



## President's Message

**CDR Bill Kirkpatrick, USN (Ret)**

*May the rains fall soft upon your fields,  
 May the road rise to meet you,  
 May the wind be always at your back and  
 May the sun shine warm upon your face.*

At this time of year, it would seem that everyone is part Irish.

St. Patrick's Day—observed every **March 17**— started as a religious holiday, but over time it's become a celebration of Irish culture. While many cities in the US may celebrate the day and their Irish heritage, it isn't a national holiday and most people will celebrate after work on the day, or on the surrounding weekends.

In Ireland, St. Patrick's Day is a national holiday so most [people have the whole day off](#). However, people in Ireland don't tend to be as enthusiastic about the holiday as those in the US.



In the USA, around St Paddy's Day, many publications provide [recipes or guides to help people turn their food or drink green](#), including beer. Chicago has long held a tradition of dyeing its river green every year.

While turning everything green is common in the US, it is rarely seen in Ireland, as it's considered a bit of a gimmick.

It is in this vein that we celebrate Paddy's Day as a secular event. It is packed with parades, good luck charms, and all things green.

While on the subject of things green, this communication would not be complete without a short discourse on Leprechaun's. In Irish folklore, a Leprechaun is a fairy with a hidden pot of gold. If you can catch and threaten him, he might reveal the hiding place. I've found this actual Leprechaun locally and I'm ready to take his pot of gold.

**BTW** You may have noticed all the [leftover food at our luncheons](#). If you bring a container, you may take some of these leftovers home with you.

Sláinte is Táinte (Health and Wealth)

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to those born in April. If you are not on the Birthday list, please send me an email with your birth Month/Day (i.e., May 18)

Betsy Korn	April 7
Mardee Buchman	April 10
Jim Warchol	April 12
Galen Rose	April 15
Rainy Bilick	April 19
Kirk Faryniase	April 28

And on the subject of **VOLUNTEERS**.... We are looking for several Memorial Day Coordinators for our Memorial Day Commemoration. Sun City Center MOAA chapter is and has been the lead, for a number of years. We need new energy in the positions. This will be a great way to meet with our community leaders and be a very positive influence on the community.

## April 2025 Program

**SCPO Wilfredo Florez, USCG (Ret.)**

US Department of Veterans Affairs

Senior Chief Will Florez is a New York City native who joined the U. S. Coast Guard in 1988. He served for 22 years and was assigned to three Search and Rescue Small Boat Stations, one Air Station and five Coast Guard Cutters. During



those years, he conducted hundreds of Search and Rescue as well as Law Enforcement missions, which yielded many lives saved as well as the arrest of human and drug smugglers. For the last 13 years, he has worked for the U. S.

Department of Veterans Affairs at both the Pasco and Tampa Vet Centers.

Senior Chief Florez will provide those in attendance with detailed information on the VA's Vet Center program as well as general information on other VA & non-VA services and programs.

## 2024/2025 Chapter Officers

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Chaplain

**\$20.00 - 2 April LUNCHEON - \$20.00**

**To Register: 813-924-1983**

*Reservations no later than 6 p.m. Sunday, 30 March 2025*

**Florida Room, Atrium Building  
945 North Course Lane , Sun City Center, FL 33573**

Please give full names of members and guests, total number attending. Cost is \$20.00/person payable at the door (cash, check, or credit card). Social hour begins when you arrive, and the Business meeting starts at 11:00 followed by a speaker and lunch.

Remember, if you make a reservation and do not attend, you are expected to pay. Bring payment to the next meeting or send check to:

***Military Officers Association of America  
Post Office Box 5693  
Sun City Center, FL 33571-5693***

### April Buffet Luncheon Menu

**Garden Salad Bar with Dressing Assortment,  
Rolls & Butter**

#### Entrees:

- Carved Sugar Glazed Ham
- Chicken Piccata
- Butter Crumb Baked Cod -Tartar Sauce

**Starch & Vegetable du Jour**

**Desserts: Chef's selected desserts**

**Beverages: Decaf Coffee, Iced Tea, and Ice Water**



## Chaplain's Devotional for April

Rev. Dr. Tom Smith

### Why Don't We Stretch?

Dr. John C. Maxwell in *Make Yours a Winning Team* addresses stretching to be successful. He states, "I would guess that 95 percent of us try to avoid stretching when we come up against something that is bigger than we are, we tend to back off. "He further observes that the number one reason for not stretching is **fear**. What can we do to overcome the fear of stretching? Let's talk about that today.

One thing that helps one stretch is public commitment, a public goal. Commitment is a quality lacking in modern America. Commitment is born in an environment of struggle, it will affect everyone around us, and it will glorify God's divine plan for our lives.

