

THE SARASOTA BREEZE



THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF SARASOTA, INC

An Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America MOAA and The Florida Council of Chapters

Best Newsletter 2000-2004, 2007/2010; Runner Up 2008/2009, 2012-2014; Newsletter 5 Star 2015/2017-2024; 4 Star 2016; Website 5-Star 2015-2024
Vol. XXXVI No. 6 MOAA 4-Star Chapter 2003/2008/2019; MOAA 5 Star Chapter 2004-2007, 2009-2018, 2020-2024 June 2025

MAY 2025 PROGRAM - Scholarship Luncheon - Ryan Chase - Sarasota HS Principal

The May luncheon was our annual scholarship awards luncheon where we celebrated the outstanding young women and men from the Sarasota area high school system who, having demonstrated their academic, leadership, and community service excellence, were selected for a Sarasota Military Officer's Foundation (SMOF) scholarship.

We were fortunate to have 9 of our 12 scholarship students able to attend the Scholarship Luncheon at Michael's on East. As a bonus, the students' parents were able to join us. We presented each student with a certificate of merit and a check for \$3,000 to help with their college expenses. Please see the photos of the students with their certificates of merit on the inside pages of this newsletter.



Ryan Chase (l) & Scholarship Chair Bill Lawyer

Our speaker was Mr. Ryan Chase, Principal at Sarasota High School as well as Sarasota County's Principal of the Year for his outstanding contributions to student success and school leadership in the county. Mr. Chase was a perfect fit to address these graduating seniors as they are about to embark on the next chapter of their lives. His speech was inspiring with a theme of leadership, hard work, and self-esteem.

Our annual scholarships are possible as a result of MOAS member donations to the Sarasota Military Officers Foundation throughout the year. **THANK YOU.**

Likewise, **THANK YOU** to the chapter members who contributed additional monies to sponsor luncheons for the student awardees and their parents. You make this celebratory event possible for the students and their families.

JUNE 2025 PROGRAM - Mike Modrik - ABC Meteorologist and 'Discover the Suncoast' Host

Mike Modrick started life with a huge interest in all types of science. Boyhood dreams included being an Archeologist, and Astronomer, starting college majoring in Computer Science. But after one class in Meteorology, he was hooked! With a B.S. in Meteorology, and a double major in Speech, he set out into the world of TV News, forecasting the weather for four decades from the Black Hills of South Dakota, to Washington, D.C., and now, on Florida's Suncoast in Paradise.

After 70 cruises (they owned a Travel Agency), Mike and his retired wife looked for a view that would be just like the back of a cruise ship. They, and their cat Tabitha, found it on the Suncoast in 2020. Mike is a Meteorologist on Good Morning Suncoast, and creator of a weekly series called Discovering the Suncoast. Every week Mike explores the unique history in southwest Florida. When he's not working, you can find him at the beach. Or the pool. Or back on the beach again!

Mike's presentation will also include information on the ABC7 studio in Sarasota as well as differences between local and regional TV. He will talk about his show, Discovering the Suncoast, and then finally he will explain his views on Climate Change and the changes to our weather in Florida.

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Military Officers Association of Sarasota (MOAS)**Mission Statement**

MOAS, a non-profit 501c(19) organization, exists to improve the awareness, life style, and overall environment of its members; support and serve the citizens of the Sarasota area; influence the political process in matters pertaining to active duty, retired and former military personnel; and enhance the image of America's uniformed services in our local community.

Chapter Officers, Directors and Committees

President	David Downer
1st Vice President	Steven L. Carnes
2nd Vice President	Ron Wozniak
Treasurer	Christa I. Friedlander
Secretary & Historian	Peter Dering
Director (Scholarships)	William F. Lawyer
Director (Communications)	Vacant
Director (Legislative)	Michael Lindquist
Director (Membership)	Len Friedlander
Immediate Past President	Jonathan C. Gordon
Legislative Committee	Michael Lindquist
Vets Affairs/Commission	Vacant
Marketing & Communications Committee	
Chairperson	Vacant
Editor-Newsletter	Len Friedlander
Web Site	Craig Hullinger
BLOG/Social Media/Photo	Craig Hullinger
Membership Committee	
Recruiting & Retention	Len Friedlander
Recruiting & Retention	William F. Lawyer
Reporting & Records	Christa I. Friedlander
Personal Affairs Committee	
Surviving Spouses Liaison	Peggy Mock
Chaplain	Michael Lindquist
Programs Committee	
Chairperson	Ron Wozniak
Luncheon Programs	Chris Nind
Young at Heart [YAHOO]	Ron Wozniak
YAHOO Coordinator	Linda Wozniak
Meet & Greet	Peggy O'Connell
Luncheon Committee	
Chairperson & Coordinator	Peggy O'Connell
Greeter	Peter Dering
50-50 Manager	Mary Gordon
Scholarship Committee	
Chairperson	William F. Lawyer
Member	Jim Ainslie
Member	Len Friedlander
Member	Mary Gordon
Member	Linda Wozniak
JROTC Liaison	William F. Lawyer
Support Our Troops [SOT]	Ron Wozniak
Awards Board Chair	Jonathan C. Gordon

