



Northwestern Michigan Chapter

May 2023

### **Next Chapter Event**

**Monday, June 12** – Our June Chapter Dinner Meeting and Silent Auction will be held at the Traverse City Country Club, beginning at 5:30 pm. The country club is located at 1725 South Union Street, Traverse City, MI 49684. Our guest speaker will be Chapter Member Tom Petzold. See you there!



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

- **New VA Pilot Program Supports Caregivers' Mental Health.** The initiative is one of several expected to launch as part of the department's "Year of the Caregiver."  
<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/new-va-pilot-program-supports-caregivers-mental-health/>
- **Bills Aim to Expand Health Care Program Offering Coverage to Children of Veterans.** Dependents and survivors of some vets don't have the same care options as fellow young adults. Help MOAA change that. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/bills-aim-to-expand-health-care-program-offering-coverage-to-children-of-veterans/>
- **COLA Prediction Points to Less Than Half of Last Year's Increase.** Find out the new figure, how the final rate will be set, and why this issue remains a top MOAA priority.  
<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/finance/cola-prediction-points-to-less-than-half-of-last-years-increase/>
- **VA Benefits, Military Pay Looking Safer as Congress Weighs Debt Ceiling Deal.** Here's what the proposed agreement to avoid a default would mean for DoD and VA budgets.  
<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/recommended-reads/va-benefits,-military-pay-looking-safer-as-congress-weighs-debt-ceiling-deal/>
- **Big Changes on Annual List of Best (and Worst) States for Military Retirees.** There's a new state atop the rankings ... and a new state in last place. Find out whether you agree with the selections. [https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/finance/big-changes-on-annual-list-of-best-\(and-worst\)-states-for-military-retirees/](https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/finance/big-changes-on-annual-list-of-best-(and-worst)-states-for-military-retirees/)
- **MOAA Joins Court Brief Supporting Critical Consumer Protections.** A recent ruling threatens a federal agency providing needed financial safeguards for servicemembers, veterans, and families. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/moaa-joins-court-brief-supporting-critical-consumer-protections/>
- **Arlington Cemetery Fix Moving Forward – You Can Help MOAA Make a Difference.** Learn how the latest on legislation offering a long-term solution to provide earned military honors. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/arlington-cemetery-fix-moving-forward-%E2%80%93-you-can-help-moaa-make-a-difference/>



## Northwestern Michigan Chapter MOAA

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

Happy Spring to all! Your MOAA Board has been active with activities and meetings. Tom Bratton has agreed to take on the role of Secretary and Andy Clayton has agreed to serve in the role of Legislative Liaison. Please thank them the next time you see them.

We will be working on developing a slate of officers and board members during the summer and it will be presented to the membership with the September meeting and newsletter. I hope you see you all at our June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting/dinner at the Traverse City Golf and Country Club. The flyer has gone out by email, please RSVP for this event. Our June meeting will also include the annual silent auction. Mark your calendars for our September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, we will be hosting Captain Frank Michael, USN (ret) who is the Director of Chapters and Councils for MOAA in Washington. Frank will update us on what is coming for MOAA for the rest of 2023 and into the future.

I had the privilege to be a member of the Michigan Council efforts for Advocacy in Action last month. Some of you may remember this as “Storming the Hill”. Our current Michigan Council President, Mary Johnson and I divided the Michigan delegation and met with as many as we could. I was able to meet with staff members for Senators Stabenow and Peters and Representatives McClain, Dingell and Moolenaar. Luckily Representative Bergman was in between floor votes and we were able to meet in person. The issues we brought to them were:

1. Restoring the Basic Allowance for Housing to 100% of the survey amount. BHA had been reduced by 1% a year starting in 2015, for a total reduction of 5%. There is a House bill currently moving through the system and a Senate bill soon to be introduced.
2. Restore the minimum number of pharmacies required in the Tricare Pharmacy contract. This number was reduced substantially during the last contract renewal and the reduction has had a very big negative impact primarily in rural areas and for those who require more complex prescriptions.
3. Support the All-Volunteer Force. Currently retention and recruiting are at very low levels and may impact readiness if not addressed.

