

Upcoming Chapter Event

Thursday, March 19 – Our quarterly dinner meeting will be held at Boone’s Long Lake Inn. Social time begins at 5:00pm. The guest speaker is our own member, Scott Dennis, Brig Gen, USAF (Ret.), speaking about his experience as a Squadron Commander in Operation Iraqi Freedom- Day One - March 20, 2003. Please see the enclosed flyer for more information. See you there!



FROM THE PRESIDENT, NWMI Chapter of MOAA – LTC Chris Johnson, US Army (Ret.)

Happy belated New Year to you all. I am grateful to take my turn as your Chapter President. I want to thank Mark Benjamin for a smooth transition and lots of guidance.

Our events committee, led by VP Eric Boals, is planning our events for the year. We continue with our quarterly dinner meetings to include a silent auction to raise revenue for our scholarship funds and our Christmas Gala and Scholarship Awards Dinner. Our annual Mini-golf outing is scheduled for May and our Chapter Picnic and Golf Tournament will take place in August. We will close out the year with our annual Holiday Gala in December. If you have ideas for our chapter outings, let us know! We are always looking for ways to foster camaraderie amongst our members and have fun!

I want to thank Mike Wildman, our Membership Chair, for his work in updating our roster ensuring we can communicate with our members and scouring the National MOAA database for former officers living in our area. If you meet a fellow officer, I hope you will extend to them an invitation to join us, and forward their information to Mike Wildman.

I'd like to welcome new members who have joined the chapter since the November Newsletter: Tom Allard, Ida Riley, Steven Briggs, Patrick Wright, and Joseph Yancho. Welcome aboard!

We still have a few openings for Chapter Officer positions: Legislative Liaison, Personal Affairs Officer, and Surviving Spouse Liaison. I encourage you or your spouse to consider joining our Chapter Board.

Mark your calendars. Our next dinner meeting is Thursday, March 19th at Boones Long Lake Inn. The guest speaker is Chapter Member, Scott Dennis, who will discuss air operations during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. See the enclosed flyer.

As we move forward, our chapter priorities are:

- To be a leading military service organization in our region.
- To provide scholarship opportunities to students of veterans and military service Cadets.
- To foster camaraderie in our community of fellow officers and their families.
- Living the motto of "Never Stop Serving".

I hope to see you all at the March Dinner meeting at Boone’s on March 19th.



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

Visit the MOAA online Legislative Action Center at: www.moaa.org/takeaction

- [MOAA - VA Releases, Then Reverses, New Rule on Veterans' Disability Benefits](#) Veterans' advocates stated [the rule](#) could allow the VA to lower disability ratings (and compensation) for veterans whose conditions are controlled or improved by medication. Public comments on the rule can be submitted [via the Federal Register website](#) until April 20. Consider these [suggestions from Regulations.gov](#) for making an effective comment.
- [MOAA - MOAA: VA Must Rescind, Not Just 'Halt,' New Rule](#) While MOAA joined fellow veteran advocacy groups in support of a VA decision [to reverse course on a new rule](#) regarding veteran disability ratings, a pledge to “halt enforcement” of the provision isn't enough – the rule must be fully rescinded.
- [MOAA - MOAA Life Member Awarded Medal of Honor](#) More than seven decades after a heroic – [and secret](#) – dogfight in the skies of Korea, 100-year-old Capt. Royce Williams, USN (Ret), received the Medal of Honor on Feb. 24 during President Donald Trump's State of the Union address in Washington, D.C.
- [MOAA - Vietnam Pilot Runs Veterans' Story Group](#) Lt. Col. Bill Confer Sr., USA (Ret) runs a veterans' story group at his retirement community in Pennsylvania.
- [MOAA - MOAA CEO Outlines Key Priorities at Joint Veterans Hearing](#) Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), testified alongside fellow veterans advocates before House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee members in Washington, D.C., using his remarks to stress the importance of three bills on MOAA's priority list.
- [MOAA - Pro Tips for Your Transition: How to Excel After Service](#) These pro tips are designed to help you translate your experience, stand out to employers, and move forward with confidence. Want more? [Visit MOAA's Transition and Career Center](#) for dozens of free articles, a list of upcoming events, and member-exclusive resources.
- **RAND Corporation Report:**
State-Level Summaries of Veteran Needs and Well-Being
https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA4405-3.html

This study examines how veteran needs vary significantly from state to state—an important reminder that effective veteran policies and programs must be informed by state-specific data rather than national averages alone.