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE***David Downer*

I'm writing this before the June luncheon, which I will attend, but I wanted to thank everyone who contributed to the success of our Student Scholarship Recognition luncheon on Wednesday, May 7th. Bill Lawyer and the entire scholarship committee did a really great job screening the applicants and making the selections for our awards. Bill also introduced Mr. Ryan Chase, Principal of Sarasota High, who handled the introduction of the recipients and handing out award certificates.

It was a terrific event, attended by proud parents, of course, and several of our members also contributed funds to cover the cost of lunches for the students and their parents. I really appreciate all that everyone gave to make this a success. Linda Wozniak is due special thanks for taking on the role of "official photographer" for this event. Photos are really important to award recipients at a time like this.

I recently attended (on Saturday, May 17th, in fact) a virtual meeting on Zoom of the MOAA Florida Council of Chapters (FCoC). While I was present only as an observer, there were many subjects that would be of interest to many of you. Among these are MOAA family cruises and vacations. Also discussed were MOAA 2024 Awards (Florida did very well) and 2025 Community Service grants. It was also mentioned that there is a "Chapter Landing Page" which should contain a lot of information about our chapter. I will confess that I haven't looked at it before writing this, but I suspect that some material that should be there isn't. That's my responsibility, so I will be working to take care of that matter. I always invite member input, too. Please contact me if you would like to share a thought or idea!

As previously mentioned also, we still need someone to fill the "Communications" position on the board! Let us know if you're interested in that or anything else. We still need a photographer at the luncheons.

Please keep track of MOAA's Advocacy in Action items and support them. See the April issue of the Military Officer magazine from MOAA National. It explained a lot about "MOAA's Advocacy Playbook." We should never forget this program and its impact on our representatives in Congress. We should all give some thought to writing to our Congressional representatives about the key issues involving the military, even if we never plan to visit them in Washington.

Remember that the Breeze always includes the sign-up information for the next luncheon (see the back page).

Editorial Policy: "The Breeze" newsletter is published by the Military Officers Association of Sarasota, Inc., an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and the Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC). MOAA and its affiliated chapters & councils are non-partisan."



SECRETARY'S CORNER

Peter Dering

**Military Officers Association of Sarasota, Inc (MOAS)
Sarasota Military Officers Foundation, Inc (SMOF)**

The board meeting for the above organizations was held Monday May 5, 2025 at the Meadows Lifestyle and Wellness Facility 3350 Longmeadow. Issues of significance are addressed below. NOTE: The complete minutes and financial reports will be on the MOAS website www.sarasotamoaa.com following approval of the Board of Directors, The information below should be considered unofficial as the meeting minutes are not yet board approved.

CALL TO ORDER: President Dave Downer called the meeting to order at 1402 and began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Dave Downer (Pres), Ron Wozniak (2VP), Peter Dering (Sec'y) Bill Lawyer (Dir), Michael Lindquist (Dir), & Jon Gordon (IPP)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Steve Carnes (1VP), Christa Friedlander (Treas), & Len Friedlander (Dir)

COMMITTEE CHAIRS & VISITORS PRESENT:Linda Wozniak and Peggy O'Connell

PRESIDENT'S ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

The next MOAS luncheon meeting will be on May 7, 2025. I will be MC at that meeting. The speaker will be Ryan Chase, SHS Principal. ALL articles for the June Breeze should also be emailed to Len before May 13.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT: (Steve Carnes) Nothing to report.

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT: (Ron Wozniak) Programs are set well into 2025. The Scholarship awardees are next, at the May 7 luncheon. The June luncheon was changed to WEDNESDAY, June 18, to accommodate Mike Modrick, speaking on "Discovering the Suncoast."

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:(Jon Gordon) Nothing to Report.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: (Peter Dering) The April 2025 BOD Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: (Christa Friedlander) The April 2025 Treasurer's Reports were approved unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

LEGISLATIVE: (Mike Lindquist) Please refer to the Breeze for the full report.

BREEZE NEWSLETTER: (Len Friedlander) The May issue was published and emailed to 233 addresses. Twenty-nine (29) copies were printed and mailed to members.

MEMBERSHIP: (Len Friedlander) No change

VETERANS' AFFAIRS: Vacant. No report.

SOCIAL MARKETING, COMMUNICATION AND WEBSITE: Vacant. No Report

LUNCHEON REPORT: (Peggy O'Connell):

- There will not be a 50/50 at the May luncheon.
- Please RSVP for the June luncheon by Friday, June 13.

