



The Volusia Officers Call

West Volusia MOAA Chapter, INC. (WVMC)

An Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America



Vol 34, No 9, MAY 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—



As I finish out my last month as your President I reflect on these past two years with great pride. First, you have an extremely dedicated, gifted and hard-working board of officers. Every one of them are so deeply committed to the mission of WVMC and spend numerous hours beyond the meetings to ensure your interests are promoted and respected.

During these past two years the chapter has received numerous awards from the national headquarters. Our newsletter, Facebook page and website set the standard for other chapters to strive for, and this is all due to the hard work of COL Jack Burtnett and MAJ Raul Gonzalez. All of our meetings have had exciting and engaging quest speakers all due to the efforts of LTC Michael Magee.

And, lastly, I can't finish before I recognize and thank Maj Peter Durnell for his tenacious approach to our chapter finances. As our treasurer he has consistently provided accurate financial statements and sound financial advice.

Lastly but not the least of which, is LtCol Twila Davis, who provides the most detailed minutes of our meetings and other pertinent correspondence, chapter records and guest speaker certificates. Finally, a special thank you to the entire board members who supported and guided me during my tenure.

I am excited to remain a member of this wonderful, worthwhile veterans' organization, and I look forward to supporting our new president LTC Michael Magee.

See you at Operation Camaraderie 25 April, American Legion Post 6 at 1100 hours.

LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET
President

WEST VOLUSIA MOAA CHAPTER
LEADERSHIPOFFICERS**President:**

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APPOINTED POSITIONS**Chief of Staff:**

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Legislative:

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Membership:

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Personal Affairs :

LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET

Scholarship:

MAJ Pam Ring, USAR, RET

Program Director:

LTC Michael Magee, USA, RET

Webmaster:

MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET

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COL John Burtnett, USA, RET

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MOAA Take Action Center -

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

Legislative -

GUARD VA Benefits Act (H.R. 1732) Following April's Advocacy in Action events, MOAA is pushing Congress to restore criminal penalties for unaccredited "claim sharks" who charge illegal fees to veterans. Several states have attempted their own fixes, but inconsistent laws—and recent vetoes tied to loopholes—show why a **federal solution is needed now**. Members are encouraged to contact their representatives in support of the bill.

Major Richard Star Act Momentum continues, with new cosponsors added after AiA. This legislation would end the offset affecting more than 54,000 combat-injured retirees. Continued constituent pressure remains essential.

Shutdown Fairness Act MOAA is urging Congress to ensure servicemembers receive uninterrupted pay during any future government shutdown. The bill remains active and needs additional support.

Military Health System Access MOAA continues monitoring appointment delays, TRICARE network gaps, and staffing shortages. Chapters are encouraged to report local access issues so MOAA can elevate them to DHA and congressional offices.

State-Level Advocacy Members should stay engaged on state legislation affecting military families, including tax policy and efforts to regulate unaccredited claims agents. Check your state's status on MOAA's State Report Card.

Member Action Items for May

- Support the **GUARD VA Benefits Act**
- Urge lawmakers to cosponsor the **Major Richard Star Act**
- Report Military Health System access issues
- Track state-level legislation impacting veterans

How you can help

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

LTC Michael Galaty Jr, USA, RET

Legislative

Last Meeting (1 APR 2026) -

President LTC Laura Wickett called the meeting to order at 1145 hours.

Attendance: 29

CH (Fr.) LtCol Chris Hoffmann gave the invocation followed by The Pledge of Allegiance.

LTC Wickett welcomed our members and guests: Laura Roth, Volusia County Clerk of Courts, and COL Dick Bielot, USA.

Lunch was served: Chicken Parmesan with Pasta, Green Beans, Chocolate Pudding for dessert.

LTC Wickett asked Maj Voelbel that the 50/50 drawings be done at this time; then the members' free lunch drawing.

LTC Lee Hector won the free lunch for the 6 MAY 2026 meeting/luncheon.

LTC Michael Magee introduced our guest speaker:

Our guest speaker is **Laura E. Roth**, Clerk of the Circuit Court Volusia County. 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." She passed out a flyer on how to sign up for free Property Fraud Alert notifications.

