

THE BUGLER



*Military Officers Association of America, Citrus County Chapter
Post Office Box 995, Inverness, Florida 34451-0995*

Captain's Call

By CAPT Thomas T. Holme, Jr. USN (Ret)

November began with our monthly meeting on the 3rd and a terrific presentation on the Fisher House Foundation and their facility at the VA hospital in Tampa by its Administrator (and MOAA member) Paula Welenc. I had been advised that she was both entertaining and informative and that advice was spot on. I think we all learned a great deal about this extraordinary and vital program. There were several comments after the meeting from folks saying this was one of our more enjoyable presentations. With your help, I hope to continue to have equally entertaining guests for our future monthly meeting.

Every year I'm amazed by Veterans' Appreciation Week and this year was certainly no different. It simply gets better and better. A few of us, representing many veterans' organizations, have been meeting once a month to make sure that the many events (dinners, concerts, balls, ceremonies and the parade) were coordinated. That effort certainly paid off and the parade, with nearly 100 individual entries was living proof. It was especially gratifying to hear repeatedly, "without MOAA this wouldn't be possible". During the meeting at Cock-a-doodles at 6:30 on the morning of the parade I noted that about 80% of the parade marshals were MOAA members. Some, of course, also belonged to other organizations but MOAA membership was a common thread. To everyone who volunteered, Bravo Zulu!

The Veterans in the classroom effort was also another big success. While the number of classes visited was down slightly, the enthusiasm in the classes visited certainly wasn't. Everyone I talked to who had participated reported that it was a positive experience for both the veteran visitors and their hosts.

Our next monthly meeting will be December 1st at the Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club,

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(the former André's) for our annual installation dinner. Check elsewhere in this month's newsletter for details on making your reservation.

The installation officer this year will be one of our own. Citrus County Commissioner J. J. Kenney has agreed to do the honors and give us a needed update on issues affecting us in the County. I look forward to hearing from J.J. and seeing all of you there for an evening of fine food and camaraderie.

During the first week of January I will be attending the Winter Presidents' Meeting with our Membership Chair(s) for what promises to be a great opportunity to share with others ideas on how to increase our Chapter membership. In recent weeks we have been fortunate to add significantly to our membership and we will need to continue that success. The circumstances in our catchment area are different from those facing Chapters located in close proximity to active duty installations. We need to develop methods for attracting both recently retired and still working MOAA members and MOAA eligible individuals living just down the street or around the corner. I am confident that we'll come back from the meeting with fresh ideas to share with all of you.

Our monthly meeting in January will be hosted by the Women of MOAA on Thursday the 19th. More information on that meeting will be forthcoming.

Until then, see you on December 1st.

Tim

Minutes of the MOAA, Citrus County Chapter General Meeting held Nov. 3, 2011

The General Meeting of Military Officers Association of America, Citrus County Chapter convened at 12:00 on Nov 3, 2011 at the Emperors Garden Restaurant in Inverness, Florida. President Thomas T. Holme Jr. presiding. There were 30 in attendance.

Former TROA CC President and Citrus County Commissioner J. J. Kenney and his wife, Brenda were present.

Chaplain Frederick Ohsiek gave the invocation and Norm Cooney led in the pledge of allegiance to the American Flag. The chapter's colours were present.

President Tim Holme welcomed our newest potential members: Bob Crawford, Carol van Schenkhof and Ron van Schenkhof. Carol and Ron are married to each other and are both retired military members.

Tim said that Sharon Richie-Melvan attended the MOAA National meeting. Our chapter was awarded a Four-Star Excellence award. This was our third "Four-Star" award in the past four years. The fourth award during this period was a "Five-Star" award. At this time, the latest "Four-Star" streamer was added to our colours.

Secretary Gary E Runyon said the minutes of the last meeting had been published in the newsletter. There being no corrections, the minutes were approved.

Gary said that Richard Lee, Admiral McLeod, Marge Blunk and he would man the MOAA booth at the November 5 Veterans Fair. Various details about setting-up and starting times were discussed and settled.

MOAA will enter an antique car in the Veterans Day Parade as their float. Louise Maroc-Hogberg will drive the car. President Tim Holme emphasized that most of the Parade Marshals for this parade have traditionally been from our organization. He encouraged our members to participate. Parade Marshals will meet at 6:30 a.m. at Cockadoodles Restaurant in Inverness.

The Massing of the Colours will be held Sunday, November 13 at the Baptist Church in Inverness. Jim Echlin and Gary Runyon will carry our chapter's colours at this event.

Tom Green said that his church was holding its monthly Friday dinner on November 4. The meal is Fish and the profits go to a charity to buy food for needy Citrus County students.

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(The minutes continued from page 2)

Tom praised this chapter's Veterans in the Classroom efforts. Tom displayed a backpack with a school logo that was given to him by the students after he spoke before their classroom.

