



Tarheel Central Chapter Newsletter Volume 2026, **Issue 7, OCT 2, 2026**

Published by The Tarheel Central Chapter of MOAA, Inc., since 1977, chartered May 9, 1978, and serving Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin Counties.

This Newsletter and others may be found at our website: <https://www.tarheelmoaa.org/about/> under Social Media.

Please sign into and like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1285830908624290>

For the full experience go to our website and enjoy the pictures, too! Click on this link: <https://tarheelmoaa.org/about/> then click on the current edition.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Tom Miller:

Veterans,

What a great meeting we had last month! The National Center for Healthy Veterans is doing incredible work for some of our most in-need veterans. Rob Altman and Bob DeCaughey received a \$250 donation from TCC to help cover rebuilding expenses and support their ongoing service to the veterans they call "Patriots."

I am proud that our chapter could support such a worthy cause. They concluded with an invitation for any of us to visit their facility in Altavista, Virginia, anytime. We had an outstanding turnout with over 75 attendees, including 44 members — our highest member attendance in years. We also welcomed several visitors, two of whom will be joining TCC as members at our next meeting.

We have an exciting fall schedule ahead:

- October 7: A trip to Bedford, Virginia, to visit the National D-Day Memorial. Bedford was chosen for the location because it lost more sons per capita on D-Day than any other town in America.
- Upcoming Events: Our annual Toys for Tots campaign, our Christmas Dance Social in December, and a group trip to the Salisbury VA Hospital to deliver gifts and spread Christmas cheer to the veterans.

I am proud to be part of such a distinguished and generous group of veterans. I look forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting on October 14th at the Maple Chase Golf and Country Club.

As Always, Keep Serving,

Tom Miller,

President, Tarheel Central Chapter MOAA

Editorial Policy: The Tarheel Central Chapter is affiliated with The North Carolina Council of Chapters <https://www.moaa-nc.org/> and with MOAA national organization - <http://www.moaa.org>. As such, The Tarheel Central Chapter is nonprofit and politically nonpartisan. Editorial policies are established by the Tarheel Central Chapter Publisher and Editor and are in consonance with MOAA's guidelines. Advertising and sponsorship are accepted based on MOAA policies and standards. The Tarheel Central Chapter (NC08) is a 501(c) 19 organization. Membership includes active, retired, veteran, and reserve officers (Warrant - Flag Officer) of the Armed Forces, NOAA, US Public Health Services, and the surviving spouses of deceased eligible officers of all 8 uniformed services. MOAA is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization. 201 N. Washington St., Alexandria, Va. 22314 Phone: (800) 234-6622. "Never stop serving!" Use the Advocacy in Action section at: <https://www.moaa.org/content/take-action/advocacy-in-action/>.



TARHEEL CENTRAL CHAPTER: The Tarheel

Central Chapter Challenge Coin Available for purchase at the monthly dinner meeting for \$15.00. On the front the chapter name runs above the US Flag and the MOAA motto rings the bottom. The NC state symbol is representative of the state flag in color and has a single white star located in Tarheel Central Chapter catchment area – Surry; Stokes; Yadkin; Forsyth; Davie; and Davidson counties. On the Back of the coin is the official MOAA logo. Can't make the dinner meeting and wish to purchase?

Address purchase inquiries to info@tarheelmoaa.org.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT is in concert with the Military Officers Association of America purposes and objectives. The goal is to foster fraternal relations among retired, active, and former officers of the uniformed services and their Reserve and National Guard components. Our aim is to actively promote the protection of the rights and interests of members of the uniformed services, their family members, including survivors, provide useful services for members and their families, and serve the community, the active military forces (past, present, and future) and our nation.

5-Star Newsletter Publisher and Editor – Greg Chase, LtCol, USAF (Ret) and Vina Chase; Editor may be reached at (336) 946-2446 or gvchase98@gmail.com The Newsletter is published for members and friends of The Tarheel Central Chapter, MOAA.

5-Star Chapter Website & Social Media Manager - Thomas B. Denegre III, LCDR USN (Vet); The address is: <https://www.tarheelmoaa.org/> Anyone wishing to receive this newsletter by email may do so by using the "Contact Us" link or contacting the editor. If we have your email, you will receive this newsletter 9 times per year plus additional "Bulletins" as events dictate. We aim to keep you informed!

CHAPTER ADMINISTRATIVE VOLUNTEERS

Elected Officers:

- **President** - Tom Miller, Capt. USAF (Vet)
- **First Vice President** – Mark Ferketish, COL, USMC (Ret)
- **Second Vice President**– Barry N. Moore, MAJ, USMC (Ret) (Legislative Affairs and Programs Chair)
- **Secretary** – Mary Laverdure, Capt., USAF (Vet)
- **Treasurer** – Tom Gatewood, Capt., USA (Vet)
- **Immediate Past-President** - Phil Briscoe, CAPT, USN (Ret) (Nominations Committee)

Directors:

1. George Lawson, LtCol, USAF (Ret) (Membership Committee Chair)
2. I.B. Southerland, III, Maj USAF (Ret) (Scholarship & J/ROTC Committee chair)
3. Thomas B. Denegre III, LCDR USN (Vet) (Web Master)
4. Barry N. Moore, MAJ, USMC (Ret) (Programs Committee)
5. **VACANT**
6. Carol Gamble - (Surviving Spouse Liaison)

Chapter Assistants:

