THE SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLE

31 August 2026

Volume IX, Issue 8

Board Meeting

Aug 17
7:00 pm
via ZOOM
Join Zoom Meeting

Chapter Board Members

President & Treasurer
LCDR Rich Higgins, USN (Ret)

Vice President & Membership
CDR Roy Yaple, USN (Ret)

Secretary, Scholarship Chair, Newsletter Editor and Surviving Spouse Liaison
LTC Larry Powell, USA (Ret)

Upcoming Meetings

Sep 2
Chapter Mtg
(Rescheduled from July)
See details below

Sep 19
8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Retiree Appreciation Day
Joint Dining Facility (Building 164)
RSVPs are requested via email at selfrao@yahoo.com or by phone at (586) 239-5580

Oct 20
Chapter Zoom Mtg

Nov 5
Chapter Mtg / Election of Officers
Nov 9
Veteran's Day Remembrance

Chapter Contact

Chapter Digital links:
Chapter web site, www.semimoaa.org

For all non-digital correspondence use the following address:
560 Barrington Rd. Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230

Never Stop Serving

Membership

Membership is open to current and former warrant and commissioned officers of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, as well as their surviving spouses.

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the nation's leading advocate for the military community and their families. Members support this mission while enjoying valuable benefits tailored to military officers. Guided by the motto "Never Stop Serving," MOAA proudly represents all branches of the uniformed services.

National MOAA membership is not required to join the Southeastern Michigan Chapter, but it is strongly encouraged. Basic national membership is free.

To become a member click HERE

Under the Eagle's Wing...a Message from the President

Fellow members,

As we move through another busy summer, I want to thank each of you for your continued support of our chapter and its mission of Never Stop Serving. Whether you attend our meetings, participate in legislative advocacy, volunteer, or simply stay informed through our newsletter, you are helping strengthen the voice of veterans throughout southeastern Michigan.

Please join me in congratulating Chapter member Henry Storm on being named the AMVETS Department of Michigan AMVET of the Year—a well-deserved recognition of his extraordinary dedication to Michigan's veteran community. Henry's commitment to service extends far beyond attending meetings; he lives MOAA's motto, "Never Stop Serving", every day. During July alone, he volunteered countless hours assisting veterans at the Detroit VA Medical Center as a member of its Advisory Board, conducting weekly veteran outreach breakfasts, hosting and preparing for his popular Thursday Vet-Talk Zoom sessions, participating in Veteran Sitrep podcasts and Vet Center support groups, and making regular calls to shut-in veterans. He personally counseled a dozen veterans preparing VA disability claims, assisted two widows seeking Dependency and Indemnity Compensation benefits, helped veterans document toxic exposures, answered countless emails, texts, and phone calls, and even accompanied a veteran's widow to the Oakland County Veterans Services Office as a "buddy witness" in support of her claim. His month also included hundreds of miles of travel throughout southeast Michigan to ensure veterans received the assistance they had earned through their service. Henry's selfless leadership, compassion, and tireless advocacy have improved the lives of countless veterans and their families. We are proud to count him among the members of the Southeastern Michigan Chapter, MOAA, and congratulate him on this outstanding and richly deserved honor.

I'm pleased to report that our July meeting, which was canceled when TACOM closed because of poor air quality from the Canadian wildfires, has been rescheduled for Wednesday, September 2, from Noon to 3:00 PM at the Michigan Military Technical & Historical Society, 16600 Stephens Road, Eastpointe. We are grateful to Chris Causley and the Society for accommodating the new date, and I encourage everyone to join us for what promises to be an outstanding presentation and an opportunity to explore one of Michigan's premier military museums. Lunch will include an assortment of sandwiches and sides from Jimmy Johns. Cost is $20 per person. Click HERE to RSVP & Pay.

Advocacy remains one of MOAA's defining strengths, and August marks the start of MOAA's annual Summer Advocacy in Action (AiA) campaign. Timed to coincide with Congress's August recess, the campaign encourages members to connect with their elected officials while they are back home in their districts—whether through a scheduled office visit, a town hall meeting, or a local community event. It's an opportunity for every MOAA member to help shape policies affecting the uniformed services and veteran community.