Stretching makes one vulnerable. Those who continue to stretch might find themselves open to criticism. Unfortunately, the road to success is paved with critics. They are ready and waiting to point out how imperfect you are. Jonas Salk, who developed the polio vaccine, was attacked continually for his creative, inventive work in the medical field. We are also vulnerable to misunderstanding. Often people whose motives are wrong feel threatened by us if we are stretching to be our best.

When stretching, it is imperative that we surround ourselves with people that can affirm us. An immutable law: We become like the people that surround us." Encouragement from a friend is like sunshine on a cloudy day.

Most people will look back at stretching as their finest hour. Why? *Growth is happiness*. The happiest people in the world are growing people; be aware that growing people can become victims of *destination disease*. The symptom is believing that arriving at a certain point will bring happiness. Retirement makes one vulnerable to this disease.

Although few people stretch all their lives, we can inspire others by stretching after military/civilian retirement. We have a unique opportunity to climb fences and motivate young men/women who have a desire to serve their country through military service.

Finally, commit to *discovering your potential*. *Dedicate your potential*. *Develop your potential*. Climb the wall and leave a legacy to young men and women that follow us in military service.

Be abundantly blessed today.



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Did you know we have a Facebook Page? We do! It's a great place to see what's happening in our chapter, and it allows you to express your opinions on our activities and keep in touch with other members. If you have a Facebook account, click the logo/link to "like" and follow our page. If you don't yet have a Facebook Account, Facebook makes it easy to establish one.

Like what you see in this newsletter?  
There's even more in the Florida Council of  
Chapter's newsletter at this link!

<https://flmoaa.org/news/#>

### Upcoming Events

#### Chapter Meetings & Luncheons

January 8	June 4
February 5	September 3
March 5	October 1
April 2	November 5
May 7	December 3

#### CAMARADERIE - SPEAKERS - LUNCH

Luncheons are the first Wednesday of each month (except January) 11am-1pm. Cost is \$20  
Atrium Florida Room  
945 North Course Lane, Sun City Center  
Register to 813-924-1983 NLT 6pm the Sunday prior to the luncheon.

**MILITARY  
BENEFITS  
FORUM**

**MARCH 13, 10AM-12PM**  
SUN CITY COMMUNITY CENTER

**MEMORIAL DAY COMMEMORATION**  
MAY 26

**NOVEMBER 11**  
VETERANS THEATER

**VETERANS DAY  
COMMEMORATION**

# Our Chapter Serves the Community.

Spearheaded by Jeannie Stratis, the Surviving Spouse Committee of our chapter convened the **2nd Annual Military Benefits Forum** on March 13, 2025. Hundreds filled Community Hall to get valuable information useful to all veterans, families, and neighbors. Organizations also had tables to provide one-on-one discussions with attendees. **Bravo Zulu, Jeannie!**



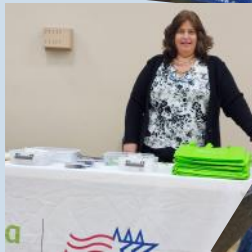
Jeannie delegates tasks to insure success!



Refreshments setup and the calm before the storm.



Presenters



Organizations



## Legislative Items of Interest

**1.)** Senator Rick Scott joined Senators Mike Crapo and John Hickenlooper in reintroducing the bipartisan ***Fighter Force Preservation and Recapitalization Act***, to preserve U.S. Air Force (USAF) fighter force structure and prioritize the recapitalization of the 39 service-retained, combat-coded fighter squadrons available to the U.S. Secretary of Defense to respond globally to world events.

Senator Rick Scott said, *“Ensuring our military is highly trained is crucial to maintaining military readiness. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I will always fight to support our military forces in Florida and across the nation and ensure they have the tools they need to defend our nation as a lethal fighting force. This legislation will ensure that our Air National Guard in Florida and across the country has the tools it needs to be prepared for any threat. I’m proud to support it and look forward to its quick passage in the Senate.”*

The *Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act* contained a portion of the previous version of the *Fighter Force Preservation and Recapitalization Act* that requires the U.S. Air Force to develop a plan to sustain and recapitalize fighter fleets for the Air National Guard.

Of the 25 ANG Fighter Squadrons in existence today, 15 do not have a recapitalization or modernization plan to replace retiring legacy fighters. The *Fighter Force Preservation and Recapitalization Act* would:

- Raise the minimum number of fighters in the Air Force inventory, requiring nearly two-thirds of aircraft to be combat capable;
- Establish a robust reporting requirement to track Air Force Fighter force structure, giving Congress oversight authority of force structure modifications;
- Prioritize recapitalization of Active Duty, Reserve and ANG units that are “service-retained” (i.e. not assigned to combatant commander) to maximize fighter assets; and
- Require a report on recapitalization of ANG fighter squadrons.