7. **Chaplain** – Dennis Lennon, CDR, USNR (Ret)
8. **Programs Committee Chair** - Barry N. Moore, MAJ, USMC (Ret)
9. **Personal Affairs** – Scott Gamble, LTC, USA (Ret)
10. **Surviving Spouse Liaison** - Carol Gamble
11. **R-JROTC Programs** – Al Chandler, LTC (Ret)
12. **Public Relations** – Al Nealeans, COL USA (Ret)
13. **Social Secretary** – Warren Boyer, 1 Lt, USMCR (Vet)
14. **Chapter Roster** – Hank Rudge, COL, USMC (Ret)
15. **Web Master** – Tom Denegre, LCDR, USNR (Vet)



FIRST VICE PRESIDENT – Mark Ferketish:

- **Tax-Smart Estate Planning**
 - October 06, 2026 | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM EDT
 - Add expert guidance from MOAA and Anderson Advisors to your estate-planning strategy.
 - <https://pages.moaa.org/10-6-26-registration>
- **Seize Your Future: Write to Influence!** October 13, 2026 from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM EDT
 - Join an award-winning author (and MOAA Life member) and learn how to make every word count.
 - <https://www.moaa.org/content/events/transition-and-career/seize-your-future-write-to-influence!/>
- **Career Transition Tools Workshop:** MOAA's Hybrid Executive Career Transition Accelerator Seminar
 - October 16, 2026 | 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM EDT
 - MOAA Headquarters, 201 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314 (Virtual attendance option available)
 - This workshop focuses on key aspects of a successful military-to-civilian transition for military leaders and for veterans looking for advancement in the civilian careers.
 - <https://www.moaa.org/content/events/transition-and-career/accelerator-career-seminar-july-20262/>

Registration at MOAA.org/ Upcoming Events: <https://www.moaa.org/content/events/MOAA-Events/>



SECOND VICE PRESIDENT - LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS – Barry Moore:

"I encourage TCC members to go to this link (<https://moaa.quorum.us/issue/47366/>) on the MOAA website, download, sign, and send any or all of the pending letters to our NC members of Congress pre-addressed for each letter." Take Care of Veterans Act: https://patriotpost.us/articles/129379-the-sad-fight-over-veterans-reform-2026-07-24?_bhlid=4d7d7aea0e2cf146f44146624e8aafe92d77499a

Urge Congress to Pass the Take Care of America's Veterans Act at: <https://moaa.quorum.us/campaign/166321/>

Some of the challenges in getting needed veteran legislation passed is explained in this link: <https://www.dav.org/learn-more/news/2026/keep-faith-with-veterans/>

Veterans Dental: This is a VA medical benefit that some of you might qualify for but are unaware of it. <https://www.stripes.com/veterans/2026-09-23/more-disabled-veterans-dental-benefits-22943820.html>

Veterans have more 'forever chemicals' in their blood than civilians: <https://taskandpurpose.com/news/pfas-veterans-concentration-study-forever-chemicals/>

A thoughtful young person: submitted by Greg Bean: <https://fee.org/articles/college-student-my-generation-is-blind-to-the-prosperity-around-us/> - **"College Student: My Generation Is Blind to the Prosperity Around Us"** by Alyssa Ahlgrén

Destroying the free market will undo what millions of people have died to achieve. I'm sitting in a small coffee shop near Nokomis trying to think of what to write about. I scroll through my newsfeed on my phone looking at the latest headlines of Democratic candidates calling for policies to "fix" the so-called injustices of capitalism. I put my phone down and continue to look around. I see people talking freely, working on their MacBooks, ordering food they get in an instant, seeing cars go by outside, and it dawned on me. We live in the most privileged time in the most prosperous nation and we've become completely blind to it. Vehicles, food, technology, freedom to associate with whom we choose.

We Take Our High Standard of Living for Granted

These things are so ingrained in our American way of life we don't give them a second thought. We are so well off here in the United States that our poverty line begins 31 times above the global average. Thirty. One. Times. Virtually no one in the United States is considered poor by global standards. Yet, in a time where we can order a product off Amazon with one click and have it at our doorstep the next day, we are unappreciative, unsatisfied, and ungrateful. My generation is being indoctrinated by a mainstream narrative to actually believe we have never

seen prosperity. Our unappreciation is evident as the popularity of socialist policies among my generation continues to grow. Democratic Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez recently said to Newsweek talking about the millennial generation, “An entire generation, which is now becoming one of the largest electorates in America, came of age and never saw American prosperity.” Never saw American prosperity. Let that sink in. When I first read that statement, I thought to myself, that was quite literally the most entitled and factually illiterate thing I’ve ever heard in my 26 years on this earth. Now, I’m not attributing Miss Ocasio-Cortez’s words to outright dishonesty. I do think she whole-heartedly believes the words she said to be true. Many young people agree with her, which is entirely misguided. My generation is being indoctrinated by a mainstream narrative to actually believe we have never seen prosperity. I know this first hand, I went to college, let’s just say I didn’t have the popular opinion, but I digress.

Capitalism Leads to Prosperity

Let me lay down some universal truths really quick. The United States of America has lifted more people out of abject poverty, spread more freedom and democracy, and has created more innovation in technology and medicine than any other nation in human history. Not only that but our citizenry continually breaks world records with charitable donations, the rags to riches story is not only possible in America but not uncommon, we have the strongest purchasing power on earth, and we encompass 25 percent of the world’s GDP. The list goes on. However, these universal truths don’t matter. We are told that income inequality is an existential crisis (even though this is not an indicator of prosperity; some of the poorest countries in the world have low income inequality), we are told that we are oppressed by capitalism (even though it’s brought about more freedom and wealth to the most people than any other system in world history), we are told that the only way we will acquire the benefits of true prosperity is through socialism and centralization of federal power (even though history has proven time and again this only brings tyranny and suffering). Why then, with all of the overwhelming evidence around us, evidence that I can even see sitting at a coffee shop, do we not view this as prosperity? We have people who are dying to get into our country. People around the world destitute and truly impoverished. Yet, we have a young generation convinced they’ve never seen prosperity, and as a result, elect politicians dead set on taking steps towards abolishing capitalism.

