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**Surviving Spouse Liason**  
Need –you don't need to be a surviving spouse for this position.

**President's  
Notes:**

As I looked back on this picture that was taken on October 27, 2021 at Hoss's Restaurant,



that evening the chapter members voted not to close. I felt a determination this could be the “The Little Chapter (Engine) That Could.” Since that picture was taken, two members have been diagnosis with cancer and undergoing cancer treatments; one passed away and one had to move to an assistant living facility. “The Little Chapter That Could” of 26 members is struggling right now. If you remember the story, the Little Blue Engine hooks up the train and has that positive thought “I think I can— I think I can” and pulls the train over the mountains.

Next week is the start of spring—everything looks better in the spring and the start of our meetings together. The board met last week and we have some excellent programs scheduled through June. (See side bar below.) We will use our June meeting to springboard a recruiting drive to the Erie area. For July and August the board is looking for venues to connect with these potential members. The board is listening to suggestions; please ask your family and friends for suggestions. We can get stuck in “we’ve always done it that way” thinking.

“The Little Chapter that Could” needs some help from the membership.

First, is to make every effort possible to attend our dinner meetings - bring your spouse or a guest. If possible, RSVP for these meetings so we can inform the restaurant how many will be attending. My phone numbers are on this page.

Second, we need six members to pay their dues to have 100% participation. A big thank you to those who have paid.

Third, the chapter would like to connect with the four JROTC units in Erie. MOAA national provides an award to a junior cadet. Due to COVID, awards presentations were cancelled. We need individuals to contact instructors and offer to present the award. The attire for presenting the award could be your military uniform, sport coat with open collar or tie, our women officers’

*Continue on page 2*

**French Creek Valley Calendar 2022**

Date	Location and Program
Tue 3/29	<b>Membership Meeting</b> Hoss's Steak & Seafood 6 P.M. 18817 Smock Hwy, Meadville, PA 16335 <b>What To Do Before It Happens— Preparing Your Survivors</b> The presentation is geared towards spouses and single adults. RSVP by Sunday, March 27 <sup>th</sup> to Gran Goza for handouts count and so the restaurant can be staffed accordingly. Contact numbers on left.
Thr 4/14	<i>Board Meeting, Italian Civic Center at 11:30 A.M. Open to all chapter members to attend</i>
Tue 4/26	<b>Membership meeting</b> Hoss's Steak & Seafood 6 P.M. 18817 Smock Hwy, Meadville, PA 16335 Speaker: Francis Lacanera director of Military and Veterans Affairs for Congressman Kelly.
Tue 5/31	<b>Membership meeting</b> Hoss's Steak & Seafood 6 P.M. 18817 Smock Hwy, Meadville, PA 16335 Speaker: Judie Dorman former police officer will speak on Personal Safety
Tue 6/28	<b>Membership meeting</b> Venango Valley Inn 21217 Church Street, US-19, Venango, PA CAPT Frank Michael USN (Ret) Program Director, Council and Chapter Affairs National MOAA

**In this newsletter hyperlinks are in this color and underlined.**

## Do You Believe in JROTC? Do You Know the Purpose of JROTC?

By Janet Oglesby, *Surviving Spouse*

I wrote this article 5 years ago after attending the East High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) awards program. East High School is an inner city school in Youngstown, Ohio. I was there to take a picture of the MOAA presenter and the cadet awardee for the chapter newsletter. The other presenter was the local Army Recruiter. The JROTC instructor is great—he should mentor all JROTC instructors. He had too many cadets for one instructor—finding another instructor that can keep up (yes, they run) with the students and understands the environment that the cadets come from is difficult!

A few days later I was at The Youngstown State University Army ROTC awards program. There was an abundance of university faculty, alumni, awards presenters and awards recipients. It is such an honor to see these young men and women in their class A uniforms. They are ready to become Second Lieutenants in the United States Army.

It hurt me that these same presenters could not show up at an inner city school to present awards, the physical award was at the school, they weren't. They didn't believe in JROTC, or did they not understand the purpose of JROTC?

