



The Volusia Officers Call

West Volusia MOAA Chapter, INC. (WVMC)

An Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America



Vol 34, No 8, APR 2026

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MOAA's Mission

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a nonprofit veterans' association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors. Membership is open to those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any component of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, or NOAA and their surviving spouses.

President's Perspective—



First and foremost I hope you all are doing well.

On Saturday, Lisa Hightower, my husband and myself served breakfast to 15 of the nicest young men. These young men from Alfred University come from a number of towns in the state of New York, and foreign countries such as Mozambique, Tanzania, and the Ukraine. Watching these young men interact with one another across all the cultural boundaries gives me hope for the future of our country.

Over the past few months we have been urging our members to engage with other veterans when we see them. When we engage with other veterans we need to embrace our purpose, focus on our impact on the military community, be passionate about our experiences, and let them know they are not alone. I enjoy being a part of a community that shares the same values, and that we put the needs of others above those of our own. We do continue to serve.

Have a wonderful month. I look forward to seeing you soon at our next meeting.

LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET
President

WEST VOLUSIA MOAA CHAPTER
LEADERSHIPOFFICERS**President:**

LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET
321-604-6694 lrwickett52@gmail.com

First Vice President:

LTC Michael Magee, USA, RET
580-713-2016 michael.p.magee.usa@gmail.com

Second Vice President:

MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET
386-366-4473 majgonz@earthlink.net

Secretary:

LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET
717-729-8281 flygirltgc@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Maj Pete Durnell, USAF, RET
321-443-6264 petedurnell@aol.com

DIRECTORS

COL John Burtnett, USA, RET
215-776-6599 dtboat@gmail.com

MAJ Shirley Burtnett, USA, RET
215-776-6613 2dtsailing@gmail.com

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET
386-479-3400 LgtCurt@gmail.com

APPOINTED POSITIONS**Chief of Staff:**

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET

Chaplain:

CH LtCol Christopher Hoffmann, USAFR, RET
863-398-6265 cahoffmann60@gmail.com

ROTC/JROTC Liaison:

MAJ Pam Ring, USA, RET
317 403-1655 pamring07@gmail.com

Community Relations :

CW4 Tom Jackson, USA, RET
540-604-7163 Thomas.d.jackson@outlook.com

Legislative:

LTC Michael Galaty, USA, RET
203 606-3848 Mglty@yahoo.com

Membership:

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET

Personal Affairs :

LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET

Scholarship:

MAJ Pam Ring, USA, RET

Program Director:

LTC Michael Magee, USA, RET

Webmaster:

MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET

VOC Editor:

COL John Burtnett, USA, RET

Surviving Spouse Liaison:

Mrs. Lisa Hightower
386-216-3767 lisamh4550@yahoo.com

MOAA Take Action Center -

<https://moaa.quorum.us/>

Legislative -

MOAA's "Advocacy in Action" efforts in 2026 will build on work done in late 2025 and focus on both defending hard-won benefits in the new legislative session and driving forward new policy improvements. The association routinely mobilizes its grassroots network to engage Congress on these issues, recognizing that many of them impact notFor 2026, the most important legislative advocacy issue the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is focusing on – and one that members should be especially aware of – centers on protecting and advancing service-earned pay and benefits while addressing quality-of-life priorities

This overarching priority includes several specific elements that MOAA is pushing for in 2026:

Defending scheduled pay increases and preserving the value of military pay tied to cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), ensuring servicemembers and retirees don't see erosion of earnings due to inflation or legislative cuts.

? Preventing harmful increases to TRICARE fees or cost shares that could disproportionately affect retirees and families

? Improving unaccompanied housing transparency and accountability, including requirements for public reporting on conditions to address safety and quality concerns affecting servicemembers.

? Advancing legislation for veterans' issues, such as shortening wait times for toxic-exposure claims and expanding caregiver support programs.

? Supporting military spouse employment incentives and other family-focused measures that enhance stability and quality of life.

only current servicemembers but also retirees, veterans, spouses, and survivors.

While MOAA may highlight many important bills or goals, the central legislative theme for 2026 revolves around protecting and enhancing the full suite of earnings and earned benefits for uniformed service members and their families – ensuring those who served aren't left behind by legislation or policy shifts.