Please consider offering your support to these issues. The MOAA magazine often has mailers which can be detached and mailed to our representatives in congress. You can also sign in to the MOAA.ORG website and click on the Advocacy tab for additional ways to voice your concerns. That is more than enough for now, I look forward to seeing you on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June!

Tom Haase  
President, NWMI Chapter of MOAA

## Upcoming Events and Quarterly Dinner Meetings

CDR Mark Benjamin, USCG, Ret.  
NWMI Chapter Vice President and Programs Chair

### Chapter Events

**Monday, June 12** – Quarterly Dinner Meeting and Silent Auction at the Traverse City Golf and Country Club. The guest speaker will be Tom Petzold.

**Thursday, August 17** – Annual picnic at the Peninsula Township Park at 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.

**Friday, December 15** – Christmas Gala and Scholarship Dinner at the Traverse City Country Club. The guest speaker will be Dr. Nick Nissley, President of Northwestern Michigan College.

### Veterans Affairs Life Insurance

Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife) provides low-cost coverage to Veterans with service-connected disabilities.

For more information on this program, or check your eligibility and apply online, go to their website:

<https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/valife/>

## NWM Chapter ROTC and JROTC Awards

Bob Kutulis, Immediate Past President NWMI Chapter MOAA

The NWMI Chapter, MOAA, recently presented two NWMI Chapter awards to ROTC and JROTC cadets:

Eliya Huebner, an Air Force ROTC Cadet at Michigan Technological University, received an award on April 18.

Kayleigh Matson, an Army JROTC Cadet at Houghton High School, received an award on May 18.

The awards were presented by Chapter Member CPT Andy Reichert, USA, Ret.

## Grand Traverse Area Veterans Coalition

CWO4 Curtis Erickson, USCG, Ret.  
NWMI Chapter, MOAA Representative

The Veterans Suicide Prevention Group, 22 2 None ([www.222none.org](http://www.222none.org)) is a member of the GTAVC and works to raise awareness and provide support to end veteran suicide.

Save your Oleson's Grocery Store receipts and turn them in to a MOAA Chapter Board Member. We will forward them on to this worthwhile organization – they will receive donations based upon the receipt amounts.

## 2023 Northwestern Michigan Chapter Structure

### Board of Directors:

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

### Chapter Officers:

President ..... CDR Thomas Haase, USCG (Ret.) ..... [thaase76@gmail.com](mailto:thaase76@gmail.com)  
Vice President ..... CDR Mark Benjamin, USCG (Ret.) ..... [mebmd11@gmail.com](mailto:mebmd11@gmail.com)  
Treasurer ..... MajGen Michael Lehnert, USMC (Ret.) ..... [wontolla44@gmail.com](mailto:wontolla44@gmail.com)  
Secretary ..... Tom Bratton, USAF Veteran ..... [thomas.a.bratton@gmail.com](mailto:thomas.a.bratton@gmail.com)  
Membership Chair ..... Col Greg Movsesian, ANG (Ret.) ..... [gmo50@outlook.com](mailto:gmo50@outlook.com)  
Legislative Liaison ..... CDR Andy Clayton, USCG ..... [gaclayton@gmail.com](mailto:gaclayton@gmail.com)  
Programs Officer ..... CDR Mark Benjamin, USCG (Ret.) ..... [mebmd11@gmail.com](mailto:mebmd11@gmail.com)  
Communications/Newsletter ..... CWO4 Curtis Erickson, USCG (Ret.) ..... [curtis\\_erickson@outlook.com](mailto:curtis_erickson@outlook.com)  
Scholarship Chair ..... Brig Gen Scott Dennis, USAF (Ret.) ..... [sldennisf16@gmail.com](mailto:sldennisf16@gmail.com)  
Personal Affairs Officer ..... Karen Movsesian ..... [themovsesians@gmail.com](mailto:themovsesians@gmail.com)  
Surviving Spouse Liaison ..... Karen Movsesian ..... [themovsesians@gmail.com](mailto:themovsesians@gmail.com)  
Chaplain ..... LT Vince Lobisco, USN (Ret.) ..... [lobisco1@sbcglobal.net](http://lobisco1@sbcglobal.net)

# March Dinner Meeting Highlights

The Spring dinner meeting was held at the Reflect Bistro in the Cambria Suites Hotel in Traverse City. Chapter member Brad Graft held everyone's attention as he spoke about the

backgrounds for the three historical fiction books that he has written. The next dinner meeting will be held at the Traverse City Country Club on June 12.



