



Volume 36

# THE NUGGET

March 2026



Number 3

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

## ATTENTION: NEW LOCATION FOR MARCH EVENT

**MBMOAA Monthly Luncheon - *The Brass Tap Restaurant*  
Thursday, 19 March \*\*\*Cost: \$30\*\*\* (details on page 7)**

### Land Use and Development Expert, Douglas A. Yount is Guest Speaker

Doug Yount has nearly 40 years of experience in local land use development and municipal executive administration, serving in positions of city management, development services, redevelopment/economic development, and project management for major master planned development projects. He attended the University of California, Santa Barbara, then received a Master's in Public Policy from the University of Michigan, where he was awarded the Arthur Bromage fellowship by the Michigan Municipal League.



Mr. Yount began his career with Deloitte as a consultant specializing in municipal finance, land use development, and organizational development. From there, he served in cities throughout California in San Diego County, Alameda County, and Monterey County, as a Community Development Director, Development Services Director, Deputy City Manager, and City Manager. While in Marina,

California, Doug led the entitlement and initial development of a significant portion of the redevelopment of the former Fort Ord. Following this public service, he served as a principal with Applied Development Economics, a consulting firm specializing in economic development strategies and assistance to public and private entities, and he recently assisted the City of Salinas in an award-winning economic development strategic plan.

From 2016 through 2024, he was employed with Shea Homes, serving as the Project Director for Marina Community Partners, the entity overseeing the Dunes on Monterey Bay mixed use master plan development, a \$2.1B 330-acre award-winning mixed use redevelopment project on the former Fort Ord. Since that time, Doug has been consulting to Shea Homes relating to the Dunes project, as well as

*(Continued on page 2)*

### March Calendar of Events



- 8 MAR — Daylight Savings Time starts
- 13 MAR — Board of Directors Meeting @1100
- 17 MAR — St. Patrick's Day
- 19 MAR — Membership luncheon meeting
- 20 MAR — Vernal Equinox (Spring begins)
- 29 MAR — Natl. Vietnam War Veterans Day

**Future Luncheons** — 16 April, 21 May

### Membership Renewal for 2026

**OK. This is it.** For those who haven't renewed their membership dues, this is the final copy of *The Nugget*. Please consider including a donation to the MoCoMOAA Scholarship Fund with your dues payment. Send in your renewal check now using the form on page 7.

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

(Continued from page 1)

assisting other development clients.

Mr. Yount has also been an adjunct instructor at Cal State University Monterey Bay in the College of Business and in the Masters in Public Policy program at the Panetta Institute, where he taught for nine years in Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship. He recently served as the board chair for the Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay,

and is a former chair of the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce board, and former chair of the board of the Monterey County United Way.

He has been married over 39 years to his wife Nicole, with two children Brett, 35 and Taylor, 33. When not agonizing over development entitlements and construction schedules, Doug enjoys fishing, playing the piano and spending time with their first grandchild.

## February Luncheon Highlights

Our monthly meeting was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> at the Monterey Elks Lodge where attendees enjoyed a delicious meal of Chicken Piccata, baked Ziti, green beans, and chocolate pudding for dessert.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance and the Invocation, President Goetzelt addressed the following items of business: (1) Our speaker for March is Doug Yount of Shea Homes, who will talk about Fort Ord history recognition, and the luncheon will be held at the Brass Tap Pub in Marina; (2) Members have until the end of March to pay membership renewal for 2026; (3) the Chapter is in need of an assistant/alternate Treasurer as soon as possible; (4) Thanks to all who advocated for passage of SB694 (“Claim Shark” Law); (5) Scholarship applications are due by the end of March; (6) We want to find a volunteer webmaster who can establish and maintain a new MBMOAA website; (7) Remember to claim the new CA tax exemption for military retirement and survivors’ benefits.

Tom Griffin provided an update on the work of the Veterans Transition Center, where he was a founder and served as Chairperson for many years. The VTC continues to expand its housing availability for homeless veterans with new units planned in the former VA clinic on Fort Ord.

Our guest speaker, Ashley Chesney, a survivor and leader in the anti-human-trafficking movement and the Executive Director of Set Free Monterey Bay,

gave us a heartbreaking and eye-opening look at the scourge of the human trafficking industry. She explained that there are many forms of trafficking, but they are all driven by money. Victims of human trafficking come from all backgrounds and range in age from early childhood through elderly adults. The two main categories of this crime are sexual trafficking and employment trafficking, and some people are victims of both of these forms. If a person is forced to engage in behavior against their will and wages are withheld from them, they are a victim of trafficking. Criminals may exert control through intimidation, coercion, drugs, shame, or physical abuse.

Ashley said that California heads the list for this crime, and that Monterey County is one of the top locations in the state. The traffickers are drawn to this area because of our thriving tourism industry and the large number of high-profile events held here. She explained that her organization helps victims with a program of Prevention, Awareness, and Restoration. They are fighting human trafficking through education and outreach, community leader training, and residential care. We are truly thankful to Ashley and her group who are doing such wonderful work in our community.



## In MoCoMOAA's rearview mirror ....

By CDR Doug Hartman, Historian/Archivist

From the April 1985 Newsletter:

You asked for it! You got it! IT being a luncheon meeting. Yes, the April Meeting of the Chapter will be held in the upper dining room at Rancho Canada Golf and Country Club on Thursday, April 19. The schedule calls for cocktails, visiting and conviviality starting at 1100 hours, and luncheon served at 1200 hours sharp. Inasmuch as there are other activities going on at the same time it is suggested that you arrive a bit early or carpool. Lunch will consist of a large Chef's Salad with dessert, wine, bread and butter, all for only \$7.00 – paid in advance to the Chapter Secretary. In the thirteen years this Chapter has been holding meetings, this will mark the first luncheon meeting, and the acceptance by members will probably determine whether we do it again soon.

**Board Actions:** The Board of Directors met in the Tower Room of NPS at 1900 hours, Thursday, March 28, with President Vagnini presiding ... The Scholarship Fund now totals \$4,578.04. To date, no one has made application for the two scholarships that were offered. The deadline for application is April 15 ... The Hospitality Committee, Major and Mrs. Jeff Maddox, announced the menu for the Annual Picnic as all the hot dogs and hamburgers you want, plus potato salad, beans, soft drinks and wine, all for \$6.00 per person ... Results of the survey taken in March for dinner locations were: 1. Rancho Canada, 2. NPS, 3. Anyplace okay, 4. Like variety, 5. Moose Lodge, 6. Ft Ord/Hyatt (tie), 8. Elks Club, 9. Outrigger/La Playa Hotel (tie) ... As a result of the short talk by Ms. Sally Griffin, Director of Meals on Wheels, at the March dinner, the possibility of Chapter support of that project was discussed, and rejected on the ground that there are



The  
Monterey  
County  
Chapter

THE RETIRED OFFICER'S ASSOCIATION



April, 1985

Post Office Box 1363

Monterey, CA 93942

so many worthwhile charities to be supported and the Chapter couldn't contribute to them all. The Board did, however, give approval to a policy of recommending that members donate their time and money to the program as being a vital necessity for the older and ill folks in the Monterey area. (Note: the current Meals on Wheels Center in Pacific Grove is named after Sally Griffin).

The first of our 1985 Monthly Golf Tournaments at Fort Ord on 11 March, was the largest ever, with a turnout of 48. We are pleased to acknowledge that March winners George Barker, Jim Guthrie, and Ed Philbin contributed their shares to the TROA Scholarship Fund. We are looking forward to having a record turnout for our second tournament, at the Navy Course on Easter Monday morning, April 8.

A large number of military physicians are completing their obligated service at this time. Silas B. Hays is feeling this shortage, but it is expected to be temporary as many new physicians are expected shortly. Meanwhile, if the delays are longer than usual, please try to understand. Similarly the pharmacy is having a personnel shortage and has had to reduce its hours. Dental activities headquarters at Fort Ord knows of no plan to refuse dental service to retired personnel concurrently with providing service to dependents.

### New South County VA Services

The MVAO, in partnership with the VA Capitola Vet Center will be starting South County outreach **this Friday and the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month at the Office of District 3 Supervisor Chris Lopez, located at 1011 Broadway St. Suite C in King City, CA 93930.** Please send any Veterans, Servicemembers or Dependents in need of services. As always, if someone cannot make that day, we do offer in-person appointments and virtual appointments, please call (831) 647-7613 to schedule.

### American Legion Post 69 Event

All War Veterans Appreciation Dinner, a charity event to raise money for veterans and veteran programs, will be held on March 28 at the Veterans Memorial Building (649 San Benito Street) in Hollister. Doors open at 1730 with dinner service at 1830. Admission is free for veterans and \$25 for guests. For tickets contact Maria at (831)637-7011 or email to [hollistervetsbuilding@gmail.com](mailto:hollistervetsbuilding@gmail.com)

## Surviving Spouse Corner: Getting to Know TAPS

By: Cheryl Toland, moaa.org, February 03, 2026

The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) directly supports all grieving the death of an active duty servicemember or veteran, regardless of the survivor's phase in their grief journey.

TAPS' team of experts, staff, compassionate volunteers, and peer-support network stand ready 24/7 to embrace bereaved families, friends, and battle buddies and connect them with immediate and lifelong tangible resources and emotional care. This includes casework and education assistance, community-based connections, in-person events, a thriving online community, and the National Military Survivor Helpline, (800) 959-TAPS (8277), which is answered by a knowledgeable, caring survivor care team member anytime, day or night.

TAPS was founded in the wake of a military tragedy following a 1992 C-12 crash in Alaska that took the lives of eight soldiers. Among the grieving family members was Bonnie Carroll, the widow of Brig. Gen. Tom Carroll, USA. After realizing that no support network was in place for the families of the fallen, Bonnie spent two years researching best practices while navigating her own grief alongside fellow survivors.

In 1994, TAPS officially opened its doors to military and veteran survivors. Today, Bonnie and the TAPS team have supported over 100,000 military and veteran survivors as they grieve, heal, and honor the life of their loved one.

Each day, an average of 26 new survivors connect with TAPS in search of support, resources, and community, such as:

**Programs.** TAPS offers a wide variety of programming, seminars, online groups, and workshops. Learn more at [TAPS.org/programs](https://TAPS.org/programs).

**Advocacy.** Efforts are dedicated to empowering survivors to use their voices to spark change while working closely with government leaders and lawmakers to advance policy and legislation that impacts life after unspeakable tragedy. Visit [TAPS.org/advocacy](https://TAPS.org/advocacy).

**TAPS Magazine:** This quarterly publication, mailed to members/survivors, is a comprehensive resource for grieving families. Visit [TAPS.org/magazine](https://TAPS.org/magazine).

**Facebook group.** In this group, a survivor can share and receive support from other survivors, staff, and professionals. Learn more at [Facebook.com/tapsorg](https://Facebook.com/tapsorg).

## Community Emergency Response Team Training

The City of Monterey is offering free Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training starting in April. **This training is open to residents of Monterey, Pacific Grove, Carmel, Carmel Valley, Pebble Beach, Seaside and the adjacent communities.**

**Dates & Times:** Three consecutive Saturdays, April 25th, May 2<sup>nd</sup> and May 9th. Time each day is 8:30 A.M.-5:30 P.M.

**Location:** Downtown Monterey

**To enroll:** Send an email of interest to [certmonterey@gmail.com](mailto:certmonterey@gmail.com) with the following information:

Name  
Physical residential address  
Home & cell phone numbers  
Email you most commonly use

We will reply with a confirmation.

*The FEMA Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program instructs local citizens in a wide variety of rescue, search, emergency medical, preparedness, safety, team operations, basic fire control and community service skills. CERT members regularly respond to assist local fire and police with storm impacts, searches for missing persons, fire scenes, evacuations and many other emergency situations. CERT members become sworn Disaster Service Workers (DSW).*

**Demetrius Kastros**

**Monterey CERT Training/Operations Coordinator**

(Editor: MBMOAA member Michael Kwasnoski serves on the CERT Skyline Drive team, so feel free to contact him for more information at (602) 692-5509 or [michael.a.kwasnoski@gmail.com](mailto:michael.a.kwasnoski@gmail.com).)

# MEMOAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' BULLETIN BOARD

MARCH 2026

### MEMOAA Website

The chapter wants to establish a presence on the internet, but we need someone who can spearhead our efforts. We need a **webmaster** who will take on the task of setting up and maintaining a website. If you can help this effort please contact Louise (goetzeltl@comcast.net)

### “Claim Shark” Legislation

**SB694** has been signed into law by Governor Newsom. This law will prohibit non-accredited agents from charging fees to assist veterans with VA disability claims. The advocacy and actions of MOAA members have helped protect California’s 1.6 million veterans from exploitation.

### Capital Advocacy Day

The California State Commanders Veterans Council will be hosting its annual Capital Advocacy Day and Council meeting in Sacramento on Wednesday 22 April. To RSVP email Dana Nichol, DANAN@WATER-WARRIOR.COM

### Charity Golf Tournament

American Legion Post 512 will hold its 5th annual charity golf tournament at the Old Del Monte Golf Course on 17 April 2026. Contact Gerry Paratore, Post Commander, gparator@gmail.com

## MOAA SIGNATURE GROUPS

**Join MOAA Leadership and your fellow MOAA members on these hosted cruises and land tours.**

July 12-21, 2026	Highlights of Eastern Europe River Cruise	9-nights from \$3,999
October 1-10, 2026	Western Europe Yacht Cruise	9-nights from \$4,999
April 25-May 2, 2027	Castles Along the Rhine River Cruise	7-nights from \$4,199
July 19-27, 2027	France & Spain Yacht Cruise	8-nights from \$5,799
September 14-25, 2027	Circle Iceland Yacht Cruise	11-nights from \$8,999
Sept. 25-Oct. 4, 2027	Battlefields of WWI & WWII Tour	10 days from \$6,495

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### *Happy Birthday*

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

Elizabeth **Barratt**, Joseph **Begbie**,  
Carolyn **Griffin**, Jayne **Harry**, Harry **Nicholson**



## The Love Lives On Act

Surviving military spouses who lose their loved ones due to combat, service-related illnesses, or suicide often face a difficult choice: remarry and lose their earned benefits or remain single for financial stability.

