



Houston Area
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~ Five Star ★★★★★ Chapter ~

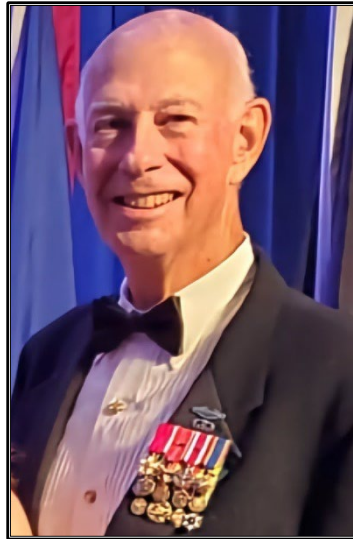
President's Message...

October 2024 Issue

Greetings Colleagues,

Happy 249 birthday to the United States Navy!

On October 13, 1775, the Continental Congress authorized the establishment of a sea faring force of two armed ships designed to work with privateers in interdicting enemy commercial ships. Its blood lines were established early when John Paul Jones who is widely considered to be the father of the United States Navy wrote to congress "I wish to have no connection with any ship that does not sail fast; for "I intend to go in harm's way." And we are all acquainted with his immortal words when asked to strike his colors by the commander of the British war ship HMS Serapis...**I HAVE JUST BEGUN TO FIGHT!** In many ways, this has become the mantra of the American fighting men and women.



I also would urge you to read the dustoff crews to receive the Congressional Gold medal. The time between when a soldier becomes a casualty and his arrival at a front-line MASH unit is known as the "golden hour". These dustoff crews changed combat medicine and ushered in a new era, saving thousands of lives.

This month, the Chapter in lieu of our regular monthly luncheon will be attending the Ukrainian frontline musical thank you tour sponsored the Ukrainian Cultural Forces Military.

Finally, we are in the 4th quarter, and we still a few members short who are not current with their dues. If that is you please help the Chapter out and bring your dues current.

Never Stop Serving!

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

★★★★★

In this issue >>>

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October 2024...Chapter Events:

Saturday, October 26th, 2024 @ 5:00pm

MOAA HA Chapter Meeting

Honor Café – From the Ukrainian Frontline With Thanks

103 North Thompson Street
Conroe, TX 77301

Tuesday, October 29th, 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
October, 2024*

I wonder what they thought as they peered through trees to the horizon and saw three strange water borne craft slowly getting larger. What the residents of the islands that would be called the Bahamas could not know was that their way of life was about to end. Of course, what was being observed was one of those tectonic shifts in history that would change everything – Christopher Columbus and the Spaniards had arrived in the New World. It was October 14, 1492, and a new epoch would descend on the world. It was the beginning of the Age of Discovery. Explorers from the great nations of Europe would soon begin to scramble to send expeditions to the newly discovered Western Hemisphere and claim their share of the natural wealth found in abundance by the Spaniards. Soon, adventurers such as **Cortez, Vespucci** (his first name was Amerigo and two new continents would carry that name), **Cabot, de Leon, Magellan, Hudson, and Drake** would become part of our national fabric and leave their names on places throughout the Americas. They ventured to every corner of the hemisphere as they made the first explorations to the “lands beyond the seas.” And thus America was born. So, happy Columbus and Indigenous People Day to everyone.

Moving up a few centuries, let us remember the service of Sergeant Alvin C. York. During World War I in the Argonne Forest in France on October 8, 1918, Sergeant York singlehandedly took out a German machine gun battalion by killing over a dozen enemy soldiers and capturing 132. For his intrepid actions, he was awarded the Medal of Honor and the French Croix de Guerre (France's highest decoration). We salute and remember Sergeant York.

October 13 is the U.S. Navy's 249th birthday. It was October 13, 1775, when the Continental Congress authorized the establishment of a sea faring force of two armed ships designed to work with privateers in interdicting enemy commercial ships. Its come a long way since. Happy birthday Navy.

October 18, 1898, the United States took control over the former Spanish possession of Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico was discovered by Columbus in 1493 and was a part of the Spanish Empire for 400 years. Then came the Spanish American War of 1898 which resulted in a U.S. victory. Part of the settlement of that war caused Spain to surrender the island to the United States. Because of that historical occurrence, you got to meet me, ha!

Don't forget Halloween!

LET'S NOT FORGET!