Destroying the free market will undo what millions of people have died to achieve.

Why? The answer is this, my generation has only seen prosperity. We have no contrast. We didn’t live in the Great Depression, or live through two world wars, or see the rise and fall of socialism and communism. We don’t know what it’s like not to live without the internet, without cars, without smartphones. We don’t have a lack of prosperity problem. We have an entitlement problem, an ungratefulness problem, and it’s spreading like a plague. With the current political climate giving rise to the misguided idea of a socialist utopia, will we see the light? Or will we have to lose it all to realize that what we have now is true prosperity? Destroying the free market will undo what millions of people have died to achieve. My generation is becoming the largest voting bloc in the country. We have an opportunity to continue to propel us forward with the gifts capitalism and democracy has given us. The other option is that we can fall into the trap of entitlement and relapse into restrictive socialist destitution. The choice doesn’t seem too hard, does it?

TCC Members: Not everyone is aware, but if you are a veteran at least 75-years-old you can request an advancement on the docket review of your veterans administration health care case appeal. I've been told by some very good sources that it actually works as advertised. This is the link: <https://www.va.gov/decision-reviews/legacy-appeals/priority-review/>

Go here for more good stuff: “President signs executive order for faster delivery of VA benefits” - Read more at: <https://www.stripes.com/veterans/2026-09-09/trump-order-faster-delivery-va-benefits-22798981.html> Source - Stars and Stripes. More at VA News - https://news.va.gov/press-room/president-trumps-executive-order-means-faster-access-to-va-healthcare-benefits-than-ever-before/?utm_campaign=VetResources&utm_id=09SEP2026&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Thanks, Barry N. Moore



SECRETARY - Mary Laverdure:

"In accordance with the Chapter Bylaws Amendments - "Each elected officer shall have a designated assistant to assure a smooth continuation of Chapter functions in the event of an unforeseen absence or resignation."

Please contact me if you are interested.



TREASURER – Tom Gatewood: **2027 Annual Dues Billing** - Per the annual November 2025 meeting and the Board's recommendation Annual Dues are \$45 (per year), due NLT 31 December 2026. The timely payment of annual dues by members of Tarheel central Chapter MOAA is required to maintain your membership in good standing. It is one of the primary obligations and responsibilities of membership.

A Tarheel Central Chapter MOAA pay portal has been established with an online service called "Cheddar Up". This is the preferred collection point for Dues, Dinner and Donations payments. **The Link to Cheddar Up is :** <https://my.cheddarup.com/c/2025-member-collection-67809/items> Mailed in payments or payments at the door will still be accepted.

2026 Dinner Reservations: See the reservation form at the end for important details! Reservations may be made by calling into (336) 682-1419 and sending checks to me:

Tarheel Central Chapter MOAA
% Tom Gatewood
3004 Kinnamon Rd
Winston-Salem, NC 27104
gatewoodhughey@aol.com

Telephone calls, emails and texts will be accepted until **5:30 PM on Thursday, Oct 8th**. The contact information is on the Dinner Reservation Form at the end.

MOAA final COLA estimate: "The latest projections place the upcoming COLA at 3.5% or 3.6%, more than the 2.8% increase made to this year's checks and the highest since the 8.7% hike announced nearly four years ago. The final figure influencing the rate – the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for September 2026 – will be announced Oct. 14 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics." Full article at: https://www.moaa.org/colapredict?_hsenc=p2ANqtz-88h98z-A5OSaDRWwOJu2Fi6UeFAxCCfHZO8GhGhhzsGVKpgYgaDyMrdvZOFoBteBDUxSJQeVqi1tZiuxCTCl_4bbA7FQ&_hsmi=441968327



IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT – Phil Briscoe: The chapter's development and future existence depend on its members. Step up and volunteer your time and talent. The listed positions require only modest time commitment.

Join the Board of Directors and directly influence the chapter's development.

Take over as the Newsletter Editor and ensure your Chapter Mates are aware of all the chapter's initiatives and opportunities.

Become the assistant Secretary or Treasurer and be available to fill in for them if necessary or take over in a year or two and really show your talent.

Just because our Dinner Meeting programs are outstanding do not think we don't need your input, join the Programs Committee.

Your assistance would be greatly appreciated with coordination of National and State Legislative Affairs awareness.

I am always available to discuss chapter leadership development and how you can assist.

Points of contact for Chapter Assistant position:

DIRECTOR POSITION on the BOARD OF DIRECTORS contact Phil Briscoe

NEWSLETTER EDITOR contact Greg Chase

ASSISTANT SECRETARY contact Mary Laverdure

ASSISTANT TREASURER contact Tom Gatewood

ASSISTANT PROGRAMS COMMITTEE contact Barry Moore

ASSISTANT LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS LIAISON contact Barry Moore

TCAB,

Phil Briscoe



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR – George Lawson:

Chapter Membership Development/Membership Committee News

Our Chapter continues to grow. Our member roster has risen to 97. The Membership Committee wants to encourage all TCC members to continue recruit new members and to attend our MOAA dinners this Fall and Winter. Our October MOAA social and dinner is Wednesday, 10/14/26 at Maple Chase CC with the social hour starting at 5:00pm. Our Dinner Speaker is Former Chief Justice of the NC Supreme Court Mark Martin; Founding and Current Dean of the High Point University School of Law. Bio at this link: <https://www.highpoint.edu/faculty-staff/law/mark-martin/> The new name tag check-in and checkout process is off to a great start. After the dinner program, please remember to return your new name tag to the correct alphabetical name tag tray before you depart. Our fellowship outreach and new member recruiting efforts are making a difference. During the Tarheel Central Chapter 10/14/26 dinner meeting we will be hosting guests and new prospective members. Please take a moment during the social hour to meet and welcome our newest Members Lt. Col. (Ret.) USA, Jon & Bethany Ackiss. Thanks.

