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President's Message

Sue Stewart, CAPT, USN (Ret)

Happy May! Spring is a time for renewal, and I hope that our members are getting outside to renew with the warmer weather and getting charged up for future Chapter activities. We have our next General Membership meeting on 8 June at 11 am and we will offer the meeting content via Zoom at noon.

Our April Member meeting was a huge success with a visit from CAPT Erin Stone, USN (ret.), Senior Director, Council and Chapter Affairs, MOAA. CAPT Stone's presentation emphasized the importance of MOAA and its Chapters to conduct legislative outreach on key matters for officers and their families. You can read more about our Chapter's efforts on AB46 in this ACE. CAPT Stone also discussed ways to maintain and increase Chapter membership including conducting hybrid meetings and offering free membership to Junior and Senior students in the local ROTC units. Did you know that active-duty military are also eligible for free Basic MOAA membership and free Chapter membership?

Editor: Ramona Chávez, Capt., USAF (Ret)



**MOAA – ONE ASSOCIATION, ONE
VOICE– YOURS**

Take Action:

<http://takeaction.moaa.org>

***Please Note: General Members Are
Moved to Thursdays for 2023**

2023 General Meetings *		
Coast Guard Island, Alameda Point Welcome Room 11:00		
Feb 9	Apr 6	Jun 8
Aug 10	Nov 9	

Board of Directors Meetings		
10:30		
Jan 3	Feb 7	Mar 7
Apr 4	May 2	Jun 6
Jul 6	Aug 1	Sep 5
Oct 3	Nov 7	Dec 5

President's Message...continued

Our Membership Committee has already implemented these ideas as well as seeking more spouses to join the Chapter. Please feel free to send additional ideas to me or Omar Farmer, our Membership Chair. I personally want to thank the Chapter board and members for being exceptional hosts for CAPT Stone; her visit allowed us to connect and collaborate with MOAA National as well as meet our requirement for the Levels of Excellence Awards to have a visit from MOAA National at least every two years.

May is also the time for two important events honoring military members. On Saturday, 20 May, it is Armed Forces Day to honor those who are serving in our military. On Monday, 29 May, we remember those who have died while serving in the military for this great country. If you have the ability, please consider volunteering or donating to either [Flags Across America](#) or [Wreaths Across America](#).

"Without memory, there is no culture. Without memory there would be no civilization, no future." —[Elie Wiesel](#)

Take care and I hope to see you in-person on 8 June.

Sue Stewart

president@alamedamoaa.org
510-586-0684

Stay Informed

Membership in National MOAA.....[15](#)
Resources at Your Fingertips.....[16](#)
2022 Alameda MOAA Membership Application.... [17](#)

2023 Upcoming Events

- Jun 6th: [Capitol Advocacy Day](#)
- Oct 5th Fleet Week Special Event
- Nov 9th Veterans' Day
- Dec 2nd Holiday Luncheon

General Membership Meeting

Save
the
Date!

Please join the MOAA Alameda County Chapter for our **General Membership Meeting on Thursday, June 8th**. Our special guest speaker will be Major Howard D. Jackson, USMC (ret.). In 1957, Major Jackson joined the Marine Corps and served in Vietnam. Major Jackson also developed the first official Human Relations Office in the Naval Services. Currently, Major Jackson is the Special Consultant to the President of the California Maritime Academy and serves as Chairman, Board of Directors of the National Minority Military Museum Foundation.

For those who cannot attend in person, we plan to provide Zoom coverage starting at noon so that you can hear about our Chapter ongoing matters and listen to our guest.

Memorial Day Events

- May 29th 10:00 am - 5:00 pm: USS Hornet will be honoring our Veterans on Memorial Day [Memorial Day 2023 - USS Hornet Museum \(uss-hornet.org\)](#). Free for Veterans.
- May 29th 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: 99th Annual Memorial Day Commemoration Program. Presentation of colors, salute to the fallen, and guest speakers
 - 5000 Piedmont Ave, Oakland, CA

General Membership Meeting June 8th

- ♦ Start time: 11:00
- ♦ Zoom start: 12:00
- ♦ End time: 13:00
- ♦ Location: Coast Guard Island Building #4, Welcome Room
- ♦ Lunch: \$15 per person, pay at the door (Free for new Active-Duty Members)
- ♦ Dress: Uniform of the day or business casual
- ♦ RSVP to LTC Rodney Grayson: secretary@alamedamoaa.org or (925) 337-0241.
- ♦ Zoom link is:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82098092144?pwd=Vlp5ZkFpRmd2RklBblR4RXZlK280Zz09>
- ♦ Meeting ID: 820 9809 2144; Passcode: 06082023
- ♦ Or dial by your location in the US: (669) 444 9171



MOAA's annual advocacy event brought members from across the nation in contact with their lawmakers in Washington, D.C. April 26th.

2023 Membership

Omar Farmer, LT USN, Membership Director

MEMBERSHIP DUES – Renew Today!