CULTURAL FORCES INTERNATIONAL



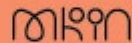
ABOUT



DONATE



2nd U.S. Tour
September–November 2024



**POWER TO THE CULTURE
CULTURE TO THE POWER**

FROM THE UKRAINIAN FRONTLINE WITH THANKS

U.S. MUSIC TOUR OF GRATITUDE: FROM THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE TO AMERICA

Professional artists before the war, now active duty soldiers and frontline volunteers, will present a wide variety of music, from Ukrainian and world classics to covers of popular hits and country tunes. Most artists fought in some of the fiercest battles of the war. After recovering from injuries, they get back to playing music.

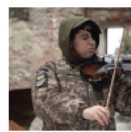
The music tour will visit Washington DC, Richmond (VA), Charlotte (NC), Columbia (SC), Atlanta (GA), Miami, Tampa and Orlando (FL), Montgomery (AL), Jackson (MS), New Orleans (LA), Houston, Austin, Dallas, and Amarillo (TX), Santa Fe (NM), Phoenix (AZ), Los Angeles and San Francisco (CA) and a few other cities.



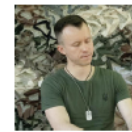
Yurii Ivaskevych
Vocalist and soloist, the Zaporizhzhia Philharmonic Orchestra (SRG, Grenade Launcher Operator, 110th Separate Brigade, TDF)



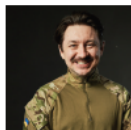
Taras Stoliar
Bandura player, Honored Artist of Ukraine (PFC, Reconnaissance Operative, 112th Separate Brigade, TDF)



Olha Rukavishnikova
Violinist, conductor, and symphonist (PFC, Reconnaissance Operative, Grenade Launcher Operator, 112th Separate Brigade, TDF)



Mykhailo Oliinyk
Composer, pianist, and singer (PVT, 59th Separate Mechanized Brigade)



Sasha Boole
Country music singer, composer, and writer (CAPT, 22nd Separate Infantry Battalion)



Liubov Shipiliuk
Bandura player, singer, and songwriter (CF frontline volunteer)



**CULTURAL FORCES
MILITARY**

**FREE
ADMISSION
LIVE MUSIC**



Cultural Forces brings together active servicemen and volunteers of artistic and creative trades. Through culture and arts, Cultural Forces improves troops' morale and provides psychological support to soldiers in combat and recovery zones.

ACT NOW: Support MOAA's Crisis Relief Program

October 09, 2024

The aftermath of Hurricane Helene brought a surge of applicants seeking help from The MOAA Foundation's Crisis Relief Program, with many more servicemembers, veterans, family members, caregivers, and survivors expected to reach out for assistance in the wake of Hurricane Milton.



Florida Army National Guard soldiers help deploy a flood mitigation device to protect a hospital from flooding in Sanford, Fla., on Oct. 8. (Photo by Sgt. Marc Morgenstern/Army)

[APPLY FOR AID: [Crisis Relief Program](#)]

The program can send up to \$1,000 to approved applicants **in as little as three days**, allowing them to cover emergency expenses in the face of often-unrelenting and unforeseeable challenges:

- A Navy veteran in Greeneville, Tenn., “lost my home, pets, money, everything” to Helene when rising water washed away his riverside residence. “I have nothing but the clothes on my back. I’m staying with my granddaughter until I can get back onto my feet.”
- An Air Force veteran saw their North Carolina hometown “devastated” and could be waiting nearly a month for restored power. “We’re having to wait in long lines to get hot food to eat. Our family can’t bathe or wash any dishes or wash our dirty clothes. ... We have lost our entire freezer and refrigerator of food. ... I could normally pay for most things, but we have never been hit this hard.”
- A former Navy officer in Florida said Helene brought a “devastating impact on our life. ... Trying to balance our existing jobs in the midst of this traumatic event is challenging, not to mention the expenses that will be required to get our homes back into a livable condition.”

[DONATE TODAY: [Crisis Relief Program](#)]

These storm victims and others will receive assistance from the Crisis Relief Program, but to keep up with the rise in demand, we’re seeking support from MOAA members and others who have not been affected.

“Thank you to those who’ve already contributed to this important cause,” said Amanda Centers, MOAA vice president of Development. “But as another storm brings untold damage to a large part of our nation, and a long hurricane season remains, there will be no shortage of need for members of our uniformed service and veteran communities. If you have not yet contributed, please consider a donation today.”