The Northwestern Michigan Chapter of MOAA is an independent, nonprofit, and nonpartisan association of commissioned officers from America's military services, U.S. Public Health Service and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. Our mission is to support legislation on behalf of all uniformed services, including all ranks, branches, and their families.

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2026 Chapter Events

Board Meetings

- May 14 – 0900 at Willie’s Rear
- August 13 – 0900 at Willie’s Rear
- November 5 – 0900 at Willie’s Rear

Quarterly Dinner Meetings – We continue to seek interesting guest speakers and local venues for our membership’s enjoyment! Please contact the board with your good ideas and suggestions!

- March 19 – Boone’s Long Lake Inn
- June 11 – Location TBD *Scholarship Fundraiser Silent Auction*
- September 10 – TBD
- December 10 – Holiday Gala- Traverse City Country Club

Other Events – The board is grateful for our members generous sponsorship of activities and scholarship fundraisers. If you would like to sponsor an activity, we would love to hear your ideas! Please contact a board member today!

- May 15 – 4:00pm. Mini Golf Tournament at Pirates Cove in Traverse City sponsored by member and owner, Brad Graff.
- August 13 - Picnic and Golf tournament at the Elk Rapids Golf Course sponsored by member Scott Dennis.

2025 Northwestern Michigan MOAA Chapter Leadership

Board of Directors:

Immediate Past President ..CDR Mark Benjamin, USCG (Ret.)mebmd11@gmail.com
 Director (USCG Liaison) CDR Ryan Hawn, USCG ryan.d.hawn@uscg.mil
 DirectorBrig Gen Scott Dennis, USAF (Ret.)..... sldennisf16@gmail.com
 Director..... COL Greg Movsesian, USAF (Ret.) themovsesians@gmail.com

Chapter Officers:

President.....LTC Christopher Johnson, USA (Ret.) ... cljpaj87@gmail.com
 Vice President/Programs.... CW4 Eric Boals, USA (Ret.)boalseric@hotmail.com
 Treasurer.....CWO4 Curt Erickson, USCG (Ret.) curtis_erickson@hotmail.com
 Secretary Marty Colburn, 1LT, ARNG (Ret.) riviera300@outlook.com
 Membership Chair LCDR Mike Wildman, USN (Ret.) wildmike50@gmail.com
 Legislative Liaison Open
 Scholarship Chair CAPT Dan Warren, USCG (Ret.) warrendr@earthlink.net
 ROTC/JROTC Liaison MAJ Bob Stovall, USA (Ret.) lrstovall@comcast.net
 Website Liaison.....LTC Christopher Johnson, USA (Ret.) ... cljpaj87@gmail.com
 Newsletter LTC Peggy Joyner, USA (Ret.) cljpaj87@gmail.com
 Chaplain LTC John Brian, USA (Ret.) airborneranger840@yahoo.com
 Personal Affairs Officer..... Open
 Surviving Spouse Liaison..... Open



The 2025 Christmas Gala

The Chapter membership enjoyed a lovely evening at the Traverse City Golf and Country Club on December 12, 2025. In addition to an excellent meal of traditional holiday fare, the Traverse City Central High School Chamber Orchestra performed a popular selection of holiday music. Out-going President, Mark Benjamin, handed the chapter gavel to in-coming President Chris Johnson. Dr. John VanWagoner, the Superintendent of Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS) presented comments on the current status and future of education in TCAPS. Culminating the Gala, through the generous support of our members, the Chapter was able to award \$8000 in college scholarships to six Northern Michigan students. Awardees and their parents were invited guests at the Gala to receive their awards. This was the tenth year we have been awarding scholarships totaling \$51,000 to Northern Michigan students. All children and/or grandchildren of an Active, Reserve, National Guard, Veteran, or Retired military member from one of the eight uniformed services or MOAA member are eligible to apply. We are proud to support local students in pursuit of follow-on education and to recognize students whose relatives have served our country and display our motto of "Never Stop Serving."