Continued next page

This year's campaign focuses on three important priorities: reauthorizing the Work Opportunity Tax Creditfor veterans while extending it to military spouses, restoring GLP-1 medication coverage for TRICARE for Life beneficiaries, and continuing the fight to pass the Major Richard Star Act, ending the unfair offset that reduces retired pay for many combat-injured veterans. MOAA has developed issue papers, digital resources, and simple tools to help members engage effectively with their Members of Congress. As always, I encourage you to stay engaged.

I encourage each of you to take a few minutes this month to participate. Whether you send a message through MOAA's Legislative Action Center, attend a town hall, or meet with a congressional office, your voice matters. Our elected officials need to hear directly from those who have worn the uniform and understand the importance of keeping our commitments to service members, veterans, retirees, survivors, and military families. Advocacy isn't just something MOAA does in Washington—it is something every member can do, right here at home.

Thank you for your membership, your friendship, and your continued commitment to serving others. I look forward to seeing you on September 2.

Rich

Rich Higgins, LCDR, USN (Ret.)
President
Southeastern Michigan Chapter
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)

Disclaimer

- The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a nonprofit military and veterans association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors.
- The Southeastern Michigan Chapter of MOAA (SEMI MOAA) is affiliated with the Michigan Council MOAA and the national MOAA Organization and are all nonpartisan
- All material or other information - including links - contained in the SEMI *Eagle* newsletter is provided as a public service to military service members and their families.
- The contents of this publication is subject to periodic updating.
- Although every attempt is made to ensure that information is accurate and timely, the content is presented "as is" and without warranties.
- Use of the information is strictly voluntary and at the user's sole risk.

US Representative Names and Districts

Click to open webpage

5 - Tim Walberg
6 - Debbie Dingell
7 - Tom Barrett
8 - Kristen Rivet
9 - Lisa McLain
10 - John James
11 - Haley Stevens
12 - Rashida Tlaib
13 - Shri Thanedar

119th Congress

Legislative Corner

The MOAA Advocacy Update

Every week, MOAA's advocacy leaders and other experts discuss issues of importance to our members and the uniformed services community. Watch the latest here.

To stay informed, you can subscribe to the MOAA YouTube channel here.

To contact your legislators and to learn about what MOAA is working on with Congress, click here.

Take Care of America's Veterans Act (TCAVA).

VP for Government Relations, MG (Ret) April Vogel sent an email to members. Below is an excerpt.

On Thursday, the House was expected to vote on TCAVA. That vote did not happen — lawmakers announced the vote would be postponed to a later date.

We are hearing from House leadership that a vote may not occur until September. When that moment comes, we hope we can count on you to help spread the word again.

Since the beginning, MOAA's support for TCAVA has been contingent on the legislation moving forward before the bill's funding mechanism, the disability rating changes for sleep apnea and tinnitus, is finalized. As MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), explained when MOAA announced its position on the omnibus package:
"Given these realities, the practical choice before Congress is not whether these VASRD changes occur but rather whether the resulting savings are reinvested in veterans, caregivers, survivors, and families or simply revert to the Treasury. We believe veterans should be the ones who benefit, and we believe the opportunity to enact so many key legislative priorities might not appear again for a very long time."

Watch for updates and reach out to you legislators and ask them to support this important legislation.

The June 2026 Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), released July 14, was 327.075, 3.1% above the COLA baseline of 317.265.
CPI-W figures from the end of the fiscal year (July, August, and September 2026) will be compared with the COLA baseline to calculate the 2027 COLA (see "How Your COLA Is Calculated,"). July 2026 figures are scheduled to be released Aug. 12.
Source: Moaa.org

Advocacy at the State Level

Legislation is Moving Forward

Good news on the advocacy front: HB 5456 and HB 5457, tie-barred bills that would launch a hyperbaric oxygen therapy pilot program for Michigan veterans and service members, have both passed the Michigan House and now sit before the Senate Health Policy Committee.
HBOT has shown real promise for traumatic brain injury and PTSD — exactly the kind of care our members and their families need better access to.
If your state senator sits on Health Policy, a short note of support could help keep this moving.

TAKE ACTION — Contact Your Legislators
The MCOC Legislative Action Center makes it easy. Enter your information once, select a bill, and your personalized email opens pre-filled in your own email client — ready to review and send. A phone call script is generated automatically. Nothing is stored or collected.
It takes less than 5 minutes.