Reminder - Wearing your military apparel is an effective recruiting tool and the easiest way to start a conversation.

The Membership Committee is continuing to recruit new Committee members for 2026. If you enjoy working with others in a team environment and want to learn more about our Chapter and MOAA, the Membership Committee is a great place to meet old and new MOAA friends. If you are interested, please contact George Lawson (803-439-4818) or any committee member. Those members are: George Lawson, Chair; Chuck Riehl, Vice Chair; Pam Angle; Alan Nealeans; Joe Rogers; Hank Rudge; Laurie Wesely; and Wes Whittaker.

The Membership Committee meeting (brown bag lunch) will be held on Monday, October 12, 2026, from 12:30 – 1:30 PM at the **Clemmons Branch Library, 6365 James St., Clemmons, NC 72012.**

Evite Action Item: MOAA Oct Dinner reservations will be accepted until 5:30 PM on Thursday, Oct 8th. Due to Maple Chase considerations, reservations (RSVP) CANNOT be accepted after Thursday, Sep 8th at 5:30 PM. You must have an Evite RSVP reservation to attend the Chapter's 2026 September Dinner, Wednesday, Oct 14th, beginning at 5:00 PM at Maple Chase Golf and Country Club 5475 Germanton Rd, Winston-Salem NC 27105. *Note: If you choose to use the convenient online dinner and the 2026 Annual Membership fee payment options, the Cheddar Up TCC dinner and Annual Membership invoice URL link is:* [Tarheel Central Chapter MOAA - Cheddar Up](#)

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CHAIR - I.B. Southerland: The JROTC Scholarship selection process for our 2026 selectees has begun, letters are out and interest is high! **Please continue to accept the DAVE HARRIS CHALLENGE to donate at least \$100 to the JROTC Scholarship Fund each year.** Mission: To provide scholarships to those deserving of help in pursuit of further education, preferably leading toward a military career.



WEBMASTER - Tom Denegre:

See our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1285830908624290>

Don't Forget ... RAFFLE, RAFFLE, RAFFLE! held at all Regular Dinner Meetings where you could win 10 times what you put into the pot. Tickets are \$1 and \$5 for six. So don't forget to bring some cash to dinner.



PROGRAMS COMMITTEE - Barry Moore: Next Meeting – The Tarheel Central Chapter of MOAA will meet at the MAPLE CHASE GOLF & CC on Wednesday, Oct 14, 2026

October 14, 2026, TCC Dinner Menu:

- **Maple Chase Salad Bar and Fixings**
- **Sliced Pork Roast with Apple Butter Barbeque Sauce**
- **Seared Atlantic Salmon with Tomato Caper White Wine Butter**
- **Buttermilk Mashed Potatoes**
- **Roasted Summer Squash**
- **White Cheddar Broccoli Gratin**
- **Carrot Cake**
- **Chocolate Layer Cake**
- **Coffee, Ice Tea, Water**



See more details on the Reservation Form at the end ...

- **October 7:** Tarheel Central Chapter Sponsored Day Visit to the National D-Day Memorial and Museum in Bedford, Virginia. Barry N. Moore POC
- **October 14:** Tarheel Central Chapter Dinner, Maple Chase Golf & Country Club. Guest Speaker is Honorable Former Chief Justice of the NC Supreme Court and current Dean of the Kahn School of Law for High Point University, Mark Martin. Barry N. Moore POC
- **BY INVITATION ONLY:** November 8: Invitation-only Marine Corps Officer Dinner for the 251st Marine Corps Anniversary Celebration, Maple Chase Golf & Country Club. Mark Ferketish and Barry N. Moore POCs [Commonly known throughout the US Embassy circuit as The Marine Corps Ball!]
- **November 11:** Tarheel Central Chapter Dinner, Maple Chase Golf & Country Club. Guest Speaker is Nationally Noted Cybersecurity Expert and President of Morse Alpha Associates (Charlotte), John Felker. Barry N. Moore POC.
- **December 9:** Tarheel Central Chapter Dinner/Dance, Maple Chase Golf & Country Club.
- **Winter Social** Date in mid-December to be announced. Again, this year we will take a bus and caravan to deliver our Christmas gifts to the Salisbury VA home residents - AND serenade the residents with Christmas carols, followed by dinner in Salisbury. Details to follow.
- **Third Wednesday, January 20, 2027:** Tarheel Central Chapter Dinner, Maple Chase Golf & Country Club. Guest Speaker is MOAA member Pete Armstrong, retired US Army, Vietnam and Desert Storm Veteran, Eagle Scout, Scout for 75 years, and international adventurer in Scouting. [Maple Chase is closed for maintenance the first two weeks of every year.]



PERSONAL AFFAIRS – Scott Gamble: Know of a veteran having difficulties, especially coping, please have them call (or you call) the Veteran's Hotline at 988 #1 or 844-647-1354.

BIRTHDAYS

- Vina Chase – 15 Oct
- Tom Denegre – 17 Oct

ALMARS : 022/26 R 161452Z SEP 26 ALMAR 022/26

MSGID/GENADMIN/CMC WASHINGTON DC//

SUBJ/UNITED STATES AIR FORCE 79TH BIRTHDAY//

GENTEXT/REMARKS/1. On behalf of the United States Marine Corps, I want to wish the men and women of the United States Air Force a happy birthday.