2025 NWMI MOAA Chapter Scholarship Winners:

David Wahl – \$2,000 "Bob Kutulis Scholarship" St. Mary Cathedral H.S., Gaylord

Eliza Aldridge – \$1,500 Leland H.S.

Mary Bauer – \$1,500 Kingsley H.S.

Saydi Kiley – \$1,000 Traverse City Central H.S.

Liberty Daugherty – \$1,000 Bear Lake H.S.

Mikayla Mertes – \$1,000 Returning Scholar, Grayling H.S./Kirtland C.C.



Pictured left to right:

Dan Warren,
Mark Benjamin,
Mikayla Mertes,
Mary Bauer,
Saydi Kiley,
Liberty Daugherty,
Tom Haase,
Chris Johnson



Traverse City Central High School String Quintet, led by Orchestra Director, Dan Jones.



Participating in the “Change of Watch” are all of the Chapter Presidents, past and present. From left to right, Bob Katulis - the first president, Tom Haase - second president, Chris Johnson - current president, and Mark Benjamin, immediate past president.



Member John Wembling models the coveted blue jacket, won at the summer golf outing!

Thank you to those of you who donated to the Scholarship Fund in 2025: Roy Aydelotte, Fritz Barrett, Mark Benjamin, John Brian, Bruce Buchan, Chris Buday, John Burbank, Marty Colburn, Scott Dennis, Curt Erickson, Brad Graft, Tom Haase, Chris Johnson, Bob Katulis, Dick Kay, Mike Lehnert, Larry Manthei, Greg Maytas, Mitch McClaire, Randy McLure, Tom Penzold, Ron Reinhold, Walter Rudolph, Todd Sanders, Page Sikes, Deb Smith, Shirley Snare, Jim Stephenson, Bob Stovall, John Wemlinger, Mike Wildman, and Forest Wortman.

We are also grateful for those who donated silent auction items to raise scholarship monies: Alden Mill House, Chris and Peggy Johnson, Coast Guard Association, Curt and Beth Erickson, Debbie Smith, Greg and Karen Movsesian, John and Charma Brian, John Wemlinger, Karen Movsesian, Mark and Shirley Benjamin, Mike and Vicki Wildman, Nolan's Tobacco and Cigar Bar, Phil Settles, P.C., Pirates Cove Adventure Park, Ryan and Christi Hawn, The Buday Family, Todd and Maura Sanders, and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

A special thanks to the Scholarship Evaluation Team for their hard work: Dan Warren, Deb Allen, Curt Erickson, Peggy Joyner-Johnson, Shannon Riley, and Mike Wildman.

Member News

New Member Profile

LT Joseph Yancho, USN

Joe went to dental school at the University of Michigan on the Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP), commissioning in 2018 upon graduation. After Officer Development School, he spent a year in a residency program at Great Lakes Naval Station, then was assigned as the ship's dentist for USS NEW ORLEANS, originally homeported in San Diego. He accompanied the ship to Sasebo, Japan and was stationed there for two years. After the ship, he finished his time in the Navy with two years at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

After 5 years in the Navy, he returned home to Traverse City to go into private practice with his father, Phil Yancho, who has been in practice in the Traverse City area for almost 40 years. Joe met his wife Leah (a dental hygienist) while at the University of Michigan, and they are enjoying living in his hometown. Outside of work, Joe enjoys golf and ice hockey, as well as enjoying the Northern Michigan outdoors.



On 18 December 2025, Chapter Member, Dan Warren, CAPT, USCG (Ret.) attended career day at Kingsley High School. He visited with three classes of Seniors and Juniors and provided them an hour presentation of his Coast Guard career, current Coast Guard opportunities, and answered questions. Pictured is Dan Warren with teacher, Michelle Peterson, who is also his sister!