LTC Wickett thanked Ms. Roth for a very informative presentation on the very interesting duties of the Clerk's office.

LTC Wickett asked if there were any corrections to the 4 MAR 2026 Luncheon Meeting Minutes as posted in the VOC. Motion to approve the minutes as posted in the VOC was made by LTC Mike Galaty and seconded by Ms. Lisa Hightower. Motion carried.

LTC Wickett presented CH (Fr.) LtCol Chris Hoffmann with a MOAA Leadership Award.

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 17 April

2. 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 or go onto www.wvhabitat.org and fill out the release form.

3. Memorial Day Ceremony 25 MAY 2026 at 0900 hours at the Veterans Plaza & Gardens in Bill Dreggors Park, 230 N. Stone St, DeLand.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Election of WVMC 2026-2027 Officers. A motion was made by Maj Curt Voelbel and seconded by MAJ Pam Ring that we elect the officers as presented in the Slate of Officers. Motion carried.

2. A motion was made by COL Jack Burnett and seconded by Maj Lewis Long that we keep the annual membership dues at \$35.00 per year. Motion carried.

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 APR 2026 is \$ 1,431.78 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 \$ 18,116.57. Note: \$2000.00 is earmarked for a JROTC Scholarship. Treasurers report is given for informational purpose and is subject to audit.

1st VP: LTC Michael Magee - stated that economic forecasters are warning people that it might be difficult to access cash in the near future. They recommend you have 72 hours of cash on hand. He also encouraged members of American Legion Post #6 to attend the upcoming meeting because election of officers will be done that night; there will be a Yard Sale at Post 6 April 11th and 12th; Saturday May 9, 2026 is a Motorcycle Ride to raise funds for area high school JROTC programs in

(Continued on page 4)

Last Meeting - continued from page 3

honorable memory of SGT Adam Quinn.

2nd VP: MAJ Raul Gonzalez - stated our Chapter had a table set up at the Veterans Stand Down and The Volusia Valor Days. We offered a \$25.00 gift certificate drawing; the winning ticket was drawn at today's meeting. MAJ Gonzalez stated he would notify the winner.

Directors and Committee Reports

Directors:

Jack Burtnett - Director- nothing to report.

Maj Curt Voelbel - Director - reviewed the Slate of Officers for 2026-2027.

MAJ Shirley Burtnett - Director - stated our Chapter is hosting a cruise August 2-9, 2026 and Maj Voelbel is our travel agent.

MAJ Pam Ring - Scholarship Chair - stated she will be presenting the JROTC Leadership Awards: Deltona HS 2 April 2026, Deland HS 29 April 2026 and University HS in early May.

LTC Mike Galaty - Legislative Chair- encouraged members to take action in the Legislative Action Center through the MOAA National website. Stated there was a very good article in the April MOAA Magazine about MOAA members going to Capitol Hill to advocate for our earned benefits.

Maj Curt Voelbel - Chief of Staff and Membership Chair- we currently have 54 members. The goal is 60.

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+. Most are Vietnam Veterans. The unveiling of the Vietnam Memorial occurred on 27 MARCH 2026 at the Veteran Memorial Plaza on Orange Ave, Daytona Beach. There will be an Honor Flight returning on April 25th at 9:00pm at Sanford Airport. Veterans gather at the airport to welcome the passenger's home.

CH LtCol Chris Hoffmann - Chaplain - presented some common theories on the origin of April Fool's Day: The Calendar Shift (16th Century France) before the adoption of the Gregorian

calendar in 1582, New Year's Day was celebrated on April 1st. Those who continued to celebrate New Year on April 1st were ridiculed as "April fools" and subjected to pranks.

Ancient Spring Festivals: The timing aligns with various ancient spring festivals, such as the Roman festival of Hilaria, which was celebrated at the end of March and involved games, laughter and disguises.

Vernal Equinox: Many traditions surrounding the first day of April link it to the unpredictability of the weather at the turn of the season often called "All Fools Day".