2. Rooted in the proud legacy of the United States Army Air Corps and shaped by the hard-earned experience of the United States Army Air Forces in World War II, the Air Force emerged as a new service in 1947. It quickly established itself as a critical element of the Nation's defense strategy during the Cold War. From the skies over Korea and Vietnam to precision air campaigns in the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and Iran, Airmen continued to adapt, innovate, and deliver decisive capabilities in support of joint operations.

3. As the Nation celebrates its 250th birthday, the men and women of the United States Air Force should take pride in their work in nearly every corner of the globe to maintain our cutting edge in the air. Whatever challenge lies ahead, Marines are confident knowing that they will be fighting alongside the world's greatest air force. Happy birthday, Airmen--Fly-Fight-Win.

4. Semper Fidelis, Eric M. Smith, General, U.S. Marine Corps,
Commandant of the Marine Corps.//

CELEBRATIONS AND CONGRATULATIONS – We celebrate those who have recently been listed on our Concerns and Prayers list, but who have recovered from either their illness or accident; we thank our Creator for that blessing.

CONCERNS AND PRAYERS LIST

- **Jackie Kohler** – recovery from abdominal surgery.
- **Pam Angle** – surviving spouse.
- **Terry Ammons** – surviving spouse.



SURVIVING SPOUSE LIAISON – Carol Gamble (pictured at Scott's left!):

Surviving Spouse Corner: “Add Your Voice on These Legislative Priorities” by Pat Green, September 02, 2026

National MOAA's Legislative Action Center is a valuable resource for the surviving spouse community. This online tool provides intent and particulars of MOAA-support bills as well as the opportunity to contact your elected officials on the legislation. While all bills listed in the

Legislative Action Center are important, a number of them deserve the attention of the surviving spouse community. Here are a few: Strengthening Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) for Surviving Families: Under the proposed provision authored by Sharri Briley and Eric Edmundson, DIC would increase by 1% each year in addition to the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for three years, to a total of 3%. This incremental step toward parity with other federal DIC beneficiaries can help veteran families manage rising costs for basic necessities. Allowing Survivors to Move Forward: The Love Lives On Act addresses the remarriage penalty burdening survivors. Currently, surviving spouses who remarry before reaching age 55 lose important benefits, such as DIC and survivor benefits. The Love Lives On Act would allow surviving

spouses to retain these benefits regardless of remarriage at any age. TRICARE eligibility would be restored if a subsequent marriage ends in death, divorce, or annulment. The choice to rebuild a life and a family should not have these financial consequences. The veteran's sacrifice should be met with the nation's commitment to care for the family left behind.

Recognizing the Reality of ALS: The VA recognizes amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, ALS, as a presumptive service-connected condition for certain veterans that results in a 100% disability rating. Current law requires a veteran to have been totally disabled for eight continuous years prior to death for a surviving spouse to receive enhanced DIC. The average life expectancy of someone with ALS is two to five years after diagnosis. This is problematic — most sufferers with this disease don't live long enough to meet the eight-year requirement. The Justice for ALS Veterans Act is a remedy. It would allow eligible surviving spouses to receive increased DIC regardless how long the veteran lived with the disease.

Legislation is a fluid process, bills are written, amended, and recombined. At this time, the Take Care of America's Veterans Act combines the three acts mentioned above and gives Congress the opportunity to improve these programs at once. As surviving spouses, we understand that no benefit can ever replace the person we lost, however, families and surviving spouses depend on this assistance. It is our duty to remind Congress that these benefits are part of the promise our nation makes to those who serve and the spouses and families who stand beside them.

Contact your lawmakers about the Take Care of America's Veterans Act.

Send Us Your Feedback

We'd love to hear from you. Please let us know if this article was helpful by sending an email to sscomm@moaa.org.

About the Author - Pat Green is a member of MOAA's Surviving Spouse Advisory Council. She has been active and engaged member of MOAA for 15 years, serving in many leadership roles.

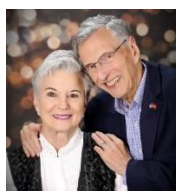
<https://news.va.gov/press-room/va-announces-major-survivor-benefits-reforms/>

<https://www.oann.com/newsroom/hegseths-wife-to-lead-trumps-new-commission-for-military-spouses-and-families/>



PUBLIC RELATIONS - Al Nealeans: Our enthusiastic promoter of chapter public relations gets the word out to the Winston Salem Journal, Clemmons Courier and WXII News. So, if you know any additional avenues for publicity, please contact him at: Alan Nealeans, 336-403-5254 or alan.nealeans@yahoo.com

SOCIAL SECRETARY - Warren Boyer:



Call 336 407-2374 if you have input.

- **October 3, 2026 (5:00pm – 7:00pm): "The Local Boys" (Bluegrass/Americana Concert)**
- **October 21, 2026 (6pm): Hops & Horn Chamber Series, Footnote Coffee & Cocktails, 4th Street W-S.**

Warren

Good Article From "1945" <https://www.19fortyfive.com/2026/09/the-great-us-marine-corps-reboot-has-arrived/>
The Great US Marine Corps Reboot Has Arrived by Caleb Larson

Gen. David Berger's reasoning was blunt: buy cheap, numerous systems instead of a few exquisite ones, and stop preparing for the grinding land wars of the Middle East. His Marines would be small, dispersed units armed with anti-ship missiles, drones, and long-range rockets, sensing and surviving in contested waters along the Indo-Pacific's coastlines, while the Army supplied the armored punch. Money mattered too. Tanks consumed manpower and procurement dollars that Berger wanted for affordable, disposable systems, on the theory that a Corps that can't survive the opening days of a missile-and-drone war is of limited value.

