

MAHONING SENANGO VALLEYS CHAPTER MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

December 2020 Volume:11 Issue 11



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Rod Hosler

As we enter the last month of the year, we reflect on the past for both the good and bad that has occurred. Although the China COVID-19 virus and pandemic have taken a toll, our Chapter remains a vibrant chapter with exciting programs and good leadership. We have been the only Chapter in Ohio and one of the few nationally that has met regularly since June, a testament to our commitment to MOAA and MSVC. We have been able to meet safely with average attendance between 17 and 25 per meeting. Not bad. Playing it safety is still a top priority, but getting back to a sense of normality is equally important. If you have concerns, respond accordingly.

The chapter has received two prestigious MOAA National Awards; the Col. Marvin Harris Communications Award (newsletter and website) and the Level of excellence (LOE) for the past year. Great accomplishments. Our members continue to remain active in chapter affairs and local Veterans activities.

The new year holds many unknowns at this time. The future of the country remains in question as we weather the political storms around us. Patience and perseverance may be key to our success in the coming months.

MSVC MEMBERSHIP ROSTER AND ACTIVITIES CALENDAR FOR 2021

The updated MSVC Membership Roster and activities calendar for 2021-2022 will be distributed to MSVC members at the 15 January 2021 meeting. Please NOTE: The roster is for members only and will not be distributed to any other persons or organizations.



MOAA / ROA CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISER DINNER: SATURDAY, 12 DECEMBER

The MOAA and ROA Chapters are hosting their annual joint Christmas Fundraiser Dinner on **SATURDAY 12 DECEMBER from 1-4 PM at A La Cart Catering, 429 Lisbon Street, Canfield, OH.** A La Cart Catering is a wonderful facility with plenty of space that can accommodate our needs. Dinner will be buffet style and cost **\$20.00 per person:** hors d'oeuvres, Chicken Cordon Bleu, roast beef, oven brown potatoes, peas and carrots, tossed salad, Jell-O salad, desert and coffee/tea/iced tea. If you wish, you may bring your own wine and beer.

To support our fundraiser, please bring a wrapped gift valued at about \$25.00 to be auctioned off and your checkbook. The proceeds are going to support several local noteworthy Veterans or military activities such as the Red Cross Distribution Center in Howland, the Blue Coats of Youngstown, or Veterans Outreach.

Please note: RESERVATIONS are a MUST, there will be no exceptions. Reservations and **PREPAID** dinner cost must be received NOT LATER THAN MONDAY, 7 DECEMBER. Dress is business casual. If you cannot attend, please consider sending \$25.00 as a donation toward the fund raiser. Contact Rod or Florence Hosler at 330-788-3270, hoslerfm@zoominternet.net or msvcmoaa@gmail.com. Dinner checks should be made out to MSVC-MOAA and sent to: MSVC-MOAA, P.O. Box 5342, Poland, OH 44514.

All health precautions are being taken, use your best judgment about attending.

Currently Serving Update– Sacramento's Land in Hawaii

by David Di Tallo

Currently serving MSVC member Benjamin ("BJ") Sacramento, his wife Lesley, daughter Callie, and son Max moved from Naples, Italy to their new duty station in Hawaii this summer, where BJ is assigned as the Assistant Operational Support Officer for Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

According to BJ, the move went as expected, but the family was unable to take any leave enroute. "At the time of our move in July, the US required a two week quarantine for personnel arriving from Italy," he explained. "But we were able to fly from Naples to Hawaii with an overnight stopover in San Francisco, CA and a very brief visit with my mother."

The family has settled into a new construction home in the Eva Beach area of Oahu, and BJ and Lesley are keeping the children home from school for the remainder of the calendar year. BJ reports that Lesley was recently selected for Commander/O-5 in the Navy Reserves (Dental Corps) and that she plans to apply to the state dental board to resume practicing.

BJ also explained that he will be up for promotion to Commander/O-5 in Fiscal Year 2021, and, following this current three year assignment, he hopes to get another command tour at a Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC).

If you would like to send BJ and his family a note, his new address is 91-1311 Ipuolono Street, Ewa Beach, HI, 96706. You can also email him at basacramento@gmail.com.

As they say in Hawaiian, "Mele Kalikimaka"! That's "Merry Christmas" to all us mainlanders.