MEET & GREET: (Peggy O'Connell) The April Meet and Greet was held on Wednesday, April 9, at Mattisons 41 on US 41. 11 folks came.

The May Meet and Greet will be on Wednesday, May 14, at Grillsmith at 5:30 pm.

PROGRAMS: (Ron Wozniak)

Future Programs

- 18 June (Wednesday) -Mr. Mike Modrick, ABC 7 Meteorologist & Host Discovering the Suncoast.
- 18 July- Mr. Thomas Sikes on the US Constitution.
- 15 August- Mrs. Heather Kasten, The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce.
- 19 September- TBD Joint Florida MOAA? (Requested FBI on Active Shooter)
- 17 October- John Saputo, Col USMC and CEO & Owner Gold Coast Eagle Distributing.
- 21 November- Annual Meeting - speaker TBD
- 14 December- (Sunday) Winter Gala no program.

JROTC, MCJROTC: (Bill Lawyer) I delivered the updated continuation plaques to all five high schools. I attended the outstanding JROTC cadet awards night at Riverview, Booker, and Sarasota High Schools. Ceremonies at Sarasota Military Academy and Venice High are scheduled for early May.

YAHOO: (Ron & Linda Wozniak) For info on cancellations, venue, date & time changes, go to the MOAS website Calendar & Blogs at <https://www.sarasotamoaa.com/> or text Ron Wozniak: 941-779-5448 or e-mail: RonWozniak13@gmail.com or Linda at 941-779-5447 or NauticalEffect@msn.com.

Future Events/Outings — Details on YAHOO Page 8 -

- Thursday 29 May Inshore Fishing on a Pontoon 0800
- Friday 30 May No Host Lido Key Beach Sunset 1830
- Saturday 14 June Offshore Fishing 0800
- Friday 20 June Sarasota Bay No Cost Pontoon Boat Cruise 1700

SARASOTA MILITARY OFFICERS FOUNDATION, INC

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT: (Bill Lawyer): The committee met on April 16 and awarded 12 scholarships across four schools: Booker, Sarasota, Pine View and Venice H. There will be eight students attending the scholarship luncheon on 7 May 2025. I will present checks to the other students at their respective local award ceremonies. I want to thank the scholarship committee for their invaluable input and assistance to make the annual scholarships a success. A special thank you to Len, Christa & Danny!

OLD BUSINESS:

- Annual picnic at the Phillippi Estates Park (went very well – Thanks, Woz, et al).
- The Big Cat Habitat visit also went well – another one for Woz – much appreciated!
- We still need someone to replace Craig Hullinger to assume Social Marketing, Communication and Website administration..

NEW BUSINESS:

- We don't actually have a meeting at the annual business meeting. Should we actually conduct business at this meeting?
- How can we attract new members?

The meeting adjourned at 1534.

NEXT MEETING: The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday June 2, 2025 1400 hours at the the Meadows Lifestyle and Wellness Facility, 3350 Longmeadow.

MONTH	BOARD	LUNCHEON
May	Monday 5	Wednesday 7 **
June	Monday 2	Wednesday 18 **
July	Monday 7	Friday 18

	LUNCHEON PROGRAMS
May	Scholarship Luncheon - Ryan Chase
June	Mike Modrick - Discovering the Suncoast
July	Thomas Sikes - The U.S. Constitution



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Michael Lindquist

June: A Time of Sacrifice – Taking Risks for the Greater Good

Sacrifice is a recurring theme throughout human history—perhaps the greatest being to give one's life for another.

On June 6, 1944, 156,000 Allied and American soldiers stormed the beaches of Normandy, France. Known as Operation Overlord, this campaign marked the beginning of the end of World War II. The amphibious assault spanned several beaches—Gold, Juno, Sword, Utah, and Omaha—with Omaha seeing the fiercest fighting. On that single day, over 2,000 Americans made the ultimate sacrifice. Between June 6th and August 31st, 20,668 American soldiers and 8,536 U.S. Army Air Forces personnel lost their lives. Our Allies—Canada and the United Kingdom—also endured heavy losses, with 16,021 soldiers and 8,178 Royal Air Force members killed.

Sacrifice is not confined to war. From Genesis 22, we recall Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac as a demonstration of his faith. In more recent history, Mother Teresa gave up material comforts to serve India's most vulnerable, while Jackie Robinson endured personal indignities to break Major League Baseball's color barrier.

Sacrifice demands courage and resilience:

- It signifies selflessness and can spark powerful transformation, enabling individuals to face hardship with renewed strength.

- Teaching the value of sacrifice helps cultivate resilience, adaptability, and purpose.

In essence, sacrifice is a testament to the strength required to confront life's challenges.