U.S. Soldiers assigned to 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division fire an M1 Abrams main battle tank at an enemy target during Rotation 25-02 at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif., Nov. 07, 2024. Rotations at the National Training Center ensure Army Brigade Combat Teams remain versatile, responsive, and consistently available for current and future contingencies. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Casey Auman, Operations Group, National Training Center).

U.S. Soldiers assigned to 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division fire an M1 Abrams main battle tank at an enemy target during Rotation 25-02 at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif., Nov. 07, 2024. Rotations at the National Training Center ensure Army Brigade Combat Teams remain versatile, responsive, and consistently available for current and future contingencies. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Casey Auman, Operations Group, National Training Center).

Summary and Key Points: Six years after Force Design 2030 began stripping out its tanks, the Marine Corps is looking even further ahead. Its Ground Combat Element 2040 roadmap, released this summer, keeps the Corps built around light, dispersed units capable of threatening Chinese ships from islands and coastlines. It then layers on counter-drone defenses shaped by the war in Ukraine, uncrewed systems, and AI-enabled command networks by the late 2030s. The idea is a force that can hide, survive, and strike when called upon, rather than one that simply looks formidable on paper.

The US Marine Corps Is a Different Force Than It Was in 2021

Force Design 2030 was the Marine Corps' roadmap and an acknowledgment that the Corps had become too heavy, too land-centric, and had drifted far from its maritime heritage. It was also an admission that the Corps had become too attached to a different model of warfare, the kind of grinding land wars that defined decades of conflict in the Middle East. Force Design 2030, instituted by then-Commandant of the Marine Corps General David Berger, stripped out legacy capabilities, freeing up manpower and money to build a leaner, more mobile Marine Corps optimized for distributed, autonomous operations inside contested maritime environments.

Change and Force Design 2030

Perhaps the largest break from the Marine Corps' past was the divestment of all of the Marine Corps main battle tanks. General Berger's logic was blunt — the Marine Corps should invest more in cheap, numerous systems rather than a few exquisite, expensive ones. Tanks sat squarely in the general's crosshairs. By 2021, the Marine Corps had divested all main battle tanks and heavy bridging equipment from its inventory, with more than 400 tanks transferred to the U.S. Army. But tanks were arguably the most visible, though hardly the only, part of the Corps' restructuring.

U.S. Army M1 Abrams Main Battle Tank variation fires at a target at Bucierz Range at Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area, Poland, August 11, 2020. DEFENDER-Europe 20 was designed as a deployment exercise to build strategic readiness in support of the U.S. National Defense Strategy and NATO deterrence objectives. In response to the pandemic, DEFENDER-Europe 20 was modified in size and scope. Phase I of the modified DEFENDER-Europe 20 was linked to exercise Allied Spirit, which took place at Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area, Poland, June 5-19 with approximately 6,000 U.S. and Polish Soldiers. In phase II of the modified DEFENDER-Europe 20, a U.S.-based combined arms battalion will conduct an emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise to Europe July 14-Aug. 22.

To its critics, Force Design 2030 is extreme. It also cut out tube artillery, reduced some aviation elements, and minimized heavy logistical trains. Its aim was streamlining, and it saw the reorganization of Marine Corps infantry for decentralized, expeditionary operations. It emphasized long-range precision fires, reconnaissance, unmanned systems, and electronic warfare, and shifted away from top-down command in favor of communicating the commander's intent and allowing Marines to decide how to realize those intentions. While the Marine Corps did become lighter and leaner, it also became harder to target and more useful in a fight with a peer adversary.

Force Design 2030 and the "Why"

General Berger's decision was rooted in the belief that the United States Marine Corps would eventually be called upon to fight and win a conflict against China in the Indo-Pacific's littoral waters. In that environment, small, mobile units would be much more important — and effective — than heavy armored formations optimized for sustained combat on land. General Berger also wants the Marines to fit better into a joint campaign with other service branches. Under that vision, the U.S. Army would provide the armored punch the Marine Corps lacks, while Marines would focus on sensing and surviving in contested areas, hitting back when circumstances are favorable, all within littoral waters or near the shore. Part of the impetus for Force Design 2030 was also budgetary. Tanks and other large legacy systems sucked up manpower and procurement money that General Berger wanted to redirect to more affordable, disposable systems. If the Corps could not survive the first days of a modern missile-and-drone fight, the logic held, it would be of limited value, no matter how formidable it appeared on paper.

Ground Combat Element 2040

Early this summer, the Marine Corps debuted Ground Combat Element 2040, a revised roadmap that provides a longer-term framework for the Corps' restructuring, particularly for ground combat. Resilient logistics and command chains are at the heart of the document, as are operations that are more dispersed and span multiple domains. In the nearer term, the Marine Corps intends to refine Force Design, in particular against the threat posed by drones in combat as witnessed in Ukraine. Further out, the Marine Corps anticipates artificial intelligence and autonomous systems to improve operations, particularly logistics and operational tempos. Central to this will be counter-UAS operations and uncrewed systems. But by the late 2030s, GCE 2040 sees AI-enabled command networks, teaming with machines, and high unit dispersion that can survive and also affect the battlefield when called upon.

General Berger's Tank Decision

The Marine Corps' divestment of all tanks was a radical decision. A force built around light, mobile—and, importantly, maritime—Marines armed with anti-ship missiles, drones, and long-range rocket artillery can threaten Chinese naval movements while also avoiding the kind of heavy, land-centric target that tanks present.

