



Northwestern Michigan Chapter

November 2022

Next Chapter Event

Friday, December 16 – The next Chapter Dinner Meeting will be held at the Traverse City Country Club in beginning at 5:30 pm. Our annual scholarship awards will be presented at the meeting. The country club is located at 1725 South Union Street in Traverse City. Dinner information is shown on the attached flyer.



In case you missed it – News from MOAA (Click on the links to open them):

- **How the Pentagon Squandered the Chance to Combat Brain Injuries.** Pushback from military leaders and lengthy debate in the military medical community led to delays that may have cost lives. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/lost-years-and-missed-opportunities-how-the-pentagon-squandered-the-chance-to-combat-brain-injuries/>
- **7 Money Moves to Make Before the End of the Year.** From tax prep to retirement planning to RMDs, act now to avoid missing key deadlines. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/7-money-moves-to-make-before-the-end-of-the-year/>
- **Tricare Pharmacy Specialty Drug Charges Take Effect January 1.** Learn your options under the new system, and get critical links and phone numbers to help move your prescriptions. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/advocacy/tricare-pharmacy-specialty-drug-changes-take-effect-jan.-1/>
- **DoD Wants to Hear From 110,000 Military Families with Special Needs.** The survey focuses on identification and enrollment, assignment coordination during the PCS process, and family support. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/dod-wants-to-hear-from-110,000-military-families-with-special-needs/>
- **MOAA-Backed Bill Would Crack Down on VA Claims Sharks.** Ask your lawmakers to support this bipartisan measure protecting veterans from unauthorized fees. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/advocacy/moaa-backed-bill-would-crack-down-on-va-claims-sharks/>
- **STAR Act Not Included in NDAA Despite Strong and Growing Support.** MOAA's fight continues to end the unjust offset and move toward concurrent receipt for all. Help us keep the pressure on Congress. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/advocacy/star-act-not-included-in-ndaa-despite-strong-and-growing-support/>



Northwestern Michigan Chapter MOAA

FROM THE PRESIDENT – CDR Tom Haase, USCG (Ret.)

I hope everyone had a great summer. Looks like winter is finally making itself felt. We have had an eventful couple of months for the Chapter. I am pleased to announce our selection as a Five Star Level of Excellence Chapter for 2021. Next time you see Bob Kutulis, be sure to congratulate him on this achievement, as his leadership, along with the tremendous support from all of you, made this achievement possible.

Mark Benjamin, Greg Movsesian, and I attended the November meeting of the Capital Area Chapter. Prior to this meeting we had the opportunity to meet with Frank Michael, CAPT, USN (Ret.), who serves as the Program Director, Council and Chapter Affairs with MOAA. He gave us an update on MOAA's legislative goals for 2022 and some interesting statistics. Of the roughly 360,000 members of MOAA, the average age is 63; about 40,000 are members of a local chapter and the average age of a chapter member is 75! Obviously the 320,000 members not in chapters are a good place to start. Frank and his staff can help us reach those who live within our geographic footprint. They will help us generate an email list to which we can send an invitation to one of our events. You all can help us add to our chapter. If you know of someone who has served as an officer, we would love to reach out to them. Mark Benjamin has a tentative commitment from Frank to attend our September meeting as our guest speaker. More to follow on that.

Scott Dennis and his Scholarship Committee have been actively seeking applications for our Scholarship Program. They will make their decisions in the next couple of weeks, and we will be awarding our largest scholarship amounts ever! Please do your best to attend our dinner meeting on Friday, December 16th at the Traverse City Country Club.

Thanks again for all you do, and Never Stop Serving.

Tom Haase

2022 Northwestern Michigan Chapter Structure

Board of Directors:

Immediate Past President Capt Bob Kutulis, USAF (Ret.)..... kutulis@charter.net
Director (USCG Liaison) CDR Andy Schanno, USCG Andrew.G.Schanno@uscg.mil
Director Col Randy McClure, USAFR (Ret.)..... rmac927@yahoo.com
Director (Elected) TBD

Chapter Officers:

President CDR Thomas Haase, USCG (Ret.)..... thaase76@gmail.com
Vice President..... CDR Mark Benjamin, USCG (Ret.)..... mebmd11@gmail.com
Treasurer MajGen Michael Lehnert, USMC (Ret.) wontolla44@gmail.com
Secretary Open
Membership Chair..... Col Greg Movsesian, ANG (Ret.)..... gmo50@outlook.com
Legislative Liaison LTC Steve Chowen, USA (Ret.)..... shchowen@hotmail.com
Programs Officer CDR Mark Benjamin, USCG (Ret.)..... mebmd11@gmail.com
Communications/Newsletter CWO4 Curtis Erickson, USCG (Ret.) curtis_erickson@outlook.com
Scholarship Chair Brig Gen Scott Dennis, USAF (Ret.)..... sldennisf16@gmail.com
Personal Affairs Officer..... Open
Surviving Spouse Liaison..... Karen Movsesian themovsesians@gmail.com
Chaplain CWO4 Thomas Petersen, USN (Ret.) thomas.petersen70@yahoo.com

