

February 2026

**Website:** <http://lincolnlandmoaa.org>  
**Facebook.com/**  
**MOAA****Lincolnland/**

**Upcoming Events**

- 13 Feb 2026, Northfield Center Springfield
- 10 April Location TBD
- 12 June location TBD
- 14 August Location TBD
- 9 October location TBD
- 11 December Location TBD

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# THE SALUTE—Never Stop Serving....



MOAA<sup>®</sup>  
Lincoln Land Chapter

**Next Meeting Information**

I highly encourage your attendance -- Note that we will have VERY interesting presentation from LtCol Mark DePue concerning his prior interview with Admiral Ron Thunman .... Look below.

**MOAA Lincoln Land Chapter Dinner Meeting Information**  
**Friday, February 13, 2026**

**Location:** Northfield Conference Center and Suites  
3280 Northfield Dr, Springfield, IL 62702, Onyx Room  
(Enter at Northfield II Entrance)

**Social Hour at 6:00PM – Dinner at 7:00PM**

**COST:** \$34.00 per person

**Dress:** Business Casual

**Program:** Mark DePue, LtCol, USA (Ret)

**TOPIC:** Presentation of Mark's Interview with Adm Ron Thunman, who passed away last year.

Adm Thunman spent his life in submarines and was one of the best storytellers Mark has ever interviewed, including stories about Adm. Hyman Rickover, commanding an attack sub sneaking around off the coast of the USSR, helping find the Titanic and working with author Tom Clancy (Hunt for the Red October).

**RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE NOT LATER THAN 5PM on Friday, February 6th.**

**REGISTER ONLINE NOW BY going to Feb 13 2026 Dinner Meeting | Lincoln Land MOAA**

or Contact by Phone (Call or Text):

Dave Knieriem - 217-899-5526 Email: [dknieriem@casscomm.com](mailto:dknieriem@casscomm.com)

Let us know how many will attend.

**MENU:** Picnic Buffet Dinner

Tossed Salad w/ Ranch and Italian Dressing

Potato Salad

Southern Fried Chicken

Hamburgers on Buns

Corn on the Cob

Homestyle Baked Beans

Fresh Baked Cornbread

Homemade Cherry & Apple Pies

Iced Tea, Lemonade, Coffee

**THANKS ... Hope to see you at our meeting on February 13th – Should be a great time and great presentation.**

# THE SALUTE—Never Stop Serving....

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## President's Corner January 2026

Greetings to members of Lincoln Land Chapter MOAA. Here we are in a new year.

Next Meeting – Northfield Conference Center (Springfield)  
Friday, February 13, 2026

Program: Mark DePue, LtCol, USA (Ret)

TOPIC: Presentation of Mark's Interview with Adm Ron Thunman, who passed away last year. He spent his life in submarines and was one of the best storytellers Mark has ever interviewed, including stories about Adm. Hyman Rickover, commanding an attack sub sneaking around off the coast of the USSR, helping find the Titanic and working with author Tom Clancy (Hunt for the Red October). It should be a GREAT presentation.

### MOAA's Legislative Action Center:

THIS IS VERY VERY IMPORTANT: I ask ALL OF YOU help MOAA and our cause by visiting their legislative action center and contacting your elected officials regarding pending legislation MOAA is working on. PLEASE!!! - GET INVOLVED WITH OUR MISSION AND OUR FUTURE!

You can reach the Legislative Action Center at the following web address:

<https://moaa.quorum.us/>

And ... Be sure to read the Legislative Update both here in the newsletter and on our website. I would like to extend a BIG "Thank You" to Colonel Bob Tyler and his continued outstanding efforts and work as our Legislative Liaison for our Chapter.

### MOAA National and Chapter Membership:

As a reminder, please contact me if you have trouble updating your personal information in the MOAA National Database. I am here to help serve you as I can.

Additionally, We need your help to make Lincoln Land Chapter and MOAA National even better organizations. Here is how you can help right now:

Recruit new members – you are ALL recruiters.

I implore you to attend as many of our meetings as possible and invite guests to attend.

Support our Chapter fund-raising efforts to support ALL our projects.

Please browse the Chapter Website and our Facebook presence and read our Chapter Newsletter to keep informed concerning events and issues of the Chapter and MOAA:

Website: <https://lincolnlandmoaa.org>

Newsletter – Available on the website and emailed to you.

Chapter Facebook Page (Still a "work in progress":

<https://www.facebook.com/MOAAlincolnland>

ALSO ... "NEVER STOP SERVING"!!

### Upcoming Meetings:

Planning for the remainder of 2026 meetings is still in work. Please let us know what you would like to see at the meetings. I will keep you updated as we develop the schedule for the year.