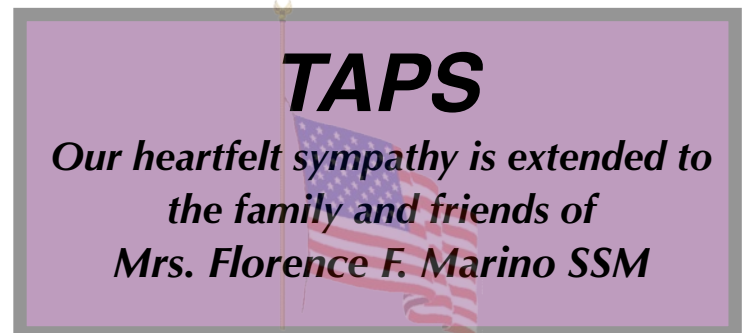
Many of you reading this newsletter have loved ones who gave their lives to defend American values. Their sacrifices must never be forgotten.

During this month of June, let us take time to reflect on the sacrifices we have made—or may be willing to make—for ourselves, our families, and our nation.

Michael

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VA's Online Legacy Project Adds Names of 210,000 Vets Lost Overseas

As the nation celebrates the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe, Veterans Affairs officials have added about 210,000 names of veterans killed or lost overseas — including about 93,000 WWII veterans — to the department's expanding online memorial project.

The [Veterans Legacy Memorial](#) was launched in 2019 and creates websites recognizing the lives of deceased veterans, allowing relatives to update the online memorials with details for their service, post-military work and family history. The scope of the project now includes more than 10 million names and has roughly doubled in the last two years, with the addition of millions of veterans buried in private cemeteries worldwide to existing lists of individuals interred at VA and military sites.

The expansion announced this week includes names from 26 overseas cemeteries and memorials administered by the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). Acting ABMC Secretary Robert Dalessandro said in a statement that the Veterans Legacy Project update “adds new resources to honor our nation's veterans from all wars and brings their stories to those who aren't able to visit our sites overseas.”

In addition to the approximately 93,000 WWII veterans added to the veterans project, about 94,000 other names added to the list are of Americans missing in action overseas or buried at sea. Those individuals are honored in a series of overseas memorials overseen by the monuments commission.

“The brave Americans resting in ABMC cemeteries and whose names are inscribed on memorials around the world sacrificed their lives to liberate allied countries and to protect our nation's interests,” said acting Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Ronald Walters in a statement. “It's our honor to preserve their legacies.”

Officials in recent months have also updated the legacy project to allow veterans to provide details of their life and service before they pass away. Information on the “Your Story, Your Legacy” effort is available on the project's website.

Receive the Breeze via email or view it on www.sarasotamoaa.com or blog.sarasotamoaa.blogspot.com



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE Michael Lindquist

The Latest From MOAA

MOAA and more than 150 volunteers took to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., for Advocacy in Action 2025, meeting with over 330 congressional offices. Together, we delivered a unified message: Congress must do all that it can to protect service-earned pay and benefits.

However, the fight isn't over. **[JOIN THE FIGHT: [Visit MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#)]**

Retirees & Veterans

MOAA NEVER STOPS SERVING WELL BEYOND THEIR MILITARY CAREER.

Veterans and transitioning servicemembers face unique challenges once they have left the military: second and non-military careers, reinventing themselves, retirement concerns, navigating veteran benefits and health care, and access to support programs and networks. MOAA remains committed to servicemembers, past and present, whether they are currently serving or those that have already transitioned to civilian life.

In the last several years, Congress has enacted legislation that has monumentally impacted how the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) delivers health care and benefits to beneficiaries and how they determine eligibility. VA faces several challenges as it attempts to sustain and balance its four primary health care missions (clinical, research, education and training, and emergency management response) while also meeting the expectations of veterans seeking access to high quality health care and benefits when and where they need it.

MOAA will focus on capitalizing on our recently released report, Ending the Wait for Toxic-Exposed Veterans, to advocate for veterans exposed to toxic materials during their service.

While the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act has made major improvements to how toxic exposures are treated by the VA, additional measures are required. In cooperation with other VSOs, MOAA will advocate for Congress to pass legislation that shortens the time veterans must wait before their toxic exposures are acknowledged and conceded by the VA.

Legislator Spotlight

Retiree COLA Predictions Remain Steady as Inflation Fears Loom

Next month's release of key inflation figures should offer military retirees, Social Security recipients, and other federal beneficiaries an early glimpse of what trade-policy changes could mean for their annual cost-of-living adjustment.

Two predictions based on the April release of March inflation data put the 2026 COLA increase at 2.3% and 2.2%, in line with previous estimates. However, both made clear the numbers did not reflect any price changes resulting from recent tariffs; the first figures to include even a small amount of that data will be released in May.

New Survivor Benefit Plan Payment Setup Coming Soon for Some Retirees

Retirees who pay monthly Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) or Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP) premiums via "direct remittance" instead of having the premium deducted from their retirement pay must change how they submit those payments in the coming months.

