



THE NUGGET



Volume 36

May 2026

Number 5

A Publication of the Military Officers Association of America - Monterey Bay Chapter

MBMOAA Monthly Luncheon - Monterey Elks Club Thursday, 21 May *Cost: \$30*** (details on page 7)**

Please RSVP to Ensure Enough Place Settings at the Tables



Monterey Bay MOAA Wins Awards

The Military Officers Association of America announced that MBMOAA has been recognized with their 5-Star Level of Excellence Award and their 5-Star Harris Communications Award for 2025. Congratulations to all who continue to make our chapter excellent.



Elizabeth Barratt, Guest Speaker Iran, A Pre-Revolution Tour

ایران، یک تور قبل از انقلاب

A fourth generation Californian from a pioneer Gilroy family, Elizabeth is a regional writer whose columns and feature articles on Central Coast history have appeared in local newspapers and magazines since 1979. Elizabeth has lived in Iran twice, under very different circumstances. This itinerary tour dates to the first time she lived there, from 1968-1970 when she enjoyed the benefit of a friendly, welcoming, proud country which she was pleased to tour. The second



tour, which was supposed to be for two years only lasted from June until December 1978, when she and her children were evacuated prior to Khomeini's arrival and the Shah's departure. At that time, she witnessed a very different Iran, where riots had overtaken the streets and people began to live in fear of what was to come. Elizabeth is the recipient of the prestigious "Women in American History" award from the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution. Elizabeth and Dick live in Monterey. At home, she enjoys cooking, gardening, rescuing cats and following the San Francisco Giants.

May Calendar of Events

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| 8 MAY — Military Spouse Appreciation Day | 16 MAY — Armed Forces Day |
| 8 MAY — Board of Directors Meeting @1100 | 21 MAY — Membership luncheon meeting |
| 10 MAY — Mothers' Day | 25 MAY — Memorial Day (federal holiday) |

Future Luncheons — 17 September, 15 October

Scholarship Winners for 2026

The Scholarship Committee, led by Mrs. Mary Schapper reviewed ten applications from seniors in six local high schools for the Gordon Nakagawa Memorial Scholarship and selected these three students to receive the awards:



Conner Bone from **Carmel High School** has chosen computational cognitive science as his field of study with a focus on the human brain and the artificial brain. He was described as having “a good mind for logic and programming.” Conner has not yet selected his college choice, but wants to enroll in the NROTC program. He is an Eagle Scout as well as a musician who has been honored for his achievement as a cellist, and a track and field athlete.

Drew Galy from **Carmel High School** is planning to attend a California college where he will pursue a degree in Neuroscience/Biopsychology with a focus on brain cancer. He served as President of the ASB, Principals Advisory Council and the Carmel Book Club. During an internship with the Carmel Area

Wastewater District, Drew discovered that leadership depends on strong organizational skills, and he has completed over 300 hours of volunteer work. His sports activities include volleyball, cross-country track, soccer, and cheerleading, as well as working as a lifeguard and swimming instructor.



Willow Cote from **Monterey High School** is a member of a Navy family who appreciates the military atmosphere of diversity, inclusion, cultural-collusion, and community building. She served as a Platoon Commander, Academic Team Commander, and Public Affairs Officer in the Monterey HS JROTC unit, and received the “Most Inspirational Cadet Award.” Willow sees a career in the performing arts. She helped young students as a Craft Leader at Camp Quien Sabe where she focused on environmentally sustainable free form crafts, and was described as “living and breathing theater” and her “passion is evident in everything she does.” She will attend Sarah Lawrence College in New York with a focus on theater and the performing arts.

