

Director's Notes

SENDING THANKS Col. Lee Lange II, USMC-Ret., director, Council and Chapter Affairs

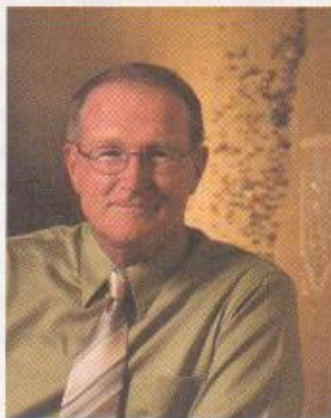
This issue I'm writing to all chapter members in our system to thank them on behalf of MOAA and remind them why our chapters are so important to the association. Because they don't receive *The Affiliate*, I'm asking the 5,900 council and chapter leaders who do to pass on the word.

Every chapter member is valuable to the association. Right now, 62,000 of you have decided it is important to go that one extra step and become a chapter member. By doing that, you are in many ways doing the heavy lifting for the other 300,000-plus nonchapter MOAA members. Here's why.

Chapters are an important element in grassroots support of MOAA's legislative goals, which really are your goals, too, because we work on issues

affecting our members. You likely know your legislators better than we ever will — some of you even grew up with them. When you speak, they listen, and when you group together in a chapter and communicate with your U.S. representatives and senators, you can make a difference.

When timing is critical, chapters are the fastest and most effective way we have to mobilize members on an important issue. Chapter support has played an important role in all of our legislative wins. The best example of how grassroots support pays off is in our Council Presidents' Seminar each spring. Your state council president visits your legislators on your behalf and carries the message on MOAA's key issues. You know it as Storming the Hill, and it works.



You are also MOAA's ambassadors in the community. Your involvement in more than 400 cities and towns across the country is how the rest of America finds out what MOAA does. Chapters support local community programs like Junior ROTC and ROTC, help area servicemembers, volunteer at veterans' homes, and assist with other important needs, which gives MOAA more visibility than any amount of advertising from national MOAA. When people see you, they find

out who we are — and more than a few want to be a part of it. Chapter members are true servant leaders in their communities by helping others as a way of giving back.

I want all our chapter members to know MOAA greatly appreciates what you are doing for the association. You are all volunteers who could be doing many other things, but instead you choose to be in an MOAA chapter. We need your help now more than ever in the fight for military benefits and in meeting the membership challenge in our chapters. We have our work cut out for us — there's no doubt about it. But all of you have beaten bigger odds in your service to the country and in other life challenges, so we can do this. I hope to see many of you in 2012 as I visit chapters across the country. Thanks for all you do.