The JROTC program is designed to teach high school students (elective program) the value of citizenship, leadership, service to the community, personal responsibility, and a sense of accomplishment, while instilling in them self-esteem, teamwork, and self-discipline. (*Don't we want that in the next generation?*)

You may think that JROTC is a military-preparation program, but as you can see, that is not in its mission. Since its beginnings in 1916, the purpose of JROTC has been to teach cadets leadership, geography, civics, health, global awareness, life skills, and U.S. history. With this focus, the cadet will be better positioned to function in life itself, even if they never go into the military.

A JROTC cadet is assigned ranks comparable to the chain of command of the military branch that is JROTC unit. To be promoted, a cadet must gain military knowledge as they progress through the program and demonstrate practical skills and leadership. Like the military, as they are promoted in rank, they are expected to help teach and lead cadets who are of a lower rank.

The other reason I was there at the high school is hard to explain unless you are an educator or a leader of young people or a parent. That proud feeling you get knowing that you were involved in some small way in turning a person's life around in a positive way. If you are around military folks you hear the word "camaraderie" mentioned. If you want to see camaraderie, attend a JROTC award ceremony. There is a tremendous showing of camaraderie amongst the cadets!

These JROTC programs are life changing experiences! I was privileged to witness that every year that I attended. These cadets are some of the best students in the school. In case you think that JROTC is for the below average student, JROTC is the largest youth training and development program in the nation, with more than 550,000 students participating in 3,390 units at U.S. high schools across the country. What a smart elective program to choose!

Our role as a MOAA chapter is simple, make sure the award gets to the school. If we really believe in the next generation we need to try to present the award in person. Yes, it is hard to applaud with the same enthusiasm for the first awardee to the last. It can be difficult to corner the cadet later and get a photo-op with you, but I will guarantee you they will have a big smile. Be prepared to meet their family as they will be smiling as well.

*The year after I wrote this article, every table in the cafeteria was filled with presenters.*

### *President's Notes continue from page 1*

equal attire. Give your cell phone to one of those young cadets for a picture of you and the awardee. If you don't know what JROTC is, see the article above..

The four schools are:

- Seneca High School in Wattsburg - Air Force Instructor SMSgt Raymond Oshop.
- Northwest Pennsylvania Collegiate Academy - Army Instructors LTC Fredrick Johns, and SFC Kenneth Watson.
- McDowell High School - Air Force-our chapter member Ralph Dorman is going to connect with the school.
- Cathedral Prep - Air Force Instructors Lt Col Brenda Franklin, MSgt Richard Sambuchino, an awards program is scheduled on 26 April.
- Contact me if you are willing to be a presenter.

The fourth and final need(s). The chapter would be so appreciative of a member(s) who would be a membership chair, a legislative chair, and a survivor spouse liaison. On the later the individual does not need to be a survivor spouse actually, a couple can be a great help on a passing of a member. MOAA has on their web site and tutorials and webinars to assist you with these duties.

MOAA's tagline is NEVER STOP SERVING, a military version of "I Think I Can."

I hope to see everybody on March 29<sup>th</sup>— *Gran Goza*

## MOAA Take Action Center Update

From MOAA Advocacy Web Page

Please send your elected official a MOAA suggested message today. [Click here](#)

MOAA's annual Advocacy in Action (AiA) event is taking shape, and while there's more than a month until the official launch, there are several ways MOAA members can begin showing their support as the campaign draws closer.

First, the basics: The 2022 AiA event will be held virtually from April 1-29. Based on Capitol Hill security measures and nationwide health challenges, we will again exercise appropriate measures of caution to bring our messages to legislators via virtual engagements. However, there may be opportunities for you to engage your legislators in person (safely) when they are home during Congress' spring break (April 11-22).

