



# MAHONING SHENANGO VALLEYS CHAPTER

an affiliate of

## MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



January 2026



### From the President's Desk

Fellow Chapter Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President for the next two years. I appreciate the trust and confidence you have placed in me and the other Officers and Board Members to guide our chapter and be good stewards of the resources you have given us.

My priorities for this year reflect those of MOAA President and CEO Brian Kelly:

- Protect member's Personally Identifiable Information (PII);
- Maximize MOAA Charities' Community Outreach Grants;
- Increase chapter participation in MOAA's Legislative Action Program; and
- Increase chapter membership and promote MOAA Premium and Life Membership.

Your Officers and Board of Directors have already begun implementing these items, along with investigating new options for fundraising and financial management.

Lastly, we remain two (2) members shy of filling our leadership positions on the Board of Directors, so please consider being part of our chapter's leadership cadre. The number one reason MOAA chapters fail is not membership, but lack of members willing to assume leadership roles.

Board of Directors Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at 10am, and we can easily arrange for video participation to cut down on travel time and avoid inclement weather.

We also need a photographer. IF YOU CAN HANDLE A SMARTPHONE, BELIEVE ME, YOU ARE QUALIFIED.

You are welcome to contact me personally to discuss these and any other matters you wish at any time.

### AFTER ACTION REPORT (AAR) – JANUARY ASSEMBLY

The Chapter convened at A La Cart in Canfield for our first assembly of 2026.

Our chapter met January 20 to swear in a new slate of Officers and Board of Directors for 2026-2028 and hear from former Army Veteran Anthony ("Stony") Smith about Private Security Contractor Operations in Iraq.

MOAA Ohio Council of Chapters President John Benedele, Jr. administered the oath of office to incoming President David DiTallo (Boardman), Vice President Joseph Mersol (New Middletown), Treasurer Bruce Bille (Howland), and Board Members at Large Ralph DeLucia (Boardman), and Stephen Motika (Perry). Secretary Albert Lind (Poland) and Board Members at Large Rod Hosler and Florence Hosler (both of Boardman) were absent.

Bowling Green, OH native Smith is a 1982 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY and served on active duty as an Infantry Officer. After leaving active duty, he worked in the financial services industry before joining several private security contractors in Iraq from 2004 to 2010."



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## LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS:

### \*\*U.S. Senate:\*\*

#### - \*\*Dave McCormick (R)\*\*

- Office: SD-B40C Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510

- Phone: 202-228-5306

- Website: mccormick.senate.gov

#### - \*\*Senator John Fetterman (D)\*\*

- Office: B40B Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510

- Phone: 202-224-4254

- Website: fetterman.senate.gov

#### - \*\*Senator Bernie Moreno (R)\*\*

- Office: B33 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510

- Phone: 202-224-2315

- Website: moreno.senate.gov

#### - \*\*Senator Jon Husted (R)\*\*

- Office: SR-198 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510

- Phone: 202-224-3353

- Website: husted.senate.gov

### \*\*U.S. House of Representatives:\*\*

#### - \*\*Representative Mike Kelly (R)\*\*

- District: PA District 16

- Office: 1707 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC

- Phone: 202-225-5406

- Website: kelly.house.gov

#### - \*\*Representative Michael A. Rulli (R)\*\*

- District: OH District 6

- Office: 2082 Rayburn House Office, Washington, DC 20525

- Phone: 202-225-5705

- Website: rulli.house.gov

#### - \*\*Representative David P. Joyce (R)\*\*

- District: OH District 14

- Office: 2065 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515-3514

- Phone: 202-225-5731

### \*\*Presidential Contact:\*\*

#### - \*\*President Donald J. Trump (R)\*\*

- Office: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, Washington DC 20500

- Switchboard: 202-456-1414

- Website: whitehouse.gov

### \*\*Additional Resources:\*\*

- MOAA Legislative Update: <https://moaa.quorum.us/> or 1-800-234-6622 ext. 215

### \*\*State Legislative News:\*\*

- Ohio Legislature

- Pennsylvania Legislative Notifications

## MSVC Board Members:

### President:

Dave Di Tallo, Commander, USN (Ret.)