Soldiers pass out food and water to civilians affected by Hurricane Helene in Perry, Fla., on Sept. 29. (Photo by Sgt. Jalen Thomas/Florida Army National Guard)

Your donation allows us to offer financial assistance to members of the following groups who are experiencing a financial setback due to a current crisis:

- Currently serving military personnel (including National Guard and Reserve)
- Spouses of currently serving personnel
- Veterans
- Surviving spouses
- Military and veteran caregivers

The program is open to all ranks and U.S. uniformed services, and can provide up to \$1,000 in financial assistance for:

- Housing (rent, mortgage, housing assistance, repairs, groceries, etc.)
- Auto loan/lease/car repair
- Utilities (electric, water, heat, internet/cable, cellphone)
- Bills, including credit card, medical, and insurance ★

Vietnam Dustoff Crews to Receive Congressional Gold Medal

By: Blair Drake
September 25, 2024

Updated Sept. 27 with Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act signed into law. Updated Oct. 2 with information about receiving updates on the medal process and ceremony.

For nearly a decade, MOAA members Lt. Col. Chris Siedor, USA (Ret), and Lt. Col. Steve Vermillion, USA (Ret), have been working to rally lawmakers to recognize Vietnam War aeromedical evacuation units and medevac crews — commonly known by their radio call sign “Dustoff” — with a Congressional Gold Medal.



Then-WO1 Steve Vermillion, USA, stands next to the helicopter “Hover Lover” in Vietnam in 1969. (Photo courtesy of Steve Vermillion)

Their efforts and those of other supporters paid off: Congress passed the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act on Sept. 17; President Joe Biden signed the bill into law Sept. 26.

It will collectively award the more than 3,000 pilots, medics, and crew who flew between combat zones and field hospitals during the war with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest award Congress can bestow.

“The passage of this legislation marks a milestone in recognizing U.S. Army helicopter aeromedical aircrafts of the Vietnam War,” said Vermillion, president of the Vietnam Dustoff Association. “These unsung aircraft risked their lives on a daily basis to save the lives of others.”



A U.S. Army helicopter collects wounded servicemembers in Vietnam in August 1966. (Photo by Bill Hall/Michael Ochs Archives via Getty Images)

Vermillion arrived in Vietnam as a warrant officer 1 on Jan. 5, 1969, and was assigned to 45th Medical Company Air Ambulance (Dustoff). He left Vietnam in early 1970 as a chief warrant officer 2, having flown 1,145 combat hours and picking up 2,217 casualties.

The medal effort has been underway since 2015, spearheaded then by Medal of Honor recipient Maj. Gen. Pat Brady, USA (Ret), a fellow Vietnam Dustoff pilot. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) introduced legislation to secure the medal that year, but the bill never moved out of committee. In subsequent years, the bill was reintroduced but did not make progress.

Over the past nine years, Siedor — a Dustoff pilot who evacuated 719 casualties and flew 530 combat hours during his year in Vietnam assigned to the 57th Medical Detachment — has sent over 2,600 emails to members of Congress and visited lawmakers on Capitol Hill nearly a dozen times to urge them to support the bill.

[VIETNAM UNCHRONICLED: The Push to Recognize Dustoff Crews]

In an interview with MOAA in 2021, he cited statistics that he said made Dustoff crews deserving of the medal.

“Dustoff and medevac crews flew more than 496,000 missions from 1962-73,” Siedor said. “Ninety pilots were killed and nearly 380 were wounded, and 121 crew members were killed and 545 wounded. They flew 24/7 and did not have the luxury of waiting for a cleared landing zone, the weather to clear, or night to end, as urgent patients faced death without immediate lifesaving care.”

Continued on next page...

Vietnam Dustoff Crews to Receive Congressional Gold Medal

Continued from previous page...

Siedor and Vermillion both credit the involvement of the Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP firm with moving the needle on the bill.

“Had it not been for the Hunton group stepping up in an exceptional way, under the direction of law partner Fred Eames, in concert with Garrett Kral, Todd Mikilop, and countless other members of group, this Congressional Gold Medal would still be waiting to be approved,” Siedor said.

The group provided more than 1,550 pro bono lobbying hours to the effort, said Vermillion, including organizing visits of Dustoff members to Capitol Hill to meet with lawmakers.

“By June, the wave [of bill co-sponsors] was coming,” said Siedor.

The Senate passed the bill in May. It cleared the House about four months later.

