



# The Granite Slate

The official newsletter published quarterly for the  
New Hampshire Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America  
P. O. Box 712, Dover, NH 03821



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Spring News & Events

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## MOAA-NH Chapter's Mission

- To promote the aims of the MOAA stated in the By-Laws of that Association
- To further legislative goals and objectives of MOAA
- To encourage and facilitate camaraderie among our membership
- To provide useful services for and to protect the interests of members, their dependents, and survivors

## Physician Assisted Suicide - A Slippery Slope for New Hampshire Veterans

The New Hampshire Chapter of MOAA is an affiliate of the country's leading organization protecting the rights and benefits of uniformed service members, veterans, and their families. To veterans, MOAA has made the same promise they've made to their country: Never Stop Serving.

Our mission is noble and often requires us to take a stand especially when vulnerable veterans health is at stake. And that's why our Board of Directors voted unanimously to join the 20-member State Veteran's Advisory Committee (SVAC) in strongly opposing physician assisted suicide in our state.

Yes, this bill (HB-1283) is ostensibly about terminally ill people. It requires two doctors to diagnose a patient has less than six months to live. The doctors must certify the patient has the mental and physical capacity to self-administer a lethal drug prescribed by the doctors.

But the SVAC and our Board remain concerned about the potential impact this bill could have on our community. Veterans are the leading suicide risk category in the United States - 16 veterans die every day by suicide. And here in New Hampshire, veterans living with severe physical injuries and pain - especially those living with TBI and PTSD - are eight times more at risk than the general population.

In fact, in testimony before the House Judiciary Committee, the SVAC representative pulled no punches when he said: "This bill scares our members right down to their socks."

Notably, 1,125 people signed-in to the bill and were opposed while 658 were in support.

Physician assisted suicide opens the door to a slippery slope of unintended consequences. And the message it sends to veterans is chilling. It normalizes suicide and undermines veteran suicide prevention efforts by presenting suicide as a legitimate medical treatment option. Our state has made enormous achievements to increase veteran suicide prevention programs. This bill has the potential to undermine those noble efforts.

The bill also creates the potential for veterans to feel pressured into making irreversible decisions. And it could unintentionally create "permission" for veterans to consider suicide especially if they see themselves as a burden on their families or communities. And it could present a dangerous alternative that devalues the inherent worth of veterans living with severe disabilities and chronic illnesses.

And we know from 10 other states and Canada it opens the door to expanding assisted suicide to other vulnerable populations.

Recently, Oregon added diabetes, arthritis and kidney disease to their list of qualifying conditions. Canada's bill now includes mental health. Hawaii and Colorado have expanded the list of people authorized to administer the lethal drugs. And New Hampshire proponents have already indicated ALS, MS, and Alzheimer's should be included in future versions of the bill.

Shockingly, "Medical Aid in Dying" legislation in Canada has led "caregivers" in Veterans Affairs Canada - the equivalent to ("Suicide continued on Page 2)

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Visit the chapter's website at [www.moaa-nh.org](http://www.moaa-nh.org)

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## **Resolutions**

Another year has passed for all. We have once again orbited through space around the sun, just 568 million miles since last New Years. Only to come back to where we started, to start all over again, 365 days, 52 weeks, 8,784 hours. We will accomplish this once again this year. A new beginning, a tabula rosa. It is when we pledge to take up a supporting discipline, to pledge to try. And even if we fall short, we are better people for having resolved to trying. Benjamin Franklin defined Resolution this way, "Resolve to perform what you ought, perform without fail what you resolve." Franklin was not wrong to aspire nor should we, no matter how imperfectly. And we, as MOAA-NH members, should highly resolve to seek this higher level, to better your Chapter, because it is your Chapter. You, and only you, can feed the engine of the New Hampshire Chapter.

I encourage you to read and become knowledgeable of your Chapter (moaa-nh.org) and National (MOAA.org). Each click is important to you and our organization. Your many benefits are Legislative action, updated newsletters, product discounts, access to member books and guides, financial education/consumer advice, scholarships, career transition, spouse protection (benefits transfers to the spouse should anything happen) and more. So, what has your Board of Directors (BOD) and Officers been doing?

First off, we have updated the By-Laws, Operational Handbook and our Event/Activity Guide. So what? There are our guiding Chapter documents. All will be available on our MOAA-NH website (moaa-nh.org) following finalization. I encourage you to read them. Preparing for our annual renowned Lobster/Clambake at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, 3 August. More to follow. For those with email, a "Blast" email was sent out (13 Feb 24) requesting support. Please look for it in your inbox basket, or maybe the "Junk" file.