Upcoming Events and Quarterly Dinner Meetings

CDR Mark Benjamin, USCG, Ret.
Programs Chair and Veterans Coalition
Representative

Grand Traverse Veterans Coalition

The Veterans Suicide Prevention Group, 22 2 None, receives a percentage of sales from Oleson's Grocery Stores as well as Family Fare Food Markets. Save your receipts and turn them in to MOAA Board Member. We will forward them on to this worthwhile organization.

Chapter Events

2022

Friday, December 16 – Christmas Gala and Annual Scholarship Dinner at the Traverse City Country Club. The guest speaker will be Dan Zassick, who is a Great Lakes Maritime Academy (GLMA) graduate, the GLMA Simulation Manager, and an instructor at Northwestern Michigan College. Additional event information is on the attached flyer.

2023

Thursday, March 2 – Quarterly dinner meeting at the Reflect Bistro, which is located at the Traverse City Cambria Suites hotel. The guest speaker will be Brad Graft, owner of the Pirates Cove Adventure Parks.

June (Date TBD) – Quarterly Dinner Meeting and Silent Auction at the Traverse City Golf and Country Club. The guest speaker will be Tom Petzold.

August (Date TBD) – Annual picnic at the Peninsula Township Park in Bowers Harbor.

Wednesday, September 13 – Quarterly Dinner Meeting. The guest speaker will be CAPT Frank Michael, USN, Ret. CAPT Michael is the MOAA Program Director, Council of Chapters and Chapter Affairs.

Northwestern Michigan Chapter Presented 5-Star Level of Excellence Award for 2021

Chapter President Tom Haase was presented the Chapter's 5-Star Level of Excellence Award certificate of 2021 in Lansing earlier this month. The award is given to MOAA chapters that meet certain requirements.

In order to receive the award, a Chapter's performance is evaluated and scored in a number of different categories. These categories include advocacy, community engagement and outreach, recruiting and retention, leadership succession, and training.

The award was presented by CAPT Frank Michael, USN, Ret., who is the MOAA Program Director, Council of Chapters and Chapter Affairs.



CAPT Michael presenting Chapter President Tom Haase with the 5-Star Level of Excellence Award Certificate.

Chapter Member Featured in Local Newspaper

Chapter member Mickey Dean was featured in an *Elk Rapids News* article earlier this month. The article, entitled "From Farm Boy to Fighter Pilot", is an interesting read. It touches upon his life as a northern Michigan farm boy through his Navy career as a pilot, flying off carriers and working as a TOPGUN pilot.

Fall 2022 Chapter Dinner Meeting

The fall Chapter dinner meeting was held at the Reflect Bistro on September 8th. About 50 members and guests were in attendance.

The evening's guest speaker was our Chapter's Surviving Spouse Liaison, Karen Movsesian. Karen spoke to the group about the Surviving Spouse Initiative that MOAA provides to its members.



Karen Movsesian

The primary role of a Surviving Spouse Liaison is to encourage, engage, and educate members, spouses, and surviving spouses. The most important role is educating members about personal affairs to take care of before and after personal loss.

If you are interested in getting more information on this program, please contact Karen at telephone (313) 318-4703, or email her at themovsesians@gmail.com.

Membership Corner

Col. Movsesian, ANG, Ret.
Membership Chairman

Greetings from snowy Rapid City! Our Chapter currently has 75 members! Recruiting new members is something we all can do. Many military officers joined MOAA while on active duty. When they relocate to a new area after separation or retirement, they may not realize there is a local MOAA Chapter they can join. So, when you meet Veteran Officers of any Service Branch, including the Reserve and Guard, invite them to join our Chapter. MOAA is here to protect our earned benefits and will be here for our spouses when needed. Please contact me with names and contact information for prospective members. A copy of our Chapter Application form is in this newsletter. It can be printed and shared with prospective members.

Many of our members have already established a member account on the MOAA website, MOAA.org. There is important information for all members that is updated regularly. In addition, it is important to the Chapter that your profile is current. After logging in, go to "my account". Verify your contact information, including email address and phone number. Then click on name and contact preferences, and make your personal choices. Under Promotion Contact Information, check the appropriate boxes to your personal needs. Finally, under Personal Communication Information, select your "Preferred Communication Method". The click save. Taking the time to do this will make the Chapter Roster more accurate. Contact me with any membership questions you may have.