[VIETNAM UNCHRONICLED: POWs Return to Hanoi]

In a press release announcing the bill’s passage, Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.), who co-sponsored the legislation with Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-Wash.), emphasized the sacrifice of Dustoff crews.

“During the Vietnam War, millions of Americans left home to fight in muddy trenches and jungles halfway around the world. Many made the ultimate sacrifice. Others returned home just to be ostracized and ridiculed. Some were never recognized for their service at all,” Rodgers said. “Unfortunately, that’s exactly what happened to the Dustoff crewmembers who risked their lives to save nearly 1 million others. They were some of the very best, and their heroism deserves to be recognized.”

Kilmer called the award “an important step toward recognizing the pivotal role that these servicemembers played in saving lives and serving their country proudly. I’ll keep pushing to ensure we demonstrate our appreciation to our veterans on behalf of a grateful nation.”

[WATCH: To Save a Soldier (1966), Part One | Part Two]

For Siedor, the passage of the bill is bittersweet.

“When I started this, I tried to get handle of how many of us were still alive,” he said. “We estimated about 2,400 at that time. Today, that number is probably about 1,800. It makes me crazy that it took so long.”

However, he said he’s glad the Dustoff crews will finally get this long-deserved recognition.

“This Congressional Gold Medal honors the exceptional intrepidity and dedication of Army medical evacuation crews in the Vietnam War who flew under the call signs of Dustoff and medevac,” Siedor said. “During the 10-plus years of picking up some 900,000 patients, the standards for medical evacuation were forever established.”

Vermillion expressed his gratitude for the award. “Our veterans are truly humble and thankful,” he said.

The Vietnam Dustoff Association is building a database of names and email addresses to keep concerned parties up to date about the Congressional Gold Medal process, including the status of the minting and production of the medal and details of the final ceremony. To have your information added to that database, email vietnamdustoffqcm@gmail.com. ★



Lt. Col. Chris Siedor, USA (Ret), flew 530 combat hours as a Dustoff pilot in Vietnam. Here, he sits in the cockpit in Long Binh, Vietnam, in April 1971. (Photo courtesy of Chris Siedor)

2025 FEDVIP Prices Announced

By: Paul Frost
October 08, 2024

The dental and vision plans under the Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) will see average monthly premium increases of 2.97% (dental) and 0.87% (vision) for 2025, according to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).



OPM [announced](#) and [posted](#) the 2025 FEDVIP pricing at the end of September and will update the plan comparison tool at [BENEFEDS.gov](https://www.benefeds.gov) in time for the upcoming FEDVIP open season. OPM manages the health, dental, and vision insurance programs for federal civilian employees. Military retirees (and their beneficiaries) enrolled in TRICARE have been eligible to utilize FEDVIP programs since 2019.

FEDVIP features 12 dental plan providers and five vision plan providers. All but one dental provider will offer both “standard” and “high” plan options. Standard plans have lower monthly premiums (about half of the high option) but higher co-pays.

In general, if you/your family have good oral health, then a standard plan is probably best. If you/your family have poor oral health or still have orthodonture needs, then a high plan is probably best.

The major difference between standard and high vision plans is the yearly frame/lens allowance. Plan premium rates are [based on your ZIP code](#).

MOAA Open Season Webinar

MOAA will conduct its [annual open season webinar](#) Oct 29 at 2 p.m. Eastern. This event will provide an in-depth review of:

- Open season dates and deadlines for TRICARE, Medicare, and FEDVIP.
- Original Medicare (Parts A and B) vs. Medicare Advantage plans (Part C).
- FEDVIP plan terminology.
- FEDVIP and TRICARE websites, including an online tour of available resources and plan comparison tools.

Can't make the webinar? All registered participants will receive an email with a link to the recording within five business days of the event.

[Register Now](#) More MOAA Events

The [BENEFEDS Plan Comparison Tool](#) soon will have both 2024 and 2025 pricing available for comparison. The 2025 TRICARE and FEDVIP Open Season begins Nov. 11 and concludes at midnight Dec. 9. Changes to your dental and vision coverage take effect Jan. 1, 2025.

MOAA strongly recommends comparing next year's pricing to this year's premium to ensure you are satisfied with your dental and/or vision plan. If you take no action during the open season, you will be automatically “rolled over” to the same plan with new pricing next year.