### This year's advocacy topics:

- Support the Major Richard Star Act (concurrent receipt for combat-injured service-members) **Sen. Tommey is the only legislative individual who has endorsed**
- Reduce TRICARE Mental Health Copayments
- Enact a 4.6% Military Pay Raise in the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)

Learn more about each topic, and how MOAA chooses the topics, below. But first:

### What You Can Do Now

**Contact a MOAA Chapter.** Most engagements during the April campaign will originate from MOAA's councils and chapters. Their legislative leaders and volunteers make most of the appointments and arrangements with legislative offices. One of the advantages of the virtual environment is the use of online meeting platforms (Zoom, Teams, etc.) which can facilitate engagement from home; please contact your local chapter to see if they can add you to their efforts – it could be as easy as sending you a link to a meeting.

**Save the Date.** If you are not near a chapter, please mark your calendar for April 1 as the kickoff for AiA engagements. We will share another article like this one with more up-to-date information, talking points, and fact sheets on our three topics, as well as links to the latest information and MOAA's web-based letters, along with the phone number for MOAA's Capitol Switchboard if you would rather call your legislators.

**Stay Informed.** Be sure to [subscribe to the weekly MOAA Newsletter](#) see page 6 of this newsletter for the latest AiA news and updates Keep up with all the latest advocacy news at [MOAA's Advocacy News page](#).

### How MOAA Picks the Topics

People often ask how we come up with the topics each year, and some wonder if their priorities are being considered in that process. I can assure our members we consider all the priorities, which are usually found within groupings of these priorities on our website. The decisions are driven by guidelines established by our board of directors. We want to ensure we are taking care of the currently serving troops and their families – as members of an officer association, we should be proud MOAA maintains this important perspective.

We also want to address an issue within our health care portfolio, as our members continue to see this as one of their priorities. When conditions permit, we also seek to leverage momentum on important issues – often the case in the second session of a Congress as they wrap up work from the previous year.

This year's topics:

**The Major Richard Star Act** (concurrent receipt for combat-injured servicemembers). Target legislation is H.R. 1282 with 186 co-sponsors as of Feb. 14 – picking up 35 new co-sponsors this session. The Senate's bill, S. 344, has 55 co-sponsors as of Feb. 14. We will build on this momentum from last year to get these bills to a floor vote, or have the bill's language made part of the FY 2023 NDAA with support from House and Senate leaders. This legislation impacts over 50,000 combat-injured service members who were not able to serve their full 20 years due to those injuries. Passage of this bill will also impact current and future members who may face the same fate of early retirements due to combat injuries.

## Legislative Contacts

MOAA Legislative Update  
<https://moaa.quorum.us/or>  
1-800-234-6622 ext. 215

### Legislative Contacts

President Joseph Biden (D)  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington DC 20500  
Switchboard: 202-456-1414  
[whitehouse.gov](http://whitehouse.gov)

### PENNSYLVANIA

**Senator Robert Casey Jr. (D)**  
393 Russell Senate Office Bld.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
Phone: (202) 224-6324  
Fax: (202) 228-0604  
[casey.senate.gov](http://casey.senate.gov)

**Senator Patrick Toomey (R)**  
248 Russell Senate Office Bld.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
Phone: (202) 224-4254  
Fax: (202) 228-0284  
[toomey.senate.gov](http://toomey.senate.gov)

*Representative District 16*  
**Mike Kelly (R)**  
208 E. Bayfront Pwy, Suite 102  
Erie, PA 16507  
Phone: (814) 454-8190  
Fax: (814) 454-8197  
[kelly.house.gov](http://kelly.house.gov)

*Representative District 15*  
**Glenn Thompson (R)**  
217 Elm St.  
Suite B  
Oil City, PA 16301  
Phone: (814) 670-0432  
Fax: (814) 670-0868  
[thompson.house.gov](http://thompson.house.gov)

Email the legislative contacts through their web site.

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*MOAA Legislative from page 3*

**TRICARE Mental Health Copayments.** MOAA supports the Stop Copay Overpay Act (H.R. 4824) – mental health is increasingly important, and the issue is getting attention on the Hill due to pandemic impacts and the effects of social media on children’s well-being. This topic acknowledges the national shortfall of access to quality mental health care and addresses TRICARE’s financial barrier to care when it is available – a problem MOAA can help fix. This legislation will benefit our currently serving families on TRICARE Select and our working-age retirees and their families.

