

October 2022

ILCouncilMOAA.org

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Never Stop Serving!!!

***“NEVER
STOP
SERVING”***



President's column

Great meeting last month. Thanks to all for your participation and concern for MOAA in Illinois. Thanks also to those agreeing to serve another term as Council officers. We will do our installation up north in March. It was good to hear Captain Frank Michael's HQ insights on what is happening all around the country with chapters – and what National is trying to do to keep chapters viable. Please continue to think outside the box on ways to engage all of the MOAA members living in Illinois in our chapter activities.

I hope the roundtable discussion on September 29th was informative. Colonel Roll provided a good summary and the recorded meeting should be available on the MOAA National chapter leaders' resource page. We need to make sure that we are doing all that we can to maximize our LOE chances.

As I am sure Colonel Smith will point out, Congress has yet to pass a budget for 2023. Which means that the continuing resolution that takes the government into December does not fund the MOAA “wins” in the NDAA. The “Advocacy” links on the MOAA National website provide all of our members with a way to keep our objectives highlighted for our elected officials.

As we wind up the year, take time to enjoy family and friends. We have much to be thankful for in this nation. Sometimes as we press the issues it is easy to forget the opportunities this country provides. As those who wore the uniform, we have a special appreciation for America's greatness. So happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Years! I look forward to working with all of you next year as we continue to *Never Stop Serving!*

Semper Fi – Bob Tyler

Legislative Input to the IL CoC Newsletter for October 2022

Congress has yet to pass a budget for 2023, but did pass a continuing resolution (CR), signed by the President, that keeps the government funded through December 16th. This will give lawmakers more time to pass FY23 funding bills, including the annual defense appropriations legislation. The CR does not fund the MOAA “wins” that we hoped would be included in the FY 2023 NDAA. Thus, we all need to contact our Illinois Congressional delegation to convey the critical importance of passing the FY 2023 NDAA and the various veteran-related House and Senate bills that it contains. MOAA National’s legislative staff have provided the information below to help in our campaign to influence our Illinois Congressional delegation. The links embedded in the paragraphs below provide information on the current status of the NDAA and actions each of us can take.

Currently, only the House has passed its version of the FY 2023 NDAA. The Senate has yet to pass its version, delaying when the FY 2023 NDAA can go into conference, where the House and Senate versions can be reconciled. With the [recent passage of the CR](#) extending current funding levels until mid-December, a government shutdown is only delayed until Congress can pass all 12 appropriations bills that make up the federal budget. More information regarding Congress' appropriations and authorization processes can be found in our recent article [here](#).

Repeated engagement and correspondence with the Illinois delegation in Congress is important as it serves to inform them of issues that are of greater importance to their constituents. MOAA National encourages MOAA members to use all methods of communicating with their Senators and respective representatives. Whether it is via email, hand-written or typed letters in the mail, phone calls, or office visits, all constituent engagements are tracked and tallied by the legislators' staff, and then relayed back to the legislator.

MOAA members in Illinois can use MOAA National’s Legislative Action Center (LAC) to support our advocacy on both the FY 2023 NDAA, and making sure Congress fully funds the government by passing the necessary appropriations bills. They can find our active campaign to urge the Senate to pass their version of the FY 2023 NDAA through [this link](#). Members can also contact both their Senators and their respective Representative and urge them to pass appropriations through our LAC's active campaign [here](#).

We encourage all MOAA members to share the links to those two advocacy campaigns on our LAC with any non-MOAA members in their respective networks that support this issue to increase constituent engagement with Congress. They can also feel free to use MOAA's Capitol Hotline at 866-272-MOAA (6622), a toll-free line to the U.S. Capitol switchboard – to connect with their legislators' office directly.

Chaplain's Column

Greetings to all !

" Never Stop Serving " is a phrase we all in MOAA have become accustomed to reading and hearing. It appears on MOAA National and State literature and we hear it used frequently in conversation with fellow MOAA members. I have a MOAA recruiting card on my desk in which those words are at least a half inch high. The phrase is both a command and an invitation. In the military we have heard it in both usages. Some commander on a higher level tells his subordinate commanders to do it and we down the line are expected to comply. In both usages, the feeling is that there is something worth while for us to do and tell about, and, if enough people keep on serving, many needs will be fulfilled and the entire MOAA organization will grow due to our commitment.