However, that decision carries an inherent risk. Once a capability is divested, the base that sustains it, including training pipelines and doctrinal expertise, withers as well, and rebuilding even a modest Marine Corps force in the future would not necessarily happen overnight. A force without deep-armor capability may find itself hamstrung in certain contingencies. Some critics of the decision have argued that even a token tank force would preserve some operational capabilities without jeopardizing Force Design 2030 entirely.

About the Author: Caleb Larson is an American multiformat journalist based in Berlin, Germany. His work covers the intersection of conflict and society, focusing on American foreign policy and European security. He has reported from Germany, Russia, and the United States. Most recently, he covered the war in Ukraine, reporting extensively on the war's shifting battle lines from Donbas and writing on the war's civilian and humanitarian toll. Previously, he worked as a Defense Reporter for POLITICO Europe. You can follow his latest work on X.

DoD Secretary Pete Hegseth gathers 600 rank-and-file troops to announce six new initiatives, including drone command and religious affairs office, and highlight plans to cut 20% of the nation's generals and admirals. <https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/security/2026/september/hegseth-returns-to-quantico-to-lay-out-technology-and-people-initiatives>

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth gathered 600 rank-and-file troops on Wednesday at Marine Corps Base Quantico to announce six initiatives that included the creation of an autonomous warfare command, a religious affairs office that will report directly to the secretary, and the addition of a new corps of cadets at five universities. Hegseth also highlighted a plan to cut 20% of the nation's generals and admirals.

“I’m proud to stand on this stage and report that the warrior ethos has been revived, our military is being rebuilt and American deterrence is back,” the secretary said about five minutes into the “State of the Force” address, which he intends to make an annual event.

Hegseth, a 46-year-old Army National Guard veteran and former Fox News host, gave a speech exactly one year ago to about 800 generals and admirals and their top enlisted advisers to lay out his vision for the U.S. military. Some of the policies the services have worked to implement include more physical fitness tests, tighter body fat restrictions and fewer shaving waivers across the force. “Now, I think the generals heard the message. Those who responded positively, which is most of them, are leading newly focused and newly empowered and disciplined formations,” Hegseth said. “Those generals who did not, who clung to the woke department, or seemed to think civilian control of the military is simply a suggestion. Well, they no longer work here.”

Hegseth began Wednesday by praising the force, particularly the troops in attendance, and celebrating what he called the return to a warrior ethos. He also lashed out at media members and reiterated that the Pentagon is no longer the “woke department.” “The complainers, the ideologues and the poor performers are no longer in the driver’s seat. No more silly PowerPoint trainings or drag queen shows,” Hegseth said. “No more gender pronouns. No more identity months. Only the warrior ethos.”

About 20 minutes into the speech, he got to the new part of the message — six new strategic initiatives to reshape the force. Hegseth first announced a new command to oversee and coordinate drone development and deployment supporting overseas operations. “Today at my direction, we are announcing the creation of Autonomous Warfare Command — or AutoWarCom — a four-star combatant command with service-like authorities built to scale autonomous and robotic capabilities,” Hegseth said.

The establishment of the command by Oct. 1, 2027, will require the Pentagon to work with Congress to get the necessary legislation, according to the memo signed Wednesday. “This command will possess directed manpower, budget, acquisition authorities and create dedicated military career pathways for officers and enlisted personnel,” Hegseth said in the memo.

The second initiative, Project Meridian, is an effort to leverage the nation’s premier private-sector innovators, business leaders and technologists to accelerate “the fielding of advanced systems for the next generation battlefield.” Emil Michael, the under secretary of defense for research and engineering, will lead the project that will be co-directed by Elon Musk, businessman and former senior adviser to President Donald Trump; Palmer Luckey, co-founder of defense technology company Anduril Industries; and Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the House.

“We should have the humility to recognize that the best forecasters of future conflict do not solely reside inside the Pentagon,” Hegseth said. Hegseth expects Project Meridian’s findings to be completed and submitted in 120 days. The group’s first meeting would be held in a SCIF 200 yards from where the speech was held on base. The third initiative involves a plan called FORTRESS America (Federal Operations for Resilience, Troop Resources, Energy, Supply, and Survivability) that is intended to ensure that every major U.S. military installation generates its own independent power. “If an adversary takes down the grid by cyberattack, by sabotage, or by any means, our bases stay lit,” Hegseth said. “Our aircraft keep flying. Our command centers never go dark.”

Michael Duffey, the under secretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, has been directed to stand up the program office within 30 days, according to the memo. The fourth initiative, Next Great American Base, involves building a new base on American soil.

“We’re calling on every governor in the country and adjutant general ... to step up to the plate and bring us their best sales pitch. If your state wants the honor ... show us why and how you’re going to do it — cutting through the red tape, offering up the land and rolling out the red carpet for our military families,” the secretary said. Hegseth said there will be no “backroom Washington deals,” just a “merit-based contest” to see which is the best state.

The state-of-the-art installation would host elite troops across hundreds of thousands of acres, the Pentagon said in a news release.

Engineered to operate completely off the commercial grid, it would feature independent power generation, autonomous systems and advanced air defenses. The America's Corps of Cadets initiative partners with a new set of institutions — Louisiana State University, Liberty University, Tuskegee University, Mississippi State University and Hillsdale College — to create additional full-time Corps of Cadets programs.

The Pentagon chief visited the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets on Sept. 19, where he also worked out with cadets at Kyle Field. "The patriotic and selfless service being taught at places like Texas A&M, VMI, the Citadel, Norwich, Virginia Tech, and the University of North Georgia," Hegseth said. "We need more officers from academic institutions like our military academies and senior military colleges. And today, we're going to make that happen."