**State Legislative Action.** This is a new position being filled by Bill Luti. Bill is experienced and knowledgeable in our state legislative process. The current and most important legislative bill is HB-1283, "End of Life Options", or otherwise known as Assisted Suicide, which MOAA-NH opposes. This bill is also opposed by the State Veterans Advisory Committee (SVAC). Please read Bill's report in this issue for more insight.

**Surviving Spouse Liaison (SSL).** Our new SSL is Pat Miller. She has taken on HB1354, relative to special number plates for surviving spouses of veterans, which MOAA-NH supports. She has testified at the January SVAC, encouraging their support and contacted local State Reps for their support. Please see Pat's report in this newsletter.

**Chaplain.** Our new Chaplain, Gary Terhune, has assumed duties and has performed his uplifting words at the BOD's meetings. We look forward to hearing more from Gary.

The **"Help Wanted"** sign is out. We are in desperate need of a **Treasurer, WebMaster, and the Lobster/Clambake Coordinator.**

Each of these are crucial to the continuance of a health Chapter. So, **PLEASE** consider stepping up for one of these positions or just fill in for a short time. Any assistance is greatly appreciated. Please call me or any of the Chapter Officers.

Just a reminder, we are all recruiters. So please be on the look out for new members. You can download the MOAA-NH member application on our website (moaa-nh.org).

Provided for your consideration.

Larry Miller  
President, MOAA-NH Chapter



("Suicide" Continued from page 1)

our VA - to recommend suicide to several veterans. This produced a national scandal and VA Canada can no longer counsel vulnerable veterans to commit suicide.

The US Congress was so concerned about the proliferation of state sanctioned assisted suicide that they overwhelmingly passed a federal law prohibiting the use of Federal funds to pay for any health care service or health benefit coverage for the purpose of assisting the death of any individual through mercy killing, euthanasia, or assisted suicide.

This prohibition applies to over a dozen federally funded health care programs including Medicare, TRICARE, the Defense Health Agency and the VA.

Moreover, no number of "safeguards" can change the fact that assisted suicide is fundamentally harmful to populations already at suicide risk. Research correlates a 6% increase in overall suicide rates in states where physician assisted suicide is legal.

It's my own view this bill preys on people's compassion. Stories of people dying in pain are stories of failure of care. No one in 2024 needs to die in pain. A notable local physician told me the solution is to treat pain, not to kill the patient.

Under Oregon's law the state is required to report annually the reasons why people chose assisted suicide. The top reasons consistently have been fear of indignities and being a burden on others, not fear of pain. We are crossing a dangerous threshold if we believe killing a person is a

humane act. Nor should the state of New Hampshire get into the business of deciding what quality of life merits death.

Our country has made enormous strides in palliative care. And people already have the right to autonomy by executing end of life advance directives. But more resources are needed so people can live out their natural lives in peace and dignity surrounded by loved ones. If this bill passes, people in need of quality health and palliative care will be deprived of valuable resources because assisted suicide becomes the cheaper option.

So, instead of physician assisted suicide, perhaps our representatives should explore legislation expanding veterans access to mental health programs and compassionate health and palliative care, especially for veterans unable to access VA services.

This approach should be our top priority. It respects the dignity and worth of veterans and keeps faith with the honor they've earned. We owe a debt of gratitude - not assisted suicide - to veterans in crisis who have made and continue to make sacrifices for our country.



Bill Luti  
CAPT, USN (Ret)

### **Surviving Spouse Corner**

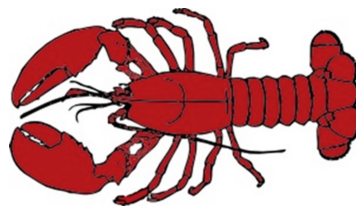
Everyone reading this article will be touched one way or another. Did you know that in New Hampshire when a veteran dies, their license plate can be passed to their spouse **ONLY** one year? Now there is a bill, HB-1354, "An ACT relative to special number plates for surviving spouses of veterans", in the NH House in the Transportation Committee. We can make a difference and change this law to allow the surviving spouse to retain the license. You can help make this change by contacting the committee. The committee Chairman is the Honorable Thomas Walsh, 603-623-4104 or his email is: [Thomas.Walsh@leg.state.nh.us](mailto:Thomas.Walsh@leg.state.nh.us).

I would also recommend that you go to the MOAA website and find your State Representative and email or call them also.

The new law RSA 261:141 would be "The plates furnished pursuant to this section are non-transferable except that surviving spouses may use the plates indefinitely after the death of the veteran until the date that the surviving spouses remarries."

I plan on following this bill until it is signed into law and will report its progress to you.