Membership Information from Mike Wildman:

After over two months of updating, MOAA's internet-based recruiting tool (NRT) is operational again. It does not, however, reflect any information about officers that have moved into our catchment area since June 2025. The chapter will continue to refer to NRT, but word of mouth remains the single most effective recruiting machine. When in the company of potential members, direct them to nwmimoaa.com and encourage them to consider joining and taking an active part in our chapter.

At its November 13, 2025 meeting, the board approved a motion to pay up to two years chapter dues for active-duty military officers, paygrades O-3 and under, that are serving in our catchment area.

2025 in the rearview mirror: The chapter was 110 members strong on January 1, 2025. Since then, we welcomed ten new members, but sadly lost 29. Your chapter now has 91 members-in-good-standing, including two surviving spouses.

Only five members are delinquent with their 2026 dues. Someone will reach out soon with another reminder.

"Never Stop Serving!"



More Member News

The Four Chaplains Dinner

On February 3, 1943 while enroute Europe, the US troop carrier Dorchester was critically torpedoed by a German submarine. Onboard, one Jewish, one Catholic, and two Protestant chaplains handed out life preservers to troops as they abandoned ship in the frigid north Atlantic. The chaplains ran out of life preservers.

At 5:00 pm on April 19, 2026, come enjoy dinner with friends and hear what happened next.

Post 35 American Legion

1231 Hasting St., TC

\$20 suggested donation

RSVP 231-922-2119 or amlegion35@gmail.com

Grand Traverse Area Veterans Coalition News

Our chapter is still collecting Olsen's grocery receipts on behalf of 22 2 None, a Veterans suicide prevention organization. If you shop at Olsen's, please save your receipts and give them to any Board Member. Thank you!

Please see attached flyers to support our veteran community!



Timothy William Goldsmith

Died January 11, 2026

KINGSLEY — Timothy William Goldsmith, born December 10, 1947, in Kansas City, Missouri, passed away peacefully at home on January 11, 2026, surrounded by the family he cherished above all else.



base bingo caller, he announced the winning card that belonged to Nan—who celebrated her win by buying the handsome Coastie a beer. That simple moment sparked a partnership that

grew into 51 years of marriage, a lifetime of devotion, and a family he adored.

Tim was preceded in death by his parents, William G. Goldsmith and Carolyn W. Goldsmith, his sister Patricia Cherry, brother in law Robert Cherry, father in law Joseph L. Hooper, and mother in law Patricia K. Hooper.

After retiring from the Coast Guard, Tim continued his career as a computer programmer with Lakes State Insurance Company, where he later retired. His greatest joy, however, came afterward: being a full time Grandpa. He poured his heart into his family, cheering from the stands at his daughters and granddaughter's sporting events, celebrating every milestone, and instilling a deep pride in service that lives on in his daughter and granddaughter.

He is survived by his wife of more than fifty years, Nan Hooper Goldsmith, daughters Alison Goldsmith and Dijana (Pete) Laurentz, granddaughter Zoe Goldsmith, great grandson Cayson Hanley, grandson Julian Lyon, his "bonus daughters" Jessamyn (John) Boyd and Karissa (Joe) Faunce, brother-in-law Reed (Karen) Hooper and sister-in-law Jill Hooper-Rocco. He also leaves behind many beloved nieces and nephews who held a special place in his heart.

Tim was an active member of the Traverse City Coast Guard retiree community and a loyal friend to many. He will be remembered as a devoted husband, a loving father and grandfather, a proud great grandfather, a supportive uncle, and a steadfast friend.

Tim graduated from Lakewood High School in Lakewood, Ohio, in 1966 and enlisted in the United States Coast Guard the following year. Over the course of 21 years of service, he commissioned the Dallas and was stationed in Olympia, Washington; Kodiak, Alaska; Traverse City, Michigan; Washington, D.C.; Detroit, Michigan; and Cleveland, Ohio—where he earned his degree from Baldwin Wallace University with a major in computer science and a minor in abstract algebra. His final duty station was Governors Island in New York, where he retired in June 1989.