**2.)** From Florida State Senator Danny Burgess who represents NE Hillsborough County:

Veterans and their families have sacrificed so much in service to our country, and it’s important that we support them in their time of need. **Senate Bill 116** will help us do just that.

With this legislation, we’re expanding support services for our veterans and their families, including mental health training so we can more easily identify those who are struggling, and adult day-time care opportunities to provide a better quality of life.

I believe this will go a long way toward meeting the needs of our veterans and showing our appreciation for their service. I am pleased to share that this week the bill unanimously passed its final committee stop and is now ready for consideration by the full chamber on the Senate floor.

# Our March Meeting!

Our March Meeting featured Joe Muhlberger and Rep. Vern Buchanan's Field Representative, Melissa Jackson, informing us about the Veteran's History Project with the Library of Congress. We learned a lot, and Joe is now waiting for us to schedule appointments to have our stories archived in perpetuity! You can schedule with him by calling (701) 509-3883, or emailing him at [joseph.muhlberger@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.muhlberger@gmail.com).



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- **Career Development Grants**- Year round vocational grants for Florida students and veterans (restrictions apply)
- **JROTC Awards & Certificates Program**- Champion Hillsborough county JROTC students & Florida public schools in citizenship
- **Honor Flight Guardianship**- Fund 4 guardians annually for flights to Washington, D.C.
- **Service Dogs**- Partnership to help subsidize guide dogs and service dogs for veterans

For more information, call

**813/634-4675**

or log onto our website at

**[milfamilysupport.org](http://milfamilysupport.org)**

1010 American Eagle Blvd. Ste 400  
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## **Support Your MOAA Charities**

### **Bequests and Heritage Society**

A bequest - a gift made through your will - allows you to retain control of your assets during your lifetime and distribute them as you wish upon your death. After providing for loved ones, many people choose to include a gift to The MOAA Foundation.

Some of the most common types of bequests include a fixed-dollar amount, a specific property, a percentage of the estate, or the residual portion of the estate. A charitable bequest may reduce estate taxes. Consult an attorney when making or revising a will to ensure compliance with state law and to minimize applicable taxes.

Donors who provide for The MOAA Foundation either by means of a bequest or a planned gift are eligible for Heritage Society membership. For more information, please email our Development office at [foundation@moaa.org](mailto:foundation@moaa.org) or call **(800) 234-6622, ext.169**.

### **For bequests to The MOAA Foundation, your attorney may find the following wording useful:**

"I give and bequeath \_\_\_\_\_ (description of property) and/or the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Foundation, a Virginia nonprofit, charitable organization (EIN: 46-4219250) that is tax-exempt under section §501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code doing business at 201 North Washington Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2539. These funds are to be used in support of all MOAA Foundation charitable programs offered by MOAA, its subsidiaries, its councils or its chapters to currently serving uniformed servicemembers and veterans of all ranks, their families and their survivors."



"This is historical fiction and will give the reader insight into one of the pivotal battles of the Vietnam war. Matt's work putting this together was prodigious. I don't know how he did it. As a historical novel, I think it is great."

General Walter Boomer, US Marine Corps (Ret)  
Available on [Amazon and Kindle](#).

## Member Spotlight

Are you involved in a community event, activity, or service? Send us a picture and a description of 'you' in action and we will highlight you in the chapter newsletter!

Newsletter Editor: Cliff Korn  
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## 2023 Memorial Day Sponsor




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Our chapter supports JROTC! In pictures above Past-President Eunice Patxot presents Lennard High School JROTC Cadet Bryan Marquez-Cortez with a medal, certificate and check to recognize his accomplishments.

# Now and Always We'll be There.



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## Sun City Center Chapter Member Application

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(Please Print Carefully)

### Applicant Information

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Alt Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Branch \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Spouse Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cell  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Alt Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Are You a National MOAA Member?** If yes supply MOAA Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Do You Wish a Chapter Name Tag at \$10?** Names? \_\_\_\_\_

**Are You a Member of Another MOAA Chapter?** Which One? \_\_\_\_\_

**To complete enrollment:** fill out application and mail to SCC MOAA Chapter, PO Box 5693, Sun City Center, FL 33571-5693

**More information?** Contact [kfaryniasz@hotmail.com](mailto:kfaryniasz@hotmail.com) Phone: (813)255-5178

#### **Other Information:**

Chapter annual dues are \$20 and \$15 for Surviving spouses. Spouses and significant others are welcome and free.

Chapter luncheons/meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month except July and August. Guest speakers are part of the program each month.



Sun City Center Chapter  
Military Officers Association of America  
P.O. Box 5693  
Sun City Center, FL. 33571-5693

### **Florida House District 70**

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