(Continued on page 8)

Last Meeting (4 MAR 2026) -

President LTC Laura Wickett called the meeting to order at 1141 hours.

Attendance: 28
LTC Ernie Tauber gave the invocation followed by The Pledge of Allegiance.

LTC Wickett welcomed our members and guests: New Member CDR Bobby Rountree USN, Ret, our guest speaker MG Rita Broadway and Liz Darr a guest of LTC Wickett.

Lunch was served: Beef with Peppers over Rice, Green Beans with Mango Tapioca for dessert.

LTC Wickett asked MAJ Gonzalez that the 50/50 drawings be done at this time. Then the members' free lunch drawing. Ms. Karen Clay won the free lunch for the 1 APR 2026 meeting/ luncheon.

LTC Wickett introduced our guest speaker: MG Rita Broadway was born in Wichita, Kansas and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Science from Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas. She was the first female cadet to receive an Army ROTC commission from Kansas State University in 1976. Ms. Broadway served over 35 years in the Army and Army Reserve and achieved the rank of Major General before retiring from the Army Reserve in June 2011. She commanded units at the battalion, brigade, and General Officer level. Her final military assignment was the Deputy Commanding General, Army Reserve, US Army Training and Doctrine Command TRADOC, Ft. Monroe, Virginia. MG Broadway also maintained a successful civilian career while serving in the Army Reserve. She worked at operational and strategic levels of the Army Reserve as a Federal Civil Service employee in training, logistics, personnel, and strategic planning. Before retiring in June 2014, her final civilian position was the Deputy Command Executive Officer and Director, Civilian Personnel Management for the United States Army Reserve Command (USARC), Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. In these roles, she developed policies and collaborated with employers to address the challenges Reserve Component Service Members encounter when balancing a civilian career with the desire to serve their country. Her civilian awards include the Federal Civil

Service Exceptional Civilian Service Award, the Department of the Army Superior Civilian Service Award, ESGR Seven Seals Award and the President's Volunteer Service Award. Her military awards include the Distinguished Service Award with Oak Leaf cluster and the Legion of Merit. In addition to her work as a Florida Ambassador to the Women in Military Service for America Memorial, Washington, DC., MG Broadway volunteers with the Department of Defense Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Florida Committee, where she serves as State Committee Chair. She also continues to serve the Army Reserve as the President, Senior Army Reserve Commanders Association (SARCA). MG Broadway resides in Astor, Florida with her husband, Garan. MG Broadway presented very interesting bios of women who served in the military from WWI through every conflict until today. These and many more bios can be found at the The Military Women's Memorial in Arlington, VA for more information please visit their website at <https://womensmemorial.org>.

LTC Wickett thanked MG Rita Broadway for a very informative presentation on women in the military.

LTC Wickett asked if there were any corrections to the 4 FEB 2026 Luncheon Meeting Minutes as posted in the VOC. Motion to approve the minutes as posted in the VOC was made by LTC Ernie Tauber and seconded by Col Jim Pugh. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. MAJ Raul Gonzalez stated the Spring picnic "Operation Camaraderie" will be held on 25 APR 2026 1100-1500 hours at American Legion Post #6. Cost is \$10.00 per person. RSVP to MAJ Raul Gonzalez NLT 15 April
2. LTC Wickett stated she wrote a grant for the MOAA program for \$5,000.00. This would be used for the Veterans homes being built by Habitat for Humanity.
3. LTC Wickett stated Habitat for Humanity is looking for Volunteers to help with the homes being built for veterans. They need volunteers on Tuesdays and Saturdays. LTC Wickett would like us to volunteer as a group. If you are interested, please complete the release form that was sent out to all members via email. We have volunteered to provide breakfast for a group of 15 student volunteers on 10 MAR 2026 at Camp Winona at

(Continued on page 4)

Last Meeting - continued from page 3

00800. Please contact LTC Wickett if you would like to help.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. LTC Wickett presented LtCol Twila Davis and CW4 Tom Jackson with Florida Council of Chapters (FCoC) Leadership Awards.