- Send check to the Alameda County Chapter, MOAA, c/o Omar Farmer, 3758 Grand Ave #12, Oakland CA 94610
- PayPal to: mcdcpa@gmail.com

\$20 for regular members, \$5 for Surviving Spouses and Spouses

Annual dues are \$20 for regular members, \$5 for Surviving Spouses and Spouses, free for active duty.

Our total membership is now at 92, with 65 regular, 8 surviving spouses, 6 spouses, and 13 active duty. Since our last meeting, 2 more members have purchased memberships for their spouses. Thank you. My hope is that more members take advantage of this opportunity. We have over 60 total spouses who are not members yet. Adding more of them to the chapter could add to a robust family atmosphere. Annual membership for spouses is only \$5.

The easiest way to join is via pay pal. We're also working on a new flyer to assist with our base recruitment efforts at CGI, Naval Reserve Center Alameda, and Camp Parks. We'll also be reaching out to other chartered veteran organizations such as:

American Legion, VFW, DAV, AMVETS, Marine Corp League, and the Navy League.

Last Bugle: Geoff Kline

June 1945 – April 2023

Commander Geoffrey Kline, U.S. Coast Guard (Ret.) was born in Melbourne, Australia 6 June 1945 to Robert (Bob) and Sheila Kline (an American soldier and his Australian wife), and grew up in Spring City, PA, with his parents and younger sister Susie.

After high school, where he played baseball and was involved in the band, Geoff enrolled in the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. His first call of duty after graduation was serving in the Arctic on the icebreaker Northwind out of Seattle, where he did two tours. He was then sent to the University of

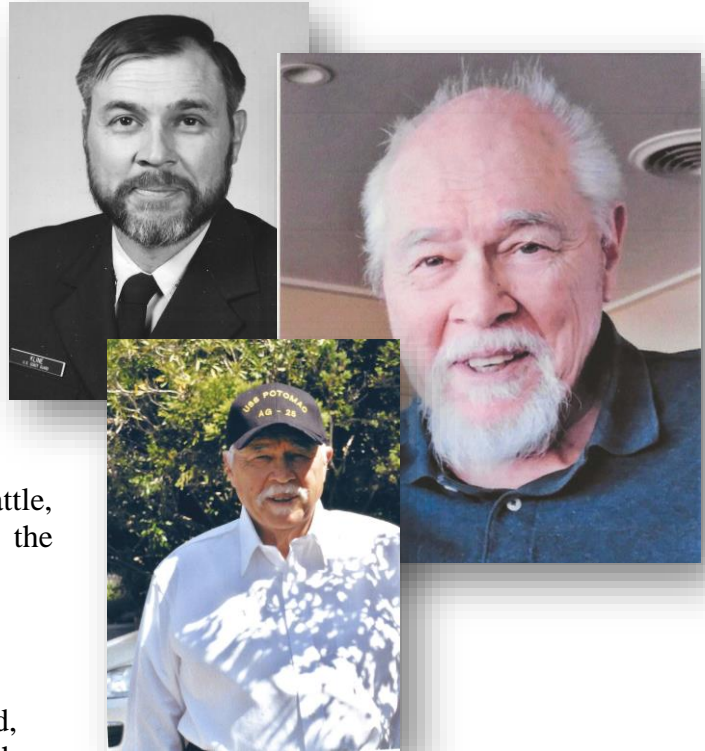
Illinois to get his master's degree in civil engineering, as well as Old Dominion University where he received a post-graduate degree. His Coast Guard career took him to Japan and England, among other duty stations, for three at years at each location, while in England he played cricket as part of a local team. His final port of call was Coast Guard Base, Alameda, where retired after three years serving as Executive Officer. He then worked for the County of San Mateo as a civil engineer in the Department of Public Works, from which he retired in 2006.

In his spare time, Geoff joined the Lake Merritt Breakfast Club and MOAA (Military Officers Association), being active in and enjoying both groups. He loved baseball, coaching a Babe Ruth team in Alameda for many years, and later coaching Alameda High School's girls' softball team. He joined the crew of the Presidential yacht USS Potomac on cruises around the bay. A gifted public speaker who was always ready with a joke, he loved being on the water and being with friends.

Geoff joined the Alameda County Chapter in 2009, shortly after the Chapter received its Charter from national MOAA. Geoff served as Chapter President for four years from January 2012 through December 2015. Geoff was on our board of directors from Jan 2012 to Jan 2019. Geoff had previously served as President of the East Bay Chapter of the Retired Officers Association (TROA) for two years from January 1996 through December 1997. TROA became MOAA On 1 Jan 2003.

Among Geoff's other community activities, he was a volunteer crew member on the USS Potomac. At that time our Chapter was looking for new activities to benefit the community. Geoff suggested that we charter the ship and sell tickets to Chapter members and others, and use the proceeds for ROTC scholarships. Thus began the signature event and identity of the Chapter.