Pat Miller, Surviving Spouse Liaison, MOAA-NH



### ***Attention MOAA-NH & Southern Maine chapter members!***

This is the **45th Anniversary** of the founding of this chapter so let's celebrate it in a BIG WAY. This is our premier event of the year which we will hold for the 40th time on 3 August at Jamaica Island at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY). Even though our attendance has been down commensurate with our membership, we are still looking forward to a great event with many special guests to be announced later.

Last year, we had two members from MOAA National, James O'Brien and Frank Michaels, the PNSY Commander, Captain Michael Oberdorf, the Southern Maine Chapter President, Brenda Pennels, and Congressional Representatives in attendance. We expect the same this year.

With our longtime Bake Meister retired, Gary Terhune and Chad Chadwick took on last year's Bake with great success, but it was on an interim basis only to give the chapter the time to find a permanent replacement. **We need a chapter member to step up as the Clam Bake Coordinator for this year!** The job has been streamlined, as the name implies, from the old Bake Meister who did everything from A-Z. NO MORE! We've broken down the job into 2 areas: Admin & Food Prep/Logistics. AoIC handles all non-food-related coordination with the PNSY. The Food Prep and Logistics arena pretty much run themselves. All the Coordinator has to do is make sure everybody does his/her job in a timely fashion. We had assistance last year from several Southern Maine chapter members which was fabulous. We loved having them. It would be beneficial for the Coordinator to be a Seacoast resident, but due to technology today, it is not a requirement. Gary will provide a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), and Chad and Gary are available to assist the new Coordinator in the transition. We can do this folks and do it well. Between two great chapters, NH and Southern ME, we have many able-bodied and intelligent people who have worked on this before, however, we need someone to take charge with some administrative/organizational skills. If a couple of guys in their mid to upper 70's can do it, anybody can! So, step up, and let's hear from you.

Contact President Larry Miller (603-440-5054), VP Pete Burdett (603-738-0168), Director Gary Terhune (603-674-0318), chapter member Chad Chadwick (603-812-8057), or any Board of Director member for more information.



## VA Expands HealthCare Eligibility Beginning 5 March 2024

The VA has announced that effective Monday, 5 March 24, eligibility for healthcare will be expanded for all veterans who served in the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, or any other combat zone after 9/11- years earlier than called for by the PACT Act. This includes all veterans who were exposed to toxins or other hazards while serving in the military, either at home or abroad, and they will be eligible to enroll directly in VA health care without first having to apply for VA benefits. Veterans who never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or on active duty in the United States will also be eligible to enroll. President Biden directed this expansion by eliminating the phased-in approach called for by the PACT Act, meaning that millions of veterans are becoming eligible for VA health care up to eight years earlier than written into law.

The VA has expanded eligibility for Agent Orange disability benefits to Vietnam-era veterans who served at 129 locations in the US during specific time frames as well as parts of Canada and India. It adds locations in 12 states within the US, as well as Kumbha, India, in 1945 and 1946, and Gagetown, New Brunswick, in Canada, in June 1966 and June 1967. It also creates broader timelines for other locations that include Cambodia, Thailand, Guam, and Laos, based on the DOD's 2019 list, which was published by the VA in 2020.

The states include, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Montana, New York, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah, and dates that range from 1945 to 1977, depending on the state and location.

It expands the territorial waters off Vietnam and other locations to include an island, Phu Quoc, that previously was omitted as automatically qualifying for benefits. It also would expand the dates of eligibility for veterans who served in the Korean Demilitarized Zone from April 1, 1968 to August 31, 1971, to September 1, 1967 through August 31, 1971.

The VA encourages all eligible veterans to visit [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT) or call 1-800-MYVA411 to learn more and apply for VA health care beginning March 5th. Since President Biden signed the PACT Act into law on August 10, 2022, more than 500,000 veterans have enrolled in VA health care.

There is a one-stop PACT Act website at:  
<https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/>

The above information is a composite of information provided by Peter Burdett, Paul Lloyd from the NH VFW Headquarters, and the formal VA announcement.

Andrew J Breuder, Col (Ret), USAF, MC, CFS



## **MOAA Webinar, 6 December 2023 “Protect Yourself from Fraud This Holiday Season”**

Our Chapter President, Larry Miller, has been listening into some MOAA Webinars recently, and felt that the above session would be of interest and beneficial to our members and asked if I would summarize some of the main points from this webinar. The main briefer was Mellissa Trumpower, Executive Director, Better Business Bureau Institute for Marketplace Trust. She explained the difference between a Complaint versus a scam: A complaint is a dispute with a business. A scam is an illegal or fraudulent offer or interaction. She mentioned that there is a Scam Tracker: [BBB.org/](https://www.bbb.org/) which can be used for research and to report scams. This site also contains a Prevention Guide and a Risk Calculator. There is also a Scam Recovery Tool which can be used to share your story for others.