Affected retirees should have received instructions on making the change from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) in March, according to a recent article at DFAS.mil, but some retirees with outdated contact information may not get the materials. No action is required from those whose SBP/RCSBP payment is deducted from their retirement pay.

Get Answers to Your Medicare and TRICARE For Life Questions From MOAA

MOAA has produced [Transitioning Into Medicare and TRICARE For Life](#), a publication exclusive to Premium and Life members that covers:

Your Health Care Roadmap: How the move into Medicare/TRICARE For Life coverage works, and what steps you'll need to take along the way.

Using Your Benefits: Everything from how to file a claim to what forms you should bring to the doctor's office, plus details on using other insurance programs and finding care (and coverage) overseas.

Common Questions (and Answers): Worried about your pharmacy benefit? Considering an insurance supplement? Unsure how to calculate your premium? MOAA has you covered.

Premium and Life members can download the [full guide](#) in PDF format or browse the contents online.

How You Can Help

MOAA works tirelessly to advocate for our military community, but we need your help. By reaching out to your representatives, you can make a real impact on legislation that affects retirees and their families.

Current Legislative Initiatives Needing Support:

TOP PRIORITY: Stop the 34-Year Wait - Deliver Toxic-Exposed Veterans the Care They've Earned

Veterans exposed to toxic substances like Agent Orange, chemicals released by burn pits, and radiation

should not have to fight for decades to prove their illnesses are service connected. Yet according to a recent report from MOAA and DAV, toxic-exposed veterans wait over 34 years on average before receiving presumptive service connection and the care they've earned. The PACT Act was a historic step forward, but its work isn't complete.

Congress must pass legislation to bolster the legal framework for establishing presumptive conditions, creating clear timelines and processes to

move from exposure acknowledgment to the delivery of earned benefits. This commonsense reform will cut through red tape, improve VA accountability, and end the long wait faced by millions of veterans.

You can easily contact your congressional representatives through the [MOAA Legislative Action Center](#).

Thank you for your continued support in advocating for our Military Family.

Michael

USPS Unveils 250th Anniversary Stamps Honoring Military Branches

The U.S. Postal Service is honoring three of the nation's military branches — the Army, Navy and Marine Corps — with commemorative stamps to mark 250 years of service. Each of the three stamps features the respective name of the military service, the service seal and the inscriptions "250 Years of Service," "Since 1775" and "Forever/USA." The stamps, designed by Antonio Alcalá, an art director for the USPS, were unveiled during a ceremony at Freedom Plaza in Washington.



The three military-themed commemorations are in the "Forever" class of postage and can be used to send a one-ounce first-class letter, regardless of the current price of first-class postage.

"Service isn't about a uniform. It's about impact. It's about showing up. It's about standing up when it matters the most," said Jeffery Adams, USPS spokesperson and an Army veteran. "As we honor 250 years of military service ... we also recognize those who are serving right now all over the

world and keeping our freedoms alive."

Army Inspector General Lt. Gen. Gregory J. Brady said the USPS itself has its own value to troop morale. "Generations of military personnel serving in foreign lands ... [have] always cherished those two words when [their] first sergeant is coming in with that big bag. Those two words are 'Mail call!' [It's] the high point of their months and years away from home."

On the Navy side, Vice Adm. Michael Boyle, director of Navy staff, noted the special relationship between the Navy and the USPS. "[This] partnership ... has spanned nearly two and a half centuries. You have well and faithfully delivered mail to ships on the far side of the world, always finding a way to keep people connected. No matter the distance. Letters and care packages from friends and family delivered to our deployed sailors at sea make an immense difference."

Providing a personal note, Lt. Gen. Paul Rock Jr. director of Marine Corps staff said, "I still have letters that my wife wrote me when I was a young first lieutenant overseas on my first shipboard deployment, and I cherish the pictures that came through the mail from my children the first time I went to war — precious memories made possible by the United States Postal Service." Rock said. "That connection remains strong to this day, and I thank the USPS for helping us share this great milestone with all Americans. These stamps will travel around the world and across our nation, carrying with them the message of patriotism, service and unwavering dedication."

Judge Awards \$680K to Hawaii Military Families Over Fuel-tainted Water

A federal judge has awarded a total of more than \$680,000 to 17 families who say they were sickened by a 2021 jet fuel leak into a Navy drinking water system in Hawaii. The bellwether cases set the legal tone for another 7,500 military family members, civilians and service members whose lawsuits are still awaiting resolution.

U.S. District Judge Leslie Kobayashi handed down the ruling awarding from \$5,000 to \$104,000 to each plaintiff. She wrote that it was clear that even though the contaminated water could have caused many of the kinds of medical problems the military families experienced, there wasn't enough evidence to prove a direct link.