April Luncheon Highlights

The chapter met for its monthly luncheon at the Monterey Elks Club on Thursday, 16 April. Though attendance was a little less than normal, everyone enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with friends over a good meal on a beautiful spring day.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance and the invocation by Chaplain Barratt, President Goetzelt addressed these items of business: 1) the next luncheon will be on 21 May at the Elks Club, and the guest speaker will be announced in *The Nugget*; 2) the chapter has a continued pressing need for an assistant/alternate Treasurer; 3) board member BG

Jerry Griffin has been awarded the POW medal, and more details will be provided when available; 4) the scholarship committee selected three high school seniors to receive awards; 5) we are developing a website, and would like to get a member to help maintain it; 6) there will be an inurnment ceremony for the remains of several indigent veterans at the Central Coast Veterans



Cemetery at 1100 on 14 May; and 7) MBMOAA has been recognized with the 2025 MOAA 5-Star Level of Excellence Award and the 5-Star Communications Award.

Our guest speaker was Leslie Pfeifer who served for three years as a flight attendant during the Vietnam War on Flying Tiger Line, a cargo and passenger delivery company. Accompanied by a very interesting visual presentation, she delivered a moving and nostalgic account of her experiences during that traumatic period of our nation’s history. Beginning with a brief history of the American Volunteer Group (AVG), which became known as The Flying Tigers, Leslie explained that after WWII some of these pilots formed the Flying Tiger Line to provide transport services for the U. S. government. In 1965 the company began troop transport flights to Vietnam. She made over 75 trips to Vietnam during her three years of service, where she and the other “stewardesses” provided a compassionate and





these memories and souvenirs through the past nearly

supportive presence for the young soldiers on the 18–20-hour flights. Those young men shared their stories, their dreams, and even some of their personal possessions with her. She has retained

fifty years. Leslie attends annual reunions of The Flying Tigers, and she speaks regularly with various groups to tell her story. She considers it very important to present a tribute to the memory of the young soldiers who served our country and were often ridiculed or unappreciated for their tremendous sacrifices. We salute Leslie and thank her for her continued selfless service.

Happy Birthday



Congratulations to these members with birthdays in **May**:

Carrie **Griffin**, Valerie **Jensen**,
Jack **Murphy**, Rosemary **Rowley**



Unique Memorial Day Observation

For over 50 years the Fleet Reserve Association, Branch 178, will hold its Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at 1030am on May 25 at the beautiful Coast Guard Pier. This ceremony is in memory of our shipmates who have transferred to the Staff of the Supreme Commander since last Memorial Day.

The Fleet Reserve Association is made up of Navy, Marines and Coast Guard veterans.

This year's event is cosponsored by the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Sea Cadets.

If you or an organization know a military veteran of any service who passed away within the last year you can submit their name to Michael LeVine at 831-375-4356 or by email at mlevine@redshift.com. Or you are invited to mention your departed loved one's name yourself.

Your loved one's name will be honored by announcing their name and by ringing a ship's bell.

Once all names have been honored a biodegradable wreath will be tossed in the bay in the name of all those departed American heroes.

This beautiful ceremony is free and open to the public. Last minute names can be given to Michael at the ceremony.

Fort Ord Nature Walk

There will be a Guided Nature Walk inside the former Fort Ord Impact Area on Saturday, May 9, 2026. Participants can choose between two guided routes, one 1.6-mile and another 3.75-mile in length, both on fuel break roads that have been cleared of munitions and explosives of concern. Participation will be limited and sign-ups will be required. A sign-up form will be available on FortOrdCleanup.com or you can send an email to Outreach@FortOrdCleanup.com or call (831) 393-1284. Please note, dogs or any other pets are not allowed on the Nature Walk.

Caregiver Wellness Summit

Visiting Nurses Association: VNA is hosting a Caregiver Wellness Summit for healthcare providers in the community, with a focus on providers who care for those with palliative care needs. There will be three subject matter experts speaking on the needs of those who need nursing care, as well as a doula who will speak on maternity healthcare. This event is slated for May 12 at the new Marriott Hotel in Sand City. Information is available at CCVNA.com.