Tom said the Fall Picnic had receipts of \$296.00 and expenses of \$190.87 dollars. With \$80.00 set aside for Bud Wise Scholarship donations, we still made a small profit.

Tom Green gave the Treasurers Report: As of October 31, 2011:

General Fund Receipts:	\$ 376.00
GF Disbursements	\$ 269.89
GF Balance*	\$5208.92
Community Service Fund Rct	\$.00 (No Activity)
CSF Fund Balance**	\$1240.54
Petty Cash Fund receipts	\$ 20.00
Petty Cash Fund disbursements	\$ 23.00
PCF Balance	\$ 6.10
Wise CD/Interest	\$2411.04
Total	\$8866.60

* Includes \$3428.99 of Bud Wise Scholarship Funds.

** General Fund owes CSF \$9.68

The Treasurer's report was approved.

President Tim Holme said the Installation Dinner will be held December 1, at The Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club. Cost is \$37.50 per ticket.

The January combined meeting will be held January 19, at the Inverness Ladies Club.

Tim reminded everyone that he is involved with the Internet Vote Easy program. This is an award winning program that gives the views of all candidates for all major races. Tim said all the information will be current and ready to go for the National elections starting November 7.

Tim announced nominations to fill the four electable positions for next year's vice president and three members of the Board of Directors.

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(The minutes continued from page 3)

They are:

Vice President: Norm Cooney

Member, Board of Directors: Richard Lee

Member, Board of Directors: Ron Resare

Member, Board of Directors: Sharon Richie-Melvan

There being no further nominations, all four members were voted in by unanimous acclamation. There were no dissenting votes.

Tim introduced our guest speaker, Paula A Welenc who manages a Fisher House in the Tampa Bay area.

Ms. Welenc thanked Tim. She said she was a retired Air Force officer and that she felt at home among the retired officers at this meeting.

Ms. Welece explained that the Fisher House program is a unique private-public partnership that supports America's military in their time of need. The program recognizes the special sacrifices of our men and women in uniform and the hardships of military service by meeting a humanitarian need beyond that normally provided by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

Because members of the military and their families are stationed worldwide and must often travel great distances for specialized medical care, Fisher House Foundation donates "comfort homes," built on the grounds of major military and VA medical centers. These homes enable family members to be close to a loved one at the most stressful times. These times are during the hospitalization for an unexpected illness, disease, or injury.

There is at least one Fisher House at every major military medical center to assist families in need and to ensure that they are provided with the comforts of home in a supportive environment. Annually, the Fisher House program serves more than 12,000 families, and have made available over three million days of lodging to family members since the program originated in 1990. By law, there is no charge for any family to stay at a Fisher House operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs; and Fisher House Foundation uses donations to reimburse the individual Fisher Houses operated by the Army, Navy, and Air Force. No family pays to stay at any Fisher House!

Ms. Welenc said there are 54 Fisher homes in the entire system with more to come. Some of the houses are designed to work closely with the Department of Defense and some are designed to work with the VA. Two homes are in Germany.

(The minutes are continued on page 5)

(The minutes are continued from page 4)

The Tampa Bay Fisher House is one of the busiest in the Nation. It is located near a military poly-trauma center which treats veterans with multiple wounds. The Tampa Bay Fisher House is one of six located near such a poly-trauma center.

On the outset of World War II, Zachary Fisher was physically unqualified to enter the military service. At home, this civilian used his personal family fortune to build a series of fortifications along the East coast of the United States to defend it from enemy attack. After the war, Fisher continued to be a benefactor to the military.

The Fisher House program was established by Zachary Fisher and his wife Elizabeth. The first "Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher House" was opened in Bethesda, Maryland at National Naval Medical Center on 24 June 1990. The second Fisher House was opened at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC.

Fisher Houses are given to the United States Government as gifts by the Fisher House Foundation. Each house is designed to provide eight to twenty-one family suites. The houses accommodate 16 to 42 family members. They feature a common kitchen, laundry facilities, spacious dining room, and a family style living room with a library. Toys are provided for the younger children. Fisher Houses are a temporary residence, not a treatment facility, hospice or counseling center. They are normally within walking distance of a military or Veterans Affairs hospital. They are designed to be comfortable temporary home, manned by caring volunteers who help family members endure the stresses associated with serious long-term medical conditions or injuries. Fisher House enables families to stay together, cook meals, do chores, and relax in a home-like environment. The nominal service fee charged Fisher House guests is always lower than other military lodging facilities and much lower than commercial hotels. There is no charge to stay at any of the Fisher Houses.

Zachary and Elizabeth are now deceased, so the foundation is run by their heirs.