Through his affiliation with the Lake Merritt Breakfast Club, he arranged for MOAA members to attend Oakland A's baseball games, where Breakfast Club members provided a sumptuous repast for a low cost. As a Coast Guard Academy graduate he was one of only a few "Coasties" on the Board. In between motor trips to his second home in Montana, his service to the Coast Guard and the community in general were above and beyond.



Geoff passed away after a short illness on 19 April. He is survived by his wife Marvera, their son Brian and two other children from an earlier marriage, Debbie and Steven, his sister Susie, and four grandchildren: Maddie, Zara, Ellie, and Ben.

He will sorely be missed.

Assembly Bill 46 Passes Appropriations Committee!

Ramona Chávez, Legislative Liaison

GREAT NEWS!

The Assembly Appropriations Committee voted to send [Assembly Bill 46: Military Services Retirement and Surviving Spouse Benefit Payment Act](#) to the suspense file on May 17th. Unlike last year, the Appropriations Committee passed the bill to the Assembly on May 18th with 15 Ayes and 0 Noes!

The bill was forwarded to the full Assembly for a Roll Call vote. The Roll Call vote is a recorded vote and will be scheduled before the end of May. After it passes through the Assembly, it will move to the Senate, then Governor Gavin Newsom for signature. **What can we do? Now is the time to re-engage your assembly members, write letters to your local newspaper, legislators, and the Governor.**

Also, we all have an opportunity to join other Veteran organizations at the State Capitol to help push legislation to support all our men and women in uniform.

The California State Commanders Veterans Council (CSCVC) will be hosting its [Capitol Advocacy Day](#) in Sacramento on Tuesday, June 6th, 2023. All veterans that belong to one of our member organizations can register. Flyer with all info and how to RSVP [here](#).

Our Capitol Advocacy Day is an opportunity for veterans to visit State Legislators and their staff to advocate and educate on issues of importance to veterans.

In Case You Missed It: KTVU2, a Bay area newstation helped us get the word out. Check it out: <https://www.ktvu.com/news/california-veterans-push-for-exemption-on-military-retirement-pay>

30 Seconds – Send an email Now!

- [Email/Letter to Your Legislative Representative, Page 12](#)
- [Email/Letter to Governor Gavin Newsom, Page 13](#)



Your Assemblymembers:

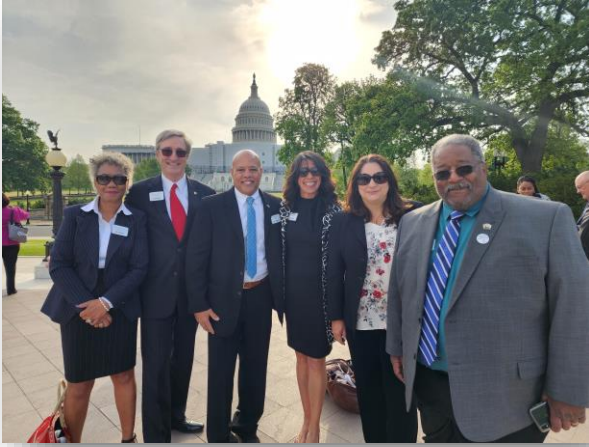
- Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, P.O. Box 942849-0016, Sacramento, California 95814
- Mia Bonta, P.O. Box 942849-0018, Sacramento, California 95814
- Alex Lee, P.O. Box 942849-0024, Sacramento, California 95814
- Liz Ortega, P.O. Box 942849-0020, Sacramento, California 95814
- Buffy Wicks, P.O. Box 942849-0014, Sacramento, California 95814

Contact your representative:

- Look up your California Representatives: <https://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>
- Assembly Taxation & Revenue Committee: <https://arev.assembly.ca.gov/membersstaff>
- Assembly Appropriations Committee: <https://apro.assembly.ca.gov/membersstaff>

Advocacy in Action

Ramona Chávez, Legislative Liaison



From left to right: Sharron Mackey, Maj. USAF (Ret.) Marv Heinze, CPT, USN (Ret.), Ray Watts, Col. USA (Ret.), Ramona Chávez, Capt. USAF (Ret.) Kristen Dennis, LDCR USN, Fred Green LDCR USN (Ret.),

I was honored to be one of eight MOAA members representing California in MOAA's Advocacy in Action efforts April 26th. MOAA's annual advocacy event brought members from across the nation in contact with their lawmakers in Washington, D.C., to address critical topics on MOAA's legislative agenda.

The event marked the first in-person effort on Capitol Hill since 2019. We were all brought together to talk to our state legislators about issues that impact our Veterans. I met with the following eight state legislators to discuss Full Housing Costs for Servicemembers and Tricare pharmacy network.