To take action click this link

Michigan MOAA State Convention

We regret to announce that the Michigan Council of Chapters State Convention, scheduled for Friday, August 14, 2026, at the Doherty Hotel in Clare, has been canceled due to insufficient registrations.

We sincerely appreciate everyone who registered, agreed to participate in the program, or helped plan and promote the convention. Unfortunately, the number of registrations received was not sufficient to proceed with the event.

Those who registered will receive a full refund. Additional information regarding refunds will be provided directly to registrants.

Although we are disappointed that the convention will not take place, the Michigan Council remains committed to strengthening MOAA's chapters across the state and providing meaningful opportunities for fellowship, education, and legislative advocacy.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support of MOAA in Michigan.

MOAA 2026 Membership Voting Opens August 1st

Voting for the MOAA national board of directors, bylaw amendments, and resolutions begins on August 1. All members who joined the association prior to July 15, 2026 and have a valid e-mail address on file with the association will receive an e-mail with voting instructions. Questions should be directed to msc@moaa.org or 800-234-MOAA. There is no option for voting other than by electronic ballot. On Aug. 1, a message will be sent to every member whose account contained a valid email address as of July 15. It will contain a unique link that will take you to the ballot. Do not share it with anyone. Once you submit your vote, the link will become inactive.

MOAA board members serve staggered six-year terms, with one-third of the seats up for election every two years. The board has the authority to set its size between 12 and 36 directors and has established 24 directors as its current target. As a result, MOAA members will vote to fill eight vacancies during this cycle.

This year, a Board Nominating Committee composed of members from the seven uniformed services currently on the board, who are neither on MOAA's board of directors nor staff, has nominated eight candidates for your consideration.

The candidates' photographs and brief biographies appear at this link.

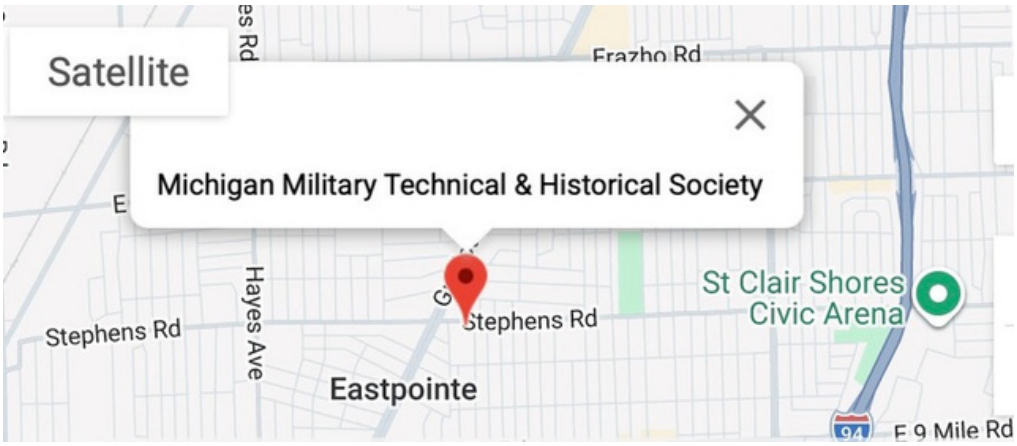
The board also recommends approval of MOAA's 2026-2028 resolutions (five in total) — intended to serve as MOAA's guiding principles for the next two years — as well as one proposed bylaw amendment.

Chapter Luncheon & Meeting

Michigan Military Technical & Historical Society

As you may know, our July 16 meeting was canceled when TACOM closed due to unhealthy air quality caused by smoke from the Canadian wildfires.

*We have **rescheduled the program for September 2nd** at the Michigan Military and Technical Society Museum, 16600 Stephens Rd.*
Eastpointe, MI 48021



Registration fees already paid will be applied to the rescheduled meeting. However, we will be happy to provide a refund upon request. Please contact Rich Hlggins (rlhigginsjr@yahoo.com) if you would prefer a refund.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. We look forward to seeing you at the event.

Veterans History Project

The United States Congress created the Veterans History Project (VHP) in 2000 as part of the American Folklife Center (AFC) at the Library of Congress, one of the world's most respected research and cultural institutions.