For an example of 2025 premium increases, here's a price listing of dental plans for “self plus one” coverage for beneficiaries living in Washington D.C. (Note: Rating areas and regions vary by provider):

- Aetna Dental (Area 2): 7.1% standard plan increase; 4.2% high plan increase.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield FEP Dental (Area 3): 3.1% standard increase; 3.0% high increase.
- Delta Dental (Area 5): 5.1% standard increase; 3.0% high increase.
- Dominion National (Area 2): 0.01% standard/high decrease.
- GEHA (Area 4): 3.1% standard increase; 3.8% high increase.
- Humana Dental Advantage (Area 3): 3.2% standard increase; 9.8% high increase.
- MetLife (Area 4): 0.2% standard increase; 0.1% high increase.
- United Concordia Dental (Area 4): 5.0% standard increase; 3.6% high increase.
- UnitedHealthcare Dental (Area 4): 2.6% standard/high increase.

Get more FEDVIP information at [BENEFEDS.gov](https://www.benefeds.gov) and at the [OPM website](#).★

Ending the Wait: How MOAA Is Making a Difference for Toxic-Exposed Veterans

September 18, 2024



MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), speaks during a Sept. 18 launch event in Washington, D.C., for a joint MOAA/Disabled American Veterans report entitled "Ending the Wait for Toxic-Exposed Veterans." (Photos by Mike Morones/MOAA)

A teenage Marine stands guard as planes spray an airbase in Vietnam with a mystery substance. More than 60 years later, he finally receives VA benefits for his hypertension claim.

A soldier at an airbase in Uzbekistan suffers so many health issues he decides to keep a journal. More than 20 years later, facing thyroid issues and the bone density of an 80-year-old, he's still ineligible for service-connected care.

A retired officer serves on a base with dangerous chemicals in its water supply at more than 80 times the prescribed federal limit. He and his fellow servicemembers remain in limbo as the VA takes years to consider their individual claims.

U.S. veterans have been exposed to toxins as part of service for more than a century. A new report from MOAA and Disabled American Veterans (DAV) dives into that long history, looking at how the VA and its predecessors have cared for those who serve ... and recommending changes to a broken process designed to reduce the average time between an exposure and the receipt of full VA benefits – currently *more than three decades*.

"The military has a deliberate plan and effective system of operation for nearly everything, but when it comes to timely identification and acknowledgement of toxic exposures, we lack a system and are falling short – servicemembers in and out of uniform deserve better," said Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), during a Sept. 18 launch event in Washington, D.C., marking the release of Ending the Wait for Toxic-Exposed Veterans, a report offering a blueprint for the VA to reform its toxic-exposure process and expand on generational progress made with the August 2022 signing of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act.

[RELATED: More Than 1 Million Veterans Have Received PACT Act Benefits]

Based on a detailed review of toxic exposures since World War I, and the response to those exposures from DoD and the VA (and their predecessors), the report offers four key recommendations:

- A three-part process to establish presumed connections between illnesses and exposures, which would create "timelines, triggers, thresholds and decisions" to steer the agencies from acknowledgement of exposure to providing needed care in a timely fashion.
- Expanded research and monitoring to better understand these exposures in real time, allowing better support for VA efforts to identify and care for veterans.
- A pre-separation enrollment into VA care for those in uniform, and the elimination of pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) requirements on toxic exposure-related legislation.
- A new classification system for toxic exposures – one that makes clear what evidence is lacking in specific cases and provides a path forward for both veterans and VA officials to fill in the gaps.

Continued on next page...

Ending the Wait: How MOAA Is Making a Difference for Toxic-Exposed Veterans

Continued from previous page...

[**COVERAGE OF 'ENDING THE WAIT': [NBC News](#) | [Military Times](#) | [Stars and Stripes](#) | [Military.com](#)**]

“This report provides a crucial blueprint for necessary refinement and reforms to reach all who are in need,” Kelly said in a news release announcing the report. “It is our duty to ensure the sacrifices made to their health while protecting our freedoms are addressed, with nobody left behind to suffer in silence.”

Behind the Report

MOAA and DAV began work on what would become *Ending the Wait* before the PACT Act’s passage. The report’s authors shifted focus to look beyond that law’s improvements, laying the groundwork to ensure benefits do not lag future exposures.