✓ District	Name
✓ 47th	Porter, Katie
✓ 5th	McClintock, Tom
✓ 22nd	Valadao, David
✓ 30th	Schiff, Adam
✓ 24th	Carbajal, Salud
✓ 35th	Torres, Norma
✓ 12th	Lee, Barbara
✓ 49th	Levin, Mike



The two issues we asked legislators to support are:

Pay Full Housing Costs for Servicemembers

Servicemembers and their families endure many moves and limited options for housing — especially when they compete for housing near their new duty station and preferred school districts. A recent survey found about 3 in 4 military families are paying at least \$200 a month for extra housing costs, nearly twice what DoD estimated an E-5 with dependents would need to pay out of pocket after reducing the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) by 5%.

Our nation expects 100% from servicemembers. Congress should ensure servicemembers get 100% of their housing allowance. Support BAH restoration and pass the BAH Restoration Act.

Restore the TRICARE Pharmacy Network

Recent network cuts have slashed TRICARE retail pharmacy options by nearly 25%, or 13,000 locations, increasing the likelihood of prescription drug access challenges for military families. This is not just the typical reshuffling of network participants with a new pharmacy contract — it is another cut

to the benefit on the heels of other recent TRICARE out-of-pocket costs increases. When it comes to TRICARE, military families are paying more and getting less — and elderly beneficiaries, rural residents, and those with serious medical issues are bearing the brunt of these benefit cuts. Congress must demand more understanding on the impacts of these reductions and restore the pharmacy network to provide the health care protections servicemembers have earned.

You can still lend your voice to these efforts through [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#).

Continue to follow [MOAA's Advocacy News page](#) for ongoing updates regarding all of MOAA's legislative priorities.



On April 19th the American Legion Department of California successfully hosted its Annual Legislative Day in Sacramento. Far right, our Alameda MOAA member Sidney Jordan USA Major (Ret.)

Alameda Chapter Earns Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications 5-Star Awards

Ramona Chávez, Director of Communications

The Alameda is a repeat recipient of the annual MOAA Communications Awards for both our newsletter and website. MOAA recognizes councils and chapters that achieve excellence in communicating with their members and communities. MOAA affiliates nominated themselves in two categories: newsletters (print or electronic) and websites. Submissions were judged on design and content. For the 2022 program year, 11 councils and 134 chapters received five-star and four-star awards. Congratulations to all!

Please use this link: <https://www.moaa.org/Harris-2022> to access the complete list of awardees and level of recognition.

What to Do When a Military Member Dies

Diane Acquistapace, Surviving Spouse Liaison

“Death never takes the wise man by surprise; he is always ready to go.” Jean de La Fontaine, 1651

Hello, your Surviving Spouse Liaison here to discuss an important subject this month. Death is a fundamental component of the human condition, and an experience we will all one day share. But, for many, it can also be an uncomfortable and even taboo subject. Talking about and planning for death may feel uncomfortable at first, but it can ease your anxiety about the future and provide clarity as you

determine what's important to you. Most importantly, it helps you protect and provide for the people you love – especially Surviving Spouses.



At this time, I am still working with the DOD to resolve Retirement pay for my loved one who has passed away. My Father-in-law passed away one year ago, and I believe it is important for people to be aware that a delay in reporting, or not understanding the process can create issues that last for an extended period of time. There are immediate steps to take to avoid overpayment of benefits to your loved one upon their passing. From experience I can tell you that the process of DOD rescinding payments can be stressful and confusing, so it is necessary to notify the DOD as soon as possible even in the moments of grief.

To report the death of a military retiree: **Step 1** - Notify the [Defense Finance and Accounting Service \(DFAS\)](#) Casualty Care Team at 1-800-321-1080. DFAS has highly trained people waiting to assist you every step of the way. When calling please have:

- Member's Social Security Number and the
- Date of death

After they halt payment, DFAS will send out a packet for the surviving spouse or dependent to request survivor benefits payments. This packet will include:

- ✓ DD Form 2656-7
- ✓ Standard Form 1174
- ✓ FMS Form 2231
- ✓ Form W-4 or W4-P

Be sure to include a copy of the military member's death certificate.

Once you have completed these forms, return them to:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service U.S. Military Annuitant Pay
8899 E. 56th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46249-1300

It is also important to know what benefits are available to you as a Surviving Spouse and for your loved one.

What is the death benefit for military retirees? The Survivor Benefit Plan is a Department of Defense sponsored and subsidized program that provides up to 55 percent of a service member's retired pay to an eligible beneficiary upon the death of the member.

Make Funeral Arrangements (Work with your funeral home):

National Cemetery Option (casket and cremated remains)

Veterans who die on active duty, or with discharges that are other than dishonorable, are entitled by law to a grave site in any national cemetery with available space. Burial benefits available include a grave site in the national cemetery, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a government headstone or marker, columbarium niches for cremation remains, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate. Each of these benefits are at no cost to the family.

