



Charleston Chapter, Military Officers Association of America

June – Issue 06 2026

Published monthly, except July

Web site: [www.charlestonmoaa.com](http://www.charlestonmoaa.com)

## Fourth Time's the Charm! We will at last hear from CAPT Shawn Lansing, Commander of USCG Sector Charleston. It will be worth the wait!

Join us at:  
California Dreaming on the Ashely River  
1 Ashley Pointe Drive  
Charleston, SC 29407  
(843)766-1644



Date: Friday, June 26, 2026, 1100-1400

Menu: Choice between California Dreaming Salad *OR* among three sandwiches, all sandwiches served with fries:

1. *California Dreaming Salad* - Mixed greens, ham, turkey, cheddar and Monterey jack cheeses, egg, tomatoes, almonds topped with warm ham and bacon, house dressing; *OR*
2. New Orleans Po'Boy - Fried Shrimp, lettuce, tomato and tartar sauce on French bread: *OR*
3. Steak Burger - 10oz. shredded lettuce, pickles, red onion, tomato, cheddar cheese, CD signature sauce; *OR*
4. Blackened Mahi Sandwich - Toasted brioche, lemon, arugula, ripe tomato, curry mayonnaise, homemade pickles

Cost: \$30 per person

RSVP: Check to arrive NLT Monday, June 22st, 2026

Please indicate your choice of entrees on your check.

Mail to: Bud Schneeweis, CAPT USCG (Ret.) 6 Wappoo Creek Place Charleston, SC 29412-2120, or pay by ZELLE (Please don't forget to list food choice in the NOTES.)

For additional info, contact Bud @ 703.300.0811 or [wschneeweis@verizon.net](mailto:wschneeweis@verizon.net)

# Legislative Summary

Submitted by: Bud Schneeweis



CAPT, USCG (Ret)

Special, Check Out: MOAA's [Take Action Center](#)

## Beyond Simple Recognition: MOAA's Work to Support Military Caregivers

We honored the families and loved ones who support our nation's servicemembers and veterans this May, the Month of the Military Caregiver, but recognition alone is not enough.

These men and women care for our most seriously wounded, ill, and injured servicemembers, as well as for veterans facing complications from age and disability. Appreciation for their service must be matched with policy that delivers stability, clarity, and long term security.

For years, MOAA has elevated caregiving as a core advocacy priority, recognizing that military and veteran caregivers are not an add on to care, but the foundation of their loved ones' health, stability, and dignity. This month is a time to reflect on progress made and confront the urgent work still ahead.

### MOAA and Caregiver Policy

MOAA's leadership in the military and veteran caregiving space reflects nearly two decades of sustained advocacy, beginning with our work alongside lawmakers, veterans service organizations, and caregiver stakeholders to help establish VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC). From the earliest debates over formal recognition within VA's health care system, MOAA has advocated for caregivers to be seen and supported as essential partners – integral to both care delivery and successful health outcomes.

That collaborative advocacy continued through successive Congresses and took center stage during the last session, when MOAA worked with bipartisan champions and veteran stakeholder groups to pass and enact the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Bene-

fits Improvement Act. The Dole Act marked the most significant modernization of VA caregiver support in decades by expanding mental health services, strengthening the VA Caregiver Support Program, and embedding caregiver well being as a core element of veteran health care delivery.

### MOAA Caregiver Priorities

While the Dole Act marked meaningful progress, MOAA has long stressed that lasting change depends on timely implementation, strong oversight, and long term stability for caregivers.

MOAA continues to prioritize caregiver support this Congress by focusing on advancing the Caregiver Reeducation, Reemployment, and Retirement (3R) Act, which has passed both the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees, and by pressing the VA to publish long overdue regulations to improve PCAFC eligibility and access. Although VA extended protections through 2028 for caregivers enrolled in the program prior to October 2020 – members of what is known as the "legacy cohort" – years of program instability and delayed publishing of the regulation have left caregivers and veterans in prolonged uncertainty, unable to plan for their futures. MOAA continues to encourage the VA to publish and implement revised PCAFC regulations without further delay.

Continued on page 5.

Thank You  
*The following have renewed their membership for Five or More Years:*

Nothing to report this month.