The Better Business Bureau has a Risk Index that can be used to estimate your overall risk: multiplying the following three factors provides a risk estimate:

Exposure (How likely are you to be targeted) X  
Susceptibility (What are the odds of losing money) X  
Monetary Loss (magnitude of loss).

Some of the riskiest scams for 2022 were:

A. Online Purchases (biggest in Exposure & Susceptibility; 32% of all scams; 74% scammed reported losses, has increased 87% in last five years)

B. Employment

C. Cryptocurrency

D. Home Improvement

E. Advance Fee Loan

F. Investments

G. Romance

H. Government grants

I. Phishing/social engineering

J. Technical Support

The most impersonated organizations included Amazon, Best Buy Geek Squad, Publisher's Clearing House, US Postal Service, Norton, PayPal, Manuel Franco, Medicare, Microsoft, Independent Workforce Development, McAfee, Facebook, Advance America, and various cash applications. In addition, rental properties with phone ads posing as investment scams with no risk and fake check scams tied to other scams.

Some tips were as follows:

1. If an offer looks too good to be true, it probably is.
  2. Avoid pet purchases that require up front payments.
  3. Fake websites: 72% lose money here
- (“Scams” continued on page 6)

*Is travelling on your bucket list.  
Maybe this list will help . . .*



## 2024 MOAA-NH TRAVEL PROGRAM

All our 2024 trips are posted on the MOAA-NH website ([moaa-nh.org](http://moaa-nh.org)) under Group Travel and through our periodic "Trip of the Month" blast email messages, the Granite Slate and travel displays at our luncheons and special events.

### 2024 TRAVEL PROGRAM:

**AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS AND DENVER:** 14 days, 20 meals, September 24 - October 7, 2024. Book now and save \$50/person. \$6499 per person double occupancy. Tour includes Sedona, Grand Canyon, Lake Powell, Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, Jackson Hole/Grand Teton & Yellowstone National Parks, Rapid City, and Rocky Mountain National Park. Price includes round trip from Logan, air taxes/fees, hotel transfers, 20 meals, including 13 breakfasts and 7

**MEMORIAL OF WAR – NORMANDY,** 11-20 October 2024. Book now and save \$100/person. \$4,799 double occupancy. Tour includes tours of London, Portsmouth, English Channel Crossing, D-Day landing sites in Caen, and Paris. Price includes round trip from Logan, air taxes/fees, hotel transfers, 12 meals including 8 breakfasts and 4 dinners.

Work is in progress for our 2025 travel program. The following is the latest draft. You will be kept updated as changes occur.

### 2025 TRAVEL PROGRAM (Draft):

**SPOTLIGHT ON TUSCANY:** 22-30 October 2025, 9 days, 11 meals. \$4,099 per person, double occupancy (\$3,999 if booked prior to 23 April 2025). This tour comes with an optional 3-night Rome extension for \$399.00 per person and a 3-day, 2-night Gourmet Bologna for \$1,099 per person. Price includes round trip air from Logan plus taxes, fees, transfers/surcharges to/from Logan if pickup within 100 miles of Logan. Highlights include Montecatini Terme, Lucca, Gothic Line, Florence, Pisa, Cooking Class, Cheese Farm & San Gimignano.

**CALIFORNIA DREAMIN':** 19-26 May 2025, 8 days, 12 meals, \$3,999 per person, double occupancy (\$3,899/person if booked by 19 November 24). This tour comes with optional 3-day, 2-night San Francisco post tour extension for \$399/person. Includes round trip air from Logan including taxes, fees, transfers/surcharges and transportation to/from Logan if pickup within 100 miles of Logan. Includes Monterey, Scenic 17-Mile Drive, Yosemite National Park, Sacramento, Lake Tahoe Scenic Cruise, Napa Valley Vineyard Tour/Wine Tasting, San Francisco

**World Connect Program:** Select any vacation trip of interest on our Group Travel program website ([www.gocollette.com](http://www.gocollette.com)) and then contact Tony or Tom. They will guide you thru the reservation process and you will receive MOAA-NH discounts and privileges. DO NOT fill out forms/applications on-line. Wait for instructions from Tony or Tom. For additional information, contact Tony Burdo, 603-391-7106, email [tonyajb@gmail.com](mailto:tonyajb@gmail.com) or Tom Kyle, 603-686-2663, email [tkyle@yahoo.com](mailto:tkyle@yahoo.com).