A Veteran's spouse, widow or widower, minor dependent children, and under certain conditions, unmarried adult children with disabilities may also be eligible for burial. Eligible spouses and children may be buried even if they predecease the Veteran. Members of the reserve components

of the armed forces who die while on active duty or who die while on training duty, or were eligible for retired pay, may also be eligible for burial.

National Cemeteries

The VA's National Cemetery Administration maintains 135 national cemeteries in 40 states (and Puerto Rico) as well as 33 Soldier's lots and monument sites. There are nine national cemeteries in California, of which **five** are presently accepting new interments:

[Bakersfield National Cemetery](#)

[Miramar National Cemetery](#)

[Riverside National Cemetery](#)

[Sacramento Valley National Cemetery](#)

[San Joaquin National Cemetery](#)

The other national cemeteries in California are only accepting burials of family members of persons already interred, or if space becomes available due to disinterment from an existing gravesite.

Please see the following website for more detailed information.

<https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/National-Cemeteries.aspx>

If you need assistance or require more information on these topics, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Diane Acquistapace
Surviving Spouse Liaison
510-366-9049
dianebell@usa.com



Please Join Us for a Special Fleet Week Event

Ramona Chávez, Director of Communications

Our annual special Fleet Week event is a short 5 months away. Please join us **05 October 2023** for our yearly ROTC scholarship fundraiser. It is always a day to remember, with a spectacular air show, food, beverages and a few ole friends.

We sold out two months early last year, so if you want to join us aboard the [USS Potomac](#), reserve soon!

RESERVATIONS

- ➔ **Cost:** \$140.00 per individual. Includes beer, wine, non-alcoholic beverages, and heavy appetizers
- ➔ **PayPal** to mcdcpa@gmail.com
- ➔ **Checks** to: Alameda Chapter MOAA. Mail to CAPT Warren McDonald; 1430 Wendy Way Menlo Park, CA 94025. *Please note for Alameda MOAA Fleet Week Event*

Boarding will start at 1:30 p.m. at USS Potomac dock, 540 Water Street, Oakland, CA 94607
Departure: 2:00 sharp

Upon payment, you will receive a confirmation letter and a ticket to board the ship.

Can't make it? Please consider donating. **Can make donations** via [PayPal.com](https://www.paypal.com), check (as noted above), or credit card. For credit cards visit <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx>. Please note for ROTC scholarship. *Our organization is tax exempt under section 501 (c) (19) of the internal revenue code. Your deduction is deductible under section 170 (c) (3) of that code. You received no goods or services in return for your donation. Our federal identification number is 38-3791117.*

For more information, contact Capt. Ramona Chávez, communications@alamedamoaa.org (925) 963-2711

Proceeds benefit the ROTC Scholarship fund sponsored by the MOAA Alameda Chapter, <http://www.alamedamoaa.org/ROTC>

May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month the Library of Congress, National Archives and Records Administration, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Gallery of Art, National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum join in paying tribute to the generations of Asian and Pacific Islanders who have enriched America's history and are instrumental in its future success.

<https://asianpacificheritage.gov/>



MOAA's TRICARE Toolkit

Bill Garcia, Col. USA (Retired) Personal Affairs

MOAA's TRICARE Toolkit provides insight and tips for navigating your TRICARE benefits. Have a question or suggestion for an upcoming column? Email beninfo@moaa.org. Read other TRICARE Toolkit columns at [MOAA.org/tricaretoolkit](https://www.moaa.org/tricaretoolkit).

If you have an injury or illness that isn't quite serious enough for an emergency room visit, but you don't want to wait to see your primary care provider, you might consider a visit to an urgent care center.

If you are unsure of what to do, call the Military Health System Nurse Advice Line at 800-TRICARE (874-2273). Nurses are available 24/7 to assist you in finding the care you need. If you are traveling abroad, you can find the pertinent international number [at this link](#).

Your status and specific TRICARE plan have different rules for getting urgent care. All beneficiaries should use a TRICARE network provider or a TRICARE-authorized (network or non-network) urgent care center to avoid additional expenses, which might not count against your catastrophic cap.

TRICARE TIPS : [Why You May Be Paying Out of Pocket When You Visit the Doctor](#)

Active-duty service members in TRICARE Prime or Overseas Prime need a referral for urgent care. Active duty servicemembers on Prime Remote do not need a referral.

Active-duty family members in TRICARE Prime or Select do not need a referral for urgent care. Family members in TRICARE Overseas Prime or Prime Remote must get pre-authorization from the TRICARE Overseas Program contractor to ensure the urgent care visit is cashless and claimless. Without pre-authorization, you will most likely have to pay the medical provider up front and file a claim for reimbursement.

Retirees and family members in TRICARE Prime or Select can receive urgent care without a referral. Prime enrollees should notify their primary care managers as soon as possible about the visit.

TRICARE TOOLKIT: [The Shingles Vaccine and TRICARE](#)

Guard members, reservists, and family members in TRICARE Reserve Select do not need a referral for urgent care. Retired guard members, reservists, and eligible family members in TRICARE Retired Reserve also do not require a referral.

