sending a sizeable contingent to France. The unit, created in 1956 by President Dwight Eisenhower, has earned 26 Olympic medals so far.

One Army veteran of that unit, Vincent Hancock, 35, is competing in his fifth Olympics and will push for his fourth gold medal after winning men's skeet in Beijing, London and Tokyo.

Four current members will test their mettle in a field of 340 across 15 disciplines from July 27 to Aug. 5 at the Chateauroux Shooting Center.

Sgts. Ivan Roe and Sagen Maddalena will compete in two events in France.

Roe, a Montana native, is making his first Olympics appearance after qualifying in the men's 10 meter air rifle and 50 meter three-position, or smallbore events.

The 28-year-old made All-American seven times at Murray State University and joined the Army Marksmanship Unit in 2019.

"Representing the U.S. is – it's a dream I've had since I was a little kid," Roe said in an Army statement. "So, it's a culmination of everything I've been doing the last two decades. It's a huge, huge milestone."



Army Sgt. Sagen Maddalena is one of four current Army Marksmanship Unit members set to compete in Paris. (Army photo)

Tozier, a Pattonsburg, Mo., native, joined the Army marksmanship program in 2017 and has earned 11 medals in international competitions.



Spc. Kamal Bey celebrates after pinning Brazil's Joilson De Brito to win the 77-kilogram gold medal in Greco-Roman wrestling at the Pan American Games in Santiago, Chile, in 2023. (Photo by Maj. Nate Garcia/Army) This article by Matt Wagner originally appeared on Stripes.com. Stars and Stripes serves the U.S. military community by providing editorially independent news and information around the world.

Maddalena hails from Groveland, Calif., and is entering her second Games. She will be looking to make the podium after taking fifth place in the 50 meter small bore in Tokyo. She's adding the 10 meter air rifle this time around.

The 30-year-old walked on at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks and earned eight All-American selections in air rifle and small bore shooting before joining the Army.

Along with Roe, two others from the Army Marksmanship Unit will make their Olympic debuts. Staff Sgts. Rachel Tozier, 32, and Will Hinton, 28, qualified in trapshooting.

Continued on next page...

Military Olympics *(Continued from previous page...)*

“When I was a senior in high school, I wrote that I wanted to make the Olympic team ... so it’s nice to be able to cross that off,” Tozier said in March.

Hinton, who is from the Atlanta metro area, made a U.S. junior world team in 2013. He switched from sporting clays to international-style trap in 2016 after joining the Army.

Keith Sanderson, 49, a Marine Corps and Army veteran, returns for his fourth Games in the 25 meter men’s rapid-fire pistol.



Army Staff Sgt. Will Hinton earned an Olympic berth in the men’s international trap event. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kulani Lakanaria/Army)

Meanwhile, Capt. Sammy Sullivan made the women’s rugby sevens squad for her first Olympic Games.

The 26-year-old West Point graduate will play the edge prop position for the Eagles during the tournament, held July 28-30 at the Stade de France in Paris.

The women’s rugby team seeks the program’s first medal since the introduction of the sport at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The Eagles took fourth place in world series league stage and beat France, one of the nations in their pool and a medal contender, 19-5 in the semifinals of a tournament in Hong Kong on April 7.

“When we really set our minds to it, we can go out and beat these high-level teams,” Sullivan told Stars and Stripes, while naming defending champion New Zealand, 2016 winner Australia and France as the main medal contenders. “That win (against France) in particular solidified in my mind that we can podium at the Olympics.”



Army 1st Lt. Sammy Sullivan runs upfield during the U.S. Women’s Rugby 7s team’s gold medal match against Canada on Nov. 4, 2023, in the Pan American Games in Santiago, Chile. Sullivan helped the U.S. team win the gold medal. (Photo by Maj. Nate Garcia/Army)

Distance runner Staff Sgt. Leonard Korir, 37, is back at the Games after missing out on qualifying for the Tokyo Games by just 3 seconds.

The former Iona College athlete took 14th place in the 10-kilometer race in 2016.

He placed third in the marathon at the U.S. Olympic trials. His race in Paris will take place Aug. 10.

Spc. Kamal Bey is competing in Greco-Roman wrestling in the 77-kilogram weight class. The Colorado Springs, Colo., native received an Olympic quota spot following the vacated berths of Individual Neutral Athletes, or Olympic qualifiers with Russian and Belarussian passports who were deemed eligible and invited to compete in Paris.