In closing ... I truly appreciate your confidence in me and our Executive Committee, and your continued support.

See you all soon! And ... you can ALWAYS call or email me ANYTIME if you have questions or concerns.  
My door is ALWAYS open.

## Lincoln Land Chapter Dinner Meeting

Friday, February 13, 2026

Location: Northfield Center  
3280 Northfield Dr, Springfield, IL 62702  
Onyx Room  
Social Hour at 6:00PM, Dinner at 7:00PM  
COST: \$34 Per Person  
"Picnic in February" Dinner  
Dress: Business Casual  
Our Program:  
Mark DePue, LtCol, USA (Ret)

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or

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Let us know how many will attend

Picnic Buffet Dinner Menu

Tossed Salad w/ Ranch and Italian Dressing

Potato Salad

Southern Fried Chicken

Hamburgers on Buns

Corn on the Cob

Homestyle Baked Beans

Fresh Baked Cornbread

Homemade Cherry & Apple Pies

Ice Tea, Lemonade, Coffee

## Membership Scams

### Stay Alert: Protect Yourself from Membership Scams

MOAA often uses email and online channels to communicate with its members about their membership status. However, we realize it may sometimes be difficult to discern legitimate messaging from scams. If you receive an email or online message about your membership that seems suspicious, do not respond. Contact MOAA's Member Service Center immediately at 800-234-6622 to verify its legitimacy.

MOAA provides scam prevention resources at MOAA.org/scams that can help you combat all types of fraud. Some MOAA-specific details that may help you spot suspicious messaging:

Life members whose dues are paid in full will never be asked for additional dues payments.

Spouses of deceased Life members inherit their membership at no additional cost.

Spouses are not eligible for membership; MOAA will never solicit a spouse to join. (Surviving spouses, however, are eligible for membership.)

Basic and Premium members may receive renewal or upgrade communications from MOAA via mail, email, text message, or phone. If you're unsure whether a message is authentic, DO NOT REPLY to the message — contact the Member Service Center at 800-234-6622 for confirmation.

## Legislative Liaison Update

Whew! The government shutdown is finally over. Congress has funded three of the twelve appropriation bills, but the NDAA is not one of the three! So, the uniformed personnel issues that MOAA cares about are still in the “sausage grinder.” That means we need to remain vigilant. One way to do that is to be active on the MOAA Legislative Action Center Link. To get there

Log into MOAA.org

Click on “Advocacy”

Click on “Legislative Action Center” (you may need to establish an account). You will find:

Advocacy campaigns with prepared emails to YOUR legislators

Advocacy issues listed by interest areas

The latest advocacy news

And more

Exploring the Action Center will take one to links to check on legislation moving through the Congress, listings of which members have signed onto specific legislation, and even more. It’s a great place to go “spelunking”!

Remember that with only 100 veterans serving in Congress, it is important that the rest of the folks on the Hill hear from veterans – veterans who have Never Stopped Serving!  
That’s us!

**Semper Fi – Bob Tyler**



## Tips for Meeting With Your Legislators

**Start preparing now for upcoming August congressional recess meetings with your elected officials.**

Every year, lawmakers return to their home states and districts for a monthlong recess. This year, they are scheduled to be back home from Aug. 5 to Sept. 6.

Council and chapter leaders are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to meet with their elected officials to help further MOAA's legislative objectives.

Your voice is essential because legislators want to hear from you, their constituents. Schedule a visit and meet face-to-face. Some elected legislators might even welcome an opportunity to address an entire chapter.

Preparation is key to a successful meeting. Here are some tips:

1. Familiarize yourself with MOAA's positions on significant issues that might arise. Visit [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#) to find details about legislative campaigns, contact information for elected officials, pre-formatted letters to lawmakers, and much more. If this is your first time visiting the action center, you might see a prompt to fill out a sign-up form. You will need to complete this step before you can send messages to Congress.
2. Make sure a legislator understands the purpose of a visit before a meeting. Every lawmaker deals with a wide variety of legislative issues and cannot be expected to be an expert on every one of them.
3. Become acquainted with the legislator's local office staff, especially those with responsibility in areas of interest to MOAA members. Don't consider it a put-down if you don't get to visit a legislator in person. They are busy and rely on staff for advice.

If a meeting with a legislator involves a chapter visit, reserve time for a question-and-answer period. Provide a legislator with advance notice of the kinds of questions or issues he or she should be prepared to address during a visit. Key questions should be prepared in advance and given to designated chapter members to ensure the session is productive.