Get membership information on the MOAA website at:

<https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/>

Chapter Member Accomplishments and Recognitions

We offer our congratulations to the following Chapter members:

Deborah Allen was selected to replace Leelanau County Administrator Chet Janik at the end of the year. Allen now works in healthcare philanthropy at Grand Traverse Pavilions as Executive Director of Development and Community Engagement. She served as a lieutenant in the United States Naval Reserves and has been a trustee for Elmwood Township.



Deborah Allen

Chapter Vice President Mark Benjamin was recognized as “Veteran of the Year” by the Grand Traverse Area Veterans Coalition. Mark has been very active in veterans organizations, including the Northwestern Michigan Chapter of MOAA, the Coast Guard Aviation Association, and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.



Mark Benjamin

Three Chapter members received Quilts of Valor during ceremonies at the Traverse City Elks Lodge on Veterans Day. They were Walter Topp, Bart Halliday, and Fritz Barratt. More information on the Quilts of Valor is shown on the following page.



Walter Topp



Bart Halliday



Fritz Barratt

Quilts of Valor

The Quilts of Valor Foundation is a national organization founded in 2003 by “Blue Star” mom Catherine Roberts. With a son deployed in Iraq – a gunner sitting atop a Humvee – she felt ten seconds away from panic 24-hours a day, every day. It was during that time her son was deployed that she had the idea of comforting Veterans with quilts.

Since then, more than 140,000 quilts have been awarded here in the United States, and in Germany, Iraq and Afghanistan. With each quilt, the mission to honor Service Members and Veterans is fulfilled – one human being reaching out and touching another, without judgement, reaching out with acceptance and with an acknowledgement of service to our nation in very trying circumstances.

A Quilt of Valor is made of three layers, and each layer has its own special meaning.

- The top, with its many colors, shapes and fabrics, represents the communities and the many individuals we are.
- The batting, the filler, is the center of the quilt, its warmth. It represents our hope that this quilt will bring warmth, comfort, peace and healing to the individual who receives it.
- The backing is the strength that supports the other layers. It represents the strength of the recipient, the support of his or her family, our communities, and our nation.
- Each stitch that holds the layers together represents love, gratitude, and sometimes the tears of the maker.

Each quilt also represents a three-part message from the givers to those receiving it:

- First, we HONOR you for your service. We honor you for leaving all you hold dear and to stand in harm’s way in a time of crisis, protecting us from the effects of war.
- Next, we know that FREEDOM IS NOT FREE. The cost of freedom is the dedication of lives of men and women like you, and this quilt is meant to say thank you for your sacrifice.
- And finally, this quilt is meant to offer COMFORT to you, and to remind you that although your family and friends cannot be with you at all times, you are forever in our thoughts and our hearts.

Additional information on Quilts of Valor can be found at: <https://www.govf.org/>

National Park Passes are Now Free for Veterans

On November 11, the National Park Service instituted a new lifetime park pass program for U. S. Military Veterans and Gold Star Families.

The pass provides *free entrance* to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands, including national parks, wildlife refuges, and forests.

More information on this program and how you can obtain your pass can be found at:

<https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/veterans-and-gold-star-families-free-access.htm>

Congress Passes PACT Act

Senator Gary Peters traveled to Traverse City on October 28 to brief veteran leaders on the Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act.

The PACT Act is a law that goes into effect in January, 2023. It expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances.

The PACT Act adds to the list of health conditions that we assume (or “presume”) are caused by exposure to these substances. This law helps us provide generations of Veterans – and their survivors – with the care and benefits they’ve earned and deserve. The Act potentially benefits 3.5 million veterans, including Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq combat veterans. You can find out more about this program by going to <https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/>

Chapter Scholarship Fund

We are very proud of the fact that our members give generously to support our chapter's scholarship fund. Your support of this program will be demonstrated at our December dinner. We will be awarding six new scholarships to deserving students and one scholarship to a returning scholar that total seven thousand dollars.

You can donate to the scholarship fund by giving a Chapter Officer a check at one of our dinner meetings, using the attached dinner meeting flyer, or by sending your check to Mike Lehnert, noting that it is for the scholarship fund. If mailing a check, you may mail it to:

Northwestern Michigan Chapter MOAA
10610 Elk Lake Road
Williamsburg, MI 49690

Thank you to those of you who have supported this year's fund, THANK YOU!