LTC Wickett called for reports:

Secretary's Report: LtCol Twila Davis- nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report: Maj Pete Durnell - reported the checking account balance as of 1 MAR 2026 is \$ 1,659.23 and \$ 1,257.80 in savings. There is a 12/month CD#1 of \$ 6,304.15, CD#2 of \$ 4,122.84 and CD #3 \$5000.00. Total assets of \$ 18,344.02. Note: \$2000.00 is earmarked for a JROTC Scholarship. Treasurers report is given for informational purpose and is subject to audit.

Directors and Committee Reports:

LTC Michael Magee - excused.

2nd VP - MAJ Raul Gonzalez- nothing to report.

Directors

Jack Burtnett - Director - nothing to report.

Maj Curt Voelbel -Director - Maj Voelbel explained the process for the Nominating Committee-that includes Col Jim Winter to develop a Slate of Officers. The Slate of Officers will be published in the April VOC and voted on by the membership at the April luncheon meeting. If anyone is interested in a position, please see Col Winter or Maj Voelbel.

MAJ Shirley Burtnett - Director - nothing to report.

MAJ Pam Ring - Scholarship Chair - excused.

LTC Mike Galaty - Legislative Chair - passed around Legislative Action Center Cards that explains the steps members need to take action on legislative items through the MOAA National website. MAJ Gonzalez also stated links are on our Chapters website at www.wvmoaa.org

Maj Curt Voelbel - Chief of Staff and Membership Chair - we currently have 53 members. The goal

is 60. He did receive a list of approximately 300 MOAA National members that live in our area of consideration. He has reached out to many of them via email and has received a variety of responses. So far 8 members may be potential chapter members.

CW4 Thomas Jackson - Community Relations - stated Barracks of Hope is accepting new packages of T-shirts, under garments and socks and pre-packaged food items. The average age of their residents is 70+.

Habitat for Humanity update on the homes for veterans - 2 of the houses have sides up and roofs. They are looking for volunteers to help. Annual John P. Thomas Memorial Volusia Valor Days will be held March 28-29, 2026, at the Volusia County Fair Grounds. Volunteers will be needed to man our chapter's table.

Volusia County Veterans Services Stand Down will be held March 20-21, 2026, 0900-1400 at The Center at Deltona, 1640 Doctor Martin Luther King Blvd, Deltona. Our Chapter will have a table-volunteers needed.

The unveiling of the Vietnam Memorial will be unveiled on March 27, 2026, at the Veteran Memorial Plaza on Orange Ave, Daytona Beach. Everyone is invited to attend.

LTC Wickett stated that Bob Atkins, a Vietnam Veteran, has put approximately \$50,000 of his own money to make this happen. He is accepting donations to help offset the cost. A motion was made by CW4 Ted Seaman, Sr. and seconded by Maj Curt Voelbel that we donate \$100.00 to the Vietnam Memorial. After some discussion the motion was amended by COL Jack Burtnett and seconded by Col Jim Pugh that we increase the donation to \$250.00. Motion carried.

CW4 Tom Jackson stated there is a group of volunteers for Missing in America Project. The purpose of this project is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations. To provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes. To date they have visited 2,955 funeral homes, found 39,617 remains, veterans' cremains identified 8,161 and 8,007 veterans interred. The volunteers pay for all their own expenses. A motion was made by CW4 Ted Seaman, Sr and seconded by Maj Pete Durnell that we donated \$100.00 to the Missing in America Project. After some discussion an (Continued on page 7)

Membership -

We welcome our newest members LTC Michael E. Profenno, USA (Ret) and CDR Bobby Rountree, USN (Ret). They increase our membership to 54 with a goal of 60 by end December 2026. We are doing great, keep up the good recruiting efforts!

Reason to be a MOAA and Chapter Member— We Make a Difference!

As champions of the uniformed services community, MOAA is dedicated

to protecting your hard-earned benefits while providing resources, programs, content, and other support to make an active, impactful difference in your life and the lives of your family.

MOAA's identity is defined by getting results on Capitol Hill, and it is important to invite all officers and surviving spouses to join MOAA in this critical fight. By becoming a dues-paying MOAA member, you will help fuel MOAA's ongoing advocacy efforts on your behalf.

As a local MOAA chapter, we lead the way. Do a friend a favor—If you know of someone eligible to be a Chapter Member, tell them about us, point them to our website WVMOAA.org and forward this newsletter. The larger our numbers, the greater our impact!

