

MAHONING SHENANGO VALLEYS CHAPTER

an affiliate of

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

December 2025



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we wind down the year, we can look back to many accomplishments of the chapter. Our numbers have grown with four new members: Janel Rice, Pete Bollinger, Wayne Recknor, and Adam DeSantis. Welcome to you all.

On a sad note, we marked the passing of Walt Duzzny, Rob and Anna Hanni, Linda Shurtleff and William Meshot.

The chapter was awarded the another MOAA Five Star Level of Excellence Award and two Five Star Level Marvin Harris Communications Awards for our newsletter, edited by Florence Hosler and our Website, managed by Bruce Bille, and a \$2,500 MOAA Community Grant secured through the efforts of Joe Mersol for Youngstown Blue Coats.

Our monthly meetings have drawn between 25 and 35 in attendance. Not bad considering all the other activities our members participate in. We were provided with a variety of topics delivered by extremely knowledgeable speakers. Our chapter is vibrant and alive, focusing on providing informative meetings and programs.

To top things off our year, we recently elected a slate of officers (President Dave Di Talla, 1st Vice President Joe Mersol, and Treasurer Bruce Bille), and board of directors (Florence Hosler, Dave Long, Steve Motika, Ralph DeLucia, Al Lind, and Rod Hosler) to continue to lead and administer the chapter. We are, however, still in need of a second vice president and one more board member to fill out our leadership requirements. So, please consider stepping up to fill these vacancies.

I would be remiss if I didn't comment on our recent Christmas Party and fundraiser which was a resounding success. With only 28 in attendance, we surpassed our donations from last year which is a tribute to the generosity of our members, by raising a total of \$1,367 for our Scholarship Fund.

Thank you everyone.

SATURDAY, 06 DECEMBER 2025 CHRISTMAS PARTY AND FUN DRAISER ROLLUP:

MSVC-MOAA hosted its annual Christmas Party and Fund Raise on Saturday, 06 December 2025 at A La Cart Catering in Canfield. It was a fun filled afternoon and a successful fund raising event. The food was great as usual, the gathering of members was equally great and the fundraising was extremely successful. There were 30 members in attendance and we raised a total of \$1,367 for the Scholarship Fund account. (\$165 raised from the raffle and \$1,202 from the blind auction. Not bad for an afternoon of fun and festivities. Thank you all for attending and participating in this noteworthy event.



**Gifting elves
Ralph DeLucia &
Joe Mersol**

**Raffel winners,
newlyweds, Patty
& Steve Motika**



LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS:

MOAA Legislative Update moaa.org/takeaction
or 1-800-234-6622 ext. 215

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STATE LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Ohio [Ohio Legislature](#)

Pennsylvania [Pa Legis Notifications](#)

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MSVC–MOAA December Legislative Update From Your Outgoing Legislative Liaison, Joe “One Last SITREP” Mersol

Season’s Greetings, MSVC Team!

As we close out 2025, your trusted legislative liaison (me) delivers one final SITREP—peppermint-flavored, lightly sarcastic, and factually accurate. Thank you for the honor of serving in this role. Now... onto the intel.

1. Protecting Troops & Veterans From the Next Government Shutdown MOAA is pushing protections to ensure military pay and VA benefits **do not get interrupted** during future shutdown nonsense. Essential services must continue, and MOAA is keeping the pressure on Congress.

2. Off-Base Housing Still a Struggle

Rents around duty stations continue rising faster than morale on payday. BAH hasn’t kept pace, and families—especially junior enlisted—are carrying the load. MOAA is pushing for updated allowance calculations.

3. TRICARE Expands Coverage for Alzheimer’s Breakthrough Treatment

New treatments are being rolled out, and TRICARE is expanding access. A big step for retirees, caregivers, and families impacted by cognitive decline.

4. Bipartisan Bill Helps Veterans & Military Spouses Get Hired

A rare bipartisan Christmas miracle: new incentives to hire veterans and military spouses, with licensing improvements and employer credits.