I still continue to serve as the Council Chaplain and with the aid of about 9 other chaplains, we endeavor to keep MOAA going both nationality and locally. We visit chapters, participating in their functions as we are able and involving ourselves in those community activities which we believe are beneficial to active and retired military of any US Branch. We feel both ordered to and invited to. As I visit, I see and hear many good things going on, and, after leaving the meetings and driving back to my home in Taylorville, I feel very confident that some good will come out of these meetings.

We of course cannot predict the future. That, by Divine design, is forbidden to us. Our Heavenly Father wants us to concentrate on today with some necessary preparation but not to worry about the future. We can't add to our lives by worrying and in fact may shorten it by worrying. With that in mind, we press on, applying our best minds to the problems of recruiting, keeping current chapters open and exploring new areas of the state for membership.

If there is one thing military people have in common, it is dealing with disappointment. A promotion doesn't come through, some base or fort is closed, some family member is designated for immediate deployment. We deal with it as best we can but we still keep on serving, knowing as St Paul says that all things work together for good to those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose, Romans 8.

" Never Stop Serving " is a good motto. It serves a good purpose and is one we can live by.

In Your Service

Ch Ralph Woehrmann

MOAA Illinois Council of Chapter Presidents, Chaplain.

MOAA accomplishments in 2021

- Repealing SBP-DIC offset, known as the ‘Widows Tax’ – saving up to \$12,000 per year for nearly 67,000 surviving spouses.
- Executing a credible game plan for oversight of DoD’s health care – protecting continued access to quality care.*
- Securing comprehensive privatized military housing reform – improving housing, establishing Tenant Bill of Rights, and Congressional oversight.*
- Lessening impact of TRICARE fee hikes (Family = \$300 vice \$900) – fighting multiple efforts to end grandfathering for those who entered service before Jan. 1, 2018.*
- Protecting TRICARE For Life (TFL) – blocked five consecutive administration budgets proposing TFL enrollment fees (2013-2017).*
- Maintaining pay raise comparability – ensuring pay raises for our uniformed services keep pace with civilian sector increases.*
- Providing Wounded Warrior protections and caregiver enhancements – securing multiple improvements to VA caregiver programs.*
- Defeating ‘COLA Minus 1 Percent’ – ending Congressional attempts to reduce retired pay, costing an E-7 retiring after 20 years \$83,000, and an O-5 \$124,000, by age 62.*
- Securing major GI Bill upgrades to include transferability – and improving benefits for National Guard on Title 32 orders.*
- Boosting compensation significantly for retirees with 50% VA disability – still fighting for the rest to include those medically retired.*
- Improving Guard and Reserve TRICARE coverage – and securing a premium cut.
- Ensuring Guard and Reserve retirement age credit for active duty service – now allowing 90 days to stretch over two consecutive years.

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Who to Contact for membership in the applicable Chapter

If you wish to join a local chapter, contact the Chapter President listed above and they will get you in touch with a Chapter Membership Chair.

MOAA chapters sponsor interesting programs and opportunities to interact with civic, political, military, and business leaders on issues important to members.

Chapters include second-career members in the work force and retired service members who have contacts in their communities that can be valuable to transitioning officers.

10 Tips to Help Retain Chapter Members

These strategies can help MOAA chapters combat the challenge of retaining their members.

Though many affiliates work hard to recruit new members, they sometimes forget about the equally important challenge of retention.

Don't negate all your hard work to increase your chapter's membership. To help retain members, consider these 10 tips:

- Vary programs and events and meeting times and days to meet member needs.
- Invite relevant speakers, such as legislators or city officials, to chapter meetings.
- Organize special events and raffles, gift exchanges, etc.
- Recognize the accomplishments of members by publishing their biographies on your website or in your newsletter.
- Offer community service opportunities to bring members together to achieve a goal.
- Provide opportunities for involvement on short-term, one-time-only projects and special issues.
- Keep costs economical, but don't let price be the driver of what type of activity to hold.
- Provide invoices for dues paid by members.
- Offer ride-sharing programs to chapter activities.
- Contact inactive members before terminating their chapter membership.

The Council has a new website. Address is <http://www.ilcouncilmoaa.org>

If you have any items or input for the website, contact MAJ (USAF, Ret) Dave Knieriem at the following email address: dknieriem@casscomm.com

MOAA Store and ROTC/Junior ROTC Items

The MOAA store has re-opened at <https://moaa.estore.shop/>. In addition to promotional gear, you can find ROTC and Junior ROTC (JROTC) award certificates (in stock now) and medals (place orders now for backorders to be shipped when medals are in stock, expected by the end of April). Electronic certificates may be customized and downloaded [online](#) at any time. Note that medals have been updated to reflect all eight uniformed services, and JROTC certificates have been updated with language more appropriate to high school students rather than ROTC students.