U.S. Family Health Plan (U.S. FHP) enrollees should visit their designated provider's website to learn how urgent care coverage works. USFHP is a TRICARE Prime option with identical co-payments.

Urgent Care Co-Payments

- Active duty servicemembers/families: Prime, \$0; Select, \$25
- Retirees/families: Prime, \$36; Select, \$34
- TRICARE Reserve Select, \$24
- TRICARE Retired Reserve Select, \$44
- Medicare/TRICARE For Life: \$0

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

New VA Website Encourages Veterans to Tell Their Stories of Hope

WASHINGTON – May is Mental Health Awareness Month. To commemorate the month, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is encouraging Veterans, along with their families and friends, to visit and view recovery journey stories on the website, [MakeTheConnection.net](#).



Make the Connection is a national awareness program operated by VA aimed at reducing the negative perceptions and stigma associated with seeking mental health care. Through the Website, Veterans and their loved ones hear from hundreds of other Veterans who may be experiencing similar challenges, learn strategies for support and recovery, along with local resources available through a resource locator.

Since the launch of the ***Make the Connection*** campaign in November 2011, there have been more than 7 million visits to the website, and more than 2.8 million people have joined the Facebook community or subscribed to the YouTube channel. The resource locator on the site, with information on VA and community-based treatment services around the country, has been used more than 220,000 times.

“We all have the ability to influence a friend or loved one in a positive way – that’s why Make the Connection was created,” said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. “We want Veterans to tell their personal stories of mental health treatment and recovery to as many of their peers as possible. Those stories can be great sources of strength for Veterans in need of hope.”

In addition to the Make the Connection [website](#) and [Facebook page](#), information also can be found on YouTube at www.youtube.com/VeteransMTC and Google+ at <http://plus.google.com/+VeteransMTC>. Information about all VA mental health efforts may be found at www.mentalhealth.va.gov.

Studies Show VA Health Care is Better Than or Equal to Non-VA Health Care

Kimberly M. Mitchell, Senior Advisor, Department of Veterans Affairs

WASHINGTON — The [Journal of General Internal Medicine](#) and the Journal of the American College of Surgeons published articles based on a [systematic review of studies](#) about VA health care, concluding VA health care is consistently as good as — or better than — non-VA health care.

The findings come from a national review of peer-reviewed studies that evaluated VA on quality, safety, access, patient experience, and comparative cost/efficiency. Of the 26 studies that looked at non-surgical care, 15 reported VA care was better than non-VA care and seven reported equal or mixed clinical quality outcomes. Of the 13 studies that looked at quality and safety in surgical care, 11 reported VA surgical care is comparable or better than non-VA care.

VA is currently delivering more care to more Veterans than ever before in the nation’s history. Among the Veterans who receive their care from VA, approximately 90% [trust VA to deliver their care](#).

“These studies demonstrate that VA care is consistently as good or better than non-VA care, both in surgical and non-surgical settings,” said **VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. “VA’s public servants are here for Veterans anytime, anyplace — even in the midst of a pandemic. Our goal at VA is to deliver world-class care to every Veteran, every time, and we will never settle for anything less.”

This year’s systematic review included studies published between 2015 and 2021. This is the third systematic review of studies comparing VA care to non-VA care, the most recent of which was published in [2017](#). Each of these systematic reviews has come to the same overarching conclusion: on average, VA care is better than or comparable to non-VA care in the domains of clinical quality and safety.

This review was conducted by researchers at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System in California and the University of California, Los Angeles. Read the full articles at [Journal of General Internal Medicine](#) and the Journal of the American College of Surgeons.

###

Email/Letter to Your Legislative Representative

Support [AB 46](#): Military Services Retirement and Surviving Spouse Benefit Payment Act

Dear X,

Assemblymember James Ramos has introduced Assembly Bill 46 in the 2023 California legislature to exempt Military Retirees and Surviving Spouses from California income tax. As you know, California is the only state in the country that does not provide some form of tax relief for its military retirees.

Despite having the largest number of assigned active military members of any state, California only ranks fourth in number of retirees. California continues to lose retirees at an accelerated rate. After 20 years of military service, military retirees are highly skilled with experience in management, task prioritization, resource management, attention to detail, teamwork, and communication. Military retirees who do remain in California provide an available workforce to fill many of the almost 40,000 technical and over 20,000 medical field job vacancies in California. These jobs include software engineering, cybersecurity, aerospace, artificial intelligence, biochemistry, physicians, nurses, and management. Additionally, many military retirees, surviving spouses and children will use their educational benefits to pursue advanced degrees in STEM and medical occupations providing a much needed help to California's workforce.