5. PCS Support for Military Spouses

PCS moves shouldn’t destroy careers. A new House bill strengthens support for spouses during relocations, including employment protections and easier credentialing.

Final Words From Joe

Thank you for trusting me to be your point man for legislation.

Thank you for the humor, camaraderie, and support.

Though I’m stepping down, I’m not disappearing.....

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and may 2026 treat us better than the last shutdown did.

— Joe Mersol

Final Call to Action

Let Congress hear from the people who actually know what’s going on: **YOU**.

Use MOAA’s advocacy portal:

moaa.quorum.us

Surviving Spouse Corner:

Florence Hosler, Surviving Spouse Liaison

Making a VA Benefits Compensation Claim

By: Nora Durham

Through my involvement with MOAA, I learned about [VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation \(DIC\)](#). As my husband served in Vietnam and was exposed to Agent Orange, it was determined his exposure subsequently caused the heart disease that contributed to his death. This qualified me to receive this benefit. With the help of a local veterans service officer (VSO) and the [VA Office of Survivor Assistance](#), I will receive this tax-free monthly compensation for the rest of my life.

Suppose you are the surviving spouse, child, or parent of a servicemember who died in the line of duty, or the survivor of a veteran who died from a service-related injury or illness. In that case, you might be eligible to receive this tax-free monetary benefit. [Visit the VA’s website to learn more.](#)

For additional information and support, contact a local VSO if one is available in your community. Not all VSOs are as helpful as others, but I finally found mine.

To prepare for opening a VA claim for disability or other benefits compensation, applicants must possess the following documents:

- Military discharge (DD Form 214) — original or certified copy is best
- Other military service information (branch, dates of service, Reserve or National Guard service dates, etc.)
- Medical records (military and/or civilian) if available, and if applying for a service-connected disability, contact information for civilian medical providers who treated the veteran for military-related illnesses or injuries (i.e., doctors, specialists, hospitals, etc.)
- Bank deposit information (i.e., voided check) — the VA will automatically deposit into this account if benefits are awarded

If the above documents are not available, veterans or surviving kin can request them online at www.archives.gov/veterans.

Nora Durham is a member of MOAA's Surviving Spouse Advisory Council.

Scan the QR code to deploy your message directly to Capitol Hill.



HISTORICAL EVENTS IN DECEMBER:

DEC 7, 1941: Japanese Attack Pearl Harbor, HI.
DEC 8, 1941: Japanese Attack the Philippines, Wake Island and Guam. U.S. Declares War on Japan.
DEC 13, 1636: National Guard Birthday
DEC 15, 1791: The Bill of Rights (first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution) became effective following ratification by Virginia.
DEC 16, 1864: Battle of Nashville, TN, Union victory.
DEC 16, 1944: Battle of the Bulge begins.
DEC 17, 1903: Wright Brothers achieved the first powered, controlled airplane flight near Kitty Hawk, NC.
DEC 20, 1989: Operation Just Cause, U.S. invaded Panama and capture Manuel Noriega on charges of narcotics trafficking.
DEC 20, 2019: Space Force Birthday.
DEC 21, 1945: GEN George S. Patton died in Germany following a car accident.
DEC 26, 1776: Washington Crossing the Delaware; American victory at the Battle of Trenton, NJ.
DEC 30, 1962: Battle of Stones River, Union Victory.



AMERICANS

We'll cross a frozen river to
kill you in your sleep on Christmas
NOT KIDDING
We've done it before



January speaker Stony Smith, (the one in the middle.)

2026 CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all chapter meetings are held at A La Cart Catering, 249 Lisbon Street, Canfield.

Lunch Meetings (3rd Friday each month, OCT–MAR): Gather; 11:30 am, Lunch at 2:00/Noon.

Dinner Meetings (3rd Thursday each month, APR–SEPT): Gather; 5:30 pm, Dinner at 6:00 pm.