Program Chair

President@msvc-moaa.org

### 1st Vice President:

Joe Mersol, Major, USA (Ret.)

Membership Chair

1stVP@msvc-moaa.org

### Secretary:

Al Lind, Lieutenant, USN (Fmr.)

Secretary@msvc-moaa.org

### Treasurer:

Bruce Bille, Lieutenant, USN (Fmr.)

Treasurer@msvc-moaa.org

### Members at Large:

Roderick Hosler, LTC, USA (Ret.)

Legislative Liaison

Stephen J. Motika, Major, USA (Ret.)

Student Affairs Liaison

Ralph DeLucia, Captain, USA (Fmr.)

YARS Base Community Council Liaison

### Historian:

Dennis Gartland, Captain, USA (Fmr.)

### Chaplain:

Dave Long, Major, USA (Ret.)

### Surviving Spouse Liason:

Florence M. Hosler, Lieutenant, USNR (Fmr.)

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## MSVC–MOAA Jan 26 Legislative Update From Rod Hosler

Team MSVC,

Here's your latest SITREP. No fluff. No panic. Just the actionable intel.

- Protecting Pay and VA Benefits During Shutdowns
- MOAA continues to push for safeguards so military pay and VA benefits stay online even when Congress decides to practice “budget brinksmanship.”
- Housing Costs vs. Allowances
- Off-base housing remains a pressure point. MOAA is pressing for allowance calculations that reflect reality, not wishful thinking.
- TRICARE and Emerging Treatments
- Coverage policies continue evolving, including for complex conditions affecting retirees and families. MOAA is monitoring access and affordability.

Final Word

Advocacy works when members speak. If you've got 60 seconds, you've got time to help.

Use MOAA's advocacy portal:  
[moaa.quorum.us](http://moaa.quorum.us)

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



## Surviving Spouse Corner: Florence Hosler, Surviving Spouse Liaison

### Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

One of the most underclaimed VA benefits available to surviving spouses is Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC).

DIC is a tax-free monthly benefit paid to eligible surviving spouses when a veteran's death was caused by — or substantially contributed to by — a service-connected disability or condition. In many cases, eligibility may exist even if the service connection was not fully established prior to retirement or death.

### Why This Matters

DIC frequently goes unclaimed — not because of ineligibility, but because surviving spouses are unaware that they may apply. The date a claim is filed can directly impact retroactive benefits, making early action critical.

### Basic Documentation to Begin

DD-214 or other service record

- Marriage certificate
- Death certificate
- Banking information for direct deposit

Claims may be filed online through VA systems, by mail, or with assistance from a Veterans Service Officer (VSO).

### Important Advisory

Surviving spouses may submit an “Intent to File” before completing the full application. This protects the effective date of the claim and may preserve retroactive benefits once the claim is approved.

### Additional Survivor Benefits May Include

- Survivor Pension
- VA health care
- Education benefits
- Home loan eligibility
- Burial and memorial benefits

## THIS MONTH IN MILITARY HISTORY — FEBRUARY

February 1, 1865

Congress approved the 13th Amendment, reshaping the nation and ultimately the composition and service of the U.S. Armed Forces.

February 4–11, 1945

The Yalta Conference brought Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin together to determine the post–World War II global order, setting the stage for decades of military alignment.

February 8, 1943

Allied forces secured Guadalcanal after six months of intense fighting, marking a major turning point in the Pacific Theater.

February 15, 1898

The USS Maine exploded in Havana Harbor, killing 266 sailors and helping precipitate the Spanish-American War.

February 16, 1945

U.S. forces launched the assault to retake Corregidor in the Philippines through airborne and amphibious operations.