**Military Pay Raise at 4.6%.** This will be worked in the FY 2023 NDAA with insights in the president’s budget and input from the Armed Services Committees in both chambers. Some legislators are interested in adjusting pay tables for the junior enlisted. We have yet to see details of any such plans, but in the meantime, we remain focused on the 4.6% raise for all ranks. This topic addresses the currently serving and their families (pay and benefits) and is significantly important to those who are about to retire.

**What’s Next?**

We will follow up with several actions over the coming weeks:

The MOAA AIA website will be live in mid-March for those who want to get a head start on lobbying for these three important topics. Watch for updates at [MOAA.org/AiA](https://MOAA.org/AiA).

As noted above, around the same time our website goes live, a follow-up article at MOAA.org will share links to everything you would need to go it alone with your legislators. However, we ask that you consider reaching out to your local chapter to possibly join their efforts.

**Watch for the April Military Officer Magazine Tear-Out Letters will be in this issue for you to send.**

Your April issue of *Military Officer* (available to Life and Premium members) will include a message from MOAA’s president highlighting the AiA efforts, as well as more details on the topics and what we are trying to achieve with your help. Very important: The publication also will include tear-out letters for you to fold, seal, stamp, and mail to House and Senate leaders, making them even more aware of our efforts and seeking their support. These letters will highlight the Major Richard Star Act.

Throughout April, we will provide articles and links to Calls to Action via our new Legislative Action Center, which allows you to send messages to your legislators via our web-based letter service.

April 11–22 is the congressional working period in the states and districts: Your legislators will be home and hard at work campaigning. This is a golden opportunity to seek an appointment in person or virtually, depending on the comfort level of those involved.

*Personal Affairs Column*

**Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)**

*From the MOAA Newsletters, Jan 27 and Feb 9, 2022:*

Most holders of Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), including employer-provided defined contribution plans, are familiar with the COVID-influenced changes (SECURE Act) to mandatory age-based distributions.

If you did not reach age 70½ until after December 31, 2019, then mandatory distributions were delayed until no later than April 1 of the year after the owner’s 72<sup>nd</sup> birth year. Future distributions must occur by Dec. 31 of each year. If you reached age 72 in 2021 but plan to delay your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) until just prior to April 2022, you will be required to make another withdrawal prior to December 31, 2022.

If the account owner reached 70½ prior to December 31, 2019, then the initial RMD must have commenced prior to April 1, 2020.

Life expectancy tables recently have been updated, reducing the amount of previously calculated RMDs for 2022 and beyond. [IRS Publication 590-B](#) is the guiding document for IRAs. As of January 26, 2022, the 590-B is still in draft form. However, the RMD worksheets (Appendix A) and Life Expectancy Tables (Appendix B) are available to make RMD estimates.

Simplified Employee Pension (SEP) plans, [SIMPLE IRA Plans](#), and Qualified Plans — defined contribution plans, like the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) and 401(k)s — adhere to [IRS Publication 560](#), which is also still in draft form for 2021 returns. Your defined contribution administrator should calculate RMDs for their account holders.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced February 3 that Medicare beneficiaries will have access to eight free, over-the-counter, at-home COVID test kits per month starting in early spring. Tests will be available through eligible pharmacies and other participating entities.

Because they are enrolled in Medicare, TRICARE For Life beneficiaries will have access to the free kits once the Medicare program is implemented. All other TRICARE beneficiaries are still subject to TRICARE policy, which currently does not cover over-the-counter COVID test kits.