If you are not a current dues-paying member of MOAA National, we encourage you to join by going to the MOAA Website - <https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa/>. Information on Premium and Life membership is described. When on the website, scroll down to join.

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET
Membership

**From the Chief of Staff -**

In response to MOAA Travel offering a 1% kickback to local chapters for newly booked travel, your Board has authorized me to match that offer, giving our chapter additional income.

I will be setting up a table at our luncheons offering my travel services. I have been a licensed Travel Professional since 2008 and have helped hundreds of clients, including many of our members, plan and book exciting land and sea journeys to many great destinations. Perhaps we will plan a group tour or cruise together. **Stop by and chat.**

**Upcoming Veteran events –
Volunteers needed:**

Annual John P. Thomas Memorial Volusia Valor Days will be held March 28-29, 2026, at the Volusia County Fair Grounds. Be sure to bring ear protection as the artillery demonstrations are very LOUD! **Volunteers are needed to man our chapter's table.**

Volusia County Veterans Services Stand Down will be held March 20-21, 2026, from 0900-1400 at The Center at Deltona, 1640 Doctor Martin Luther King Blvd, Deltona. **Volunteers are needed to man our chapter's table.**

Remember to stop by the table at our luncheon to purchase a bunch of potential winning 50-50 tickets @ 3 for a dollar.

Cash donations may be dropped in the buckets at the door for Veteran's Causes and JR ROTC Scholarships.

Sample Tee Shirts and Hats with our local chapter Logo will be on display for you to purchase or order. Pricing TBD. Military logo Bracelets are also quite popular and for sale.

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET
Chief of Staff

Why Sailors Wear Bell-Bottoms

Did you know the U.S. Navy's famous bell-bottom trousers originally helped sailors roll up their pant legs for deck washing and could even be used as make-shift floatation if needed?

<https://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/military-trivia-facts.html>

The Chaplain's Corner -



LOOK FOR BEAUTY -

A number of years ago I realized that I could take interesting pictures with my camera. I enjoyed them and would share those that I thought were striking in beauty and awe. In some ways it is easy to take good pictures of large vistas in the Southwest. They are all around you.

I wanted to become an even better photographer. I read material by other photographers and learned some of their secrets. I tried duplicating what they did. That worked and I have become more aware of how best to show things in nature. However, what I wasn't expecting is that my eyes became more trained on seeing things intentionally. I suppose why most people don't have that same "eye" is because we are too busy or preoccupied to spend the time to notice little things.

I've noticed that when most people take pictures with their cellphone they don't even think about what might be in the background of the picture. They rush photos to get on to the next thing. I wonder if that is a problem with our culture generally.

I remember my grandparents telling me that when they were younger most houses had porches. When the weather was good they would be outside. Neighbors could walk by and conversations would happen. They would get caught up with the neighbors. Most of us now don't even know our neighbors.

There is a story that I read about a reporter who had been working on a story and a tree fell on her and she suffered a broken neck. Thankfully she did not become paralyzed, but the recovery time was significant. In addition to her injury, she had been caring for her aging parents. She was also the mother of two boys.

While she was recovering she saw how her father couldn't play ball with his grandchildren, but he could talk with them, hold their hands and even laugh. She realized it brought great joy to her father to help out that way. It gave her joy knowing the boys were getting to know their grandparents in a special way. She probably would not have noticed that if she didn't have the time to notice the little things right in front of her. She could see the beauty right in her own home that she might have missed if she hadn't been injured.

There is beauty all around us if we can take the time to notice. Take things slowly and pause to notice little things that you rarely even see. I would guess you will see things in a whole new way and how beautiful even the smallest things can be.

*LtCol Chris Hoffmann, USAF, RET
Chaplain*

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The next meeting, 1 APR, will be held at the DeBary Country Club, 300 Plantation Club Drive, DeBary, FL 32713. The meal will be chicken parmesan with a side of pasta, rolls, tea and coffee. There will also be a dessert.

The lunch cost is **\$24** per meal if paid by cash or check; \$25 if paid with a credit card. We ask that if paid with cash exact change helps. The guest speaker will be Laura Roth, Volusia County Clerk of the Circuit Court. Her bio is on page 7.

Please bring your unexpired pantry items and your donation of toiletries for Barracks of Hope.