Bey, 26, will compete Aug. 6-7 at the Champ-de-Mars Arena.

Soldiers coaching at the Games are former Olympians Master Sgt. Dennis Bowsher in the modern pentathlon and Sgt. 1st Class Spenser Mango in wrestling.

On the Paralympics side, Sgt. 1st Class John Wayne Joss III, 41, and Staff Sgt. Kevin Nguyen, 31, will be shooting in the R6 50-meter rifle prone SH1 event.

Sgt. 1st Class Elizabeth Marks, a 33-year-old swimmer, will try to repeat her impressive Tokyo Games haul of three medals — a gold, a silver and a bronze. ★

MOAA's Work Continues to Preserve Earned Burial Benefits

By: Mark Belinsky

MAY 21, 2024



Marines conduct military funeral honors with funeral escort for Maj. Gen. Harry Pickett, USMC, in Section 52 of Arlington National Cemetery on July 19, 2023. (Photo by Elizabeth Fraser/Army)

Many military retirees face a significant threat to their eligibility for interment with military honors at Arlington National Cemetery – and legislation is required for a long-term solution.

MOAA and [others in our veteran and military advocacy community](#) have long supported [H.R. 1413](#), the Expanding America's National Cemetery Act. This election year, your messages to lawmakers about this legislation matter more than ever.

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

Why This Bill Matters

The proposed federal rule for [Arlington National Cemetery eligibility reduction](#) still looms, and defense officials are looking for options to prevent a reduction in benefits directed by Congress in the FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The reduction would be felt by many 20-year retirees, women veterans whose service came before many roles were open to all, and the most troubling of the exclusions – older veterans with plans in place for Arlington who could face agonizing and unexpected decisions in the coming months or years.

The proposed criteria focus on maintaining eligibility for those who received close-combat awards, limiting interment to those with a Purple Heart or Silver Star and above. Not only is the criteria unfair to veterans who served bravely in positions where close combat was not part of their duty, there is no “grandfathering” statute to these proposals: Veterans of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam eras who have planned on this benefit for decades would be subject to the new criteria.

[HEAR FROM THESE VETERANS: [Closing the Gates? Why Congress Must Act on Arlington National Cemetery](#)]

The Expanding America's National Cemetery Act – championed by Rep. Lisa McClain (R-Mich.) and Rep. Chrissy Houlahan (D-Pa.), both members of the House Armed Services Committee – offers a long-term solution, authorizing DoD and the VA to transform an existing VA-run national cemetery into the next location that will afford interment with equivalent military honors as Arlington National Cemetery reaches capacity. This expansion would eliminate the need for reduced eligibility.

A Senate companion bill is required; outreach to your senators could make the difference by making this legislation bicameral and bipartisan.

Only 86 House members [had co-sponsored the bill](#) as of May 21. If your representative is not yet in support, please reach out via our [Legislative Action Center](#) or call their local office and ask them to co-sponsor H.R. 1413. They will not know what you need if you don't ask this election year.

Continued on Page 8...

When Santa Wore a Flight Suit

By Lt. Col. Patrick J. Chaisson, USA (Ret)

Deployed U.S. servicemembers are always held closely in the hearts of their loved ones back home. This is especially true during the holiday season. In 1965, thousands of ordinary Americans were determined to show the troops stationed in South Vietnam they were not forgotten at Christmastime.

These folks — including many people without a family member in the military — began preparing care packages as a gesture of support and gratitude. The gift boxes they put together typically contained such treats as baked goods, sweet treats, and personal comfort items. Each parcel, often addressed to “Any Soldier (or Marine) in Vietnam,” also contained a handwritten note.

There was just enough time to get a snack at the club ... before we had to depart for Japan. Citizens from all across the U.S. took part in this spontaneous, loosely organized cause. Also joining in were corporations such as the Cott Beverage bottling plant in Scotia, N.Y., which donated pallets of canned soft drinks for servicemembers deployed to Southeast Asia.

The amount of holiday cheer collected that year totaled 761 tons. But then a new problem arose: How were all these gifts going to get across the Pacific Ocean in time for Christmas?

Many participants believed it was a job for DoD. After all, the packages were addressed to members of the armed forces serving in a combat zone. But senior military officials raised serious objections to this unplanned delivery mission.