A memorial service will be held at Kingsley United Methodist Church, located at the corner of Spring and Blair Street, on Saturday, January 31. Visitation will take place from 12 pm to 1 pm, with the service beginning at 1 pm.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Coast Guard Foundation at coastguardfoundation.org or to Kingsley United Methodist Church Food Pantry.

It was during his time in Traverse City that Tim met the love of his life. As the

Arrangements have been entrusted to Kalkaska Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

Chapter members were saddened to hear of the loss of past member, Tim Goldsmith. Tim was active with the MOAA chapter up to the time that his illness got the better of him. Tim was also a member of the Traverse City Coast Guard Aviation Association chapter. Farewell Tim, until we meet again on Fiddler's Green.



Northwestern Michigan Chapter

March Dinner Meeting

Thursday, March 19, 2026

Boone's Long Lake Inn

7208 Secor Rd, Traverse City, MI 49685.

Our guest speaker will be chapter member Brig Gen Scott Dennis, USAF (Ret). He will talk to us about "Operation Iraqi Freedom" from his perspective as an Air Force pilot in-theater on Day One – March 20, 2003



The "social hour" will begin at 5:00 pm. At 5:45 pm we will order our dinner entrees from the menu, below. The prices shown *include gratuity*.

The four dinner choices are:

- ◆ 8-ounce Prime Rib - \$ 48.00
- ◆ 8-ounce Salmon - \$48.00
- ◆ One Chicken Breast - \$32.00
- ◆ Half Rack of BBQ Ribs - \$35.00

All dinners include a house salad, baked potato or vegetables, bread & butter, coffee, tea, milk, and soft drinks.

- Alcoholic beverages are not included in the entree prices and can be ordered from the bar.
- Desserts are not included in entrée prices. You can order desserts from the menu or buy a scoop of ice cream for \$3.00.

Scan the left QR Code to RSVP, order, and pay for your dinner(s). Please indicate your dinner choice(s) and numbers of dinners desired. Scan the right QR Code to donate to the scholarship fund.

Please RSVP no later than March 12, 2026.



RSVP for the Event



Donate to the Scholarship Fund

Can also RSVP at Chapter Website: <https://www.nwmimoaa.com/events.html>



THE LARGER OUR NUMBERS, THE GREATER YOUR VOICE.

Why MOAA chapter membership matters.



MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM FOR MOAA AND NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Name _____

Rank _____ Branch of Service _____

Active Retired Former Reserve National Guard Surviving Spouse

Spouse name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of Birth _____ Telephone _____

Email _____

(To ensure delivery of MOAA communications, please provide a personal email address)

Are you a member of MOAA? Yes No Unknown

MOAA Member Number (if known) _____

Not a MOAA national member yet? Check here to receive a BASIC Membership at no cost to you. **BASIC**

Upgrading to **PREMIUM** membership gives you immediate access to a full spectrum of career and financial resources, exclusive publications, college scholarships for dependents, and countless discounts on products and travel. Visit moaa.org/join to learn more.

How did you hear about MOAA Chapter involvement? _____

Are you a member of any other MOAA Chapter(s)? Yes No

If yes, which one(s)? _____

To complete enrollment:

- Fill in this form and email it to wildmike50@gmail.com . Do not include credit card information. Or,
- Mail it with a check made out to NWMI Chapter MOAA, and mail it to:

Mike Wildman, 702 Ahgosa Trl, Traverse City, MI 49686.

Chapter Membership and dues information

Get to know and enjoy the company of fellow officers in northern Michigan.

As members, we engage socially; award scholarships to deserving students; maintain a strong civic presence; and support legislation to preserve and enhance the benefits for active, veteran, and retired members of the armed forces of the United States of America.

Chapter eligibility is limited to MOAA members who have paid their chapter dues.

Chapter dues are \$20 per year, or \$55 for three years, and are payable on January 1 of the year after your membership has expired.

"Never Stop Serving"

You will be opted in to receive e-communications from MOAA and your local chapter. You will be able to opt out of any further e-communications at any time. MOAA will not sell or share your personal information.