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*For every referred Client I donate \$100 to the MOAA Scholarship Fund!*

## Summerville High School Naval JROTC Awards Program

SCPO Craig Donald, USN (Ret) has done an outstanding job training the Green Wave Battalion in Summerville High School. On Thursday 23 April 2026, the auditorium was filled with excited students and parents as the program started.

Guests and parents were welcomed to the program and a cadet sang the National Anthem. Another cadet gave the Invocation and the entire battalion repeated the Cadet Creed. There are 210 cadets in the Green Wave Battalion. Each of the cadets wore their uniform correctly and looked sharp.

Several different organizations were there to present awards to cadets. As the numerous awards were presented, the audience, especially the cadets, gave an exuberant round of acknowledgement. SCPO Donald explained each of the awards as the presenters congratulated each recipient. At the end of each presentation the audience gave a round of applause.

Cadet Jacob Williams was presented with the MOAA National Medal and Certificate for his work with the unit during the past year.

Cadet Andrea Sandoval received the MOAA National Certificate and the fifty - dollar cash award for her support of the unit this past year as well as her support throughout her tenure in the JROTC program.

SCPO Donald reported that the graduating seniors were well equipped to continue their education as well as to move into work places in the area. Several were planning to enter the US Navy as a career as well as other services.

The instructors are very caring and capable of administrating this program for many years to come. I recommend that we continue to support them with our presentations of awards in the coming years.



Cadet Jacob Williams  
and BG Brockman

Cadet Andrea Sandoval  
and BG Brockman



## HANAHAN HIGH SCHOOL ARMY JROTC AWARDS CEREMONY

On Saturday, April 18, 2026, I again had the privilege to represent the Charleston MOAA Chapter in presenting our MOAA Chapter's Outstanding Cadet Award and \$50 to outgoing JROTC Hawk Battalion Commander, Cadet LTC Sofia Bolaños Calle, for her demonstrated leadership excellence during the 2025 - 2026 academic year. The incoming Hawk Battalion Commander, and former Battalion Executive officer, Cadet LTC Asa Astacio, was presented the National MOAA Medal and Certificate for demonstrating outstanding citizenship, personal responsibility, and service to his community and country during this same period. Some 20 other military, veteran, and civic/cultural organizations provided awards to other exceptional JROTC cadets. About 100 cadets, other students, families, and friends attended the event which lasted about 2 hours. After graduation, Cadet LTC Calle plans to attend Winthrop University in Rockhill, SC, while Cadet LTC Astacio wants to attend the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md or The Citadel for Navy ROTC to become a surface warfare officer. As usual, Hanahan JROTC instructors, US Army LTC - retired Yolanda Ellerbee, and US Army CSM - retired Renaldo Jordan demonstrated their outstanding dedication to the JROTC program and professional excellence reflected in the exceptional performance of their students.

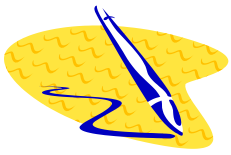
*Philip R. Bernstein, COL, USA (Ret)*



### Rest in Peace

*Military Brothers and Sisters. Your Service  
to Our Country is Recorded and Honored.*

*Thankfully, nothing to report this  
month.*



# President's Pen

I started last month's President's Pen with "May is one of those very busy months." Well, June is following in its footsteps! It brings us D Day Remembrance, Flag Day and Father's Day. It also brings us to high school and college graduations; therefore, we have lots of ROTC and JROTC Awards Ceremony articles for publication. Due to this, you will see a lot of changes in this month's newsletter - mainly, no new member biographical sketch. No worry, that shall return!

With the June newsletter, we also begin our summer break with no newsletter in July and no luncheons in July and August.

CPT Tom Antwine, Maj Mike Rose, COL Beverly Brockman and I attended an interesting meeting at Charleston Southern University on 21 May. A very generous donor has given the university an opportunity to design and construct a Veterans Student Center to support the veterans that are presently on campus.

Charleston Southern has a very large veteran population among their student body that is now being served by a Veterans Lounge that is about 400 square feet. This area is not adequate to serve the present needs.

This new facility will be a stand-alone building that is larger, better equipped, and designed to provide space for studying, counseling, meetings, events and fellowship. More to come about this in the future.

Thank you again for your continued support to the Charleston Chapter!!