Since Federal law prohibited the military from paying for the personal travel of service members and their families, Fisher House expanded its support to include airline tickets. Through a program call *Operation Hero Miles*, Fisher House now gives away free airline tickets to help military families reunite with hospitalized service members.

Fisher House "inmates" come from all across the country. Qualified "inmates" include a parent, spouse, fiancé, girl/boyfriend, close neighbor or anyone else that qualifies as a close source of comfort for a wounded military person. One "inmate" spent over 1,000 hours in the Tampa Bay Fisher House. Imagine the cost if this person had to foot the bill for this alone? The Tampa Bay house always has 100% occupancy.

(The minutes are continued on page 6)

(The minute continued from page5)

“Inmates” must have a patient in the Tampa VA hospital and must live greater than fifty miles away. Children can stay at a Fisher House. All children are given a stuffed animal. Usually, each patient is allowed one suite. Arrangements are made to send children to local schools if that is appropriate. The military pays for day care.

No money contributed to the Fisher House Foundation goes for PR. The houses speak for themselves. All bases now have a Family Resource Liaison to coordinate efforts between the military and a local Fisher House

The Tampa Bay Chapter of MOAA is a supporter of their local Fisher House. The Tampa Bay Fisher House has a staff of two.

New Fisher Houses have been proposed and will be built. There is a vetting process to see where they are needed most.

Tim Holme thanked Ms. Welnec for her comments.

Norm Cooney won the 50/50 and donated the \$77.00 to the scholarship fund.

Hank Butler said that the Korean War Veterans Association had reserved a MOAA table at their upcoming December 3 ball.

The meeting was adjourned at 13:05.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary E Runyon
Secretary

FYI: The deadline for submitting articles for “The Bugler” newsletter is the 15th day
of the month.

Legislation Report for December

By Tim Holme

I think it is pretty obvious that most of us are aware that November 23rd is going to be an important date for those of us paying close attention to what's happening in Washington regarding the deliberations of the "Super Committee" on the budget. This newsletter is scheduled to be in your hands at just about the time the Committee demonstrates whether or not they have managed to come to some sort of compromise agreement. The target is an agreement that produces \$1.2 to \$1.5 Trillion in savings over the next 10 years. Mind you, even with an achievement of the greater amount of savings, this does not result in a balanced budget and our national debt will continue to rise!

For weeks the Committee of 6 Democrats and 6 Republicans, 6 Senators and 6 Representatives have apparently agreed to little other than to disagree on how to reach an agreement. One side insists that entitlements (Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, etc) cannot be touched and taxes (primarily on the wealthy) have to be increased. The other side insists that entitlements need to be on the table and that increasing taxes is a non-starter. I sometimes believe that the Committee members are more concerned about the impact of a solution on their reelection prospects than they are about the impact of a solution on the health of the nation's economy. Or, am I too cynical? ☺

To me, the real solution is to bite the bullet and produce an agreement that doesn't limit itself to \$1.5 trillion, but shows real leadership and finds at least \$4 trillion in savings. To do otherwise only creates the need to do it all over again in a few months as the debt crisis continues to require agreements to raise the debt ceiling once again. The real need is for a balanced budget and to reduce debt not just deficit. This certainly isn't going to be accomplished by just taxing the rich, even if the Administration decides that anyone making more than \$250 thousand per year is rich! Entitlements must be on the table. e.g., the age for both early receipt and full Social Security benefits must rise by at least two years. When first created, Social Security was never expected to pay out for an average of 15 years. Medicare and Medicaid costs must be dramatically reduced. But that cannot happen without tort reform. Doctors must be protected from frivolous law suits so they won't be forced to practice "defensive medicine" by ordering expensive tests and procedures "just in case".

With regard to taxes, the real solution should be a major overhaul of the entire system. To me the solution is not an increase in tax rates. We already have the highest corporate tax rates in the world and increasing taxes on the super rich will just encourage them to move their wealth to investments producing non-current income. A major improvement in the tax code requires elimination of provisions that exist for "social engineering" and an increase in the tax base. Too many people pay no taxes at all either because they live on the grey economy with unrecorded income or can afford expensive legal advice to identify complex provisions of the tax code. One solution could be a national sales tax which would kick in only if you spend what you earn. To avoid it being too regressive, one needs only to decide what is taxed. e.g., milk and eggs – no tax/beer and candy – tax; medical prescriptions and toilet paper – no tax/herbal tea and greeting cards – tax. Thus, if one is truly poor and spending only on life's essentials, you pay no taxes. But, if you buy non-essentials, whether it's a small or large luxury, you are taxed. The added benefit is that the need for an annual tax return (and the IRS) is eliminated.