VHP's purpose is to collect, preserve and make accessible the personal accounts of U.S. military veterans and Gold Star Families so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand their service.

The Chapter is considering collecting personal accounts from members in the chapter. Veterans from all branches and ranks of the United States military who served from World War I through the more recent con!icts are eligible to participate. As contributors to this national preservation effort, volunteers from around the country interview veterans and collect first person narratives. VHP accepts veterans' personal narratives in the forms of original, unedited audio and video recorded interviews, photographs, letters, diaries, journals and unpublished memoirs.

In order to be accepted, we must follow the 30-20-10 Rule:

- 30 minutes is the minimum length required for audio- or video-recorded interviews

and/or

- 20 pages is the minimum number of pages required for memoirs, diaries or journals

and/or

- 10 is the minimum number of photographs, letters, maps or pieces of 2-D artwork

If you are interested, or know someone who is interested, in participating in this project, send an email to Larry Powell at L-spowell@ameritech.net, with the subject Veterans History Project (or VHP).

MOAA SIGNATURE GROUPS

Join MOAA Leadership and your fellow MOAA members on these hosted cruises and land tours.

July 12-21, 2026	Highlights of Eastern Europe River Cruise	9-nights from **$3,999**
October 1-10, 2026	Western Europe Yacht Cruise	9-nights from **$4,999**
April 25-May 2, 2027	Castles Along the Rhine River Cruise	7-nights from **$4,199**
July 19-27, 2027	France & Spain Yacht Cruise	8-nights from **$5,799**
September 14-25, 2027	Circle Iceland Yacht Cruise	11-nights from **$8,999**
Sept. 25-Oct. 4, 2027	Battlefields of WWI & WWII Tour	10 days from **$6,495**

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VA, HHS sign MOU to improve cooperation on psychedelic drug trials

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Health and Human Services signed a memorandum of understanding July 13th to ensure the effective implementation of President Trump's Executive Order on Accelerating Medical Treatments for Serious Mental Illness.

Through that order, President Trump instructed his administration to explore whether psychedelic drugs might play a role in saving the lives of Veterans and others with serious mental illness. It specifically called on VA to work with HHS to increase clinical trial participation and share data with the Food & Drug Administration to ensure that successful trials lead to the timely evaluation and approval of these drugs.

The MOU signed today lays the groundwork for VA-HHS cooperation on psychedelic trials, which includes efforts to:

- Increase clinical trial participation
- Provide training for therapists, nurses and doctors involved in these trials
- Collect and share data on the effectiveness, safety and costs of these potential therapies
- Share data with the FDA so it can quickly approve tested treatments
- Develop educational materials so patients know what to expect when a successful trial leads to a new, approved treatment

To read the full article and actions being taken click this link.

9/11 National Day of Service

The VA National Cemetery Association (NCA) in partnership with Carry The Load and Just Serve is organizing the 9/11 National Day of Service to commemorate the 25th anniversary of 9/11. The event includes a brief ceremony and instructions to volunteers on headstone cleaning and beautification. This is a great service opportunity for employee engagement, youth groups, and individuals. Participants are encouraged to post on a Veteran's memorial page at VA's Veterans Legacy Memorial.
To register go to this link: https://www.carrytheload.org/patriot-day/

Mid-Michigan Honor Flight

"it's never too late to thank a veteran"

Mid-Michigan Honor Flight is dedicated to honoring our veterans by inviting them to share in a day of honor at our nation's memorials, commemorating their service and sacrifices. They are committed to expressing our gratitude and respect for their bravery and dedication to our country.

We believe in the importance of preserving the legacy of our veterans and ensuring that their contributions are never forgotten. Our team is passionate about this mission and works tirelessly to make it a reality. Through our efforts, we aim to create a memorable and impactful experience for our veterans, allowing them to feel the nation's deep appreciation for their service.

If you would like to get involved, or know a veteran that would like to participate on a flight, click on this link.