BJ Sacramento, wife Lesley, daughter Callie, and son Max at the Tenuta Cavalier Pepe Vineyard outside Naples, Italy prior to their July 2020 move to Hawaii.
(Photo courtesy of BJ Sacramento)

MSVC Gets Virtual Tour of new VA Clinic

By David J. Di Tallo

The Mahoning and Shenango Valleys Chapter –Military Officers Association of America (MSVC-MOAA) got a virtual tour of the Department of Veterans Affairs soon-to-open Youngstown Community Based Outpatient Clinic at its monthly lunch meeting Friday, November 20 at A La Carte Catering in Canfield, OH.

Thirteen members and one guest enjoyed a buffet lunch – and plenty of space in between each other – and got to meet Clinic Director Carl Schneider as he provided a remotely broadcast, walking tour of the new clinic on Youngstown's north side. For those familiar with the current clinic at 2301 Belmont Avenue, the newly-constructed, leased facility is just a short walk south of the current location at the intersection with Francisca Avenue.

Mr. Schneider graduated from Bowling Green State University in 1995 and has been with the "VA" for fifteen years. He was named Director of the Youngstown clinic in July 2014.

According to Mr. Schneider, the new clinic will have enlarged and enhanced waiting and treatment rooms, as well as additional administrative space for the staff. It will also have a covered parking location for the mobile Mammogram and Audiology Vans, with a "plug in" point for data access and power.

Schneider also pointed out the locations for the Laboratory and Pharmacy, which are located at the front of the building for easier access, as well as patient treatment rooms, physical therapy spaces, and expanded restrooms with showers.

The clinic expects to cease operations at the close of business Friday January 15 and take advantage of the weekend and Monday, January 18 federal Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday to move all remaining staff and equipment to the new site, in order to be up and running by Wednesday, January 20.

According to Schneider, a Dedication Ceremony will be held at some time in February. Legislation is pending in the U.S. Congress for the new facility to be named in honor of Youngstown veteran and MSVC member Carl Nunziato.



MSVC-MOAA First Vice President Bruce Bille welcomes Mr. Carl Schneider, Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Youngstown Community Based Outpatient Clinic for a virtual tour and discussion of its new facility on Belmont Avenue at the chapter's November 20 lunch meeting at A La Carte Catering in Canfield, OH. (Photo courtesy of Michael Wisniewski) cont. pg. 4

MSVC Honors Veterans

By David J. Di Tallo

Mahoning and Shenango Valleys Chapter (MSVC) chapter members turned out to honor the nation's veterans last month at several ceremonies in Youngstown, Ohio.

On Sunday, November 8 at 1pm members were on hand for the Laying of the Roses at the Mahoning Valley Vietnam War Memorial at the corner for Wick Avenue and West Federal Street in downtown Youngstown. The event was sponsored the Vietnam Veterans of America (Youngstown Chapter 135) and the Mahoning County Veterans Services Commission (MCVSC) and featured the reading of each of the 103 names of local residents killed or missing in the Vietnam War. The event occurs annually on the Sunday preceding Veterans Day.

As each name was called, a family member, friend, or representative from a veterans service organization placed a red rose at the base of the Memorial, which was erected in July 1989 and is inscribed with all 103 names.

For Vietnam War veterans James Swager and Andrew Gall, the event holds special meaning. Swager, a retired Navy Explosive Ordnance Detail (EOD) Officer with three tours in Vietnam, was there to remember and honor fellow Austintown Fitch High School alumni Charles W. Brown (Army) and Mount Union College classmate William A. Berry (Marine Corps), both of who were killed in action.

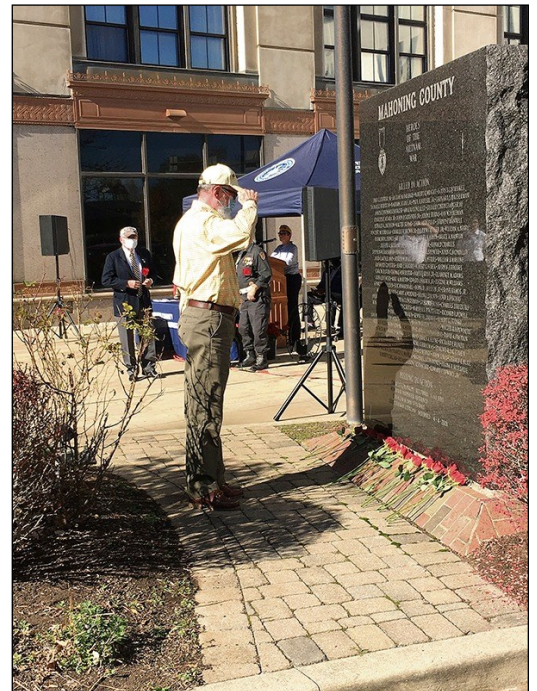
Andrew Gall was an Air Force crew chief supporting EB-66 electronic warfare flights from Thailand over North Vietnam from 1969 and 1970. He was in attendance to lay a rose for fellow Campbell Memorial High School alumnus and family friend Ronald Puskarcik, a Marine who was also killed in action and whose family was also in attendance.