If sent by ship, perishable goods like Grandma’s raisin roundies would probably spoil before they were unloaded at one of South Vietnam’s small, inefficient ports. This left air transportation as the only viable way to send mail from home. Yet Pentagon spokespeople claimed every available U.S. cargo airplane was already busy hauling high-priority materiel such as ammunition and repair parts.

The situation could have become an enormous public relations fiasco. While nobody was prepared to “bump” a planeload of urgently needed medical supplies for crates of cream soda, neither did anyone want to tell Mr. & Mrs. John Q. Citizen they couldn’t mail their son in Vietnam a box of homemade sugar cookies.

A Christmas miracle was needed. And while Santa Claus was very busy that season, some of his elves stepped up to make sure the troops got their holiday gifts. These elves, however, wore Air Force-issued flight suits.

The Air National Guard volunteered to take on the task of delivering Christmas presents to Southeast Asia. The Air Guard had a fleet of transport aircraft and highly skilled flight crews capable of making this 22,000-mile round-trip journey; it just required the Pentagon’s permission.

That permission was granted but came with some strings attached. Air National Guard flight crews had to volunteer for these so-called “training missions,” which meant they couldn’t be mobilized (but did receive pay for their service). Furthermore, airmen were allowed only four hours on the ground in South Vietnam — enough time to unload, refuel their airplane, load outbound cargo, and depart.

Operation Christmas Star began Nov. 20, 1965, when a Boeing C-97 Stratofreighter aircraft from Tennessee’s 164th Air Transport Group (ATG) left Nashville for Vietnam filled with 4,500 pounds of holiday treats and mail. A total of 77 Air National Guard transport planes would follow over the next five weeks.

Continued on next page...



Snow falls as C-97 crew members gather for their mission during Operation Christmas Star in 1965. Top: C-97 cargo planes from the Air National Guard did the heavy lift for Operation Christmas Star. Photos: 109th Airlift Wing, New York Air National Guard

When Santa Wore a Flight Suit *(Continued from previous page...)*

States participating in Christmas Star included Arizona, California, Delaware, Georgia, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. In total, Air Guard flight crews hauled 406 tons of goodies for the troops in South Vietnam that year.

Retired C-97 command pilot Col. Jack Meachem, who served with the New York Air National Guard's 109th ATG, remembers Christmas Star vividly.

"Our route started in upstate New York," he said, "and we flew to Travis AFB in California the first day. On day two, we went on to Hickam AFB, Hawaii. Then on the third day, we [flew] to a flyspeck of an island called Kwajalein."

Next, Meachem's Stratofreighter stopped overnight at Clark Air Base in the Philippines before making one final hop into Da Nang, South Vietnam, on day five.

"There was just enough time to get a snack at the club," Meachem recalled, "before we had to depart for Japan."

He said their return route took them through Tokyo's Tachikawa Air Base and Wake Island, then on to Hickam and Travis before arriving back home at the 109th ATG's base in Schenectady, N.Y. — 11 days after they started out.

Operation Christmas Star succeeded brilliantly. The generosity of Americans back home, assisted by Air National Guard aircrew members like Meachem, helped make the 1965 holiday season a less lonely one for many of the 200,000 U.S. servicemembers stationed in far-off South Vietnam. ★



MOAA – Houston Chapter Luncheon

July 27, 2024

1130am - 1330pm

Speaker

CO

Lt Colonel (Ret) Tom Duncavage USMC

Commissioner, Texas Military Preparedness Commission



Meal Options: Chicken Schnitzel, Pork Schnitzel or Spinach Quiche

Meal includes: Main, sides, dessert and coffee/tea

Cash Bar

Price: \$30.00 per person

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

Please RSVP to Rob Ritchie
Email: rpitchie@earthlink.net
Phone: 713.818.0408

[RELATED: [Air Force Colonel's Family Reacts After She's Denied Burial at Arlington National Cemetery](#)]

How You Can Make a Difference

Just as the Grand Army of the Republic – an association of Civil War veterans – championed the cause of Decoration Day, MOAA continues its work alongside The Military Coalition as Memorial Day approaches in the fight to preserve honors that matter intensely to those who serve and have served, their families, and their survivors.