## Silent Auction to Be Held at June Dinner Meeting

The Chapter will be holding a silent auction as part of the June Dinner Meeting at the Traverse City Country Club on June 12. If you would like to donate an item for the auction or know of a business that would like to donate a gift to the auction, please contact Greg or Karen Movsesian at their email addresses, which are shown on Page 3.

## Second Annual Mini Golf Outing a Success

The second annual Chapter golf outing at Pirates Cove Adventure Park in Traverse City was held on May 19<sup>th</sup>. This year's weather proved to be ideal for the event, as many people took to the miniature links to support Pirate's Cove's Putting for Patriots fund as well as our Chapter's Scholarship Fund. We look forward to next year's event!

## Scholarship Presented at Mini Golf Outing



A NWMI Chapter Scholarship was presented to Ava Schulz at the recent mini golf outing. Shown in the picture are Scott Dennis, Chapter Scholarship Chair, Kim Schulz, Ava Schulz, and Chapter President Tom Haase.



From Left to Right: Chapter President Tom Haase, 2023 Mini Golf Champion Dave St. Aubin, and Chapter Vice President Mark Benjamin.

## Why Join MOAA?

Do you know anyone who meets the requirement for membership in MOAA and is *not* a member?

### Who We Are

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the country's leading organization protecting the rights of military service members and their families. Those who belong to MOAA not only lend their voices to a greater cause, but they also gain access to extensive benefits tailored to the needs and lifestyles of military officers. MOAA members proudly hail from every branch of the uniformed services. To them, we have made the same promise that they have made to their country: Never Stop Serving.

MOAA's greatest mission is to improve the lives of those who serve and their families, which is achieved largely through the tireless advocacy efforts taking place in our nation's capital. MOAA's experts in Washington are there to support legislation that benefits the military community and are equally vigilant when fighting to stop legislation that threatens our livelihood. The larger our numbers, the greater our voice.

### Who Can Join

Membership is open to active duty, former, retired, and National Guard and Reserve commissioned and warrant officers of the uniformed services and their surviving spouses.

There are three levels of membership:

#### Basic Membership

As a MOAA BASIC Member, you'll have free electronic access to MOAA e-communications about news and support of critical advocacy efforts to protect your military benefits. The Basic Membership is FREE.

#### 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.

#### 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.

Additional information on MOAA memberships and benefits can be found on the MOAA website:

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

#### **Northwestern Michigan Chapter Membership**

***If you know someone is already a member of MOAA, is not a member of our Chapter, and they live in the Northern Michigan area, please give them a copy of our Chapter membership application. A copy of the form is attached to this newsletter.***



## 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



**Northwestern Michigan Chapter  
June Dinner Meeting  
Annual Silent Auction**

**Monday, 12 June, 2023  
Traverse City Country Club  
1725 South Union Street, Traverse City, MI  
5:30 PM**

**Guest speaker: Chapter member Tom Petzold, MAJ USAF (Ret)**

**Price \$55.00 per person Our buffet dinner includes:**

- Grand Traverse Bay Salad
- Oven Baked Parmesan Lake Superior Whitefish
- Chicken Breast Caprese
- Rice Pilaf
- Green Beans
- Rolls and Butter
- Vanilla Ice Cream

Name(s):

Member - \_\_\_\_\_ Guest(s) - \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number in Your Group Attending (Please indicate # of dinners):

<u>Member and Guest(s)</u>	<u>Amount Due</u>
Buffet Dinner: _____ @ \$55.00 .....	\$ _____
Scholarship Donation: .....	\$ _____
Total Amount Due	\$ _____

**Reservations to: Karen Movsesian, 8079 Aarwood Trail NW, Rapid City, MI 49676 or email [themovsesians@gmail.com](mailto:themovsesians@gmail.com) or text/call 313-318-4703 Negative replies requested.**

*Advance payment is preferred, but you can pay at the door.  
Check payable to NW MI Chap MOAA.*

**RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NLT JUNE 6, 2023**