“We call on the Department of Veterans Affairs and congressional leaders to join our growing coalition of veterans service organizations and other stakeholders to enact comprehensive reform so future generations of veterans never have to wait decades to receive the care and benefits they deserve,” reads the report, which includes:

- Stories of individual veterans (like those outlined earlier) whose personal timelines to receive care after exposure to toxins while in uniform has taken as long or longer than the overall average ... or, in some cases, has yet to reach a conclusion, mired in VA claims work and an uncertain medical future.
- A deep dive into the history of toxic exposures, from World War I mustard gas to radiation experiments in the 1950s to the VA’s long struggle to care for all servicemembers who came in contact with Vietnam-era defoliants.
- A case study of the chemical exposure at Fort McClellan, Ala., outlining how proposed changes to the VA’s exposure framework could’ve trimmed the time between exposure and benefits for veterans and family members by a dozen years or more.

“We are proud to work with MOAA to propose a paradigm shift that finishes what the PACT Act started by comprehensively reforming the way the VA responds to toxic wounds,” DAV Washington Headquarters Executive Director Randy Reese said in the news release.

[RELATED: [K2 Veterans With Unexplained Medical Conditions to Qualify for VA Disability Assistance](#)]

The report’s release represents a significant milestone for MOAA in its work on ending the wait for these servicemembers, and it will serve as a base for more extensive advocacy efforts in the 119th Congress and beyond, said Cory Titus, MOAA’s director of Government Relations for Servicemember Compensation and Veterans Benefits.

“Armed with these findings, we’re able to work with lawmakers and their staffs to craft meaningful legislation designed to improve a flawed process,” Titus said. “Our research not only adds to our credibility on these issues, it shows how urgent further reforms are if we want to provide the benefits owed to our veterans, their families, and their survivors before it’s too late.” ★



Former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. David Shulkin speaks during the Sept. 18 launch event in Washington, D.C.

Chaplain's Corner...



GOD'S GLORY IN TODAY'S WORLD

This past week we were visiting in a small town in North-Central Washington State where we were regaled by a fantastic display of the Northern lights. At my age my cataracts and macular degeneration wouldn't let me see the colors but the 360 degree surround of the shimmering light gray Borealis was awesome. The following night we were supposed to see the lights again, so when I went out I looked up at another stunning display. It wasn't the Lights again, just clouds, but the background of the moon lit up the clouds with a different shining display. My take on this episode is that the beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Psalm 119:91 says: "Your Laws, O God, endure to this day for all things serve you." My theology and belief is that God is served by His creation. Whether you call God by His Western Name, or the Creator, YHWH, Allah or another name, He is still the Creator. The beauty that is around us displays the glory of God. Whether it is the sky, the clouds, the ocean displaying His power by the crashing of the waves upon the rocks, filling our ears with the roar of those waves; they are all part of the display of God's glory. When I think of the verse above I believe that the laws of science are a part of that display. God transcends science. Those laws of science are developed by our human scientists as they discover how God uses them.

Creation theory doesn't bother me or my beliefs about scripture's definition of creation. God is much bigger than our laws and definitions of His creation. The laws we find and the ways they are used give God glory. When Jesus came into Jerusalem the Pharisees complained about the ruckus and told his disciples to silence the crowd. Jesus replied, "If the crowd is silenced even the rocks would cry out." The rocks do cry out by the law of gravity...100% of the time you can throw one up...it will come down. If it comes down on your head, you will cry out! But that won't give God glory.

The laws of science...those of medicine that bring glory to God as we discover and use them. Medical advances use the laws of science and the investigation of those laws to cure diseases and help us have longer lives and ease some of our pain. Physical therapy uses muscular exercises and stretches; Doctors use pharmaceuticals to help the pain. When we feel better we are usually happier. Life is a gift. Whether we give God credit, or glory, or not; we are still here. Genesis says that man was made "in the image of God." We bear that image regardless of our faith. God desires and actually requires that we give Him that glory. That is why we have faith. That is why we live.

~ David Essells, USAF, MAJ, RET

MOAA – HA Chapter Meeting September 28, 2024



Ivan Santiago and Eugene Tulich,
Guest Speaker, Commander (Ret) United States Coast Guard
President, Houston Military Affairs Committee



Dan Gutierrez



Alan Ostendorp



Judith Thomas



Ivan Santiago



Bob Poland



Jean Eugene



William Smith



Kio Ahmed



Donald Audric



Kathy Frank



Denis Blindauer



Harry Stevenson

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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 \(quorum.us\)](https://www.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: _____