In MBMOAA's Rearview Mirror

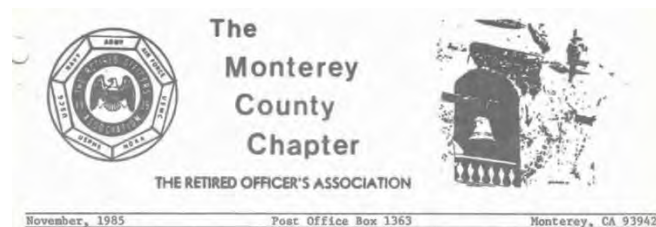
By CDR Doug Hartman, Historian/Archivist

From the November 1985 Newsletter:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (Lee L. Vagnini) At our November 21 luncheon we are scheduled to have our annual meeting and election of officers. Major Henry Gustafson, as chairman of the nominating committee, will announce a slate of nominees and a vote will be taken. Nominations may be made from the floor any nominee must indicate his or her willingness to serve if elected.

The November Luncheon Meeting will be held at the Rancho Canada Golf Club on Thursday, November 21, on a different schedule of a social hour at 1100, lunch at 1200 hours, followed by a short meeting and lively entertainment. The lunch menu will consist of a salad, roast beef, whipped potatoes, vegetable, sherbet and coffee or tea all for only \$7.00 per person, paid in advance by check to the Chapter Secretary.

The entertainment will be by 40 members of the Russian Folk Ensemble which consists of a choir, traditional folk orchestra and folk-dance group under the direction of Alexander Holodiloff, Russian instructor at the Army Defense Language Institute. It has wide popularity at the Presidio and in the Monterey Peninsula community where it performs at schools, hospitals, churches, festivals, and various private organizations. Mr. Holodiloff, who is called Shura in Russian, has been directing the ensemble for the past nine years at DLI. Only those students with



a strong academic average are allowed to join the group which meets for two hours during the week.

Influenza immunizations are available at the immunization clinic on the second floor of Silas B. Hays Hospital at Fort Ord. No flu shots are given on Tuesday afternoons as this is reserved for yellow fever shots.

The law of supply and demand has its effect on medical recruiting too. Now that nationwide we have a surplus of physicians the Army is getting the best. Over 80% of new Army physicians are from the upper half of their classes and for some key programs there are 20 applications for each slot.

It appears that the use of the Navy Golf Course controversy has been resolved. Following the meeting between Admiral Shumaker, Congressman Panetta, and Mr. Rudolph (city manager) it was decided that the city of Monterey would no longer try to lay claim to the government property. There is still some consideration being given, by the NPGS, to letting the fairgrounds folks use the area near the 18th green as a temporary parking area during the major fair events.

VA Office of Survivor Assistance 2026 Summit

Report from Kathy Prout, Surviving Spouse Liaison, CalMOAA Board member

Yesterday (8 April) I attended by invitation The VA Office of Survivor Assistance 2026 Summit. I learned a lot about the new applications on line for The Survivor Pension and DIC. What was stressed was that it is important for the military retiree and veteran to go to the VA and establish a claim, provide your DD214 or discharge papers to make sure it is correct. If you were in a war or in the Blue Water Navy make sure it is in your record accurately.

As a result of the Pact Act, there are more presumptive conditions related to Agent Orange, the Burn Pits, Gulf War, etc. Doing this may result in some tax-free disability compensation but will also make it easy for your spouse to receive DIC. If there is no record on file, and your spouse has to find them or get them ordered, it adds months to the process and there is no income.

File an intent to file online which locks in your date of claim and then you have time to find the documents required. Also, the difference between 100% disabled and P and T (permanent and total) is that 100% can be reduced if the veteran improves, but P and T is permanent and cannot be reduced.

Veteran of the Year Nominations

From Adam Errahebi, Military & Veterans Affairs Office



I am excited to announce that this year's Veteran of the Year nominations are open until Friday, June 26, 2026. The Military and Veterans Affairs Office has recently made edits to the eligibility criteria as well as highlighting the selection consideration on the application. If you know of any Veteran that is making an impact in the community in a volunteer capacity, I urge you to please nominate them. You can submit a nomination on the County of Monterey Military and Veterans Affairs Office website at: MVAO.org. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know or call (831) 647-7613.