The sixth initiative, the Office of Religious Affairs, will report directly to Hegseth and future defense secretaries to come. "Faith in something greater than us," Hegseth told the audience. Less than 5% of the force identifies as non-religious, which means 95% of the force "recognizes an Almighty God," he said. "This is not going to be a paper-pushing shop. It's going to have real teeth," the secretary added. "The experts, our chaplains, will finally have an advocate at the highest levels."

Christianity has been an emphasis since Hegseth took over the Defense Department, including a monthly prayer and worship service that started in May 2025. Americans United for Separation of Church and State, which has sued the Pentagon for its monthly services, criticized the announcement. "The Department of Defense owes it to the nation's service members to defend religious freedom as promised in our Constitution — a freedom they risk their lives protecting for all of us," Rachel Laser, organization president and CEO, said in a statement. "Hegseth's latest announcement violates that promise by elevating Christianity to an even higher role in shaping U.S. military policy." Hegseth and the troops who traveled for the speech started the morning with physical training at the Pentagon. The secretary and troops wore "This is War" shirts, referencing the Pentagon's secondary name, "Department of War."

"We are in a war of attrition against the Pentagon bureaucracy every single day, and it is a war that we intend to win," the secretary said during his close to one-hour speech. As troops arrived at the Marine Corps History Center an hour before the speech, a 144-page "War Department field manual" was on tables to grab. The book included four of Hegseth's speeches, including last year's Quantico address. Trump wrote a foreword that said, "I will not ask you to fight dumb wars." The audience consisted of E6 noncommissioned officers and junior commissioned officers with the rank of O3.

"Now it could have been E5s or E7s or O2s or O4s, but I've got a sweet spot, a special thing, for E6s and O3s," Hegseth said. Hegseth also, as expected, announced a 20% cut to general and flag officers. "The media calls that a purge. I call it accountability, and long overdue, and frankly, the bare minimum," the secretary said. The planned reductions must take place by Jan. 1, according to multiple reports.

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Why MOAA chapter membership matters.



Tarheel Central Chapter of MOAA, Inc.

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☐ Active ☐ Retired ☐ Former ☐ Reserve ☐ National Guard ☐ Surviving Spouse

Spouse name _____ Spouse Email: _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Date of birth _____ Telephone -Cell _____

Member Email _____ Telephone - Land _____

To ensure deliverability of MOAA communications, please provide a personal email address.)

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To complete enrollment:

- **Print and fill out this form** and email it to: Chapter Membership Chair, George Lawson: galaws71@gmail.com, as an attachment.
- To pay your annual dues, either mail your check for \$45.00 made out to TCC MOAA to: Treasurer, 3004 Kinnamon Rd., Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27104, or
- Go to <https://my.cheddarup.com/c/2025-member-collection-67809/items> - the Chapter payment portal, and select annual dues.

For more information, please go to the Chapter website: www.tarheelmoaa.org

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

Our Chapter is open to all active, reserve, retired, veteran and former (Warrant - Flag) officers of the US Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Space Force, NOAA and US Public Health Service, their spouses, and surviving spouses.

Chapter membership and dues information:

Affiliations:

- North Carolina Council of Chapters
<https://www.moaa-nc.org>
- MOAA, Inc.
<http://www.moaa.org>

A Chapter Dinner Meeting is held the **2nd Wed** of each month (Sept – May). Our Social Hour begins at 5:00 PM, followed by dinner and a program at **Maple Chase Golf and Country Club 5475 Germanton Rd, Winston-Salem NC 27105.**

Dress: "Business Casual"

Chapter Dues: \$45/year

Tarheel Central Chapter

DINNER RESERVATION FORM for Wednesday, Oct 14, 2026

Cheddar Up reservations, indicated by Dinner payment on Cheddar Up, Telephone calls, emails and texts will be accepted until 5:30 PM on Thursday, Oct 8th as Maple Chase needs the reservation guarantee early so the correct amount of food can be ordered for delivery in time for the dinner on the following Wednesday.

Your Name: _____

Birthday (DD/MMM – Member ONLY) _____

Number of Reservations: _____

Spouse Name: _____

Guests Names: _____

At **\$30** each: _____

Add Scholarship/Worthy Cause Donation: _____

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Grand Total: _____ Check #: _____

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Call Reservations into (336) 682-1419 and Send Checks to Treasurer:

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As of Oct 1, 2026: Read more about these (and other items) at: [MOAA - News Listing](#)

- **TRICARE Changes, Housing Fixes, and More: 10 MOAA Priorities as the NDAA Takes Shape by Kevin Lilley - September 23, 2026**
<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2026-news-articles/benefits/tricare-changes,-housing-fixes,-and-more-10-moaa-priorities-as-the-ndaa-takes-shape/>
- **Summer Advocacy in Action: How MOAA's Advocates Made August Count - Sep 23, 2026 - Dozens of meetings and thousands of messages put our key issues in front of lawmakers.** <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2026-news-articles/advocacy/summer-advocacy-in-action-how-moaas-advocates-made-august-count/>

Other important developments regarding MOAA's advocacy:

- **August Recess Ends: In September, lawmakers have just 16 legislative days before the midterm elections. Keeping the government funded is the top priority. The National Defense Authorization Act and the Take Care of America's Veterans Act, a sweeping package that includes the Major Richard Star Act, will both compete for floor time.**
- **Other important developments regarding MOAA's advocacy** <https://moaa.quorum.us/>
 - **Take Care of America's Veterans Act in Spotlight During Recent Conference**
 - **How the Senate NDAA Draft Would Help Military Families Find the Care They Need**
 - **MOAA-Backed Program Will Expand Fertility Options for Military Families**
 - **This Spouse-Employment Boost Requires a Different Path on the Hill ... and Needs Your Support**

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