Four Chaplains Tribute Dinner

<p>American Legion Post 35 1231 Hastings Street Traverse City (231) 922-2119 amlegion35@gmail.com</p> 	 <p><i>Join your American Legion in honoring a story of sacrifice, selfless service and leadership</i></p>	<p>Sunday April 19, 2026 Beginning at 5:00</p> <p>Cost: Donation of \$20 at the door</p> 
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Please RSVP with Eventbrite.

Open the camera on your phone and scan the QR code below





MARCH 10, 2026 FIGHT THE FIGHT FUNDRAISER



TWIN BIRCH GOLF CLUB & RESTAURANT
1030 COUNTY ROAD 612 NE
KALKASKA, MI

On average, **22 veterans** take their own lives every day. It's time to stand together for those **Fighting the Fight Within**. Join **22 2 None** for a night of community and support. A percentage of all sales will go directly toward our free programs for local veterans.

- **WHEN:** March 10th | 4:00 - 9:00 PM
- **WHERE:** Twin Birch Golf Club & Restaurant
- **HOW:** Dine-in or Take-out - Every order counts!

Meet the team - stop by the 22 2 None information table to learn about our mission, upcoming events, and how we are making a difference in veteran lives.



For more information:
www.222none.org
events@222none.org





MILITARY COMMUNITY JOB FAIR

MARCH 6, 12PM to 2PM

VFW POST 2780
3400 Veterans Dr
Traverse City, MI

ALL VETERANS WELCOME

- Dress professionally
- Be prepared to interview
- Bring your resume

Meet with local employers who value veterans and the strengths they bring to today's workforce.

Active Duty | Guard | Reserve | Veterans and their families.

Questions? E-mail muoiop@michigan.gov

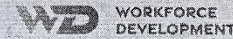
Brought to you by:





- Cherry Capitol Airport
- City of Traverse City
- Munson Hospital
- Traverse City Public Schools
- Grand Traverse Pavilions
- Plumbing Steamfitter Union
- Leelanau County Government
- Grand Traverse Resorts and Spas
- TentCraft
- Cone Drive
- GT Plastics
- Cintas
- Transportation Security Authority – Cherry Capitol Airport

Veterans' Employment Services



Veterans' Employment Services (VES) offers program-specific services through Veterans' Career Advisors (VCAs) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs) with eligibility requirements as defined by federal law. VES provides individualized career and training-related services to veterans, including those eligible persons with barriers to employment and their spouses. VES also helps employers fill their workforce needs with jobseeking veterans.

Veterans' Career Advisors:

What role do they play in assisting veterans?

Veterans' Career Advisors work directly with veterans, their spouses and eligible persons who have significant barriers to employment. The services provided by a VCA are referred to as individualized career services. These services include, but are not limited to:

- Comprehensive assessment interviews
- Career guidance services
- Individual Employment Plans
- Staff-assisted job search activities
- Labor Market Information
- Basic staff-assisted career services



Other responsibilities of the VCA include case management, outreach services to veterans and group job counseling, which differs from licensed counseling.

What other benefits do VCAs provide?

Working in conjunction with local Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs), the services offered through VCAs directly help job-seeking veterans:

- Increase resume marketability
- Improve interview skills
- Learn how to effectively use social networking

To be successful, VCAs aim to establish a strong rapport and relationship with the veterans they serve – to provide them with the best services possible to help them reach their employment goals.

Where can you learn more about Veterans' Employment Services?

For more information, please contact Michigan Works! at 1-800-285-WORKS (9675), or find your local MWA by zip code at MichiganWorks.org.

You'll also find more information about Veterans' Employment Services by scanning the QR code and visiting Michigan.gov/VES.



Local Veterans' Employment Representatives:

How do they help veterans?

Local Veterans' Employment Representatives perform a wide range of duties on behalf of veterans, specifically relating to employer outreach.

LVERs are assigned duties which promote the advantages of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations and business groups.

LVERs advocate for all veterans served by the Michigan Works! Agencies to business, industry, and other community-based organizations by participating in appropriate activities such as:

- Planning and participating in job and career fairs.
- Conducting employer outreach.
- In conjunction with employers, conducting job searches & workshops as well as establishing job search groups.
- Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs and businesses to promote and secure employment and training opportunities for veterans.
- Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts.