



# THE NUGGET



Volume 36

April 2026

Number 4

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

## **MBMOAA Monthly Luncheon - Monterey Elks Club Thursday, 16 April \*\*\*Cost: \$30\*\*\* (details on page 7)**

***Please RSVP to Ensure Enough Place Settings at the Tables***

### **Flying Tiger Line Flight Attendant Leslie Pfeifer is Guest Speaker**

Leslie Pfeifer (Laird) served for three years as a flight attendant during the Vietnam War on Flying Tiger Line, a cargo and passenger delivery company.

Flying Tiger history began during World War II when the original aircraft were small fighter planes. Piloted by the novice American Volunteer Group, who were from all branches of the military and civilians, these men provided military support to the Republic of China in their defense against the Japanese invasion between 1941-1942.

When the war ended, a few of the AVG pilots purchased several war surplus cargo planes and used them to carry supplies to U.S. troops during other incursions under the name Flying Tigers. In 1965, the company began troop transport flights to Vietnam with newly purchased Boeing 707 and Douglas DC-8 aircraft.

Leslie was hired in 1967 and made over 75 trips to Vietnam. As civilian employees of the airline, flight attendants were paid \$475 per month. They really weren't prepared for the reality of taking young men to war. The soldiers weren't really prepared either. The flight attendants tried to make the troops comfortable. The flights were long - they spent 18-20 hours on the planes to and from Vietnam.



Pfeifer was upset over the way troops came home to protests and disrespect. She later told an interviewer, "My emotions and demeanor changed completely. As time went on I became more and more angry and saddened over the treatment of the soldiers. They were doing what they were told and serving our country. I lived in Berkeley during those years and witnessed protest marches and anti-war demonstrations. The men and women on our flights had served our country, some wounded - physically and mentally. There was no regard for the young men who risked their lives and thousands losing their lives."

*-- From Lamorinda Weekly, March 31, 2021*

### **April Calendar of Events**

- 5 APR — Easter Sunday
- 9 APR — National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day
- 10 APR — Board of Directors Meeting @1100 in MVAO Bldg.
- 15 APR — Federal and CA State Income Tax Day
- 16 APR — Membership luncheon meeting at The Elks Club

**Future Luncheons** — 21 May, 17 September



**The primary mission of MOAA is advocacy. Make your voice heard by contacting you legislative representatives. To find out how, visit the MOAA Take Action website: <https://moaa.quorum.us/>**

## March Luncheon Highlights

On an unusually warm March 19th the chapter met for lunch at The Brass Tap restaurant in Marina. This new venue provided a pleasant change of routine, and attendees enjoyed the delicious pub-style fare.

After the Pledge of Allegiance and a poignant invocation offered by Chaplain Kwasnoski, President Goetzelt made these announcements: (1) the April luncheon, at the Elks Club, will feature guest Leslie Pfeifer to speak on the history of The Flying Tigers Airline; (2) please encourage friends to renew their membership by the end of the month, as our enrollment continues to decline; (3) the chapter is still looking for an assistant/alternate Treasurer; and (4) applications for the Gordon Nakagawa Scholarship are due by 31 March – any JROTC cadet, or any child or grandchild of a veteran is eligible.

Doug Yount, a land use and development expert with over 22 years of experience working with government agencies and commercial entities involved in the re-development of the former Fort Ord, gave a very interesting talk on the many projects involved. He recounted some of the difficulties faced in the early days after the 1994 closure of the post and the competing issues from the many stake-holders in Fort Ord Reuse Authority.

Doug discussed the enormous clean-up projects that have been done and some that are still underway. He briefly outlined the various housing and commercial developments, including The Dunes, Seaside Highlands, Sea Haven, and Campus Town. Significant efforts have been made, particularly at The Dunes, to incorporate memorial statues and murals that commemorate the history of the men and women who served their country at Fort Ord.



## Monterey Bay Defense Alliance Breakfast

The Monterey Bay Defense Alliance (MBDA) will be holding a breakfast at the Monterey Conference Center on Wednesday 15 April. CDR Larry Friese (USN-Ret), will speak about his experience as a Prisoner of War (POW). Here's the link to sign up for the event:



<https://members.montereychamber.com/events/details/beyond-the-hanoi-hilton-a-conversation-with-former-naval-flight-officer-and-vietnam-pow-larry-friese-15854>

CDR Friese served as an A-6 Intruder Bombardier/Navigator in Vietnam, where he flew 138 combat missions between July 1967 and February 1968. His plane was shot down on his last combat mission, and he was captured by the enemy four days later. He spent

over five years at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" as a POW before being released during Operation Homecoming on March 14, 1973. CDR Friese is the recipient of the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying

*(continued on page 3)*

*(continued from page 2)*

Cross, the Bronze Star, the Prisoner of War Medal and many other awards.

His Silver Star Citation reads: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity from February to November 1968 while interned as a Prisoner of War in North Vietnam. Despite the fact that he was consistently maltreated and subjected to severe cruelties, CDR Friese refused to cooperate with his captors in any manner. He displayed an exceptionally high degree of determination and

resolve and provided his fellow prisoners both an example to emulate and a source of encouragement. Fully aware his resistance to the enemy would arouse increased wrath and harsher treatment, he nonetheless persevered in his resistance. Through his exceptional courage and determination in the face of extreme adversities, CDR Friese reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps, the Naval Service, and the United States Armed Forces."

## **Did You Know...The Museums of Monterey**

*By CDR Doug Hartman, Historian/Archivist*

*You probably know that there are a number of interesting museums and historical sites around Monterey but here is a short, non-comprehensive, list.*

- The Monterey Museum of Art: features California art – past and present. Located at 559 Pacific Street, Monterey and is open Thursday through Sunday 1100-1700. There is an admission fee, but try your military ID first. Phone: 831.372.5477.
- The Colton Hall Museum and Jail: where California's first Constitution was drafted in October 1849 with exhibits on early Monterey. Located at 570 Pacific Street, Monterey and open Thursday – Sunday 1000-1600. Phone: 831.646.5648.
- The Pacific House Museum: part of the Monterey State Historic Park (which includes additional buildings and adobes), located at 10 Custom House Plaza, Monterey. Open Tuesday – Sunday 1000-1600, gardens open daily. Guided walks 1100, 1300, 1500 with tickets purchased at the Custom House located at 20 Custom House Plaza, Monterey. Phone: 831.649.2907.



- The Presidio Museum: recounts Monterey's various stages of military development. Located in Building 113 in the Lower Presidio Historic Park at Corporal Ewing Road, Monterey and is open Saturday and Sunday 1000-1600. Phone: 831.646.5648.

- The Monterey History and Art Museum at the Stanton Center: features historical Monterey-based artists, a rotating contemporary local artist exhibit, as well as a small Salvador Dali collection. Located at Custom House Plaza,

Monterey and open Saturday – Wednesday 1000-1700. Admission fee required. Phone: 831.372.2608.

- The Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History: captures the diversity of the Central Coast's flora, fauna, and historical artifacts and stories. Located at 165 Forest Avenue, Pacific Grove, it is open Wednesday through Sunday 1000-1600. Phone: 831.648.5716.
- The National Steinbeck Center: charts the life of author John Steinbeck and features each of his books. Located at 1 Main Street, Salinas and is open Thursday through Sunday 1100-1700. Admission fee required. Phone: 831.775.4721.
- The Henry Miller Memorial Library: not a museum, not even a library but a book store and music venue, but very much a funky "Big Sur" type of place, plus a beautiful drive down the coast. Located in Big Sur along Highway 1 just south of Nepenthe on the left and open Thursday through Sunday 1100-1700. Phone: 831.667.2574.



*All information is from their Internet websites*

# VA Fully Rescinds Disability Ratings Rule ... Here's What Should Happen Next

By Kevin Lilley/[moaa.org](http://moaa.org)/February 27,2006

After feedback from veterans, advocacy groups, lawmakers, and other stakeholders – 20,000 of whom provided comments via the Federal Register – the VA fully rescinded an interim final rule that may have punished veterans for receiving medical treatment.

VA Secretary Doug Collins announced Feb. 19, two days after the new rule was published, that it would not be enforced. The official rescission echoes Collins' Feb. 19 statement, which said the rule served to clarify existing policy, but notes the department “recognizes that many commenters construed the interim final rule as something that could result in adverse consequences.”

MOAA was among those commenters, noting that the rule “fails to account for treatment burdens, creates harmful incentives, destabilizes access to benefits, and was promulgated without adequate public input.” While the VA's Feb. 27 move to rescind the rule represents a first step toward rebuilding trust with the veteran community, three other key recommendations from MOAA's public comment should come next:

## End the Legal Fight

The VA's short-lived rule change came after the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims ruled against the department in *Ingram v. Collins*, stating that the VA should issue disability ratings based on the severity of a veteran's condition, following precedent “requiring the discounting of beneficial effects of medication.”

In the rule, the VA said the court “erred” in its determination, and noted the case and other recent judicial rulings as grounds for rapid passage of the clarifying regulation. MOAA and other stakeholders disagree with this interpretation, and so long as the VA proceeds with appealing *Ingram* and similar cases, veterans' benefits would remain under threat.

“Continued pursuit of an appeal is in direct opposition to the halted enforcement of the [interim final rule],” MOAA wrote in its public comment.

## Clarify the Ratings Process

The rescinded rule had been meant to “reaffirm the proper understanding of VA policy,” according to the rule text. And while the rule is going away, such reaffirmation is still sorely needed.

The department should state clearly that a disability rating will not be reduced based on the effects of treatment, and that a veteran's ability to address chronic injury or disease with medication should not be confused with “medical improvement.”

Many veterans suffer a reduced quality of life from effective treatments – anything from moderate to severe side effects to medication and treatment needs that disrupt life's regular rhythms. They should not worry about losing earned benefits while they deal with these second-order effects.

## Keep Veterans Healthy

By weighing medication as part of a VA disability rating (and subsequent benefits), the department inadvertently created an incentive for veterans to skip treatments prior to an evaluation, or otherwise mask any treatment-related improvements.

The VA can address this concern moving forward by releasing guidance that would “explicitly prohibit adverse rating consequences tied to treatment compliance, ensuring veterans are not discouraged from following prescribed care,” MOAA wrote in its public comment.

## The Next Step

MOAA and fellow veterans service organizations will continue to engage with the VA on this issue; the lack of engagement with such groups has been cited by many as contributing to the confusion caused by the recent rule, which was passed without a traditional feedback period.

No veteran should feel that undergoing treatment for an illness or injury could lead to unexpected downgrades in their service-earned benefits. Keep up with this issue and other MOAA priorities via our news page.

## TAPS ... Colonel Richard M. Ely, USA (Ret)

We have learned of the death of former chapter member Richard (Dick) Ely at the age of 82. He is survived by his wife Barbara, and his children and grandchildren. We would like to express our deepest sympathy to his loved ones.



### **Veteran of the Year Program**

The Military and Veterans Affairs Advisory Commission approved modifications to the policies and procedures of this program. The MVAO website has been updated with the changes and new form as well as a button on the main page for the list of prior awardees. Nominations can be submitted now, and are due before 30 Jun 2026.

### **Veterans Cemetery News**

There will be an inurnment of the remains of about eight indigent veterans on 14 May 2026, most likely 1300 - 1400. Thanks to the Monterey County Sheriff-Coroner Office and the MVAO for coordinating this with the director of the cemetery.

### **DAV Info**

Beginning in April shuttle rides to the VA Clinic in San Jose will depart from the Marina Clinic on Tuesdays at 0900.

### **Construction at Fort Hunter Liggett**

On March 9 the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Garrison Fort Hunter Liggett conducted a ground-breaking ceremony for a new network enterprise center. The 21,500-squarefoot facility, will serve as the installation’s central hub for information technology services, supporting everything from secure communications and cybersecurity to network connectivity and customer support for Soldiers, civilian staff and tenant organizations.

### **Stay Alert: Protect Yourself from Membership Scams**

*From MOAA Affiliated Councils and Chapters*

MOAA often uses email and online channels to communicate with its members about their membership status. However, we realize it may sometimes be difficult to discern legitimate messaging from scams. If you receive an email or online message about your membership that seems suspicious, do not respond. Contact MOAA’s Member Service Center immediately at 800-234-6622 to verify its legitimacy.

MOAA provides scam prevention resources at [MOAA.org/scams](http://MOAA.org/scams) that can help you combat all types of fraud. Some MOAA-specific details that may help you spot suspicious messaging:

- Life members whose dues are paid in full will never be asked for additional dues payments.
- Spouses of deceased Life members inherit their membership at no additional cost.
- Spouses are not eligible for membership; MOAA will never solicit a spouse to join. (Surviving spouses, however, are eligible for membership.)
- Basic and Premium members may receive renewal or upgrade communications from MOAA via mail, email, text message, or phone.

If you’re unsure whether a message is authentic, DO NOT REPLY to the message — contact the Member Service Center at 800-234-6622 for confirmation.

## William Thompson, First Colonel of the United States Army July 5, 1736 – September 3, 1781

William Thompson was born in Ireland and emigrated in 1755 to Carlisle, PA. He served as an officer in the French and Indian War, after which he became a business and civic leader in Cumberland County. On June 25, 1775, Thompson accepted a commission from Congress as the first Colonel of the Army of the United Colonies. His unit, originally known as Thompson's Rifle Battalion, quickly distinguished themselves during the Siege of Boston in 1775–1776. Their sharpshooting skills were critical in harassing British troops and maintained



pressure on British positions, eventually forcing the British to evacuate Boston. Recognized for his leadership and effectiveness, Thompson was promoted to Brigadier General in March 1776 and took command of a relief expedition against Canada. On June 8, 1776, the British captured him while leading Continental forces at the Battle of Three-Rivers near Quebec. He was not officially exchanged until October 25, 1780, and he died in ill health on September 3, 1781. He is buried in the Old Carlisle Cemetery on East South Street.

### *Happy Birthday*

Congratulations to these members with birthdays in April:



Dennis **Allion**, Theresa **Allion**, Emma **Brown**,  
Mary **Edmund**, Marcella **Hall**, Suzzane **Mansager**,  
Stephen **Trotter**



### Message from MOAA Government Relations

Each spring, MOAA advocates from across the country come together to support key priorities affecting servicemembers, veterans, their families, and



survivors. This year's campaign will focus on four important initiatives designed to strengthen support for the uniformed services and veteran communities:

- H.R. 2102/S. 1032: Major Richard Star Act
- H.R. 1732: GUARD VA Benefits Act
- H.R. 6796: Military CARE Act
- S. 3168: Shutdown Fairness Act

On April 15, event participants will meet with lawmakers and their staff on Capitol Hill for our annual Advocacy in Action Hill Day, sharing these priorities directly. But that should not be the first time they hear about them. That is where you come in. Our Hill Day engagements will be stronger when lawmakers have already heard from you, their constituent, back home.

Watch for Advocacy in Action alerts and take action through MOAA's Legislative Action Center. (<https://moaa.quorum.us>).

### TAPS ... Lieutenant Colonel Jean Stallings, USA (Ret)

Former chapter member, Jean Stallings passed away at the age of 91 on 11 March. We want to express our deepest sympathy to her loving survivors: her nephew Daniel Stallings (Lynne) of Muncie, Indiana, her niece Susan Stallings of Greensboro, North Carolina, and her sister-in-law Cathy Stallings of Cocoa, Florida.

**THE MONTEREY ELKS CLUB**

150 Mar Vista Drive,  
Monterey, CA 93940



**Thursday, April 16, 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, 9 April.**

**Early RSVPs (yes or no) are highly desirable!**

**E-Mail** Valerie Jensen at [vejensen@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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

*The Nugget* is published by the Military Officers Association of America - Monterey County Chapter, Inc., PO Box 1363, Monterey CA 93942, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax exempt organization. It is published monthly except July & August. MOAA and its affiliated chapters are non-partisan. The advertisements appearing in this publication also do not reflect an endorsement by MOAA or this affiliate.

FIRST  
CLASS  
POSTAGE

<p><b>Now and Always We'll be There.</b></p> <p>★</p>  <p><b>MOAA</b> INSURANCE PLANS</p> <p>1-800-247-2192 • <a href="http://www.moaainsurance.com">www.moaainsurance.com</a></p>	 <p><b>TOM ROWLEY</b> REALTOR - J.D. CaDRE # 00975775</p> <p><b>SHOWCASE, REALTORS</b></p> <p>534 Abrego Street Monterey, CA 93940 <b>OFFICE 831-648-7271 VM EXT 213</b> FAX 831-648-7270 HOME OFFICE 831-373-5204 TOMR2004@HOTMAIL.COM</p> <p><small>Each office is independently owned and operated.</small></p> 
---	--

### 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><b>2026 MBMOAA Leadership</b></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			