The amount awarded to each plaintiff was significantly smaller than the roughly \$225,000 to \$1.25 million that their attorney, Kristina Baehr, requested. Baehr called the damage awards disappointing but said the families "prevailed against all odds against the U.S. Government."

Baehr said the legal team was reviewing options for resolving the thousands of remaining cases.

The government admitted liability for the spill before the trial began, but its attorneys disputed whether the plaintiffs were exposed to enough jet fuel to cause the vomiting, rashes and other alleged negative health effects.

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May 2025 Scholarship LUNCHEON



Ed & Bobbie Hamilton



Hugh & Jenny Templeton (guests of Cynthia & Chris Nind) and Linda Brent



Art & Cyndi Hillman

2025 MOAS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



(l-r) Marisa Von Bender - Booker HS, Charlotte Taylor - Sarasota HS, Ella Moulton - Sarasota HS
Sadie Dilweg - Sarasota HS, Michael Krigsman - Venice HS, Ben Buurma - Pine View HS
Claire Steiner - Pine View HS, Nicholas Barresi - Sarasota HS, Trent Wesner - Venice HS
Not Pictured - Madelyn Bland - Sarasota HS, Massimo Parkin - Sarasota HS, & Anabel Tocco - Venice HS



Benjamin Buurma



Ella Moulton



Charlotte Taylor



Sadie Dilweg



Michael Krigsman



Claire Steiner



(I) MOAS President Dave Downer & Guest Speaker Ryan Chase



Marissa Von Bender



Nicholas Barresi



Trent Wesner

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

VA Shifts Survivors Assistance Office In Effort to Speed Up Benefits

Veterans Affairs officials unveiled a major reorganization of survivors assistance programs Monday, including the establishment of an outreach team to help families of deceased veterans navigate the department's bureaucracy.

They also promised ongoing improvements to increase automation that will expedite survivors' claims in coming months as part of the effort.

In an open message to the veterans community, VA Secretary Doug Collins said the moves

are designed to simplify the process and improve families' interactions with the department.

"The last thing survivors need in their time of grief is frustrating red tape and bureaucracy," he said in a statement. "That's why we are creating a better system to more quickly and effectively provide survivors the services, support and compassion they've earned."

The Office of Survivors Assistance was established in 2008 as a way to consolidate benefits for deceased veterans under a single agency. The office provides information on funeral resources,

bereavement counseling and estate planning, as well as clarification on which veterans benefits continue after an individual's death.

VA officials plan to move the office from the Veterans Benefits Administration to reporting directly to the VA secretary, with five full-time staffers advising department leadership on survivor's benefits issues.

Along with the change, leadership announced plans to stand up a new "white-glove" survivor outreach team in the Philadelphia VA Regional Benefit Office to "guide and assist eligible survivors throughout every step of the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation claims process, with the goal of getting to 'yes' on claims decisions."

Survivors can be eligible for nearly \$2,000 in monthly payouts from VA depending on their health and their veterans' service-connected disabilities before death. But the calculations for the benefit can be overly complicated, with additions and subtractions for length of marriage, length of service and final military ranks.

That new team is scheduled to start work later this month, after personnel complete specialized training on survivor benefits issues.

Department officials said that they currently process more than 1,000 DIC payments or adjustments a day through automated systems. But they said they hope to expand that number in coming months, pending a review of the department's claims systems.

Collins and other senior leaders have promised a host of cost-savings and department improvements through a series of reforms; many aimed at trimming personnel and bureaucracy within the department.

The efforts so far have generally earned praise from Republicans but concern from Democrats, who worry cutback will lead to slower response times and delays in services.

In a statement Monday, House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Mike Bost, R-Ill., praised the announcement. "We have to keep pushing VA forward to meet the needs of veterans and their families," he said. "Today's action by Secretary Collins is in lockstep with that mission."

Go Digital with Medicare

Sign up by May 31

Get the most up-to-date Medicare information faster! Don't wait — sign up for the online "Medicare & You" handbook by May 31 and we'll send you an email in the fall as soon as it's available online.

The searchable online handbook lets you find what you need quickly, it's available on-the-go (like at your doctor's office), and saves paper and taxpayer dollars.

[Choose the Online Handbook](#)

It's easy to sign up for the online "Medicare & You" handbook:

1. [Log into \(or create\) your secure Medicare account at medicare.gov/account](#) and select "Edit my account settings."
2. Under the "Email and delivery preferences" section at the top of your account settings, select **"Edit" next to Medicare & You Handbook.**
3. Under "How do you want to get your Medicare & You Handbook?" select **"Electronically" then "Save Changes."**

Try it out! If you change your mind, you can always switch your settings back to "paper" in your Medicare account.