You can support these efforts by taking one or more of the steps below to amplify MOAA's request for lawmakers to co-sponsor this bill:

- [Download the information paper here](#) and share it with your elected officials.
- Activate your network to write and call your representatives and ask them to co-sponsor H.R. 1413. Ask your senators to introduce a Senate version of the same legislation. Friends, family members, and others in your network can call 866-272-MOAA (6622) – a toll-free line to the U.S. Capitol switchboard – to connect with their legislators' offices.
- [Share this link](#) to MOAA's Legislative Action Center on social media. It will allow all who see it to generate a message to their lawmakers in support of the bill.
- Ask other local military and veterans service organizations, such as local posts, to call and engage on this issue.

[THE FINAL CHAPTER: [Preparing for a Military Sponsor's Death, and What to Do When It Happens](#)]

Unsure what to say to your network, or to your legislators? Consider these talking points:

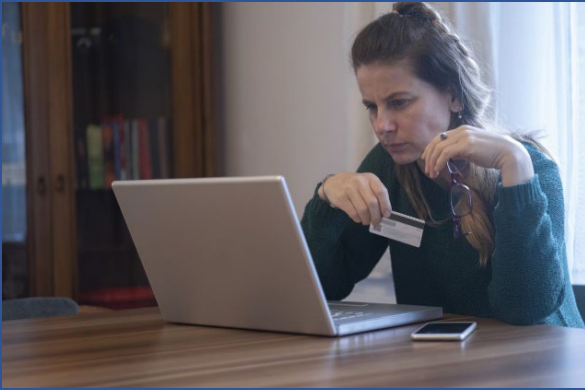
- **Long-Term Fix Needed:** No matter the eligibility changes, Arlington National Cemetery eventually will run out of room. An enduring solution is required to maintain an equivalent level of benefits.
- **Partnership Makes Sense:** The VA runs 155 national cemeteries. DoD runs only Arlington and the United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery. While DoD's primary focus for resources is national security, partnering with the VA will provide an integrative approach.
- **Honoring Service:** Put simply, transforming a VA national cemetery to afford military honors would sustain service-earned benefits.

[Make your voice heard](#) this Memorial Day and join the grassroots effort to protect these earned honors. You can follow updates on this and other MOAA advocacy campaigns at [MOAA's Advocacy News page](#). ★



Survivor Scams: 4 Ways to Keep Your Benefits Safe

By: Kevin Lilley
JUNE 24, 2024



Nothing is off-limits to scam artists – including taking advantage of military survivors in their most vulnerable moments.

As these beneficiaries begin the process of reviewing insurance, applying for survivor programs, and even preparing funeral ceremonies, they become tempting fraud targets. And while many of the scam-prevention tactics offered by MOAA apply in these circumstances, there are some specific practices survivors should keep in mind, offered by the VA and other governmental agencies.

1. Paperwork Protection

In the immediate aftermath of a veteran's death, survivors face a series of forms they may find overwhelming. Resist the urge to take shortcuts – signing before a form is filled out, for example, or failing to read over new materials. Keep a copy of every form for your personal records, with special care paid to discharge papers and VA claims.

[RELATED: [More Survivor Resources From MOAA](#)]

2. Timely Reporting

Reporting a veteran's death to the VA not only avoids benefit overpayments, it can help stop identity theft. The VA also recommends reporting the death to one of the three credit bureaus – Equifax, Experian, or TransUnion – which will trigger an update the veteran's credit report and may stop similar scammers.

[FROM VA.GOV: [How to Report the Death of a Veteran to VA](#)]

3. Watch the Details

Scam artists have multiple venues to collect personally identifiable information (PII), which requires survivors to be vigilant on several fronts:

- If you haven't created a VA account that's protected by a personal identification number (PIN), consider doing so.
- Scammers may use obituaries to collect personal data for use in identity theft. This could involve creating fake accounts in the deceased's name or contacting relatives mentioned in the obituary while posing as tax officials or insurance agents. The VA recommends leaving out some details in the obituary – birthdate and mother's maiden name, for example – that are of particular value to fraudsters.
- Do not give out PII via text, and only use trusted web links. If you're unsure whether an email is legitimate, reach out to the sender via another contact method (phone call, website contact form).