The "April Fish": In France a common tradition is to attach a paper fish to someone's back. This "April fish" is believed to represent young, easily caught fish, symbolizing a gullible person. While the exact origin is unknown, the tradition of playing pranks on this day has been a widespread cultural phenomenon for centuries.

COL Jack Burtnett - Editor - nothing to report.

LTC Michael Magee - Speaker Coordinator - working on speakers for the next meeting cycle. If you have suggestions, please contact LTC Magee.

Ms. Lisa Hightower - Surviving Spouse Liaison - nothing to report.

LtCol Twila Davis - Personal Affairs Officer - stated that Fred Laponzina passed away. He was the 105-year-old WWII Veteran that some of our members had met.

GOOD of the CHAPTER

Maj Curt Voelbel stated that MOAA National has a travel agency and they offer a kickback of 1% to MOAA. Maj Voelbel stated that the WVMC Executive Board has authorized him to be our Chapter's travel agent. He will give a 1% kickback to our Chapter. The first group travel will be a cruise August 2-9, 2026 on Princess Cruise Line. Please contact him if you are interested in going.

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 court house. This will be a recurring monthly event. Members are invited to join us.

LtCol Davis stated she received an autographed

{Continued on page 6}

From the Chief of Staff -

Once again, our chapter is among the elite number of MOAA Level of Excellence Award winners as we achieved 5 Star status for our Chapter Leadership and both our Newsletter and Website!

As stated by CAPT Frank J. Michael, USN (Ret), Senior Director, Affiliated Councils & Chapters at MOAA: On behalf of MOAA President and CEO, Lt Gen Brian "BK" Kelly, I am thrilled to announce the 2025 MOAA Levels of Excellence and Col. Marvin J Harris Communication Award winners. This year, our judges considered 158 LOE awards and 259 Communications award nominations, with a record number of new submissions. This was a highly competitive process reflective of the extraordinary level of grass roots engagement and dedication of our affiliates across the country.

Upcoming Veteran events - Volunteers needed:

West Volusia Habitat is moving quickly on the 4 Veterans Homes. They will need volunteers to begin painting within the next couple of weeks. We will be providing breakfast for the volunteers the 1st Saturday in May. We will need muffins and orange juice. **If interested, please contact Laura Wickett** and let her know what you can provide. The subcontractors are currently working on finishing the plumbing and electrical work.

Our chapter will be providing an outdoor American flag for each of the homes with an inscription "Presented by The West Volusia MOAA Chapter".

During and after our luncheons

Following the meeting/luncheon the Book Club will meet to discuss a selected book This month, because of the short time available, we will discuss a short book: Squirm to Learn: If Your Not Squirming, You're Not Learning.

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.

So far, we have 8 Cabins filled with our members on our Aug 2, 2026, Princess Caribbean cruise out of Port Canaveral. If interested in joining us, contact Curt Voelbel.

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 an additional group tour or cruise together. **Stop by and chat.**

*Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET
Chief of Staff*



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Last Meeting - continued from page 4

copy of a book -Path of a Mustang written by Raymond Parker a MOAA member and former member of our Chapter. He also wrote a book Value in Valor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

LTC Wickett announced:
Executive Board Meeting will be held on 8 APR 2026, 1000 hours at the American Legion Post 6. Members are welcome to attend
Our next luncheon meeting will be 6 MAY 2026 1100 hours at the DeBary Country Club.

Meeting adjourned at 1342 hours.

LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET

Secretary

**Membership -**

We have some potential members who are very close to joining and we hope to see them at our May 6 luncheon. Currently we have 55 members with a goal of 60 by the end December 2026. We are doing well, keep up the good recruiting efforts!

Reason to be a MOAA and Chapter Member—

We Make a Difference, we advocate for ALL veteran's, we help our local Veterans, we support our local Jr. ROTC with scholarships, we interact with other local veteran organizations; we have fun!

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.