JAN 16 – Lunch Meeting, Topic: Private Security Contractor Operations. Speaker: Anthony “Stony” Smith

FEB 20 – Lunch Meeting, Topic: Ohio DOT Transportation Projects in the Valley, Speaker: TBD

APR 16 – Cadet Night Recognition Dinner.

MAY 21 – Dinner Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TDB.

JUN 18 – Dinner Meeting at Golden Corral Buffet, Hermitage, PA Topic and Speaker: TDB.

JUL 16 – BBQ Picnic at the Fish and Game Club of Vienna.

AUG 20 – Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TDB.

SEPT 17 – Dinner Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TBD.

OCT 16 – Lunch Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TBD.

NOV 20 – Lunch Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TBD

DEC 05 – Christmas Luncheon and Chapter Fund-raiser (1:00 pm to 4:00 pm)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MSVC-MOAA – LUNCHEON MEETING – FRIDAY, 16 JANUARY 2026

MOAA-MSVC will host its monthly luncheon meeting on **Friday, 16 January 2026** at A La Cart Catering in Canfield. **The program topic: Private Security Contractor Operations with Anthony “Stony” Smith as speaker.** Check-in starts at 11:30 AM, with lunch at 12:00 Noon

Luncheon cost is \$20.00 and you may pay for your meal at the door. Please **RSVPs** not later than **Monday, 12 January** to mcvcmoaa@gmail.com **Mark your CALENDAR NOW** and see you on Friday the 16th.

Mahoning-Shenango Valleys Chapter

Membership Requirements

The membership in MSVC shall be composed of: men and women who are or have been commissioned or warrant officers of the seven United States uniformed services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Public Health Service). Surviving spouses of deceased individuals who, if living, would be eligible for membership. MSVC memberships are open to all eligible people.

Contact : msvc-moaa@gmail.com for more information or download the membership form here: <http://msvc-moaa.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/2021-MSVC-Member-Application.pdf>



BECOME A MOAA NATIONAL PREMIUM OR LIFE MEMBER:

MOAA National and Chapter membership is open to all Retired, Former, and Active Officers of the seven uniformed services and spouses can become Chapter members. Officers on active service (active or reserve duty) are exempt from paying chapter member dues.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

MOAA LIFE Membership is the most elite membership category. As a MOAA LIFE Member, you'll receive all of MOAA's PREMIUM benefits - plus more - for life. Additional benefits include spouse protection and direct access to MOAA staff experts on the dedicated MOAA LIFE Member Hotline.

PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP

MOAA PREMIUM Membership gives you total access to everything MOAA has to offer, including our full spectrum of career and financial resources, MOAA-exclusive publications, college scholarships for dependents, and countless discounts on products and travel.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

By Florence M. Hosler

Mahoning and Shenango Valleys Chapter has opened its 2026 season in accordance with our Chapter Constitution and Bylaws. Dues remain at \$20

You may submit your dues by paying at a meeting or through our website <https://msvc-moaa.org/membership> or by sending a check to MSVC MOAA, PO Box 5342. Poland OH 44514

HAIL AND FAIRWELLS

Farewell: Ralph & Beth Minton have left for the greener pastures of Minnesota, the state bird being the common loon, they will fit in well.

Hail: Colonel Wayne Recknor, Adam DeSantis, Janel Rice, and, Pete Bollinger,

YSU JIM TRESSEL SIGNED FOOTBALL RAFFEL

The YSU Carl Nunziato Veterans Resource Center in conjunction with the YSU Athletics Department has graciously donated a 2023 commemorative YSU football signed by JIM TRESSEL. This signed football will be raffled off at the MSVC Cadet Recognition Night Dinner on 16 April. Raffle tickets will be sold starting at our January through March luncheon meetings and at our 16 April dinner meeting. Proceeds will go toward our ROTC/JROTC Scholarship Fund. This is a great item that will enhance any den or office.





Fun had by all, so excited to get silly, useful, and beautiful gifts!

All photos by Dave DiTallo