*Six more chapter members for 100%*

**Thanks to the Following for Their 2022 Dues**

Clifton Barretta	Granville Goza	H. Charles Shulz
Carol Bellini	Barb Goza	Paula Sleptzoff
Mark Bellini	George Hagstrom	Richard Stuntz
Steven deKramer	Marc Kirchner	Ann Sturgis
Ralph Dorman	Paul McKay	Janice Thomas
Richard Elberfeld	Edward Morfenski	Joal Wolf
Pat Genung	Janet Oglesby	

*Surviving Spouse Corner:*

**End-of-Life Documents**

*By: Barbara Ann Bowman, member of MOAA's Surviving Spouse Advisory Council*

Most people would list among end-of-life documents a will, a trust, an advance directive, a DNR (do not resuscitate) order, and a durable power of attorney. But the list of documents that deal with end-of-life issues is much longer. Deeds to real property, beneficiary declaration for life insurance, and the signature card to a bank account are all end-of-life documents. They determine who gets what and through which legal procedure when someone dies.

Fortunately, checklists to help create an end-of-life plan are available through a number of trustworthy organizations. Among them:

- MOAA's [Help Your Survivors Now: A Guide to Planning Ahead](#)
- VA's [Planning Your Legacy](#)
- Military.com's [Military Retiree Survivor Checklist](#)
- State Bar Association articles and forms

Research these resources, pick a checklist, or create one of your own. Gather legal documents you already have, including will, trust documents, health care directives, powers of attorney, beneficiary designations, asset inventory, deeds, military papers, instructions to access digital accounts, and contact information for family.

Consult professionals — lawyer, accountant, insurance agent, financial advisor — to help put together the plan, and then review, update, redraft, and re-execute documents, lists, and paperwork when needed.

At least once a year, review and update the plan. Have circumstances changed? Do the documents do what they are intended to do? Have state or federal laws affecting any of these documents changed? Are lists of assets current? Are titles to real estate, bank accounts, and vehicles correct? Are beneficiary designations still good?

Discuss your plan with those who hold health care proxy, powers of attorney, and other authority over your person and property. Put documents in a safe place, yet where they can be accessed by those in whom you have placed trust.

Be proactive. End-of-life documents are in reality life's documents. Deal with them now.

MOAA has a Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter is an affinity group whose members share information and ideas with others in a virtual environment. The Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter now meets every other month on the Third Tuesday through Zoom. Almost 40 states are represented in the membership. A membership application is downloaded [at this link](#). It can also be obtained by sending a request to [mssvc02@gmail.com](mailto:mssvc02@gmail.com).

IN MEMORIAM

**MAJ Bill Sleptzoff, US Air Force Frm.  
4 September 1949 – 31 January 2022**

Bill was born in Munich, Germany a son of Alexander and Irene W. Eisen Sleptzoff, who preceded him in death along with a brother, Alexander Sleptzoff, Jr.



He was a 1967 graduate of Meadville High School and received three degrees in Math, Geography and Computer Science from the former Edinboro College. He was a veteran of the Vietnam War serving stateside in the US Air Force from 1971–1974 and then in the reserve until 1985 leaving with a rank of Major. He worked as a wire EDM specialist for many area Tool and Die firms, most recently being Vision Tool.

He was active in the Republican party and enjoyed most outdoor activities, including hunting and fishing. He also enjoyed photography and traveling.

Surviving is his wife, Paula of 27 years, two step-children, and five step-grandchildren, a brother, a sister-in-law, and many nieces and nephews.

At the recent board meeting. A motion was made to present Post 52 with a donation in memory of these five FCV Officers. FCV will ask Post 52 that the donation be used to help veterans in our area.

- Col James A. Thomas Sr., USAF Retired, passed away on May 12, 2010
- Lt Col Raymond Causa, USAF Retired, passed away on January 16, 2019
- 2LT Dr. Robert Moyer, Army, passed away on March 25, 2019
- LtCol Fred Cunningham, USMC Retired, passed away on December 6, 2019

**Crawford County Veterans Affairs**

Phone: 814-333-7314  
 Fax: 814-337-5623  
 Downtown Mall (Parking Lot Side)  
 900 Water St., Suite 2  
 Meadville, PA 16335

Crawford County has five DAV vans. The vans are used for transporting veterans to and from their VA medical appointments and are conveniently located at VFW posts in Linesville, Meadville, and Titusville. There is no cost for this service and the veterans do not have to be members of any veterans organization. The Transportation Coordinator works every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday scheduling rides. Volunteer drivers are needed to keep things running smoothly.