Upcoming Meeting: 1 APR 2026
Following Meeting: 6 May 2026
Upcoming Board Meeting: 8 APR 2026

Meetings are held at the DeBary Country Club, 300 Plantation Club Drive, DeBary, FL 32713. Social hour starts at 1100 hrs., lunch served at 1145 followed by an interesting guest speaker, then a short business meeting.

Guest Speaker Bio -

Laura Roth earned her bachelor's degree from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida, and her law degree from the University of Arizona. She became the Volusia County Clerk's office first in-house legal counsel in 2004, and was appointed the Chief Deputy Clerk, the lead administrator, in 2011. Laura ran for office and became the Clerk of Court for Volusia County in 2016.

As Clerk, Laura is committed to pursuing unsurpassed process efficiencies, technology innovations, and customer service improvements at the Clerk's office. Since being elected, some of her office's achievements include a lower collection fee on delinquent financial obligations, the introduction of a survey system to increase customer feedback, and the implementation of a free service to alert Volusia County residents to possible land-related record fraud. The Clerk's office motivating philosophy is "We Love Helping People."

Below are some of her Professional Service:

- * Volusia County Law Library Board of Directors, Treasurer
- * Daytona State College Paralegal Advisory Committee
- * Volusia County Bar Association
- * Volusia/Flagler Association of Women Lawyers
- * Florida Bar Association
- * Florida Supreme Court Steering Committee on Families and Children
- * Florida Clerks of Court Operations Corporation, Performance Improvement and Efficiencies Committee, Chair
- * Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers, Conference Subcommittee, Vice Chair
- * Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers, Strategic Technology Committee
- * Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers, Legislative Committee
- * Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers, Court Operations/Rules Review Committee
- * Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers, New Clerk Academy Subcommittee
- * Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers, CCIS Special Committee
- * Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers, Florida Courts E-Filing Authority Board
- * Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers, Best Practice Committee, Chair, 2019-2024
- * Graduate University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law, Magna Cum Laude, 2003
- * Order of the Coif, 2003
- * Graduate Eckerd College, Florida, Highest Honors, 1998

Some of her Professional Recognitions:

- * Recipient, "Exceptional Community Partner Award," Spring Hill Neighborhood Association, Inc., 2017
- * Clerk of the Year, 2021, Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers Association
- * "Laura Roth Day," August 3rd, 2021, County Council, Volusia County, Florida
- * Legislative Advocate Award, "Game Changer to Build the Future," 2022-2023, Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers Association

Last Meeting - continued from page 4

amended motion was made by Col Jim Pugh and seconded by Ms. Lisa Hightower that we increase the donation to \$250.00. Motion carried.

CH LtCol Chris Hoffmann – Chaplain – excused.

COL Jack Burtnett – Editor – nothing to report.

LTC Michael Magee – excused.

Ms. Lisa Hightower – Surviving Spouse Liaison – reported she has talked to Karen Wiltuck and she is improving. Her goal is to join us for the April luncheon meeting.

LtCol Twila Davis - Personal Affairs Officer - nothing to report.

LTC Wickett gave an update on CW5 Bob Connelly.

GOOD of the CHAPTER

LtCol Davis stated our chapter has a table at the Deland car show on the 3rd Saturday of the month to recruit members and receive donations for veterans causes. The car show is in front of the courthouse. This will be a recurring monthly event. Members are invited to join us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

LTC Wickett announced:

Executive Board Meeting will be held on 11MAR 2026, 1000 hours at the American Legion Post 6. Members are welcome to attend.

Our next luncheon meeting will be 1 APR 2026 1100 hours at the DeBary Country Club.

Meeting adjourned at 1325 hours.

LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET
Secretary

Legislative continued from page 2 -

How can you help.

Signup with MOAA's **Legislative Action Center** and contact your elected officials.

LTC Michael Galaty Jr, USA, RET
Legislative

Habitat for Humanity - Veteran Project -

On Saturday, 7 March, LTC Laura Wickett, her husband Stan and Lisa Hightower served breakfast to 15 young men working on the Veteran Project sponsored by Habitat for Humanity. These young men from Alfred University came from a number of towns in the state of New York, and foreign countries such as Mozambique, Tanzania, and the Ukraine. At the same worksite and time, MAJ Raul Gonzalez pitched in as a worker doing projects to help move the houses toward completion.