*Ernie*

## Thank You

**Lt Col Edward D. Knowles Toys for  
Tots Benefits Program  
30th Year**

**Current Toys for Tots Fund**

**\$ 992.17**

## CROSS HIGH SCHOOL ARMY JROTC 2025-2026 AWARDS CEREMONY

Cross High School held its Annual Awards Ceremony on April 29, 2026, in the Wilhelmina J. Moore Auditorium. The event began with a prayer, posting of the colors, and a moving rendition of the national anthem by Cadet Sergeant Ny'Aja Shepherd. Among the attendees were Principal Tiffany Brown, JROTC Battalion members, award presenters, family, friends, and school staff. Colonel (Ret.) Nicholas Anderson, a Cross High graduate, presented the MOAA Medal and Certificate to Cadet Captain Morgan Travelstead and the MOAA Outstanding Cadet Award to Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Bradley. The Cross High JROTC Program is led by Army Lieutenant Colonel Ben Lipari and Army Sergeant First Class Corin Gilens.

**Nicholas Anderson, COL, USA (Ret)**



**Cadet Bradley, Col Anderson & Cadet Travelstead**

## Woodland High School Army JROTC Wolverine Battalion Awards Program

I attended the Woodland High School's Army JROTC Ceremony on Thursday April 30, 2026, at 6PM. The Woodland HS Army JROTC Program is led by Major John Logan, Jr, USA (Ret) and SFC Kevin Simpson, USA (Ret). MAJ Logan and SFC Simpson's leadership and work with the JROTC program has resulted in an increase of about 16% in total number of cadets over last year. MAJ Logan was explaining how they held a recruiting program at the middle school which is geographically located on the adjoining HS campus and recruited about 47 cadets for the program. The program started with the Wolverine Battalion marching

Continued on page 6.

### **GAO Findings Reinforce MOAA Priorities**

A recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report highlights significant gaps in how the VA measures, oversees, and delivers caregiver mental health support. GAO found the VA lacks clear performance and outreach goals, collects limited data, and does not have sufficient oversight to ensure caregivers receive effective mental health information and supportive services.

These gaps illustrate the broader need for policies that protect caregivers' long-term emotional and financial well being – priorities MOAA is advancing through our support of the Caregiver 3R Act and the publication of clear, consistent PCAFC regulations. Without stable, forward looking policy and regulatory frameworks, caregivers and the veterans they support face prolonged stress, uncertainty, and economic risk that can persist long after the caregiving role ends.

### **MOAA to Congress: Include These 9 Provisions in the NDAA**

MOAA offered nine proposals in a May 8 letter to lawmakers that “address issues integral to readiness, retention, and quality of life” and should be included in the upcoming must-pass defense authorization bill.

The issues cover the needs of active-duty families, Guard and Reserve members, as well as retirees. Many have been part of MOAA advocacy efforts dating to the beginning of this Congressional session (or before) and are reflected in bills making their way through the 119th Congress; the FY 2027 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) offers a legislative vehicle for passage of these improvements.

Continued grassroots support of these pieces of legislation strengthens the argument for their NDAA inclusion.

**Duty Status Reform Act:** H.R. 6976 would

### **Rest in Peace Spouses**

*For Your Support to our Military  
Brothers and Sisters. Your Service is  
Recorded and Honored.*

Thankfully, nothing to report this month.

cut the more than two dozen reserve duty statuses to four, better ensuring these members earn the same benefits and service credit as their active duty counterparts when performing the same duties.

**MOLD Act:** H.R. 7188/S. 3654 would give families in military housing more resources to escape unhealthy living conditions, including required independent inspections to remediate toxic mold and the ability to withhold housing payments until treatment and repairs are complete.

**Military CARE Act:** H.R. 6796 would establish a digital reporting system to allow patients at military hospitals and clinics to report access to care issues. The system would connect beneficiaries with patient advocates while reporting data to the Defense Health Agency for use in identifying issues at individual facilities and systemwide trends.

**Major Richard Star Act:** H.R. 2102/S. 1032, already cosponsored by more than 400 House and Senate members, would end an unjust pay offset faced by combat-injured retirees, who lose a dollar of military retirement pay for every dollar of VA disability compensation. MOAA is a founding member of the Star Act Alliance, which has worked to increase momentum behind the legislation in recent weeks.

**TRICARE For Life and GLP-1s:** MOAA has been outspoken regarding the need to reverse last year's decision to end coverage of these drugs for certain TRICARE For Life users, creating a two-tier coverage system that sets a dangerous precedent and weakens the service-earned health benefit.

**Health Care Fairness for Military Families Act:** H.R. 4768/S. 2448 would allow dependents to remain on TRICARE coverage until age 26, bringing parity with commercial health plans. Eligibility currently ends at 21 (or 23 for full-time students), meaning military families must decide between costly TRICARE Young Adult premiums or the end of health care coverage.

**Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) Restoration:** BAH has not covered full housing costs since 2015 and now sits at 95% of expected rent and utility bills. This means most of the force, to include junior members in high cost-of-living areas, are forced to cover at least 5% of these bills out of pocket. Bringing BAH back to 100% not only restores a service-earned benefit, it will help address other financial concerns faced throughout the all-volunteer force.

**Prenatal Care for Military Families Act:** H.R. 4381 would create a pilot program to establish pregnancy as a TRICARE qualifying life event (QLE), allowing expectant moms to change plans and secure access to vital prenatal care where it is available. The current

system leaves many such patients trapped in a plan that may not allow them to access critical, timely maternity resources.

**Child Care Improvements:** By expanding the Child Care In Your Home pilot program as well as increasing access to au pairs among military families, the NDAA could help address the more than 8,000 military children now on child care waitlists.

Register at MOAA's Legislative Action Center to keep up with the latest on these MOAA advocacy priorities and others.

### **Bipartisan Bill Would Protect USPHS, NOAA Corps Retirement Pay From Federal Shutdowns**

U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps members join Navy Reserve members and other uniformed services personnel as part of Arctic Care 2024, a joint mission to deliver no-cost medical, dental, optometry, and veterinary services on Alaska's remote Kodiak Island. A bipartisan House bill introduced May 12 would guarantee retirees from the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and NOAA Commissioned Corps receive paychecks during federal funding lapses, extending a protection already offered to all other uniformed services retirees.

The Pensions for Retired Uniformed Service-members Act would align USPHS and NOAA retirement payments with other uniformed services retired pay that's already drawn from the Military Retirement Fund. Doing so would remove those payments from discretionary budgets, allowing them to continue during a federal shutdown.

It's the same protection that was expanded to include Coast Guard retirees in fiscal year 2023, made possible by language in the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act. And it comes after USPHS and NOAA retirees felt the effects of the recent funding lapse.

"All who serve our nation in uniform have earned their benefits, to include consistent and reliable retirement payments," said Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), MOAA president and CEO. "MOAA strongly supports this legislation, which takes an important step toward ensuring parity across all uniformed services."

About 8,000 USPHS and NOAA retirees would benefit from the protections, according to a press release from Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-Md.), who introduced the bill alongside Reps. Don Bacon (R-Neb.) and Maxine Dexter (D-Ore.).

"Our bipartisan legislation will mean these patriots will get the pensions they earned, so they don't go hungry or struggle to pay their rent or mortgage during a government shutdown," Raskin said in the release.

The Commissioned Officers Association of the United States Public Health Service also endorsed the legislation.

### Woodland JROTC Awards Ceremony cont. from page 4.

into the gymnasium. Morale was high as each of the three companies chanted their cadet creed. Parents and friends were present and cheering for them.

A cadet moderated the program with different cadets participating. The Colors were posted and the Pledge of Allegiance given. An invocation was given at the beginning of the ceremony and a benediction at the close of the ceremony by Cadet Second Lieutenant Noah Green, the unit's cadet chaplain.



I presented the National MOAA Medal Award to Cadet Second Lieutenant Noah Green. Unfortunately, Cadet First Sergeant Amauri Berry was unable to attend to receive the JROTC Outstanding Cadet Award and the \$50 bill enclosed. Her award will be presented to her by MAJ Logan and SFC Thompson. SFC Thompson made sure all par-

ents had the opportunity to take photos of their cadets and to personally be involved in the promotion of cadets.

Mr. Michael White, Principal of Woodland HS, spoke and praised the cadets and the JROTC Leadership, but he gave special praise to the parents for their support of their cadets. He also reinforced SFC Thompson's words to all of the cadets including the seniors to have a goal in mind for themselves and to give back to their community regardless of the path they take in life whether directly into employment or further education or a military career.

MAJ Logan and SFC Simpson have certainly developed a strong JROTC Program at Woodland HS and I recommend we continue to support this JROTC unit throughout the years. The Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage have been instilled in these young cadets.

**COL Beverly R. Brockman, USA (Ret)**

Charleston Chapter MOAA  Membership Application  Renewal  Change of Address. Chapter Dues: \$20.00 a year for Regular membership. Surviving Spouse membership \$5.00 per year. Multiple year dues are encouraged in order to reduce paperwork. Make check payable to "Charleston MOAA". Mail to: Charleston MOAA, P.O. Box 70421, Charleston SC 29415-0421.

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Service \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Member of National MOAA? Please provide your membership number \_\_\_\_\_

Your status :  Retired  Active Duty  Reserve  National Guard  Former Officer  Surviving Spouse Dues for Year (s) \_\_\_\_\_

How do you want to receive your newsletter  US Mail (B&W) or  E Mail (Full color)

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We now accept payments through Zelle® for dues, lunches, and donations for Toys for Tots and Scholarship funds. Please follow these simple steps:

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**Step 2:** Add our organization as a recipient. Send your payment to: charlestonmoaa@gmail.com.

Make sure the name shown is: Charleston Chapter, Military Officers Association of America

**Step 3:** Enter your payment details.

- Amount: Enter the correct amount for your payment.

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- Luncheon/food choices
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This memo helps us credit your payment correctly.

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- Zelle® payments go directly from your bank account to ours, usually within minutes.
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EDITOR			
SCHOLARSHIP/Web Site	Col Rudy Smart, USAF	843-834-0474	r2smart1@gmail.com

**Prospective Chapter Members:** If you are not a member of the Charleston Chapter, MOAA, you have received this copy as a courtesy invitation to contact any Officer or Director for information about joining our Chapter. News and Views herein are not necessarily those of any Government Department or another Chapter, or a Member's Chapter and non-partisan.

# Membership News

## LATEST INFORMATION

Total Members - 206  
Regular Members—161  
Honorary Members - 4  
Surviving Spouse Members - 40  
Special Members—1  
Members receiving the newsletter by email 132

CHARLESTON MOAA MEMBERS: We are continuing our recruiting drive for new members. If you are uncertain of your status, just e-mail me at [brockman1982@att.net](mailto:brockman1982@att.net) and I will verify if you are current for another year or more or— if you need to pay dues for 2026. My cell number is 704-300-8739, but an e-mail is usually the best and most efficient. We value your membership and appreciate your support of our chapter.

As of January 1, 2026 our dues for Regular Members has been increased to \$20/year. The dues will remain at \$5 for Surviving Spouses—defined as widows or widowers of Regular Members. Please make checks payable to "Charleston MOAA" and mail to Charleston MOAA, PO BOX 70421, Charleston, SC 29415-0421. We now have an alternative method for payment of dues other than USPS. Please see the instructions for Zelle payments on page 7.

RECRUITING UPDATE - I ask everyone to think of our Chapter when you are meeting new folks in your community, neighborhood, church or other organizations. If they are interested in joining our Chapter, and meet the criteria, I will be glad to follow-up and share more information with them. Just provide my name, number and e-mail to them or send me an e-mail with their information and I will reach out to them.

ADDRESS/EMAIL CHANGES-Please keep me advised if you have a change to your address, phone or e-mail and I will update our records. When you have requested a newsletter to be mailed to you and your address has changed or you are on vacation, the Chapter must pay a fee to the Post Office for the newsletter to have the mail released. We will be glad to use your email during your time of travel only if you prefer.

We very much appreciate everyone's support of our Chapter and should you have any questions at any time,— feel free to call me at 704-300-8739 or e-mail me at [brockman1982@att.net](mailto:brockman1982@att.net). I will be happy to answer your questions.

Thank you!  
Beverly Brockman Col, USA (Ret)  
Membership 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

## Thank You

*For your gift in support of  
Chapter programs:*

*LTC Ellen C. Beckmann, USA (Ret)\*\**

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<http://www.charlestonmoaa.com>

**Many improvements were recently made,  
and the work continues.**