Sincerely,

The Medicare Team



MOAS MEET & GREET

Wednesday June 11th

5:30pm to 7:30p

Mattision's Forty-one

7275 S. Tamiami Trail

Sarasota, FL 34231

<https://www.grillsmith.com/>

Please let Peggy O'Connell know by Monday June 9th if you will be attending.

pegoconnell12@gmail.com

or (312) 982-1374

10th Annual Memorial Day Flag Placement

Sarasota National Cemetery

Saturday, May 24, 2025 - 0800

Go to the second entrance for parking

What to Bring: water/beverages, a 12" Ruler or 12" paint stick, a 5 or 6" Screwdriver and a Rubber Mallet to assist with driving the screwdriver into the ground.

Questions? Contact Bill Lawyer 941-228-1943 or wflawyer@yahoo.com

Flag Retirement Saturday May 31, 2025

Meshia Richardson, Event Director

941-448-6299



YAHOO
Young At Heart Organization
Linda & Ron Wozniak

Looking for Your Ideas & Volunteers to Organize Future YAHOO Events

We have other YAHOO Events/Outings in mind and would like to see other MOAS Members and/or spouses come up with suggestions and hopefully volunteer to assist and/or organize an event/outing. Linda and Woz will assist you along the way. It is fun and you will be glad you were able to make MOAS an even better organization.

PAST EVENTS & OUTINGS

Saturday 26 April MOAS 4th Annual Picnic

Great Florida weather & terrific MOAS company. A good time was had by all. Mary Gordan, Ron & Linda Wozniak comprised the Picnic Committee & thanks to those who brought dishes to pass, help us set up & take down & the 2 Steves, Carnes & Mulligan for helping Woz at the grills.



Everyone had the opportunity to take home leftovers. The remaining food was donated to the West Manatee Fire & Rescue Station.

Saturday 3 May BIG CAT HABITAT

The weather was greater our 16 attendees. The Bird Show & Lemur Show were included in the admission price. Our tour guide provided plenty of insightful info about the resident animals. The tigers & bears were most impressive & they seemed more active after we came right up to the fences.



Following the tour, 6 of us had a delicious BBQ lunch at Stottlemyer's Steakhouse

UPCOMING EVENTS/OUTINGS

Thursday 29 May 0800
Inshore Fishing on a Pontoon
Freedom Boat Club Dock
12300 Manatee Ave W., Bradenton
 4 boat spaces available.

Contact Woz at 941-779-5448 or e-mail: RonWozniak13@gmail.com NLT **Tuesday 27 May** to reserve your spot. **Start & quit times are flexible.** Cost: fuel & tip for dockhand. Bring your own food & drink, sunscreen & a cap, Woz will provide tackle if you do not have any. FL Saltwater fishing license required unless a FL Resident 65 or older. Rubber soled shoes are required aboard all boats.

Friday 30 May 1830 (Sunset 2000)
No Host Lido Key Beach Sunset Gathering
400 Benjamin Franklin Drive, Sarasota 34236.

There are restrooms. BYO beach chairs, food & drinks. Look for the US, USMC, & POW/MIA Flags near the beachhead. You are welcome to bring your Service Flag. If you do not have a flagpole of at least 8' contact Woz **Please let us know if you are coming NLT Wednesday 28 May. Lido Key Beach (Everything To Know Before A Visit) - [The Tourist Checklist](#)**

Monday 9 June 1000-1100
Sea Turtle Tracks & Shorebird Facts
Holmes Beach City Hall Annex,
5801 Marina Drive, Bradenton Beach.

Come join us & host Anna Maria Island and Shorebird Monitoring for sea turtle and shorebird nesting talks. Contact Woz NLT **Saturday 7 June** if you are coming. Lunch following on the beach at **Gulf Drive Cafe, 900 Gulf Drive N, Bradenton Beach.**

Saturday 14 June May 0800
Offshore Fishing
Freedom Boat Club Dock
12300 Manatee Ave W., Bradenton

4 boat spaces available
 Fishing Bean Point off Anna Maria Island and the Gulf of Mexico. **Possible Tarpon hookups.**
 Contact Woz NLT **Tuesday 27 May** to reserve your spot.

Friday 20 June 1700-2000
No Cost Pontoon Boat Cruise on a Tri-toon Boat
Freedom Boat Club - Sarasota Marina Jack,
2 Marina Plaza (A-Dock) Slip 19, Sarasota
 8 boat seats available.

We're back! 1st Day of Summer.
 BYO food & drinks on a relaxing cruise on Sarasota Bay & around Bird Key in a 2024 tri-toon boat. Contact Woz at 941-779-5448 or e-mail: RonWozniak13@gmail.com NLT **Tuesday 17 June** for reservations.

For information on cancellations, changes in venue, dates & times, go to the MOAS website Calendar & Blogs at <https://www.sarasotamoaa.com/> or text Ron Wozniak: 941-779-5448 or e-mail: RonWozniak13@gmail.com or Linda at 941-779-5447 or NauticalEffect@msn.com.

