



North Shore and Chicago Chapter of THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Newsletter – May 2026

Program and Speaker for May 17th

Our next Chapter luncheon meeting is on May 17th at Dover Straits, 890 Highway 45, Mundelein. The social hour begins at 12:30 pm with lunch at 1:00 pm and speaker to follow. An announcement announcing our speaker will be sent separately.

From the President's Desk

Spring is in full swing, and your chapter has been busy on multiple fronts — from the halls of Congress to our own membership rolls. I am proud to share several exciting updates with you this month.

Advocacy in Action — Capitol Hill

This month, members of our state council traveled to Washington, D.C. for MOAA's Advocacy in Action. They met with congressional offices to advance the legislative priorities that matter most to our community. Those priorities this session include:

Major Richard Star Act — Eliminates the “VA Offset” so combat-injured veterans can receive their full military retirement pay and VA disability benefits simultaneously, without reduction.

Shutdown Fairness Act — Ensures service members and DoD/DHS civilian employees continue to receive pay during any future government shutdown or funding lapse.

GUARD VA Benefits Act (Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act) Reinstates criminal penalties for unaccredited claims representatives who charge unauthorized fees, protecting vulnerable veterans from predatory actors.

Military CARE Act — Directs the Pentagon to build a digital system that improves access to care at Military Treatment Facilities, making it easier for beneficiaries to get the healthcare they have earned.

We owe a sincere thank you to everyone who made the trip and carried our council's voice to Capitol Hill. Their time and dedication make a real difference.

Membership Mail Campaign

On the home front, our chapter mail campaign is underway. We are reaching out directly to MOAA national members in our area who are not yet affiliated with a local chapter, inviting them to join our ranks. If you know a fellow member who hasn't connected with us yet, please encourage them to respond — or better yet, reach out personally. Local membership amplifies everything we do, from advocacy to camaraderie to community support.

Five-Star Level of Excellence Award

I am thrilled to announce that our chapter has earned MOAA's Five-Star Level of Excellence Award — the highest recognition MOAA bestows upon affiliated chapters. This award is a testament to the hard work, commitment, and professionalism of every single member who contributes to making this chapter exceptional. The award will be formally presented at next month's luncheon by our council president, and I hope to see every one of you there to share in this well-deserved recognition. Until then, thank you for your continued service, engagement, and dedication to our chapter's mission. Never stop serving!

Matthew Garrison, Chapter President

Volunteers Needed — ROTC Scholarship Presentation Ceremonies

We need chapter members to represent us at upcoming ROTC scholarship award ceremonies! This is a great opportunity to meet the next generation of military officers and show our chapter's commitment to developing future leaders. If you're available and interested in attending, please contact Al Saller at chief5army@att.net to sign up or for more information on dates and locations.

These young cadets appreciate seeing the support of fellow officers — let's show up strong.

Chapter News

Sad News

The Chapter is saddened by the April 4 death of member Brigadier General John L. Fascia, Illinois Army National Guard. BG Fascia's service was marked by significant contributions to peacekeeping, emergency preparedness, and disaster response.

ROTC / JROTC Awards and 50/50 Drawing (April 2026)

The North Shore & Chicago Chapter of MOAA has provided two universities, IIT and Northeastern University with ROTC medals, as well as certificates, presentation folders, and \$250 scholarships for each one. In addition, the chapter has provided three public high schools, Michigan City, Wheeling and Alan B. Shephard with JROTC medals, certificates and presentation folders. These honors are awarded to outstanding and dedicated cadets at the discretion of their leadership.

At the April 19th chapter meeting at Dover Straits the 50/50 Raffle collected a total of \$95 to be deposited in the scholarship fund.

CW5 Alfred Saller, USA (Ret.) Vice-President

State Legislation Report



Above is a photo of representatives of major veteran organizations in the state taken on February 25, 2026, in the Chambers of the Illinois Senate. The occasion was Veterans' Day at the Statehouse. Senator Porfiro, Chair of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, and Senator Wilcox, Ranking Minority Member and a MOAA member are in the photo also. I represented our MOAA Chapter (and am present in the photo).

MAJ Dean Farr, USA (Ret,) Director of Legislation (State)

Midwest Veterans Closet Report

The Midwest Veterans Closet remains one of our supported charities. The Midwest Veterans Closet continues to have a significant impact on the military community. In March 2026, we provided resources to 691 military families/individuals; 526 Veteran families and 165 Active-Duty families. In addition, we provided for a combined 1,821 family members. Of this number, 439 are under the age of 18. Among the numbers shown above are multiple visits.

Mark Your Calendars

Our June meeting will be held on June 16th at Dover Straits where we plan to hear from the Illinois National Guard. There are no meetings in July and August though we usually get together for breakfast.



Dover Straits

890 E. Route 45, Mundelein

Sunday, May 17th, 2026

Speaker: TBD

Entrees from a Special Menu, plus soup, salad and dessert

● **1230 Friendship Hour - 1300 Luncheon - 1400 Program** ●

PLEASE NOTE: Business Casual Dress Requested

● **RESERVATION REQUEST (Deadline is May 15th)** ●

TO: LtCol Jim Haley, 4717 Saratoga Avenue, Downers Grove, IL 60515-3534

Phone: 630-229-5006 email: jasehaley@icloud.com

FROM: NAME _____ RANK/SVC _____

GUEST/SPOUSE _____

Please reserve ____ places at the MOAA meeting on **Sunday, May 17** at Dover Straits, Mundelein @ \$40.00 per person.

____ This will be my first attendance at a meeting of this Chapter.

____ I will need a ride to the meeting. ____ I would be happy to drive someone.

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ payable to *North Shore and Chicago Chapter MOAA*.
(*Payment at the door is not desired. Meal orders and payment are arranged in advance.*)