February 19, 1945

The Battle of Iwo Jima began. Five days later, Marines raised the American flag on Mount Suribachi — an image that became a symbol of resolve and sacrifice.

February 24, 1991

Operation Desert Storm's ground campaign began, leading to the liberation of Kuwait in just 100 hours.

February 27, 1991

Coalition forces declared Kuwait liberated, concluding major combat operations of Desert Storm.

*February reminds us that officer legacy is forged in decisive moments — from the liberation of Corregidor and the hard-fought sands of Iwo Jima to the swift execution of Desert Storm's ground campaign. These were not accidents of history; they were the result of disciplined leadership, moral courage, and a commitment to mission above self. As members of MOAA, we inherit that standard. Our responsibility today is different in form but equal in duty: to lead in our communities, safeguard the benefits earned through sacrifice, and ensure the next generation of officers understands what honorable service requires.*

## MSVC-MOAA LUNCHEON MEETING



FRIDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2026



MOAA-MSVC will host its monthly luncheon meeting

on **Friday, 20 February 2026** at A La Cart Catering in Can- field. **The program topic: VA Disability Compensation with Paul Webber 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 you**

meal at the door. Please **RSVPs** not later than **Monday, 16 February** to [mvcvmoaa@gmail.com](mailto:mvcvmoaa@gmail.com) **Mark your**

**CALENDAR NOW** and see you on Friday the February 20th.

## 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 at 11:30 am, Lunch at Noon.

- **MAR 20** – Lunch Meeting, Topic: VTC with MOAA Legislative Affairs

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

- **APR 16** – Cadet Night Recognition Dinner.
- **MAY 21** – Dinner Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TBD.
- **JUN 18** – Dinner Meeting at Golden Corral Buffet, Hermitage, PA. Topic and Speaker: TBD.
- **JUL 16** – BBQ Picnic at the Fish and Game Club of Vienna.
- **AUG 20** – Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TBD.
- **SEPT 17** – Dinner Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TBD.

### Other Meetings:

- **OCT 16** – Lunch Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TBD.
- **NOV 20** – Lunch Meeting, Topic and Speaker: TBD.
- **DEC 05** – Christmas Luncheon and Chapter Fundraiser (1:00 pm to 4:00 pm).

Chapter  
Calendar

## 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 [mssc-moaa@gmail.com](mailto:mssc-moaa@gmail.com) for more information or download the membership form here.

[Membership Application](#)

#### ELIGIBLE UNIFORMED SERVICES



#### BECOME A MOAA NATIONAL PREMIUM ORLIFE 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

Joe Mersol

The Mahoning-Shenango Valleys Chapter has officially launched the 2026 membership year in accordance with our Constitution and Bylaws. Annual chapter dues remain \$20. Dues may be paid at any meeting, online at [mssc-moaa.org/membership](http://mssc-moaa.org/membership), or by mailing a check to MSVC-MOAA, P.O. Box 5342, Poland, OH 44514.

#### Current Strength Report:

Regular Members: 65  
Spouse Members: 11  
Surviving Spouses: 4  
Friends of MOAA: 3  
Life Members: 6  
Dues-Exempt (Active Duty): 21

As of this report, \$840 has been received in dues with \$580 still outstanding. If you have not yet renewed, please take a moment to do so. Strong membership ensures strong advocacy, meaningful programming, and continued support to our veterans and ROTC/JROTC scholarship initiatives. Every member strengthens the mission.



## YSU JIM TRESSEL SIGNED FOOTBALL RAFFLE

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.





**LCDR Ret John G Bendele, Jr swore in new officers**



**OFFICER INSTALLATION CEREMONY**



**OFFICER INSTALLATION CEREMONY**



**AWARDS PRESENTATION**



**MOAA PRESIDENT'S AWARD  
LTC Ret Hosler**



**LEADERSHIP AWARD  
LT Fmr Florence Hosler**



**AWARDS PRESENTATION**