**From The Survivor Outreach Services Coordinator**



*Survivor Outreach Services*

*Many choose new goals for the beginning of the Year.*

*Organization is a great place to start. DFAS, BENEFEDS, MILCONNECT and the VA are all great online resources and a great place to start.*

*As a reminder the Survivor Benefit Plan*

*Marital Status Update form (Formerly Certification of Eligibility) is due annually*

*on the Annuitants' birthday. If you have questions, contact Michelle Rutherford at*

*[michelle.r.rutherford3.ctr@army.mil](mailto:michelle.r.rutherford3.ctr@army.mil) or 217-720-9574.*



## Greetings from your Council Chaplain !!

Kindest Greetings to all !!

Recent events in portions of MInneapolis have prompted expressions of concern for justice and safety for everyone. Just about any video we have seen or newspaper accounts we have read, have shown rioting and over all mayhem. With instant communication these days one may wonder if all this evidence is hurting or helping the situation. I have relatives living in Minneapolis and wonder how they are doing, they being retired elementary school teachers and retired US Postal Service employees. They are drawing good retirements, They, I am sure. are concerned for their own and others safety. .

The usual responses to domestic turbulence - further hostility, apathy and constructive dialogue, are on going.

The question many of us have where God is on all of this . Doesn't the Bible teach that He, as Creator of all things, is still in control ?

Why is there such a high level of violence over what Federal Government sources allege is a legitimate roundup of illegals? The answer to the first question is an obvious and heart warming " Yes ". The Psalmist says that the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. Psalm 24: 1. He will destroy those who speak lies Psalm 2: 6 .He turns back His enemies Psalm 9: 3. The second question is more complex than by saying that discord is the result of sin,which, of course, is true. But there are times when what the US Constitution says about the supremacy of the Federal Government vs. what rights the States have to govern their own affairs are in conflict. I as an ordinary citizen am not in a position to give an answer. These are legal questions.

What I can assure you during these troubled days, as the above shows, is that God is still in charge and in His own way and time will bring peace to Minneapolis and other places where discord is the rule of the day. It is something we can pray for in our public worship services and in our private homes.

In the meantime, listen carefully to what is being said, and, read thoughtfully to what is being written. Firing off a letter to someone or something without careful reflection will do little to promote peace and may serve to enflame the matter even further.

We pray for God's Blessings during these difficult days.

# THE SALUTE—Never Stop Serving....



## PROVIDING CRISIS RELIEF TO OUR NATION'S HEROES

Together, we can offer support and stability to the uniformed services and veteran communities during a crisis.



### OUR GOAL

Our goal is to raise \$1 million to endow The MOAA Foundation's Crisis Relief Fund and continue our great work.



### WHY CRISIS RELIEF?

More than 12 million veterans without a VA disability rating have virtually no support when disaster strikes.



### CAN YOU HELP?

Our hope is your generous contribution will help us reach our goal to fund this program in perpetuity.



## READY TO ASSIST

In April 2020, The MOAA Foundation launched an emergency COVID-19 Relief Fund to support uniformed services families impacted by the pandemic.

**As the pandemic has ebbed, we know crisis-related needs of uniformed services families and veterans still exist.**

To answer the call for help, we established The MOAA Foundation Crisis Relief Fund — an enduring emergency relief fund to assist uniformed services personnel, veterans, and their families (including caregivers and survivors) in the midst of crisis.

## WHAT SETS US APART



Our streamlined application takes less than 20 minutes to complete, saving applicants the time they need to address other urgent priorities.



Funds reach an approved applicant's bank account within days of approval — timely relief when it can have the most impact.



Financial grants are awarded to qualifying applicants to help with housing costs, utilities, medical and insurance bills, groceries, and more.



100% of our Crisis Relief applicants would recommend our program to others in need.



(800) 234-6622



moaa.foundation@moaa.org



charities.moaa.org/crisisrelief

# Never Stop Serving

## Lincoln Land Chapter MOAA

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Springfield, IL 62791-9435

David Miller  
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or 217-761-3973.

Email:  
david.b.miller32.nfg@mail.mil

<http://lincolnlandmoaa.org>



**Our Purpose**—Serving the entire Military Community locally & nationally

**Our Motivation**—Supporting our most reliable asset—the US military member

**Our Means**—Informing legislators, supporting local events & organizations

**Our Membership**—Commissioned Officers of the Eight Uniformed Services (USA, USMC, USN, USAF, US Space Force, USCG, NOAA, USPHS) who strongly believe in supporting a volunteer force for the safety and security of our country

## MISSION OF THE LINCOLN LAND CHAPTER

**The Lincoln Land Chapter's mission is:**

**To foster fraternal relations among the retired, active and former uniformed services and their National Guard or Reserve components;**

**To protect the rights and interest of same to include dependents and survivors;**

**To further promote useful services for members of the former and current members of the Armed Forces and their dependents and survivors;**

**and to serve the community to the fullest extent possible.**

**Our Chapter has a Facebook page presence on the web:**

<https://www.facebook.com/MOAAlincolnland> Check it out—Also, it may be accessed through our website by clicking the “F” logo near the top of the home page.