In yellow shirt, Stan Wickett, to viewers right, Laura Wickett, and in red top, Lisa Hightower.



Some of the young men from Alfred University.



Raul Gonzalez using a nailing gun.

Raul Gonzalez doing interior framing.



**JOIN WEST VOLUSIA MOAA CHAPTER
FOR OUR **FOURTH** OUTDOOR
**OPERATION
CAMARADERIE
PICNIC****

Saturday, April 25, 2026, 11am to 3pm

American Legion "Adam Quinn" Post 6

(1087 Biscayne Blvd, DeLand, FL 32724)

At the DeLand Municipal Airport

Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Sides & More.

Soft Drinks included.

(American Legion Post 6 Canteen will be operational)

\$10.00 per person (pay onsite)

AMERICAN LEGION MEMBERSHIP NOT REQUIRED

RSVP: MAJ Raul Gonzalez to 386-366-4473

Or e-mail majgonz@earthlink.net

RSVP NO LATER THAN **APRIL 17, 2026**



March Guest Speaker -

MG Rita M Broadway, USA, (Ret), gave a very interesting and informative talk about women in the military. She started with several women who served their country during World War I and others who served up to the present. These were stories MG Broadway uncovered in the Military Women's Memorial at Arlington, VA.



MG Broadway, a WVMC member.

President, LTC Laura Wickett thanking MG Broadway for her presentation.



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2025 Leadership Awards -

Every year MOAA national presents leadership awards to members who have gone above and beyond to serve the values espoused by MOAA. We had three recipients this year: LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, (Ret), CW4 Thomas Jackson, USA, (Ret), and LtCol Chris Hoffmann, USAF, (Ret).



President LTC Laura Wickett presents LtCol Twila Davis with the MOAA Leadership award. Twila is the chapter secretary and Personal Affairs Chairman as well as a hard working board member for our chapter.

President LTC Laura Wickett presents CW4 Tom Jackson with the MOAA Leadership award. Tom is very active as our Community Relations and Support chair person. He spends a great deal of time coordinating with other agencies in Volusia County regarding veterans affairs especially the vulnerable and homeless.



Fr. LtCol Chris Hoffmann was unable to attend this meeting. He is our chaplain and is very active in the community supporting peoples of all faiths and circumstances.



The Volusia Officers Call
West Volusia MOAA Chapter, INC.
An Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America



Items to Note -

Free Meals

Those attendees who win a free lunch from the "ticket drawing" will only be able to claim their free lunch at the NEXT meeting.

If you are receiving this via U.S. Postal delivery and if you have email, we can get the VOC to you more quickly and at less expense to WVMC. Please let the editor know your email by contacting him at volusiaofficerscall@gmail.com

Notice: WVMC does not endorse any of the paid advertisers.

New name tags are available from MAJ Raul Gonzalez at the monthly meetings or by contacting him at: majgonz@earthlink.net. The cost is \$15.

Check out **OUR** website at www.wvmoaa.org It has a lot of information and links to useful information for all vets. The website gives guidance about how prospective members can join MOAA and WVMC.

National MOAA and the West Volusia MOAA Chapter are nonpartisan organizations.



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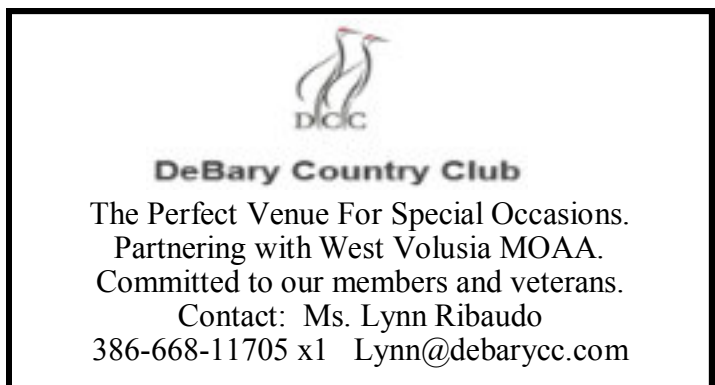
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DeBary Country Club

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Committed to our members and veterans.
Contact: Ms. Lynn Ribaud
386-668-11705 x1 Lynn@debarycc.com