Summary of nomination and selection considerations:

Applications must be received by the close of business on Friday, June 26, 2026. Incomplete applications will be returned to the nominator for completion.

Purpose of Award: The purpose of this award is to recognize Monterey County veterans whose volunteer service has produced a meaningful and demonstrable impact for veterans and/or the residents of Monterey County.

General: Please complete each field to the best of your ability. The contact information for both the Veteran and the nominator is extremely important to successfully process the nomination.

Veterans of the Year (VOY) eligibility criteria:

- Nominees must have received an Honorable discharge from the Armed Forces, consistent with applicable state and federal law. Exceptions for characterizations of service other than honorable may be made by the MVAAC Chairperson.
- Nominees must reside in Monterey County; no waivers will be considered.
- Nominees selected for a specific Board of Supervisors District must reside in that district.
- No individual may be selected more than once as a Veteran of the Year. There is no restriction on being nominated multiple times.

Selection Considerations:

- 1) **Community Impact and Outcomes-** Degree to which volunteer service produced measurable, meaningful benefits to the community
- 2) **Service above and beyond paid or expected duties-** Volunteer contributions clearly exceed responsibilities and are mission driven
- 3) **Service to Veterans, Military, or Broader Communities-** Meaningful and relevant of support to the community through direct service, mentorship, advocacy, or capacity building
- 4) **Broader Civic Contributions-** Volunteer service that strengthens the community through civic engagement, leadership, collaboration, or initiatives that advance public good
- 5) **Sustained Commitment or Exceptional Impact-** Nominee shows consistent commitment or exceptional level of impact
- 6) **Leadership, Initiative, or Collaboration-** Nominee leads, mobilizes, or develops programs that create solutions
- 7) **Evidence and Verifiability-** Nominations provide sufficient detail and corroboration to assess impact.

Note: Nominations for the Sam Farr and Jack Stewart Awards are due to the UVC before 25 Sep 2026.



College Tuition Fee Waiver

The College Tuition Fee Waiver for Veteran Dependents waives mandatory systemwide tuition and fees at: California Junior and Community Colleges (CCC), California State Universities (CSU), and University of California (UC). This benefit helps an eligible dependent of a Service-Connected Disabled Veteran rated at 0% or greater reduce the cost of higher education! For details go to <http://www.mvao.org>.

Veterans Cemetery News

The CA Central Coast Veterans Cemetery will conduct an inurnment of the remains of 6-8 indigent veterans on 14 May 2026, at 1100. Thanks to the Monterey County Sheriff-Coroner Office and the MVAO, along with the director of the cemetery, for coordinating this respectful ceremony.

Memorial Day Observance

There will be a public ceremony of remembrance at the Central Coast Veterans Cemetery at 1100 on Memorial Day, May 25.

Fort Hunter Liggett

King City and Ft. Hunter Liggett will host an Open House to celebrate the installation's 85th Anniversary from 1500-2100, on 2 May 2026. There will be concessions, bands, live music, etc., and it will close with fireworks at 2100.

Japanese American Citizens League Event

The JACL invites you to join them on 2 May, from 10 AM – 3 PM, to celebrate 100 years of culture and history at the Monterey Peninsula Japanese American Citizens League Hall, 424 Adams Street in Monterey. There will also be a Swing Dance from 7 – 9 PM.



From the April 2026 Honor Flight Newsletter:

We are thrilled to be preparing for Mission #25, scheduled for Tuesday, September 15 through Thursday, September 17, 2026—a journey like no other for another deserving group of our local heroes. This special trip to Washington, D.C. gives our veterans the opportunity to visit the memorials built in their honor.

We are always looking for Veterans to participate in their Tour of Honor. If you know a Veteran – whether a friend, family member, or someone you meet in the community – please share information about Honor Flight with them.

If they reside from **South Monterey County through Ventura County**, encourage them to complete an application online: <https://honorflightccc.org/veteranapplication/>

TAPS ... Colonel Anna J. Marshall, USAR (Ret)

We have learned of the death of former chapter member Anna (Ann) Marshall on 1 March 2026 at the age of 101. We would like to express our sincere condolences to her loved ones.