Whatever is decided will be affected by our vigilance and continued response to "Action Alerts" from MOAA. Failure of the Committee to reach an agreement or of Congress to approve an agreement reached will result in a massive (\$600 Billion) cut to the Defense budget which will be worse. We need to be sure we do everything we can to be sure an agreement is reached and passed. –TTH–

Secretary's Notes

A couple of things: If you have not done so already, please make your reservations for the Installation Dinner. The coupon is located elsewhere in this newsletter.

Also, the call for next year's dues begins with this issue. Those receiving their newsletters via email will note the dues tickler on the bottom of the email cover letter. Those receiving their newsletter via USPS and owing dues will still see the dreaded old fashioned "red address label." There will be a dues coupon located elsewhere in this newsletter.

More and more, we are delivering our newsletters via e-mail and this just does wonders in saving money that can be used for charitable causes.

And when you pay your dues, please consider a donation to the Bud Wise Scholarship Fund. We have now given away more than \$12,000.00 in scholarships since the program's inception. We are now hearing reports of our scholarship winners completing their advanced education. This is a very good cause. Don't forget donations to our Community Service Fund too. Most of the checks we write to the various charitable programs we support are drawn from this fund. Tom Green, the man with the checkbook, is always reminding us that this fund needs constant replenishing.

"Merry Christmas!" to everyone. I hope each of our chapter members gets to spend some Christmas time with their family. -GER-

Women of MOAA

By President Louise Maroc-Hogberg

The Women of MOAA will have their November luncheon early because of Thanksgiving. It was held the third Thursday, November 17, 12:00 midday at The McLeod House Bistro on Apopka Avenue, Inverness.

The December Christmas luncheon will be held Thursday, December 15, 12:00 midday. This meeting will be held at the Lakeside Bar and Grille. This is the old Van Der Valk.

We will exchange our gifts with our usual playful game. I shall be sending out reminders so please put it on your calendars.

The Women of MOAA will host the Joint Potluck Luncheon at The Women's Club on Forest Avenue, Inverness on Thursday, January 19, 2012. We will all meet with a hot casserole, salad or dessert. There will be a donation at the door to cover the rental cost for the clubhouse.

RSVP: Aussie90@tampabay.rr.com 637-5898

Cheers,

Louise

DECEMBER INSTALLATION DINNER

MOAA of Citrus County will be holding this year's Installation Dinner on Thursday, December 1 at the Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club (formerly called Andre's).

- Cheese and Wine table opens at **17:30**
- Dinner begins at **18:30**
- Speaker and Installation begins at **19:30**

Dinner choices are: **Baked Tilapia Almandine** or **Sliced London Broil** with mushroom gravy. Each entree includes a tossed salad. There will be a wine and cheese bar. For deserts, there will be our traditional "Phantom Chocolate Monster Cake."

The Installation Dinner is our year end, major event of the year. At this dinner, we will celebrate the installation of our newly elected Vice President and three members of the Board of Directors. We will also be displaying another MOAA National four star chapter streamer from our chapter's colours. This is the fourth year in a row we have added an award streamer. This year, we can also look back on our twelfth year of awarding a Bud Wise Scholarship.

The cost of this year's dinner is **\$37.50** per person which includes a built in donation to the Bud Wise Scholarship. Even though we live in a time of increased costs and budget shortfalls, we are pleased to point out that we have kept the price exactly the same as last year with absolutely no degradation in our traditional end-of-the-year celebration. So, it's a bargain.



YES! I want to attend. Please make the following reservations for me...

<i>Name of guests attending:</i>	<i>Entrée</i>	
_____	<i>Beef or Fish?</i>	$\$37.50 \times 1 =$ _____
_____	<i>Beef or Fish?</i>	$\$37.50 \times 1 =$ _____
<i>Dues (\$15.00 Reg/\$6.00 Aux).....</i>		$=$ _____
<i>Community Service Fund.....</i>		$=$ _____
<i>Total</i>		$=$ _____

Please make you check payable to MOAA of Citrus County and mail it to:

***MOAA of Citrus County
Post Office Box 995
Inverness, Florida 34451-0995***

MOAA of Citrus County

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Inverness, Florida
34451-0955

Phone:
352-563-5727

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laserger@infionline.net

**God Bless my
homeland....forever!**

Coming Events

MOAA Women's Christmas Luncheon: 12:00 Noon at the Lakeside Bar and Grill (Van der Valks)

Annual Installation Dinner: 17:30, December 1, at the Citrus Hills Country Club (Dinner served at 18:30)

MOAA Women Joint Potluck Luncheon at The Women's Club on Forest Avenue, Inverness, 12:00 Noon, January 19. Bring a hot casserole, salad or dessert. There will be a donation at the door to cover the rental cost for the clubhouse.

Visit our award winning Web site!

You can find us at:

<http://citruscountymoaa.org/>

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Customer Name
Street Address
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