Current law revokes benefits if they remarry before age 55, leaving many—especially those with young children—without crucial support. The **Love Lives On Act (H.R. 1004/S. 410)** ensures surviving spouses can remarry at any age without losing their benefits.

By supporting this legislation, Congress can honor the sacrifices of military families and provide them with the stability they deserve.

<https://moaa.quorum.us/campaign/110777>

## VA Awards Disability Benefits Using Criteria From 80 Years Ago, Federal Watchdog Finds

*By Linda F. Hersey, Stars and Stripes, 15 January*

WASHINGTON — A federal watchdog warned lawmakers that the Department of Veterans Affairs needs to fully revise the 80-year-old criteria for awarding disability payments or risk miscalculating benefits for millions of veterans. The VA administers one of the nation's largest disability compensation programs — providing \$195 billion in compensation in fiscal year 2025. But criteria the VA developed in 1945 do not align with modern medicine, employment and the impact of disabilities on a veteran's earnings potential, the Government Accountability Office testified at a subcommittee hearing of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee Wednesday.

“Without a rating schedule that fully reflects present-day changes in medicine and the labor market conditions, VA may overcompensate some veterans while undercompensating others,” said Elizabeth Curda, GAO director of education, workforce, and income security. Disability ratings in 2026 are based on physicians' and lawyers' judgments from 80 years ago about service-connected disabilities and average earnings losses from disabilities, according to findings in a GAO report issued Wednesday before the hearing. The report was titled “VA Disability Benefits: Progress Made but VA Decisions on Veterans' Claims Continue to Be Based, in Part, on Outdated Criteria.” VA's management of disability compensation claims has been on GAO's “High-Risk List” since 2003. “Given the size of and investment in the program, VA must be able to make accurate decisions about veterans' disability claims,” according to the report. The subcommittee raised concerns about the outdated medical and earnings loss data, as well as a

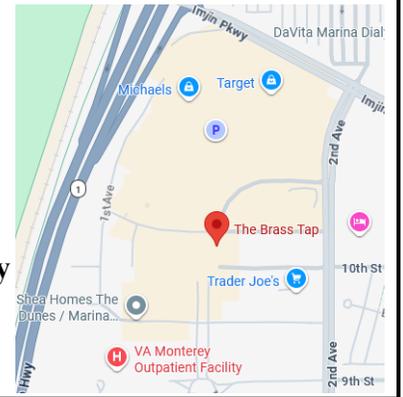
lack of oversight of disability exams primarily conducted by private contractors.

“In 1945, my dad was just mustering out of the military,” said Rep. Jack Bergman, R-Mich., a retired Marine Corps lieutenant general. “We are using that date here in current data. It scares the hell out of me. This is a ball of bureaucratic string.” Nina Tann, VA's executive director for compensation service, said the agency has made progress updating medical information on service-connected injuries and illnesses affecting 11 of 15 “body systems.” The VA also published proposed rules for the remaining four areas, covering mental health disorders, as well as medical conditions affecting respiratory, auditory and neurological systems, Tann said. The agency anticipates publishing the final rules by the end of fiscal 2026. But as of January, VA had not updated a second set of data related to earnings loss, according to the GAO. Earnings loss is the average decrease in expected earnings caused by specific disabilities. “Consequently, ratings determinations for all earnings loss calculations remain based on information from 1945,” according to the GAO. Rep. Morgan McGarvey, D-Ky., urged the VA to also seek feedback from veterans as it updates the criteria for determining disability benefits.

Kyleanne Hunter, CEO of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, echoed those comments, saying that “veterans' voices should be included at the table.” The medical problems of post-9/11 veterans include traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder, which were not widely recognized decades ago, Hunter said.

# THE BRASS TAP RESTAURANT

99 General Stillwell Drive  
Marina, CA 93933  
(831) 383-7404



Thursday, March 19, 2026

Social Hour: 1100; Meal service: Noon

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

Menu: Choose from the four options shown below (place order when making reservation).

### **All-American Pub**

Angus blend burger, aged Cheddar cheese, smoked bacon, lettuce, tomato, pickle

### **Chicken Tenders**

Hand-breaded, beer-battered chicken with barbeque sauce

### **Fish & Chips**

Hand-breaded, beer-battered fish with malt aioli

### **Shrimp Platter**

Grilled shrimp with cocktail sauce

These orders are all served with coleslaw and crinkle-cut fries or tots. Dessert, soft-drinks, coffee are included.

**PLEASE RSVP NO LATER THAN NOON THURSDAY, 12 March.**

**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**

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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.*

		<u>2026 MBMOAA Chapter Leadership</u>			
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		LCOR 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			