**MOAA is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. It is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization.**

While MOAA is permitted by law to lobby—and does so actively—its status as a tax-exempt veterans organization precludes it from participating in political activities, which are defined as intervening directly or indirectly in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

**Stated briefly: the association may advocate issues, but it may not advocate the election or defeat of particular candidates or political parties. This newsletter follows the policies of MOAA National.**

**Now and Always  
We'll be There.**



90228

1-800-247-2192 • [www.moainsurance.com](http://www.moainsurance.com)



### MOAA Legislative Action Center

You can help MOAA by visiting their legislative action center and contacting your elected officials regarding pending legislation MOAA is working. You can reach the Legislative Action Center at the following email address: [take.action.moaa.org](mailto:take.action.moaa.org)

## Reasons to join a MOAA Chapter

Joining a MOAA chapter offers a range of benefits and opportunities for military officers and their families. Here are some of the reasons to consider joining a MOAA chapter:

**Make Yourself Heard: MOAA chapters provide critical grassroots support for MOAA's national legislative agenda, helping to protect the benefits of military servicemembers and their families.**

**Give Back to the Community: Chapter members serve as ambassadors in their communities, supporting various programs that positively impact the lives of others.** **Networking Opportunities: Chapters include second-career members in the workforce and retired servicemembers, providing valuable connections and networking opportunities.** **Stay Informed: Chapter newsletters, websites, and meetings offer the latest information on local, state, and national issues and changes to military benefits.**

**Influencing State Legislation: MOAA chapters can lobby for and pass state-level legislation that affects military members and their families.** **Joining a MOAA chapter is a way to contribute to the advocacy efforts of the organization and to support the rights of military service members and their families.**

# WHY JOIN?



As champions of the uniformed services community, MOAA is dedicated to protecting your hard-earned benefits while providing the resources, programs, content, and other support to make an active, impactful difference in your life and the lives of your family.

Our identity is defined by getting results on Capitol Hill, and we invite all officers and surviving spouses to join us in this critical fight. By becoming a dues-paying MOAA member, you will help fuel our ongoing advocacy efforts on your behalf.

For state and local issues, MOAA chapters lead the way. Find camaraderie with a purpose by joining your local chapter. Scan the QR code for more information or reach out to your local chapter.



## A LEGACY OF ADVOCACY SUCCESS

Worked to establish TRICARE For Life in 2001 and to defeat multiple enrollment fee proposals since

Championed a historic pay raise for junior enlisted servicemembers in 2024

Celebrated passage of the Dole Act to provide needed support to veterans and caregivers in 2024

Other legislative wins we have played a critical role in accomplishing over the years — further demonstrating why MOAA has been named a Top Lobbyist by *The Hill* 18 years in a row:

- Modernized the GI bill for the 21st century
- Expanded benefits for veterans harmed by burn pits through the PACT Act
- Repealed the SBP-DIC Offset ('Widows' Tax')
- Enhanced protections for families residing in military housing
- Secured back pay for federal recognition of promotions
- Defeated the 'COLA minus 1 Percent' reduction in retired pay
- Halted military treatment facility downsizing
- Boosted compensation significantly for retirees with 50% VA disability or greater

## STAY INFORMED ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AND MORE

### Legislative Action Center

Our Legislative Action Center empowers you to engage with your lawmakers on issues impacting the uniformed services and veteran communities. Learn more at [moaa.quorum.us](http://moaa.quorum.us).

### MOAA Newsletter & Military Officer Magazine

MOAA offers a weekly e-newsletter with updates on legislation, benefits, finance, and more, plus a monthly magazine featuring in-depth coverage of military life and policy issues.

## CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER:

### Lincoln Land Chapter

CHAPTER NAME

<http://lincolnlilandmoaa.org>

CHAPTER WEBSITE

### David W Knieriem, Maj, USAF (Ret)

CHAPTER LEAD

[dknieriem@casscomm.com](mailto:dknieriem@casscomm.com)

CHAPTER LEAD CONTACT

## MOAA's Key Goals for the 119th Congress

As the legislative slate resets for the 119th Congress, MOAA member engagement will become even more vital to achieving our advocacy objectives. Your advocacy ensures that MOAA and the broader community of military and veteran service organizations (MSOs/VSOs) maintain momentum for existing priorities such as the Major Richard Star Act, [which would benefit tens of thousands of combat-injured veterans](#). We also need your help to build support for new objectives and emerging issues, often via immediate action, to respond to the sporadic nature of the legislative process.