## Will You Support MOAA-NH?

As MOAA-NH celebrates its 45th anniversary, there are several opportunities for members to show support for the organization. How? By volunteering to fill several positions listed below. They are:

- **Treasurer:** *This position is currently vacant.* Please contact former Treasurer CDR Roby Day, USN (Ret.): (603) 642-7956; [fuzzbutthall@comcast.net](mailto:fuzzbutthall@comcast.net) for more information and questions.

- **Four Directors:** These positions will be voted on in November 2024. Please contact CDR Sharon Day, USN (Ret.): (603) 642-7956; [cimice89@comcast.net](mailto:cimice89@comcast.net) for more information and questions.

- **ClamBake Coordinator:** This position needs to be filled **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** to ensure the Clam Bake happens **THIS AUGUST!!!** Recently reorganized, all the **Coordinator** has to do is make sure people who perform the two main areas of responsibility, Administration and Food Prep/Logistics, do their jobs in a timely fashion. For questions and further information, please contact LTC Gary Terhune (Ret) at [schoonergst@yahoo.com](mailto:schoonergst@yahoo.com) or (603)-674-0318.

- **Webmaster:** The chapter Secretary, CDR Michael McLean, USN (Ret) currently performs this job maintaining the chapter's website, but he needs assistance as the Secretary duties are numerous. He can be contacted at [mamclean@comcast.net](mailto:mamclean@comcast.net) or (603)767-0411 for further information or to answer questions.

### The 157th ARW at Pease has a new Retiree Activities Office!

Colonel Nelson Perron, 157th ARW Commander, has appointed John Symington as the Retiree Activities Office (RAO) Director. All RAO staff are 100% volunteers. Located in room 238 of building 100, the office will be manned on Thursdays from 1000-1400 hours and will primarily focus on interacting with members of the military retirement community on benefits guidance, current AF affairs, benefit changes, contact with other retirees, and suggestions for improvements. Additional RAO hours will increase as the volunteer staff grows. There will be an annual Retiree Day in June.

The number of the RAO office is 603-430-2636. A permanent RAO email address is being created, but in the meantime, you can contact [retireeadmin@157arwretirees.com](mailto:retireeadmin@157arwretirees.com) or [JSymington@outlook.com](mailto:JSymington@outlook.com).

If you are a retiree, spouse or widow of a retiree and would like to volunteer, please contact John Symington at 603-617-9665.

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www.moaa-nh.org



WHY MOAA?  
YouTube video

### Welcome to Our New 2024 Chapter Members!

CW3 Bradley F Boisvert  
COL. Ronald G Corsetti  
Mrs. Deborah D Davitt  
Maj. James L Elwell  
MAJ. Robert Sedgley

Albany, NH  
Hollis, NH  
Bethlehem, NH  
Sullivan, NH  
Gilford, NH



March 2024

*Taps*

CAPT William B. Birkmaier, Jr., USN (Ret) Wayland, MA  
LTC Joseph M DeChant, USA (Ret) New London, NH  
Col. David F Wall, USMCR (Ret) Methuen, MA

("Scams" continued from page 4)

3. Fake websites: 72% loose money here
  4. Social media purchases; don't make quick purchases
  5. Text messages; don't click on unsolicited links
  6. Reviews: don't rely on reviews when making purchases
  7. Always use a credit card for purchases; don't use Gift Cards.
  8. Listen to your "gut"; if it "feels" wrong, disengage.
  9. Use two-factor ID for your websites, secure websites, and don't use same password for multiple websites.
  10. Always report scamming even if you lose money.!
- A. J. Breuder, Editor



### CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK

Did you know that MOAA-NH has a Facebook page? We do . . . at <https://www.facebook.com/MOAA-NH-403462326493407/> Check out all the latest pictures and information about the chapter. While you're there, be sure to "like" us.

Cut and paste or type the link below into your browser. It will take you directly to National MOAA's "Take Action" tab. There you can learn about current legislative issues and voice your opinions about their efforts.

<http://www.moaa.org/takeaction>

### FOR LINKED-IN USERS

MOAA-NH members: We have established a group on LinkedIn for the purpose of helping members find employment in the New Hampshire area. If you have a LinkedIn account, please request to join the "New Hampshire Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA-NH)" group. If you are seeking employment or know a prospective member who will be, create a post for the group with a link to the member's profile. We also ask that recruiters and human resource professionals from companies around New Hampshire who are interested in hiring former officers to join the group. If you have suggestions for the LinkedIn Group, please contact Tom Goff at [tgsk64@gmail.com](mailto:tgsk64@gmail.com).