

## December Social

Please join us with our first social on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Invitation was posted earlier on Facebook (and please follow us there, as that is the easiest and fastest way for us to post events and RSVP links). A pdf invite is attached with this newsletter.

Coordinating details are shown below. The venue has a great menu and an ample private conference room to accommodate us.

Date: December 9, 2021  
Time: 6- 8 p.m.  
Location: Saint Coyote Restaurant  
135 Diamond Blvd Suite 111

## MOAA News

### *Ending the 'Widows Tax'*

*(Ed Note: This effort was supported by our chapter for several years and we are happy to have been a part of it. Many thanks to our federal representatives for their stalwart support).*

For decades, survivors of deceased military members forfeited part or all of their purchased Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity when they received Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from the VA. This was known as the SBP-DIC offset, but most who followed the issue had a more sinister name for it: The "Widows Tax."

This unfair policy cost up to \$12,000 a year for nearly 67,000 surviving spouses. With leadership from MOAA's surviving spouse community, in true grassroots fashion, the issue became

the focus of advocacy efforts, media outreach, Military Officer features, and more traditional advocacy measures.

After years of work on all fronts, MOAA helped secure passage of a widows tax repeal as part of the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which became law in late 2019 with an implementation period completing in January 2023.

"The inclusion of the widows tax repeal in the NDAA was only possible through a persistent, unified voice," said MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret), following Senate passage. "MOAA's 350,000 members have advocated aggressively in support of repeal, and we have worked in sync with fellow veteran service organizations."

Source: MOAA.com

## Category General Information

Military Times (militarytimes.com) puts out an annual guide to both basic benefits and installations, both of which are of potential interest to active duty, National Guard, veterans and retirees.

- Military Benefits Guide: The latest information service members want to know about basic pay, VA loans, education, retirement, and more.
- 2021 Installation Guide: Explore our updated database of all the military installations, including location, phone numbers, schools, housing, and more.

## MOAA Podcasts

MOAA has a new feature which may be of interest. They have initiated and intend to continue producing podcast with topics of interest.



The first three listed are as follows:

- Recruiting our Future Force: Challenges and Solutions (w/ MG Kevin Vereen and MG Jason Bohm)
- Military Retirement 101: Getting your Finances in Order (w/ Shane Ostrom)
- Why Military Pay Remains a Top Priority

## DOD Alaska News

*Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies (by Rachel Nostrant)*

The Defense Department announced Nov. 17 that Anchorage, Alaska is the sole candidate city to host the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies, the Department of Defense's (DoD) Regional Center for the Arctic.

Defense Department Regional Centers are international academic institutions for bilateral and multilateral research and training with the goal of building strong relationships with international security leaders. The Regional Center for the Arctic comes on the heels of

growing concerns that as the Arctic warms, ice melts and shipping lanes emerge, the chance for conflict between nations in the region could increase as well.

“The center will support the U.S. Interim National Security Strategic Guidance direction to work with like-minded partners and across the interagency to pool our collective strength and advance shared interests,” Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a press release announcing the center’s establishment. “It will address the need for U.S. engagement and international cooperation to strengthen the rules-based order in the region and tackle shared challenges such as climate change.”

U.S. Army Alaska has struggled in the past two decades to be the service’s proponent for cold weather warfare amid the wars in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, former Army Alaska commander Maj. Gen. Peter Andrysiak told Army Times last year. And with conflicts blooming in places like the Himalayas — between India and China — cold weather warfare is re-emerging as a potential source of conflict that the DoD sees as a future readiness issue.

The specific site for the new center in Anchorage will be finalized after the DoD completes the Department of the Air Force’s strategic basing process.

## DOD News

**Strike on US base was Iranian response to Israeli attack, Officials say** (New York Times) Iran has not acknowledged the

attack, but U.S. and Israeli officials said it was retaliation for Israeli airstrikes, drawing the U.S. into Iran’s shadow war with Israel.

**US considering returning some evacuees who don't pass vetting process to Afghanistan** (CNN) The Biden administration is considering sending some of the Afghan evacuees at a US military base in Kosovo back to Afghanistan if they cannot clear the intense vetting process to come to the United States, according to three US officials familiar with the matter.

**Homeland Security wants more troops at the US-Mexico border to help operate blimps, congressman says** (Stars & Stripes) The Department of Homeland Security is asking the Pentagon to send an additional 1,500 troops to the U.S. border with Mexico next year, in part to operate observation blimps previously used by forces in Afghanistan, said Rep. Henry Cuellar, D-Texas.

**Navy looks to get back on schedule for fielding hypersonic missiles on submarines** (Defense News) The U.S. Navy hopes it can more quickly deploy hypersonic weapons on submarines by leveraging testing by the U.S. Army and onboard a Navy destroyer, as well as prioritizing funding for an underwater launch test facility, the admiral overseeing the Navy’s hypersonics work said.

**Taiwan commissions advanced new F-16s as China threat grows** (Reuters) Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen lauded military cooperation with Washington

on Thursday as she commissioned the first combat wing of F-16 fighters upgraded with U.S. help to bolster the island's defences during rising tensions between Taipei and Beijing.

## 2021/22 Calendar of Events

Jun 14: Army Birthday  
Aug 4: Coast Guard Birthday  
Sep 18: Air Force Birthday  
Oct 13: Navy Birthday  
Nov 10: Marine Corps Birthday  
Dec 9: Holiday Social  
Jan (2022) 27: Dinner Social (Meeting)  
Feb ##: ASYMCA Salute to the Military  
Mar 24: Dinner Social (Meeting)  
April ##: JROTC Awards  
April ##: MOAA Storming the Hill  
May 26 Dinner Social (Meeting)

## Contact Information

Please share this newsletter! Contact information provided below:

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- Phone: (907) 570-1027
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Anchorage, AK 99501
- Annual chapter dues: \$25; on or about January of each year, on-line payment may be made at:

<https://chapterdues.moaa.org/MemberShip.aspx> or a check payable to Captain Cook Chapter. Thank you for your support!

- Facebook Group: MOAA Captain Cook Chapter, AK
- Chapter site: [www.MOAA-AK.COM](http://www.MOAA-AK.COM)

*President: Catkin Kilcher Burton  
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