First step: Register as an advocate in [our Legislative Action Center](#). If you're already registered, send the link to a family member or friend. Remember, the Legislative Action Center is open to all who support the uniformed services community. While our advocacy team remains active on many issues not listed here, our priorities are shaped throughout the year depending on policy developments or emerging issues that necessitate an all-hands approach. Additionally, we share many interests with [The Military Coalition](#) and other stakeholders. MOAA leverages those relationships to expand our reach on Capitol Hill.

### **These are among MOAA's priorities for this year:**

#### **Currently Serving**

**Military housing:** Recent reporting from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reveals the myriad challenges servicemembers in unaccompanied housing are facing. The health, safety, and privacy concerns outlined by GAO show the need for action. MOAA seeks to improve funding and condition transparency for unaccompanied housing by requiring an annual, publicly available report, which will highlight areas that require the most attention from both DoD and Congress.

#### **Retirees/Veterans**

**Toxic exposure:** MOAA will focus on capitalizing on our recently released report, [Ending the Wait for Toxic-Exposed Veterans](#), to advocate for veterans exposed to toxic materials during their service. While the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act has made major improvements to how toxic exposures are treated by the VA, additional measures are required. In cooperation with other VSOs, MOAA will advocate for Congress to pass legislation that shortens the time veterans must wait before their toxic exposures are acknowledged and conceded by the VA.

## Family/Survivors

**Spouse employment:** Rates of unemployment for military spouses continue to be four to five times higher than the national average. This persistent challenge requires not only providing education and employment resources for spouses, but also incentivizing businesses to hire someone who will likely move in two to three years. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit program was established to support populations who face significant barriers to employment, and adding a military spouse target group is long overdue. Passing the Military Spouse Hiring Act will provide another important lever needed to address the critical issue of spouse unemployment.

## DoD Health Care

**Access to care:** DoD has acknowledged that congressionally directed reforms to the Military Health System (MHS), together with U.S. medical workforce volatility, exacerbated long-standing access challenges and led to a destabilized MHS that does not consistently deliver timely care to beneficiaries. Current patient resources for reporting access problems and getting assistance navigating the MHS are inadequate. Also, it is unclear if there are mechanisms for reporting up to the Defense Health Agency so systemic access challenges can be identified and addressed. MOAA seeks a digital MHS assistance platform allowing beneficiaries to report access-to-care challenges and receive help navigating the MHS, including reporting requirements to increase visibility on barriers to access so fixable issues can be addressed.

## VA Health Care

**Support for caregivers:** MOAA has long advocated for legislation that would improve caregiving support for veterans' families. This includes enhancements to the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) and expansion of home health and long-term care services to meet current and future needs of veterans, their caregivers, and families. This year, MOAA strongly supports the reintroduction and enactment of the Veteran Caregiver Reeducation, Reemployment, and Retirement Act. This legislation acknowledges caregivers' invaluable contributions while addressing the significant economic and emotional burdens they face. By offering education, employment, and retirement opportunities, the legislation empowers caregivers to achieve financial security while potentially reducing the federal government's long-term economic burden.

## **Persistent Efforts**

There are certain issues that MOAA will always advocate for until they are passed. Among these are concurrent receipt for combat wounded (Major Richard Star Act), Arlington National Cemetery access, and cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs).

MOAA will also continually monitor certain issues and will immediately mobilize the entire association, our membership, and VSO/MSO allies to ensure these issues are not negatively impacted. These issues include:

- Decrements to scheduled pay increases.
- New TRICARE or TRICARE Pharmacy Program fees.
- TRICARE cost-sharing increases that exceed military retired pay COLA or TRICARE Pharmacy Program cost sharing that exceeds common industry practice.

Unequal decrements of compensation and benefits based on rank, age, family composition, retirement status, or disability benefits.

As the work of the 119th Congress gets underway, MOAA will continue its efforts to advocate on behalf of our members and the entire uniformed services community. We will leverage our experience and our relationships on Capitol Hill and with our partners to navigate an increasingly partisan environment.

Through our efforts, MOAA will seek to ensure that servicemembers, veterans, and retirees and their families — who have sacrificed so much — continue to receive benefits earned through their service.

## **When MOAA Speaks, Congress Listens**

Learn more about MOAA's key advocacy issues and contact your elected officials using the MOAA messaging platform.