

April 2026

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

THE SALUTE—Never Stop Serving...



Next Meeting Information

Upcoming Events

- 10 April Location TBD
- 12 June location TBD
- 14 August Location TBD
- 9 October location TBD
- 11 December Location TBD

**Lincoln Land Chapter Dinner Meeting
Friday, April 10, 2026**

**Location: Route 66 Motorheads Bar & Grill, Museum and Entertainment Complex
(Click Here for Directions - Google Maps)
600 Toronto Rd, Springfield, IL 62711
Social Hour at 6:00PM, Dinner at 7:00PM**

Order from the Menu

**COST: Menu Cost plus 20% Service Fee (Tip) and 9.75% Tax
(Note that drinks/dinner will be on one ticket for each party)
Pay Motorheads, Not the Chapter - Cash or Credit Card ONLY
(Example: A \$50 Dining/Drinks Check plus Service Fee and Tax = \$64.88)**

PROGRAM: Dr Scott Blomberg

**Dr. Blomberg served as the optometrist for the 101st Airborne when they were on occupation duty in Iraq in 2003, and will be speaking about that experience.
(Thanks to Lt Col Mark DePue for securing this interesting speaker for us)**

IMPORTANT * ENSURE YOUR RESERVATION IS MADE
NOT LATER THAN 5PM on April 9th**

**MAKE RESERVATIONS ONLINE (Preferred Method) (CLICK
HERE)**

**or by
Contacting by Phone/Text/Email:
Dave Knieriem 217-899-5526 (dknieriem@casscomm.com)
Please let us know how many will attend.**

Inside this issue:

Next Meeting Information	1
President's Corner	2-4
From the Legislative Liaison	5
From The Chaplain	8
From the SOS Office	7
Chapter Information	9-16

President's Corner March 2026

Greetings to members of Lincoln Land Chapter MOAA..

Next Meeting – SOMETHING NEW

Motorheads 66 Bar and Grill (Springfield)

Friday, April 10, 2026

Program/TOPIC: Dr Scott Blomberg will be the speaker. Dr. Blomberg served as the optometrist for the 101st Airborne when they were on occupation duty in Iraq in 2003 and will be speaking about that experience.

(Thanks to Lt Col Mark DePue for securing this interesting speaker for us)

MOAA's Legislative Action Center:

I keep pounding the drum on this one 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! This is our PRIMARY MISSION!

You can reach the Legislative Action Center at the following web address: <https://moaa.quorum.us/>
Also ... 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"!!

MOAA CHARITIES:

The MOAA Foundation and the MOAA Scholarship Fund are uniting under a single organizational structure known as MOAA Charities. The goal is to increase impact on the uniformed service and veteran communities while preserving programs, donor options, and traditions core to the MOAA mission.

The mission has not changed. MOAA remains fully committed to empowering uniformed service and veteran families by supporting their journeys, strengthening their lives, and honoring their service. The philanthropic intent remains the guiding principle

Chapter Golf Outing/Fundraiser:

After reviewing the membership survey concerning support of the Chapter Golf Tournament, the Executive Committee decided that the event will be cancelled for this year. Lack of support and manpower for the event was the primary reason for cancelling.

Going forward, this will require us to reevaluate our fundraising efforts and/or realign our support for the scholarships. I will discuss this further at the April 10th meeting.

Upcoming Meetings:

Friday, April 10, 2026 - Chapter Dinner Meeting
Motorheads 66 - Springfield, IL
PROGRAM/TOPIC: Dr Scott Blomberg

Friday, June 12, 2026 - Chapter Dinner Meeting
Doherty's Pub and Pins, Decatur
PROGRAM/TOPIC: TBD

Friday, August 14, 2026 - Chapter Dinner Meeting
Island Bay Yacht Club
PROGRAM: Chapter Scholarship Presentation

Friday October 9, 2026
Bistro 537 (Richland Community College) - (Tentative)
PROGRAM: TBD
Annual Business Meeting

Friday, December 4, 2026 - Christmas Gala and Scholarship Fundraiser Northfield Center, Springfield IL

In closing ... I deeply 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.

Dave Knieriem, Major, USAF (Ret)
Lincoln Land MOAA Chapter President

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

It's that time of year again. When the Lincoln Land MOAA Chapter meets April 11th I will be on my way to DC to join with MOAA folks from every state to "take it to the Hill." We will be visiting nearly every one of the 535 Congressional offices on April 15th. This year's four topics are:

The Richard Star Act to end the unjust pay offset for combat-injured veterans (Senate Bill 1032 / House Bill 2102).

Shutdown Fairness Act that ensures that servicemembers receive pay and benefits during government shutdowns (S. 3168 / H.R. 7137).

The Guard VA Benefits Act to protect veterans from claim sharks (H.R. 1732).

The Military Care Act to improve access to care at military hospitals and clinics (H.R. 6796).

Details on these issues can be found on the MOAA advocacy action webpage (<https://www.moaa.org/>). Please log into the advocacy center to send the pre-prepared message (you may edit it and even "personalize" it) to your elected officials. It makes an impression if they see several messages on the topics we are discussing with them. And as I noted in the last edition, less than 7% of Americans are able to claim the title of "veteran". It is increasingly important that we who are veterans "***Never Stop Serving***" as advocates for those who have served. Congress needs to hear from all of us!

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 (Formally Certification of Eligibility) is due annual-ly

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

michelle.r.rutherford3.ctr@army.mil or 217-720-9574.



Greetings from your Council Chaplain !!

Kindness Greetings to all in LLC !!

With Easter at or of its earliest dates fast approaching, we wish all a blessed one, spending it in appropriate worship settings and enjoying it with family and friends, and, .also with sincerest thanks to Major Knierem and his fine staff for keeping us all together by offering fine programs with fantastic meals at reasonable prices.

Unless one has been away from the media in recent days, they are unaware that yet another war is going on in the middle east, this time between the USA and ISRAEL vs IRAN and its allies, the issue being that as far as former is concerned, the other side should not have the ability to make a deliverable nuclear weapon, given their alleged long abuse of human rights.

That there are wars and rumors of wars should not surprise us for our Lord spoke of them as signs of His Second Coming, not to dispense irregularities of human justice but to deal with response to His justice - " when you have done to the least of these my brethren you have done it unto me." So as wars come and go, our response to them, as St Mathews Gospel writes, is to

" lift up your heads for your redemption draws near."

In the meantime we who are formerly military as well as they who are currently serving somewhere need to be aware of what the Christian attitude should be concerning our involvement in the military.

In the Old Testament war occurs in Genesis 14 when Abraham rescues his nephew Lot from the Elamites. He used 318 trained men from his household .In 2 Samuel 13 the nation of Israel developed a standing army after a strong political system was developed by Saul ,David and Solomon.

In the New Testament Jesus marveled when a Roman Centurian understood authority as well as what faith means .Jesus did not renounce his authority as a soldier. and , many soldiers are praised as Christians.

The Bible does address serving in the military and they who serve with character, dignity and honor can be assured that their civic duty is respected by our country and God, and ,deserve our respect. Of course we are encouraged to pray that the day will come when all weapons of warfare, as Isaiah says,will be beaten into plowshares.

In Your Service

Ralph Woehrmann

Ch MAJ USA,Retired

Illinois Council of Chapter Presidents, Chaplain



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

PO Box 9435
Springfield, IL 62791-9435

David Miller
Phone: (217) 415-2837
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.moaainsurance.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: takeaction.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.

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://lincolnlandmoaa.org>

CHAPTER WEBSITE

David W Knieriem, Maj, USAF (Ret)

CHAPTER LEAD

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.