Military retirees pay taxes on their second career earnings which will likely well exceed their military retirement. Instead of losing a taxpayer and family, California will retain taxpayers with increased earnings and family tax revenues. AB-46 will actually raise total state tax revenues. Retained retirees will immediately increase sales and property tax revenues, aiding our state's, city, and county budgets.

Another consideration is that military retiree pay is a stream of federal revenue into the economy of the state where a retiree chooses to live. According to a study conducted for the Governor's Military Council, the defense industry contributed \$168 billion to CA's economy in 2021, 5% of the state's budget. The DoD estimates that military retirees and surviving spouses bring a \$4.8 billion, annual inflation-protected stream of federal funds, to California's economy each year. Already Virginia, Florida and Texas receive more than \$6 billion each year in federal military retiree income and California is falling further behind.

AB 46 honors those who dedicated their lives to serve their country, and their surviving spouses and families. Additionally, it helps our state retain and attract uniformed-service retirees to strengthen the state's skilled workforce, bring stability to communities, and contribute to the state and local tax base.

Please support AB-46. Doing so provides strong visible support to our California employers and economy, as well as our retired military members and their surviving spouses.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Signature

Name, Address

[Organization if applicable]

AB 46 Letter/Email to Governor Gavin Newsom

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Instructions: Please cut and paste the letter below and send via email to GovPressOffice@gov.ca.gov . Prefer mail? Send to address below.

Support [AB 46](#): Military Services Retirement and Surviving Spouse Benefit Payment Act

May 20, 2023

Dear Governor Newsom,

Assembly member James Ramos has introduced AB 46, "*Military Services Retirement and Surviving Spouse Benefit Payment Act*," and on behalf of the Alameda County Chapter of MOAA, we are asking for your support of this legislation.

We truly appreciate Assemblymember Ramos for recognizing the significant contributions our military retirees and their spouses provide to California's work force development and the \$168 billion dollars the Defense Industry brings to California each year. Governor Newsom, it is time that California joins the other 49 states that currently provide an exemption on military retirement from state income taxes by you supporting and passing AB 46.

Department of Defense Actuary Reports show that California had 165,502 retirees in 2010, and that number was reduced to 149,430 by 2020. That same DOD Actuary Report reveals a continuing decline in California's military retiree population, which as of 2021 has shrunk to 128,561. The decline in California's military retiree population has a negative impact on federal funds that flow into California. Both Arizona and Nevada have seen an increase in their state's military retiree population during this same period and federal funds follow the military retirees to these states. Failure to support AB 46 will likely continue this downward trend of military retirees leaving California and California losing federal monies.

Additionally, a 2021 study conducted by the California Research Bureau, California State Library on California Statewide National Security Economic Impacts states that California is home to the nation's largest concentration of military personnel and other national security activity. The study further states that in 2020 military and national security activities generated an estimated \$168.7 billion in economic activity, approximately 5.4% of California's economy.

Military retirees, with an average age of 42, who have spent the last 20 years serving our country as Medical Professionals, STEM roles, Life Sciences, National Security experts, Engineers, Aviation Maintenance, Space Force Professionals, Vocational Trades, and more provide the state with a valuable work force. Military retirees are ready from the first day of retirement to enter numerous professions in CA where there is a shortage of candidates. Studies conducted by the San Diego Military Council clearly show that these 2nd careers generate millions of dollars of additional revenue for local communities, counties and California from local taxes, sales taxes, and state taxes on the salaries of those 2nd careers. AB46 will keep these retirees in California.

Support AB46!

Signature
Name, Address
[Organization if applicable]

Membership in National MOAA

Omar Farmer, LT USN, Membership Director

Please keep your contact information in the national MOAA database up to date. I can review it, but I cannot change it. You can update your contact information by logging into your membership account at MOAA.org and accessing your "Profile Info" page. Members can also call or email the Member Service Center and one of MOAA's Member Service Representatives would be happy to update the necessary information. Members can email msc@moaa.org or call 1-800-234-6622 for further assistance.

National MOAA has set a goal to have all Chapter members be, at least "Basic" members of national MOAA.

All our members who are eligible for membership in national MOAA are members of national MOAA. For 2022, we have 101 members. We now have 53 Chapter members who are "LIFE" members of national MOAA, twenty-one who are "Premium" members and 22 who are "Basic" members. Our spouses are not eligible for national MOAA membership.

It is important that Chapter members who are Premium (Annual) members of national MOAA keep their national MOAA membership current with the payment of annual dues; or upgrade to "LIFE" membership in national MOAA. I guess, another option would be to downgrade to "Basic" membership but with the loss of the MOAA's monthly Military Officer magazine and the loss of a few other premium member benefits. A comparison of member benefits at each membership level can be reviewed at <https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa/>

MOAA Membership Costs

Basic MOAA membership is FREE

Premium (Annual) Membership:

Annual Dues	One Year	Two Years	Three Years
regular members -	\$59	\$100	\$132
surviving spouses -	\$53	\$90	\$120

LIFE membership cost varies from \$894 for someone 49 years old or less to \$104 if you are 95 to 99 years old. LIFE membership passes to your spouse if you predecease your spouse.

