



The MOAA Nassau Florida Chapter and MOAA national are non-partisan organizations. This newsletter is published monthly. A current issue of this newsletter can be found on our website [NCFL](#). This newsletter is intended for wide distribution via e-mail within the Nassau Florida Chapter. Opinions expressed by contributors are their own and may not express the positions of MOAA Nassau County Florida Chapter or MOAA national.

## FEBRUARY 2026 MOAA NEWSLETTER/FERNANDINA BEACH

### **NEXT GENERAL MEETING WILL BE ON 10 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 1130 FERNANDINA BEACH GOLF CLUB (FBGC).**

The MOAA Nassau Florida Chapter will be having its monthly meeting on 10 February 2026 @ 11:30. Our speaker will be Gary Powers Jr. He is the Founder and Chairman Emeritus of The Cold War Museum, located at Vint Hill, VA 45 minutes west of Washington, DC. Gary founded the museum in 1996 to honor Cold War veterans, preserve Cold War history, and educate future generations about this time period. As Chairman of the Presidential Advisory Committee for the Cold War Theme Study, he worked with the National Park Service and leading Cold War experts to identify historic Cold War sites for commemorating, interpreting, and preservation. In 2015, he consulted for a Steven Spielberg Cold War thriller, Bridge of Spies, about James Donovan who brokered the 1962 spy exchange between KGB spy Rudolph Abel and CIA U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers, Sr. Gary is the author of Letters from a Soviet Prison (2017), Spy Pilot (2019), and Enemy Territory (2022) which help to dispel the misinformation surrounding the U-2 Incident. Go to <https://garypowers.com/> for more information.



As a reminder, in accordance with our arrangement with the golf club, if you reserve lunch/dinner, you have obligated the chapter for your expense and will be requested to reimburse the chapter. However, if you can provide at least 24-hour notice prior to the event of your change in plans, we can then modify the number of meals requested from the club and remove this obligation. Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated, as we have reached this agreement with the club to keep the individual costs to a minimum. Lunch/Dinner will be \$20.00/\$30.00 to be paid at the door. To make, change, or cancel your reservation, please contact Louis Tonti at [louistonti@gmail.com](mailto:louistonti@gmail.com).

Our January general meeting was well attended with over 40 members attending our first meeting of the year. Captain Tony LaVecchia USN (ret), our chapter president was our speaker. He presented his "Way forward for 2026", future events, and our chapter's yearly goals. In addition, we had Kings Bay's Senior Enlisted Advisors (SC Douglas-Swalls and SC Hudgas) present thanks to our chapter for our donation of 130 gift cards to their junior enlisted. If you want to review his lecture, please go to our website @ [NCFL](#). I have also posted his "From the Chapter President," letter in this newsletter and our 2026 general and social calendar as well. This year is going to be full of events and excellent speakers that will make our chapter stronger and even more flexible.

Mark your calendars



## From the Chapter President”

February 2026

Aloha Nassau County Chapter of MOAA Members –

Wow, we are already firmly into 2026. At the January Chapter meeting I spoke about the exceptional year the Chapter experienced in 2025 and the Chapters' focus of efforts for 2026, and those focuses are to continue to: **Grow Chapter Membership, Increase Membership Participation, and Maintain Strong Fundraising**. To read about the 2025 Chapter Highlights and 2026 Focuses....[Click Here](#).

The next Chapter meeting is scheduled for 10 February at 1130, and the guest speaker will be Gary Powers, a Cold War Historian. The Chapter will also hold an Officer Call on 24 February at Disco Witch Brewery in Yulee. Come out for both events to participate and experience **Camaraderie with Purpose**.

There are still approximately 20 Chapter members that have not yet renewed their 2026 membership. Renew your membership online at: [RENEW MEMBERSHIP](#).

**MOAA has published their 2026 Legislative Priorities, and they are:**

- Shutdown Fairness Act
- Improve and Enhance the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Act
- Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act
- Military CARE Act
- Veteran Caregiver Reeducation, Reemployment, and Retirement Act

To make your voice heard and to support MOAA's Legislative Priorities, please ensure you are signed up in the **Legislative Action Center (LAC)**, as approximately 60 Chapter members are NOT. **Please sign up, it's important** and it only will take a few minutes. Scroll down further into the newsletter to the easy-to-follow LAC sign up instructions.

Please....

- Be a Recruiter – Get one person to join our Chapter
- Participate in Calls to Action and attend as many Chapter events as possible
- Donate to the Chapters' Charitable Efforts Program at: [DONATE](#)

Very Respectfully,

*Tony*

## DONATIONS

If you or someone you know would like to donate to our chapter, please go to the following link [DONATE](#) or take a picture of the QR code. Thank you.



We have 108 active members that contribute to our activities and volunteer work with their \$25.00 annual dues. Please pay Bob at the door or go to [RENEW MEMBERSHIP](#)

WANT TO ADVERTISE IN MOAA NEWSLETTER  
OR KNOW A BUSINESS THAT DOES?!