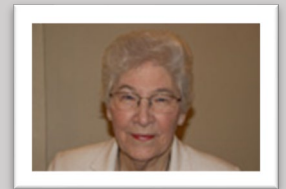
[UPDATED MONTHLY: [MOAA's Surviving Spouse Corner](#)]

4. Take Pause

The loss of a loved one can be overwhelming in even the best of circumstances – a fact fraudsters hope to use to their advantage. Any solicitation requiring urgent action, especially one involving benefits, may be a scam.

Why take the time? Aside from risking your information, a scammer may seek to enroll you in a VA benefit plan you're not eligible to use. If you receive improper benefits from such an arrangement, even unknowingly, you may face penalties in addition to recoupment.

Want more ways to combat scams of all sorts? MOAA partners with the [Cybercrime Support Network's Military and Veteran Program](#), which aims to protect servicemembers, veterans, and military families from falling victim to fraud. Find more information [on their blog](#). ★



Surviving Spouse Corner:
From Social Security Administration:
Important Changes to Access Your Social Security Account

Soon you will no longer be able to sign in to your online Social Security account using your Social Security username and password. To access Social Security online services, including my Social Security, you will need to create a Login.gov or ID.me account.

This change simplifies your sign-in experience and aligns with federal authentication standards while providing safe and secure access to our online services.

If you are one of the millions of account holders who already use Login.gov or ID.me account to sign in, you do not need to take any action.

To transition your account, please go to “Sign in” at the top of our website and select “Sign in with Social Security Username.” After successfully signing in you will be asked to create an account with Login.gov. Login.gov has 24/7 customer phone and chat support to answer your questions and, if needed, help you with creating your account.

After you successfully link your Social Security username with your new Login.gov account, you will see a confirmation screen and be directed to the service you were attempting to access. You can start using your new Login.gov account to access Social Security online services immediately. Your old Social Security username will no longer be available.★



Chaplain's Corner...



GOD'S PLAN AND OURS

It's the middle of summer and we've had some excitement here in Houston. Independence Day and the picnics went off quite well until the Beryl Roller Coaster came to town. Families knew the storm was coming and made their plans accordingly. The forecasters for Independence Day made sure we knew the storm was coming and gave us the warnings on how to prepare for the hurricane. We just didn't know what would happen and how. I have friends who had their Alaska Flights and cruise tickets for Wednesday the 10th. They were skittish to say the least. But the forecasters on Sunday were still telling us that we didn't know what would happen. Fortunately the storm blew through quickly and the 10th was a beautiful day to fly.

The fact is that we can make our plans but God controls the weather. Here in America it's more politically correct to talk about Mother Nature or just nature doing the controls. Our Faith is important to us but we can take the words of those around us and enjoy those people regardless of what they say about the weather's control. Our faith helps us maintain stability when the storms of relationships, events and circumstances rage around us. Our responses, thoughts and actions are under our control and God's. When we realize this is His world and we are His people we can experience His Peace without being wiped out by the circumstances. There are times when we know that He is in control...then there are times when we have to put on our faith glasses and search for His control. I pulled out my binoculars the other day to watch a hawk high up in a pine tree way down the block. I thought it was a young one and I was curious enough to try to find out if my old eyes were looking at a branch 300 yards away or if it really was the young hawk thought I saw. I was right. And the looking glasses helped.

Seeing circumstance and God's work is fascinating. I had one of those God moments this week at Costco at the lunch counter after a doctor's appointment. I noticed an Asian gentleman sitting alone and one of the vacant seats was beside him after I got my brat and soda. I asked him if I could join him; he assented. So I began a conversation by asking his country of origin. He was from Vietnam and was waiting for his wife. Once I explained that I'd done 18 months there he told me we were in the same place, doing the same thing only a year apart. He had done Flight School at Forts Wolters and Rucker the year before me. The only difference was that he flew for the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). He stayed and continued to fly after we Americans left. Not long afterward his aircraft was shot down and he was captured. The VC walked him up to Hanoi after he recovered from the crash. He remained a prisoner until 1990 when they released him to return to his wife and family. Shortly after his return to Saigon he made arrangements to flee back to America. He told me the waiting, the pain of separation and the risk of the journey was worth all the work. He had a much better understanding of Independence Day than I have. He knew God was in control and we knew that God had arranged our meeting that day. He is currently a pastor here in Houston. We exchanged phone numbers and will get together again. A chance meeting, yes, but it is a God thing. Faith allows us to watch God work in the circumstances of our daily lives.

~ David Essells, USAF, MAJ, RET

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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 December 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: _____