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

Military Trivia -

Thirty of the 45 presidents served in the [Army](#), 24 during time of war, two earned the rank of five-star general (Washington -- who was promoted posthumously to a six-star general in 1976 -- and Eisenhower) and one earned the [Medal of Honor](#) (Theodore Roosevelt) (<https://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/military-trivia-facts.html>)

The Chaplain's Corner -**Asking for help isn't a bad thing!**

If you are like me, you probably think you are pretty independent, have decent skills to handle most projects, and know where to find information for things you don't know how to fix. It used to be a quality of Americans that we prided ourselves on being able to take care of most things on our own without having to ask for help.

The truth is that we have always had to ask for help or be willing to recognize that we can't do everything by ourselves. I think of the pioneers who headed west from St. Louis looking to make it big in California and parts west. They took all their possessions in a wagon and pointed west. That's probably what most of us thought. Yet, the more that I have read about that time is that you wouldn't dare set out on your own. There were too many things that could go wrong. Crossing a river or running into marauders and thieves made the trip dangerous. Some Indian tribes were violent and would make passing through their land difficult or impossible. Plus, there were mountains to be scaled.

It was almost always necessary to have skilled guides to lead a group west in safety. Often men were hired who watched the herd of cattle that would be needed along the journey. If a wagon wheel broke it would take a skilled carpenter to fix or replace it. The pioneers that made it to the Pacific needed the help of many people and weren't afraid to admit it.

Actually God wants us to ask for help too. The Christian scriptures tell us to seek out the Lord in prayer. The letter of James reminds the reader that God will grant us wisdom when we ask for it. Ahaz was told by the Prophet Isaiah to seek a sign from God. The magi needed the help of the religious leaders in Jerusalem to find the Christ child. Even Jesus needed the help of Simon to carry His cross to Calvary.

Asking for help reminds us that God gave us each other to make this life better. Those of us who have served know that we counted on brothers/sisters in arms to make it home. We helped others who were injured. We have done the same on the home-front.

At this point in life don't feel too much pride to ask for the help of others and most especially the help of God. He is waiting to hear from us and respond generously. May you find the help you need and be that angel of the moment to help others when they call out to you.

*LtCol Chris Hoffmann, USAF, RET
Chaplain*

Military Trivia -

Only one president (James Buchanan) served as an enlisted man in the military and did not go on to become an officer.



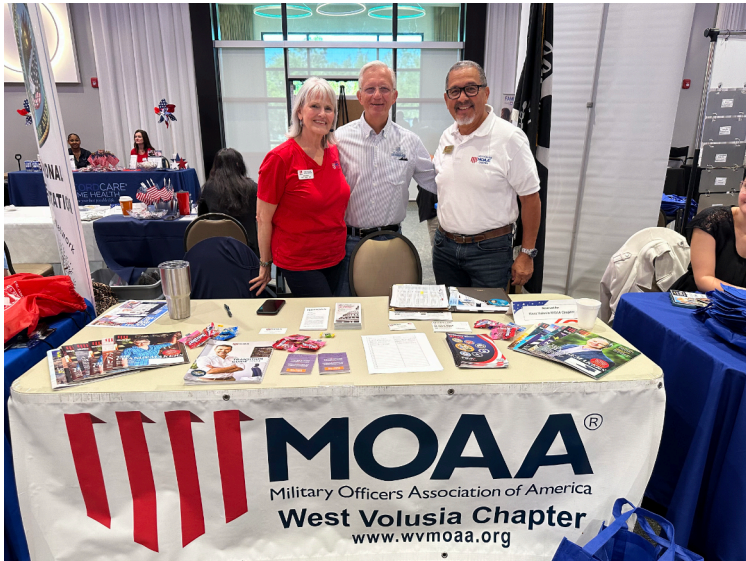
The next meeting, 6 MAY, will be held at the DeBary Country Club, 300 Plantation Club Drive, DeBary, FL 32713. The meal will be vegetable pasta Alfredo topped with blackened chicken breast, rolls, tea and coffee. There will also be a dessert. The lunch cost is **\$24** per meal if paid by cash or check; \$25 if paid with a credit card. We ask that if paid with cash exact change helps. There will be no guest speaker because we are installing the officers for next year.