**Annual Subscription Costs:**

**Half Page Ad: \$1000**

**Quarter Page Ad: \$500 . 1/8 Page Ad: \$250**

**E-Mail: [Rssstang@aol.com](mailto:Rssstang@aol.com)**

## MOAA SIGNATURE GROUPS

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

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

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## FERNANDINA BEACH HAPPENINGS FEBRUARY 2026



The Amelia Island Book Festival returns for its 24th season on February 27. This island tradition features celebrated authors at events and venues throughout the community. Go to [Book](#) for more information

### Lend Me A Soprano

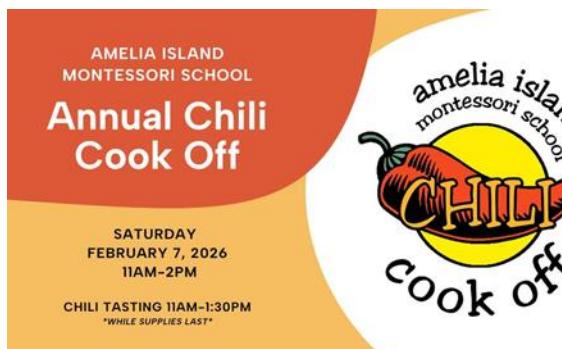
by Ken Ludwig

February 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28

Matinees: February 15, 22

Comedy/Farce. Lucille Wylie, manager of the Cleveland Grand Opera Company, prepares for a one-night-only performance of Carmen starring world-famous soprano Elena Firenzi. Things go awry when Elena arrives late, her jealous husband Pasquale shows up and passions flare! It's up to Jo, Wylie's clever assistant, to save the day. Full of mistaken identities, romantic entanglements and backstage chaos, but at heart a beautiful story of mentorship and self-discovery.

Sexual Content, Mild Language, Alcohol/Tobacco Use. Go to [Theatre](#) for more information.



### Amelia Island Montessori School

Chili Cook-off

February 7, 2026 Centre Street

11:00 am - 2:00 pm

This long-running community event focuses on Chili tasting from local competitors. The event will have live music, a kid's zone, vendors and chili booths. For more information, go to [Chili](#).

## LOCAL PARKS



**Fort Clinch.** It has numerous outdoor activities to fit just about everyone's abilities. Go to [Fort Clinch](#) for more details about hiking, biking, bird watching, Fort Clinch tours,.....



**Egan's Creek Greenway.** A protected area of over 300 acres that runs north to south along Egan's Creek, the Greenway was opened for public use in the summer of 2000 as an undeveloped park for passive recreational use. Go to [Egans Green Way](#) for more details. **For individuals with disabilities**, a 2-person **GEM electric car** is available for reservation at the Atlantic Recreation Center to travel through the Greenway. Call 904-310-3350 for availability and to reserve.



**Little Talbot Island.** It is one of a handful of undeveloped barrier islands remaining in Northeast Florida. Boasting more than five miles of pristine beaches and three miles of bike trails, Little Talbot offers untouched natural beauty and diverse ecosystems for visitors to explore. Go to [Little Talbot Island](#) for more info.



**Big Talbot Island.** Located on one of Northeast Florida's unique sea islands, Big Talbot Island State Park is primarily a natural preserve, providing a premier location for nature study, bird-watching and photography. Go to [Big Talbot Island](#) for more info.



# Nassau County Chapter Meeting and Social Schedule for 2026

Date	Event	Time	Location	Guest Speaker / Comments
<b>13 January</b>	General Meeting	1130	FBGC	CAPT Tony LaVecchia, USN (Ret) President, Nassau County Chapter of MOAA
<b>10 February</b>	General Meeting	1130	FBGC	Gary Powers Jr. Cold War Historian
<b>24 February</b>	Officers Call	1730	Disco Witch Mainland	464073 FL-200, Yulee, FL 32097 Food available for purchase or bring your own
<b>10 March **Evening Mtg**</b>	General Meeting	1730	FBGC	
<b>14 April</b>	General Meeting	1130	FBGC	RADM Robert Wirth, U.S Navy Commander, Submarine Group TEN, Kings Bay GA
<b>24 April</b>	Officers Call	1730	First Love Brewing On-Island	22 S 8th St, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034
<b>12 May **Evening Mtg**</b>	General Meeting	1730	FBGC	
<b>9 June</b>	General Meeting	1130	FBGC	
<b>Xx June</b>	Officers Call	1730	TBD – Mainland	
<b>8 September **Evening Mtg**</b>	General Meeting	1730	FBGC	
<b>13 October</b>	General Meeting	1130	FBGC	
<b>Xx October</b>	Officers Call	1730	TBD – On Island	
<b>10 November</b>	General Meeting	1130	FBGC	
<b>11 December</b>	Christmas Party	1730	FBGC	1730 Cocktails, 1830 Dinner