**Erie County Veterans Affairs**

140 West Sixth Street Room 111  
 Erie, PA 16501  
 814-451-6265  
[veteraninfo@eriecountypa.gov](mailto:veteraninfo@eriecountypa.gov)

**Venango Cty Veterans Affairs**

Troy A Wood  
 Human Services Complex  
 1 Dale Avenue  
 Franklin, PA 16323  
 Phone: 814-432-9780

**Mercer County Veterans Affairs**

14 Courthouse  
 Mercer, Pa 16137  
 Ph: 724-662-7511  
 Fax: 724-662-7516

Did this newsletter arrive via email last Thursday?



**ADVOCACY**

**VA Plan Would Close 3 Major Medical Centers, Restructure Outpatient Clinics**

**MOAA Testifies Before Congress on Top Priorities for Veterans**

**Congress Nears Agreement on FY 2022 Funding ... Almost Half a Year Late**

**If not then you need to do establish a login and update your email preferences at MOAA National**

To establish a login at [MOAA.org](http://MOAA.org) and create a profile. There is lots of information on the MOAA web site. You need to be a member to login to the chapter area. Our newsletter will contain hyperlinks to the MOAA website.

If you ARE a MOAA member and HAVE a login go to [www.moaa.org/email](http://www.moaa.org/email) about updating email preferences. Many people don't realize they need to update their preferences. As soon as you go to this web page, simply add your email address in the box. Next, you can see all the MOAA alerts they receive and can remove/add at your leisure.

**Mission Statement French Creek Valley**

*French Creek Valley Chapter will promote the objectives of the Military Officers Association of America providing a uniform lobbying platform on behalf of the active duty, Reserve, Guard, retired, and former officers of the uniformed services and their spouses and families. Conduct activities which: perpetuate traditions, educate and inform members of world, national, and local events, which affect the current and former members of the U.S. military. Provide a fraternal and supportive community for members to network, socialize and promote camaraderie.*

**Membership Requirements for French Creek Valley Chapter**

*Membership is open to active duty, National Guard, Reserve, retired, and former commissioned officers and warrant officers of the following uniformed services: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.*

*Memberships also are available for surviving spouses of deceased officers. Chapter specific membership for spouses of present members and honorary members.*

This newsletter is published for the benefit of the members of the French Creek Valley Chapter, which is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). MOAA and its affiliated chapters and councils are non-partisan. Articles in this newsletter are the opinions solely of the individual authors and do not necessarily express the policy or opinions of the newsletter's editor or publisher. Also, the individual opinions do not reflect an endorsement by the French Creek Valley Chapter or the national organization of the Military Officers Association of America, unless so indicated [Copyright 2018 Military Officers Association of America All rights reserved.] Questions or comments should be directed to: Granville B. Goza, III, Capt USAF, Ret., (814) 398-4470 [gbgoza3@gmail.com](mailto:gbgoza3@gmail.com)

**APPLICATION AND DUES RENEWAL FOR FRENCH CREEK VALLEY CHAPTER AN AFFILIATE OF MOAA**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Is this a cell Yes  No  Do You Text Yes  No

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Is this a cell Yes  No  Do You Text Yes  No

Service Branch	Rank	Status (Retired, Former, Active)
Component	Years Active	Years Reserve
		Years National Guard

Member of MOAA National Yes  No

Make Check Payable to:  
**French Creek Chapter**  
 PO Box 1004 Meadville, PA 16335

Chapter Dues for 2022  
 Regular Member **\$10**  
 Spouse Member **\$10**  
 Surviving Spouse **\$5**

How do you communicate, – these are faster than email  
 Are you on Facebook?  
 Do you use Twitter?

Newsletters will be emailed, check this box if you prefer postal service **IMPORTANT DUE TO COST**

If you are an surviving spouse put your spouses name down, their branch(s) last rank, status