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

Upcoming Meeting: 6 MAY 2026
Following Meeting: 2 SEP 2026
Upcoming Board Meeting: 13 MAY 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.

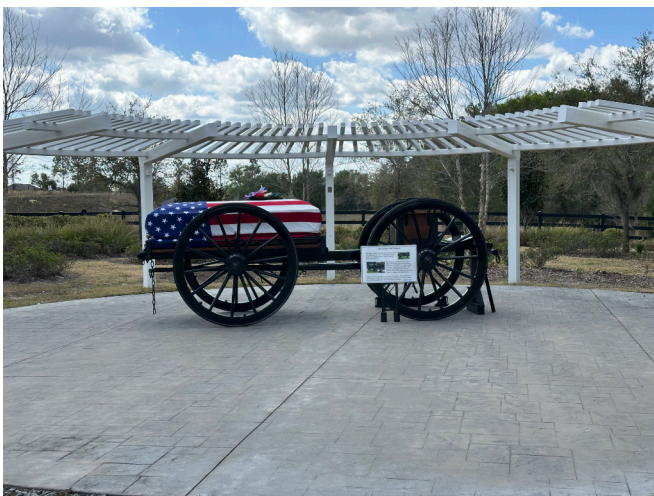
Volusia County Stand Down -



The Veterans Stand Down was held on 20-21 March at The Center in Deltona. WVMC set up a table to inform and help attendees.

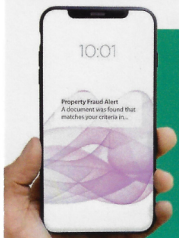
Pictured at the table are WVMC members Pam Ring and Raul Gonzalez. In the middle is XXX

The other two pictures show some of the displays that were set up for the attendees enjoyment.



PROPERTY FRAUD ALERT

PROPERTY FRAUD occurs when someone records a fraudulent document in the county land records office, making it look like they own your home or property.



PROPERTY FRAUD ALERT is a notification service that alerts subscribers against the possibilities of fraudulent activity being committed against their property.

SIGN UP FOR FREE by visiting PropertyFraudAlert.com, by scanning the QR code with your phone camera, or call the Property Fraud Alert Hotline at 800-728-3858.



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This is an excellent service provided by the Clerk of the Circuit Court. The Circuit Court is the keeper of all official documents in Volusia County. They will notify you if any document with your name is processed. They are just the keeper of records; they cannot correct anything but they will let you know when something is recorded. They do not determine legitimacy just that a document was recorded. If it is fraudulent, you must pursue the correction with the appropriate office. Just scan the QR code with your cell phone or go to PropertyFraudAlert.com on your computer. Filling out the form is very easy.

Opportunities to Help -

Habitat for Humanity is building four houses in DeLand on E Walts Ave for veterans. WVMC is going to donate four outside flag holders and flags (made in the USA). We will have a donation bucket for anyone who would like to contribute to the funding of these flags. The holder and flag are about \$32 each.

West Volusia Habitat is moving quickly on the 4 Veterans Homes. They will need volunteers to begin painting within the next couple of weeks. We will be providing breakfast for the volunteers the 1st Saturday in May. **We will need muffins and orange juice. If interested, please contact Laura Wickett and let her know what you can provide.**

April Guest Speaker -



The guest speaker at the April luncheon was Laura E. Roth the Clerk of the Circuit Court. She gave an interesting and lively talk about the numerous functions performed by her office.

WVMC President Laura Wickett presents a certificate of appreciation to Laura Roth for her presentation.



Leadership Award -



WVMC President Laura Wickett presents Father Chris Hoffmann a Florida Council of Chapters leadership award for his hard and dedicated work during the past year in supporting the WVMC and MOAA goals.

Volusia Valor Days -

Our WVMC table at the Volusia Valor Days which took place on 28-29 March at the Volusia County Fairgrounds. Pictured are Raul Gonzalez and Shirley Burtnett.



One of the day's highlights was the simulated battle between World War 2 American and German forces. In the center of the photo is a Sherman tank, a mainstay of the U.S. Army's armor.



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.

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.

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.*



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386-668-11705 x1 Lynn@debarycc.com