FBCG – Fernandina Beach Golf Club, located at 2800 Bill Melton Rd, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

## **NASSAU CHAPTER CALL TO ACTION**

### **2026 ISSUES**

**MOAA's 2026 Legislative Priorities – Click [HERE](#) for Details on Each Priority**

- **Shutdown Fairness Act**
  - Allows the Pentagon and the Department of Homeland Security to continue paying servicemembers during any future funding lapse
- **Improve and Enhance the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Act**
  - Modernizes the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), a nonrefundable tax credit employers can take for hiring target group members during the employee's first year on the job, by increasing the amount of the credit and adding military spouses as a target group. The program is intended to reduce the unemployment rate of "job seekers who have consistently faced barriers to employment" by incentivizing employers with a tax credit, according to the Labor Department.
- **Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act**
  - Reinstates criminal penalties for unaccredited claim representatives who charge unauthorized fees while assisting veterans with filing a claim for VA disability compensation benefits.
- **Military CARE Act**
  - Requires the Pentagon to establish a digital system designed to improve access to care at military treatment facilities (MTFs) by providing beneficiaries with a standardized platform to report barriers to MTF care and creating a data record that does not exist today to give Defense Health Agency leadership and Congress the insights needed to address systemic access challenges.
- **Veteran Caregiver Reeducation, Reemployment, and Retirement Act**
  - Expands health care coverage and career transition support for caregivers and would require a study designed to provide caregivers with a path toward financial security in retirement.

Congressman Bean's office to assist you with a military or veterans' matter, you can contact Ms. Troope at [Christina.troope@mail.house.gov](mailto:Christina.troope@mail.house.gov) or by phone at 904-319-9433(o) or 904-403-7557©.

**For the most recent MOAA national content go to [MOAA](#) for more information. Here are the most recent topics:**

1. New coalition forms to end unfair pay offset facing combat-injured veterans.
2. Feds remind states about law protecting military spouse job licenses.
3. Arkansas chapter fights food insecurity among local veterans.
4. MOLD act would protect military families from hazardous living conditions.
5. MOAA shares legislative priorities at congressional reception.
6. IRS confirms no tax on \$1,776 “Warrior Dividend”.

## **NEWSLETTER CORNER**

### **Veterans Affairs website (highlights)**

Go to [VA](#) to sign up for monthly newsletter

1. VA is HIRING.
2. Free technology courses for Veterans.
3. Research that matters.
4. Can you work with a 100% VA disability rating?
5. VA resources, we're here for you.
6. Veteran and military year-round discounts.
7. NEW: Veteran Job postings over 100 positions are available.

### **TRICARE EAST Newsletter Issue 4/2025**

**Go to TRICARE**

1. Learn your 2026 TRICARE health plan costs.
2. Get your RSV and Flu immunizations with TRICARE.
3. Preview your 2026 TRICARE pharmacy costs.
4. TRICARE open seasons 2025: understanding your TRICARE health plan options.

If you know someone who wants to [join the MOAA](#) and meets the below eligibility requirements, please have them fill out the attached application.

**NASSAU COUNTY FLORIDA CHAPTER****MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION****MOAA is a Non-Partisan Organization**

**Eligibility:** Regular Members are all individuals who are or have been a commissioned or warrant officer of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Space Force, NOAA, US Public Health Service, or Reserve or National Guard of these uniformed services, or a Surviving Spouse of any of the aforementioned. A spouse of a regular member may join as an Auxiliary Member.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please PRINT (Last Name) (First Name) (MI) (Suffix)

**MILITARY RANK:** \_\_\_\_\_ **GENDER:** { } M { } F **BIRTHDATE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Spouse / Surviving Spouse leave blank) (mm/dd/yyyy)**SERVICE:** { } USA { } USN { } USAF { } USMC { } USCG { } USPHS { } NOAA { } USSF**STATUS:** { } Retired { } Active { } NG/Reserves { } Former Officer { } Surviving Spouse { } Spouse**YEARS OF SERVICE (MM/YY):** From \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_**MAILING ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **APT:** \_\_\_\_\_**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_, **FL ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_**HOME PHONE:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ **CELL PHONE:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SPOUSE NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_**National MOAA Member:** { } YES { } NO **MOAA National #:** \_\_\_\_\_**PLEASE CHECK CHAPTER ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU DESIRE TO ASSIST:**

{ } Speaker Planning - { } Membership - { } Legislative Affairs - { } Phoning Members

{ } Newsletter - { } ROTC/JROTC - { } Fundraising - { } WEB Site - { } Data Processing

{ } Social Events Planning - { } Finance

**Chapter Dues \$25.00 Annually Payable to "Nassau MOAA"****PLEASE SEND APPLICATION AND DUES PAYMENT TO:**

Nassau County Florida Chapter of MOAA

PO Box 16313

Fernandina Beach, FL 32035