Earlier in the ceremony MSVC President and MCVSC Commissioner Rod Hosler explained the meaning of the POW/MIA Chair placed at the front of the guest seating area.

Several chapter members also attended one of the few area Veterans Day observances on Wednesday, November 11 at 11am at the Mahoning County Courthouse hosted by the United Veterans Council (of which MSVC-MOAA is a member) and the MCVSC. This indoor event in the courthouse rotunda featured remarks by MCVSC Executive Director Mrs. Susan Krawchyk and Ohio State Senator Michael Rulli (R-33rd) and music by the Austintown Fitch High School Concert Choir. Mahoning County Commissioners Anthony Traficanti, Carol Rimedio-Righetti, and David Ditzler all attended.

Following the official observance, Andrew Gall paid a visit to Catholic War Veterans Post 1292, also in Youngstown, for a more private ceremony honoring ten members who all passed away since Veterans Day 2019.

Mr. Barry Jones of Poland, OH (foreground) and MSVC member and Vietnam War veteran James Swager (background) lay roses at the base of the Mahoning Valley Vietnam War Memorial on Sunday, November 8 in downtown Youngstown. (Photo by Sean Barron)



A participant lays a red rose at the base of the Mahoning Valley Vietnam War Memorial during the November 8 Laying of the Roses Ceremony in Youngstown, Ohio. The monument, which was erected in 1989, is inscribed with the names of 103 local residents killed or missing in action in the Vietnam War. (Photo by WYTV.com)



In other business, the chapter welcomed retired U.S. Air Force Colonel Kevin Riley as a guest. Col. Riley lives in Brookfield, OH and recently came out of retirement to head up the new Air Force Junior ROTC program at Austintown Fitch High School. The chapter is looking forward to adding AFHS to its annual awards program in the spring of 2021.



MSVC-MOAA members (from left) Walter Duzzny, Ralph DeLucia, and David Di Tallo welcomed retired U.S. Air Force Colonel Kevin Riley (in uniform) to its November 20 lunch meeting at A La Carte Catering in Canfield, OH. (Photo courtesy of Michael Wisniewski)



SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER: There's a Facebook Group Just for You

Are you wondering where to go to get information about issues affecting surviving spouses and families? Are you looking for a supportive, nonjudgmental group to assist you in learning and keeping up to date on benefits and legislation impacting our surviving families? Need a pick-me-up or to connect with others who share similar interests as you? Join the [MOAA Surviving Spouses and Friends Facebook](#) page!

This is a private group, just answer a few questions and wait for approval from the moderators, you of course must have Facebook membership as well.

This page is intended to be not only an efficient way to disseminate information on benefits, proposed legislation, advocacy efforts, etcetera, but also a way for all of us to connect and uplift one another. Feel free to share photos of family or pets and let members know how you are doing.

TAPS



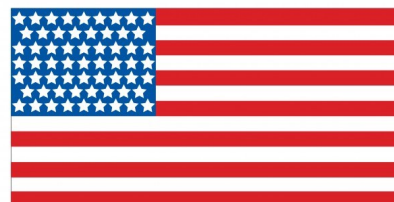
LTC Gary L. Williams, USA, Ret., Past President MSVC-MOAA

Lieutenant Colonel Gary L. Williams, 77, U.S. Army, Retired, passed away on Thursday, 26 November following a brief illness. A lifetime resident of Madison Township, Gary was born on 22 July 1943 and graduated from Beaver Local in 1961. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Education from Youngstown State University in 1965 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant from the Army ROTC program, serving in Korea during the Vietnam War. Gary retired from the Army Reserve in 1992 at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. A Life member of the Military Officers Association of America, he served as the President of the Mahoning and Shenango Valleys Chapter, 2015-2017.

Gary married Patty Ann Lynn on 26 February 1966, a union lasting 55 years. He was a proud father of 15 children that included LTC (Ret.) Gary Timothy Williams of East Liverpool, and MAJ (Ret.) Patrick "Rick" and Kelly Williams of Negley, both sons members of the MSVC and MOAA. Gary earned a Masters' Degree from Kent State University in public school administration, and served as Columbiana County Recorder and Commissioner and was a longtime Madison Township Trustee. Gary was a member of Point of Mercy Sanctuary in Lisbon. He will be truly missed by all who knew and respected him.