Photos courtesy of Mid-Michigan Honor Flight

Wreaths Across America

The Chapter will be adopting the Roseland Park Cemetery in Berkeley. We will be raising funds for scholarships through the purchases of wreaths. You can purchase wreaths throughout the year and participate in the wreath-laying ceremony on 19 December. To purchase 1 or more wreaths, click on this **LINK.**

2026 THEME: REMEMBER ME

"We often speak of "our service members" as though they are one unified group. Yet within that group are countless individuals, each with a name, a family, and a story that helped shape the freedoms we cherish today. While we honor them collectively, we can sometimes overlook the deeply personal sacrifices: the parent who never met a grandchild, the young recruit asked to shoulder more than any teenager should, the veteran who returned home carrying memories too heavy to share."

- Karen Worcester, Executive Director, Wreathes Across America

President's Advisory Councils

The MOAA President's Currently Serving and Spouse Advisory councils advise the president on current and potential MOAA programs, plans, and policies – especially as they pertain to the recruitment, retention, and representation of the interests of those in uniform. They are made up of a diverse group of active duty, National Guard, and Reserve servicemembers and spouses from all uniformed services who also serve as MOAA ambassadors, support MOAA advocacy efforts, and volunteer at MOAA events. Their contributions are vital to the long-term success of our member-driven organization.

What Issues Do the Advisory Councils Address?

MOAA's strategic plan is the foundation of the topics on the councils' agenda. Key areas within MOAA's strategic plan such as advocacy, membership, member engagement and value, chapters and councils, and philanthropic efforts serve as focal points for guided discussion among the councils and MOAA's senior leaders.

Past councils have provided insights into what currently serving families are most interested in, areas where they need support, and ways to engage them. As a result of these engagements, the councils have presented valuable recommendations to MOAA such as:

- Improvements to Advocacy in Action, MOAA's signature advocacy event.
- Creating a Military Spouse Networking Zone at MOAA's Annual Networking Forum to be more inclusive of military spouse job seekers attending the event.
- Engaging council alumni better through inclusion in a biweekly President's message, volunteer calls to action, and invitations to participate in MOAA events.
- Developing a foundational outline for a future, more robust volunteer program.
- Providing insight on issues to consider in how MOAA can better ensure and embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion within the organization.
- Assisting in the development and marketing of MOAA initiatives to provide needed support to veterans and currently serving families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This article appears on MOAA.org. To read the rest of the article, click on this link.

VA Healthcare, Pension and Compensation; Weekly Zoom Calls

If you are in the White Lake or Milford area, please feel free to contact Henry Storm ancientgrape@gmail.com or Roy Yaple (yapler@comcast.net) about the VA breakfast meetings, Monday and Friday at 7AM at Leo's Coney Island in White Lake and Wednesday at 7AM at the Americus Grill in Milford. Breakfast is pay as you go and a wonderful place to enjoy fellowship with other veterans and ask questions on VA-related topics.

If you are applying for VA Healthcare or considering filing a VA disability claim, and are looking for help, please consider attending the weekly 4PM Thursday Zoom coffee or the noon Sunday Zoom podcast on VA Healthcare and Disability Claim topics.

This is the **link** for you to save to access the Website. Here you will find all of the links that are individually listed below :

- 12:00 - 1:00 PM EST Sunday Noon Veteran **Sitrep** Podcast
- 4:00 - 5:00 PM EST Thursday **Vet Talk**
- Facebook Page Trusted Helpers: A daily update on what is happening with your VA benefits
- 550+ Videos, created by Air Force Veteran Ed Ruckle, answering questions veterans, like you, have asked.

Please note that the VA 1010EZ, the form for applying for VA Healthcare has been revised as of July 2024. If you applied in the past and were denied VA Health Care, another look with the new form may be appropriate to see if you qualify for VA Healthcare.

Something New!!

For the past 14 years, I have been helping veterans and their family members navigate the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) websites, and help them find the information they were looking for. Over the years I have gather thousands of documents, created hundreds of slide decks, video overviews, audio overviews, infographics, sitemaps, visual roadmaps, and battle plans.

It didn't take me long to realize, the information collected was for the veteran community, the processes and skills sets, I that used, to gather that information applied to their spouses, dependents, parents, and caregivers as well. Rather them keep this gold mind of information locked up in my filing cabinet, I thought - it was time to share. Click to go to **Ed's Blog.**

The end of a relationship. Loss of a job. Housing instability. Feeling a loss of purpose. At some point, everyone will face a challenge. Some of those challenges may develop into a crisis.

Recognizing a crisis in yourself or those you care about can help you know when to find support.

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Or text 838255