THE MONTEREY ELKS CLUB

150 Mar Vista Drive,
Monterey, CA 93940



Thursday, May 21, 2026

Social Hour: 1100; Meal service: Noon

Menu: *Elks sensational serve-yourself specialty buffet! (varies from month to month)
Build-it yourself salad + desert
Separate Coffee/Tea Station; water on the tables*

Cost: \$30 per person (to be paid at the door, exact cash or check greatly appreciated).

Reminders: A reservation made is a reservation paid. The venue requires our reservation numbers one week prior to the event, further, it is their policy that we pay for all meals reserved. Therefore, we ask that any reservations cancelled after noon on Thursday still be paid for. If no or a late RSVP is made, there is no guarantee seating will be available.

PLEASE RSVP NO LATER THAN NOON THURSDAY, 14 May.

Early RSVPs (yes or no) are highly desirable!

E-Mail Valerie Jensen at vejensen@sbcglobal.net or call her @ **(831) 372-8633** to make your reservation. Please leave a message with your full name, phone number, and number attending. Every effort will be made to acknowledge receipt of your reservation.

If you or someone you know needs a ride to the luncheon, or if you are able to give someone a ride to the luncheon, please let Val know.



Monterey Bay Chapter Membership Form

Mail to: MoCoMOAA, PO Box 1363 Monterey, CA 93942

New Member: _____ or Renewal: _____

Name: _____ Rank: _____ Service: _____ Retired: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Spouse's Name: _____

National MOAA Number _____ (From MOAA Magazine Label)

E-Mail Address: _____

Signature _____ Date: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

Regular Member & Spouse: \$35 for Nugget via U.S. Mail: _____ \$25 E-MAIL Nugget _____

Surviving Spouse: \$25 for Nugget via U.S. Mail: _____ \$15 E-MAIL Nugget: _____

Enclosed is my check for dues through _____ \$ _____

Optional donation to Scholarship Fund: \$ _____ Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

If Active Duty: Anticipated PCS date: _____

Editorial Policy

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Our Mission

The mission of Monterey Bay MOAA is to promote the purposes and objectives of MOAA; to foster fraternal relations among its members; to benefit the members of the uniformed services, their families and survivors, and to advocate for a strong national defense while providing needed support to the community and its members.

| | | <i>2026 MBMOAA Leadership</i> | | | |
|--|----------|---|----------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| CWS Louise Goetzelt, USA | 717-4469 | LTC Jim Lane, USA | 438-7008 | Mrs. Elizabeth Barratt | 241-6927 |
| President, Membership Co-chair | | Board Member | | Surviving Spouse Liaison | |
| Ret. Soldiers/Veterans Councils Representative | | LTC Jack Murphy, USA | 647-7613 | LtCol Michael Kwasnoski, USAF | (602) 692-5509 |
| LTC Richard Barratt, USA | 241-6927 | Board Member, Programs Co-chair, | | Chaplain | |
| Vice-President, JROTC Liaison | | Legislative Liaison | | CDR Doug Hartman, USN | 717-7330 |
| LTC William Breen, USA | 917-7022 | Mrs. Jeanne Nakagawa | 384-4002 | Chapter Archivist/Historian | |
| Treasurer, Monterey Bay Defense Alliance Rep., | | Board Member, Hospitality/Raffles Chair | | LCDR Tom Rowley, USN | 373 5204 |
| Meeting Plans | | MAJ Duane Peterson, USA | 373-3412 | Monterey Bay Defense Alliance Rep. | |
| CDR Delbert Curtsinger, USN | 883-0509 | Board Member, Membership Co-chair | | LTC Tom Griffin, USA | 277-7080 |
| Secretary, Editor of <i>The Nugget</i> | | Mrs. Mary Schapper | 757-3791 | Monterey Bay Defense Alliance Rep. | |
| BG Gerald Griffin, MD, USA | 649-8989 | Board Member, Personal Affairs Chair, | | | |
| Board Member | | Scholarship Chair | | | |