If you need help in becoming a member of national MOAA, let me know. If I have your written permission, I can sign you up to be a "Basic" MOAA member at no cost. The best way is to send an email to bredderman@sbcglobal.net.

MOAA membership is incredibly significant when MOAA lobbies Congress on issues important to the military community. National MOAA and the Alameda MOAA Chapter are nonpartisan organizations.



You defend the country. We defend your benefits.

[Join Now](https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa/)

<https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa/>

To join, visit

Resources at Your Fingertips

- **Need a DD-214?** Visit <https://www.va.gov/records/get-military-service-records/>
- **DOL VETS:** <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets> The U.S. Department of Labor is the Congressionally mandated lead agency for programs and services to veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses.
- **Alameda, MOAA Board Members for 2021:** <http://www.alamedamoaa.org/Chapter-Officers>
- **MOAA Alameda Membership/Renewal Application** Last page of newsletter or online here: <http://www.alamedamoaa.org/Join>
- **MOAA National application** <http://www.moaa.org/Content/Join-MOAA/Why-join-MOAA.aspx>
- **Alameda Chapter Website** <http://www.alamedamoaa.org>
- **California MOAA Council Website:** <http://www.calmoaa.org>
- **Alameda Chapter Editorial and Privacy Policy:** <http://alamedamoaa.org/Editorial-and-Privacy-Policies>
- **MOAA Legislative Update/Action Center:** <http://alamedamoaa.org/Legislative-Update>
- **Useful Websites for California Veterans**
- **CA Legislation:**
<https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billSearchClient.xhtml>
- **California State Senate:** <http://senate.ca.gov/>
- **California State Assembly:** <http://assembly.ca.gov/>
- To find CA Law, including the Military and Veterans Code:
<https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes.xhtml>
- Find your State and Local Legislator: <http://votesmart.org/>
- **CALMOAA Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/582556558468846>
- Northern California Coast Guard Retiree Council Website is NCCGRC.org
- PACT Act General PSA (30) : https://youtu.be/Rj1Eo0C_UNE
- PACT Act General PSA (15): <https://youtu.be/1-MPpbhRPS0>
- PACT Act Veteran PSA (30): <https://youtu.be/tulW0c76pC0>
- PACT Act Veteran PSA (15): <https://youtu.be/ohaeNLC6fRY>
- PACT Act Doctor PSA (30): <https://youtu.be/0qEf3wEr81A>
- PACT Act Doctor PSA (15): https://youtu.be/P4Z04L16_2A
- PACT Act Caregiver PSA (30): https://youtu.be/fDGw1ykpQ_0
- PACT Act Caregiver PSA (15): <https://youtu.be/W94lGxmqlFo>
- PACT Act Caregiver PSA (Spanish, 30): https://youtu.be/l9o42_7COMY
- PACT Act Caregiver PSA (Spanish, 15): <https://youtu.be/AzrE5Gdrejc>
- PACT Act Benefits PSA (30) : <https://youtu.be/LDH5rcSW0q0>

2023 Alameda MOAA Membership Application

<p>Please Check One</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> New Member</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Officer</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Spouse</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Surviving Spouse</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Renewal</div> </div>	<p>Please Check One</p> <p>Name and Rank of qualifying officer's spouse:</p> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 5px;"/>
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Military Status (please check one)

☐ Active Duty
 ☐ Retired
 ☐ Guard/Reserve
 ☐ Former / Inactive

U.S. Service (please check one)

☐ Army
 ☐ Air Force
 ☐ Coast Guard
 ☐ Marine Corps
☐ Navy
 ☐ USPHS
 ☐ U.S. Space Force
 ☐ NOAA

Date: mm/dd/yyyy **National MOAA #*:** _____

**National MOAA # not required; however, you can acquire free basic membership
at: <https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa/>*

Name: _____ **Rank:** _____ **Date of Birth:** mm/dd/yyyy
Email: _____ **Phone:** _____
Address: _____ **Apt:** _____ **City:** _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code** _____
Spouses Name: _____

I am interested in participating in a Chapter office or committee ☐ Yes ☐ No

Membership is for the calendar year commencing 1 January of each year.

Annual Dues: 1) **Active Duty:** \$0 2) **Regular:** \$20 / \$10 if joining after July 1 3) **Spouse/Surviving Spouse:** \$5

New Members: Please attach a copy of your military ID, DD-214, or other proof of service as military officer.

Make checks payable to: ALAMEDA COUNTY CHAPTER, MOAA or [Paypal](#) to mcdcpa@gmail.com

Submit: Can be filled out electronically and emailed to alamedamoaamembership@alamedamoaa.org or mail
MOAA Alameda County Chapter, c/o LT Omar Farmer, 3758 Grand Ave #12, Oakland CA 94610.