Receive the Breeze via email or view it on www.sarasotamoaa.com or *blog* sarasotamoaa.blogspot.com



SARASOTA CHAPTER

Wednesday June 18, 2025

@ 11:30am

Michael's On East

1212 S East Ave Sarasota, FL 34239

Dress Code – Casual

MENU

SERVED LUNCHEON

Specialty Bread Basket

ENTREE

Home-Style Meatloaf

with a "Down Home" Mushroom Sauce served with Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Steamed Green Beans & Baby Carrots

VEGETARIAN

Eggplant, Roasted Red Pepper & Fresh Mozzarella Rollatini

DESSERT

Triple-Berry Tart

Blueberries, Raspberries & Blackberries Baked in a Cookie Crust with Frangipane & Cinnamon Streusel

Served Coffee, Decaf & Tea

*Pre-set Iced Water
Served Iced Tea w/Lemon upon request*

Please make your luncheon reservation by mail.

Fill out the form below and mail us your check.

1. Provide first & last names, rank and service of attendees. Use back of form, if needed. Please note in comments if it is your birthday month, you're a new member, a surviving spouse, or if this is your, or your guests, first time attending.
2. Special diet and vegetarian meal requests **MUST** be submitted together with the initial luncheon reservation. Michaels on East will no longer honor last minute requests at the luncheons.
3. **Your reservation and payment should be received no later than 3 days before the luncheon date.** For late registrations, you must EMAIL or Call our Luncheon Coordinator (Peggy O'Connell). Do **not** contact Michaels on East. We will try to accommodate late registrations, but *no guarantees*. We must inform Michaels on East at least 48 hours in advance. *No refunds will be possible after that date.*
4. If you make your reservation with the intent to pay at the door, we must hold you to that promise, as Michaels on East will charge us for your guaranteed meal, if you attend or not.

MEMBER INFORMATION

Name, Rank Service _____

Phone # _____ email: _____

Please reserve ___ seats for the luncheon

Cost \$39.00/person (Tax & Gratuity incl.)

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____

Name	Meal (E / V)	Comment

COMMENT CODES: SS-Surviving Spouse; BD-Birthday; NM-New Member

Please mail reservation form and check payable to **MOAS**

to:

PEGGY O'CONNELL

1100 Imperial Drive #303, Sarasota, FL 34236-2465

Questions? (312) 982-1374 or email: pegoconnell12@gmail.com

NAME TAGS

Fill out the form and provide a check for \$16.50 payable to **MOAS** & we will hand deliver a name tag to you at the next luncheon. Please allow 2 weeks for fabrication.

Give to Len Friedlander at a luncheon or mail to 8221 Deerbrook Circle, Sarasota, FL 34238.

First Name _____ Last name _____

Rank (Abbreviated) _____ Service _____

Status _____

Example

First Name Henry Last name O'Connell

Rank (Abbreviated) LCDR Service USNR Status Ret



MAY - JUNE 2025



DATE	EVENT	TIME
Saturday May 24	Memorial Day Flag Placement @ National Cemetery - Details on Page 9	8:00 a.m
Monday, May 26	MEMORIAL DAY	
Friday, May 29	YAHOO: Inshore Fishing on Pontoon Boat - Details on Page 10	8:00 a.m
Friday, May 30	YAHOO: Lido Key Beach Sunset Gathering - Details on Page 10	6:30 p.m.
Monday, June 2	MOAS/SMOF Board Meeting - Meadows Wellness Center	2:00 p.m.
Monday, June 9	YAHOO: Sea Turtle Tracks & Shorebird Facts - Details on Page 10	10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, June 11	Meet & Greet - Mattison's on 41 - Details on Page 9	5:30 p.m.
Saturday, June 14	FLAG DAY + U.S. ARMY BIRTHDAY	
Saturday, June 14	YAHOO: Offshore Fishing - Details on Page 10	8:00 a.m
Wednesday, June 18	MOAS Luncheon - Michaels on East - Mike Modrick	11:30 a.m.
Friday, June 20	YAHOO: No Cost Pontoon Boat Cruise - Details on Page 10	5:00 p.m.



Military Officers Association of Sarasota, Inc. | P.O. Box 1016 Sarasota, FL 34230-1016

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Membership Dues: Regular Surviving Spouse Allied Associate *Mail application with your check for \$35, made payable to MOAS. Postal Newsletter add \$24*

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____ Rank _____ Spouse Name _____

Street Address (Include Apt#) _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ E-Mail Address _____ Birthday mm/dd/yyyy _____

Status: Active Retired Former Officer Regular Reserve Surviving Spouse Foreign _____ Country _____

Service Component: Army Navy Air Force Marine Corps Coast Guard NOAA USPHS National Guard Space Force

Please do not publish my personal information in the Directory Who told you about the Association? _____

Signature _____ Date _____ National MOAA Member Number _____

Revised 11/23

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