We would like to thank the following scholarship fund donors:

Roy Aydelotte	Fritz Barrett	Scott Dennis	Tim Goldsmith	Wayne Koppa
John Lindsey	Brad Wortman	Marci Smith	Mark Benjamin	Angie Morgan
Marty Colburn	Jim Stephenson	Jim Kent	Greg Movsesian	Randy McClure
Tom Haase	Brad Graft	Mike Lehnert	Tom Petersen	Walter Topp
Richard Kay	John Burbank	Paul Klein	Bob Kutulis	Tom Petzold
Mike Wildman	Bruce Buchan	Don Pond		

We would also like to thank the following Corporate Donors for their support that aided our scholarship fund through their item donations for our silent auction:

Grandview Golf Club	Timberwolf Golf Club	Bay Meadows Golf Club
Elmbrook Golf Club	Pirate's Cove	West Marine
Green Mitt Car Wash	Lowe's	Alden Mill House
Sportsman's Warehouse	John Wemlinger	Mitch LeClaire
Bob Kutulis	Mike Lehnert	Gordy LaFontain

Reining Liberty Ranch Donation

We recently received a thank you from the Reining Liberty Ranch for a \$100 donation made by our Chapter earlier this year.

Reining Liberty Ranch is one of the many veterans support organizations in the northwest Michigan area. They provide a number of different types of no-cost support programs for both men and women veterans, including their eight-week long Horses 4 Heroes programs and peer-to-peer support groups.

Their ranch has an open-door policy to area veterans, and they invite you to stop by for some coffee, tea, snacks and conversations. They are located at 4656 Silver Pines Rd in Traverse City. Their website is:

www.reininglibertyranch.org

Retiree ID Cards

The Department of Defense is transitioning from its current paper-based Uniformed Services Identification (USID) card to a more secure, next generation USID card. They expect to complete this transition by 2026.

The Next Generation USID card will incorporate an updated design and security features to deter counterfeiting and fraud, and will be printed on a plastic cardstock.

Card issuing facilities and appointments can be made online at:

<https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/locator>





**Annual Christmas Gala and Scholarship Awards Dinner Meeting –
Scholarships Will Be Presented to Deserving Area Students**



Friday December 16, 2022

5:30 p.m.

Traverse City Country Club

1725 S Union Street, Traverse City, MI 49684



**Guest speaker: Mr. Dan Zassick, Great Lakes Maritime Academy Simulation
Manager and Instructor, Northwestern Michigan College**

Dinner will be Traditional Holiday Fare served buffet style, and includes:

Machus Salad, Biscuits, and Rolls

Carved Turkey Breast, Pan Gravy, Cranberry Sauce, and Stuffing

Roasted Ham with Dijonnaise

Mashed Potatoes

Sautéed Green Beans

Roasted Squash Wedges

Coffee, Tea, and Lemonade

Cash Bar with Drink Tickets

Price \$45.00 per person.

Member Name: _____ Guest Name: _____

Number of meals times \$45.00 = Amount:\$ _____

Scholarship Donation:\$ _____

Chapter Dues (\$20.00/year, \$55.00/3 years)\$ _____

Total Amount Due:\$ _____

Reservations to: Mark Benjamin, 3688 Holiday Village Road, Traverse City, MI 49686,
Email Mark at: mebmd11@gmail.com, or call/text him at (231) 642-1201.

*Advance payment is preferred, but you can pay at the door.
Make you check payable to NW MI Chapter MOAA.*

RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NLT 5 pm SUNDAY DECEMBER 11, 2022



Application for Membership – Northwestern Michigan Chapter

A membership in good standing with the National MOAA organization is a requirement for Regular Chapter Membership. Auxiliary Membership is for surviving spouses of deceased members and those surviving spouses of any deceased individuals who would, if living, would be eligible for membership. Honorary (Non-Voting/Dues) Membership is by invitation of the Board of Directors of this Chapter.

Type of Membership Requested: Regular Auxiliary Honorary

Name (Last, First, MI) _____

Branch of Service _____ Rank _____

Status _____

National MOAA Membership # _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address _____

Phone Number (Include Area Code) _____

Date of Birth _____

Spouse's Name _____

Signature

Date

Dues (Submit with Application - \$20 per year or \$55 for three years) \$ _____

Make Checks Payable to: Northwester Michigan Chapter, MOAA

Date Paid (For Chapter Use) _____

Date Accepted (For Chapter Use) _____

Submit Application to any Chapter Director at a Chapter Meeting, or mail to:

Northwestern Michigan Chapter, MOAA
Gregory Movsesian, Membership Chairman
8079 Aarwood Trail NW
Rapid City, MI 49676