The cost of medals to affiliates will remain at \$3.00 per medal due to a MOAA subsidy. Additionally, the store recently added the USPS live rate to shipping options, providing a lower-cost alternative.

**Never Stop Serv-
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MOAA Legislative Action Center

You can help MOAA by visiting their legislative action center and contacting your elected officials regarding pending legislation MOAA is working. You can reach the Legislative Action Center at the following email address: take.action.moaa.org

MOAA's Legislative Priorities for 2022

- Sustain pay raises and adequate BAH for the troops and COLA raises for retirees.
- Ensure the Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Public Health Service continue to receive pay during a government shutdown.
- Protect the value of the military health care benefit.
- Protect the Military Health System pharmacy benefit, and achieve flexibility in TRI-CARE pharmacy copays.
- Address barriers to accessing care within the MHS, including TRICARE coverage gaps and mental health care access challenges.
- Protect family support programs, and ensure military-provided services (housing, PCS, child care, youth programs, financial counseling) are readily available and meet standards for quality and costs.
- Achieve equity of benefits, protections, and administrative support for Guard/Reserve members consistent with their active-duty counterparts.
- Sustain Veterans Health Administration (VHA) foundational missions and services.
- Reform the presumptive process to support veterans claiming service-connected disabilities for toxic exposures.
- Achieve concurrent receipt of service-earned retirement pay and VA disability pay.
- Protect full military honors and burial at Arlington National Cemetery for those currently eligible.
- Improve survivors' benefits.
- Support a quality transition experience from active duty to veteran status for all servicemembers.
- Recognize the pandemic continues to affect the lives of our servicemembers.

Reasons to Join a MOAA Chapter

You know the value of belonging to MOAA and your chapter!

But when you're talking to a potential new chapter member, it's important to remember that many officers might have only limited knowledge of MOAA's chapter system.

Creating a dialogue and asking open-ended questions is the best way to find out if and how a chapter membership could help a prospective member.

Find out as much as you can about their priorities in order to tailor a response that is more likely to resonate with them personally.

Here are some aspects of membership that may appeal to them:

1. **Make yourself heard.** MOAA's chapters provide critical grassroots support for MOAA's national legislative agenda. Chapter members let their legislators know what's on their minds and open doors for MOAA's legislative team in Washington, D.C.
2. **Give back to the community.** Chapter members are MOAA's ambassadors in their communities, supporting countless programs that make a difference in the lives of others. These members continue to serve and are giving back in the truest sense.
3. **Value added to chapter members' lives.** MOAA chapters sponsor interesting programs and opportunities to interact with civic, political, military, and business leaders on issues important to members.
4. **Networking with fellow officers.** Chapters include second-career members in the work force and retired service members who have contacts in their communities that can be valuable to transitioning officers.
5. **Stay informed.** Chapter newsletters, websites, and meetings provide you with the latest information on local, state, and national issues and changes to military benefits.
6. **Influencing state legislation.** Most states have a council of chapters that unites chapters in the state. These councils, and independent chapters in states without a council, often lobby for and pass state-level legislation that affects military members and their families, such as exempting military retired pay from state income tax or increasing funding for state veterans' programs.
7. **Camaraderie with a purpose.** MOAA chapters unite active duty, former, and retired officers from every branch of service, including National Guard and Reserve, as well as surviving spouses, offering the opportunity to connect with others with similar backgrounds and interest and develop close and lasting friendships.

Council of Chapters

New Website

The Council has a new website. Address is <http://www.ilcouncilmoaa.org>

If you have any items or input for the website, contact MAJ (USAF, Ret) Dave Knieriem at the following email address: dknieriem@casscomm.com

MOAA is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. It is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization.

While MOAA is permitted by law to lobby—and does so actively—its status as a tax-exempt veterans organization precludes it from participating in political activities, which are defined as intervening directly or indirectly in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Stated briefly: the association may advocate issues, but it may not advocate the election or defeat of particular candidates or political parties. This newsletter follows the policies of MOAA National.



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The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) established the **MOAA Scholarship Fund** in 1948 to provide educational assistance benefits to children of military families. It supports one of the association's founding principles: ***education is the cornerstone of a strong democracy***. It is funded by donations from MOAA members, Councils and Chapters, corporations, and others with a desire to help military families. For additional details, go to the MOAA website at **MOAA.org**

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The Greatest Casualty is
Being Forgotten!

Now and Always
We'll be There.



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