CAPT Thomas V. Petzinger, USN, Ret.

Captain Thomas V. Petzinger, 90, U.S. Navy, Retired, passed away on Tuesday, 30 November following a brief illness. A resident of Boardman Township, Tom was born in 1930 in Canton, Ohio. He earned a Bachelor's Degree from Mount Union College in 1952, and was commissioned an Ensign from Naval Officer's Candidate School at Newport, Rhode Island, in July 1952. He was a Navy deep sea diver, and served aboard the USS Mender, a salvage ship, and helped clean Inchon Harbor after the Korean War. In 1954, Tom worked at Bikini Atoll where he built underwater moorings for four hydrogen atomic bomb tests. Tom retired from the Navy Reserve in 1977 after serving 25 years with the rank of Captain. He is best-known as the owner of Pan Atlas Travel, where he worked until 2001.



Legislative Contacts:

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

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DELAYS IN OBTAINING MILITARY DOCUMENT FOR ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS

As you may be aware, the government's primary repository for military personnel records, the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), has been closed to the public since March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to numerous COVID-19 exposures occurring with increasing frequency, the NPRC has informed us they have shut down most of their remaining operations indefinitely. This decision negatively impacts our ability to obtain documents to determine eligibility for interment in national cemeteries.

NPRC will continue to make every attempt to assist Veterans and their families, but if a service member's records cannot be obtained through any source other than NPRC, they may not be able to make a timely eligibility determination.

All Veterans and family members must be made aware of this issue and you are to search for any additional military documents which may be in your possession. Documents kept by the Veteran may be the only documents available at this time to verify his or her eligibility for burial and other services.

All Veterans and family members are encouraged to check the following:

- * County Veterans Service Commission for assistance.
- * Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) such as the American Legion or the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), etc. These organizations may have discharge documents on file for members.
- * Any military orders the service member may have received or any documents showing a military service number would be helpful.
- * County clerk of the county where the service member would have returned from service. The service member may have filed their documents with the county upon discharge from military service.

If the service member has a set of dog tags, please send a clear photograph of them to our agency.

Any additional information provided may improve our ability to locate records. You may send any additional information or documents by fax at 1-866-900-6417 or by email at NCA.Scheduling@va.gov. Please follow up on the fax or email with a phone call to 1-800-535-1117, Option 1, to alert us to this additional information. We apologize for the delay and thank you for your assistance in this emergency.

MAHONING COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION CLOSED FOR ON SITE APPOINTMENTS

The Mahoning County Veterans Service Commission is closed for in person on site appointment until further notice. Appointment and assistance can be made by contacting the Mahoning County Veterans Service Commission at (330) 740-2450).

MAHONING COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION, 19 DECEMBER FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The Mahoning County Veterans Service Commission is sponsoring a Food Distribution program taking place on Saturday, 19 December from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at the Cavelli Center in downtown Youngstown. The last Food Distribution on 15 November at the Canfield Fairgrounds provided food to over 1,000 families. Several Chapter members helped out during this distribution. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Rod Hosler. Dress for the weather and bring a mask.

MSVC 2021 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

15 JAN – Luncheon Meeting, at A La Cart Catering, Canfield; Installation of Officers. Officiating will be Mayor Richard A. Duffett of Canfield
Speaker: Mr. Stephen Brown, Fmr LT, USN; Mine Clearing Operations Haiphong Harbor, North Vietnam in 1973.

16 JAN – OCC Meeting, NVMM-Columbus.

04 FEB – MSVC Board Meeting, VRC, YSU.

19 FEB – Luncheon Meeting/Workshop, at A La Cart Catering Canfield, Topic: "Being Dead is No Excuse." Preparing for the inevitable with humor.

Spouses are encouraged to attend.

MSVC MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL - 2021

Beginning in January, we will be soliciting our 2021 Chapter Memberships dues at \$20.00 per person to offset the administrative costs incurred in the operations of the Chapter. Your quick response is appreciated. Renewal checks can be mailed to: MSVC-MOAA, P.O. Box 5342, Poland, OH 44514

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL for MAHONING SHENANGO VALLEYS CHAPTER MOAA

Name: _____ Military Status _____ Spouse Name _____
Branch _____ Rank _____ Years Active/Reserve _____ / _____
Regular Member (Retired, Former, Active* Officer of the seven uniformed US Services (Membership \$20/year)
*FREE