

# Military Spouse News

April 2019

## Chair of the Tampa Chapter MOAA ~ Surviving Spouse Committee



Renée Brunelle

Renée Brunelle is the Co-Founder of Pathfinders Downsizing Solutions. She guides clients in the navigation of smoothly moving from one residence to another by “rightsizing” their entire home. Using the popular Marie Kondo approach of Decluttering has been a key pillar to success. Renée guides clients on what to *take*, what to *sell* and what to *donate/trash*.

Pathfinders was named after her late husband, Major Travis Brunelle who was both an Army Ranger & Green Beret.

Renée has over twenty years of experience in the Senior Living Industry as both a Marketing Director and Executive Director. She has worked closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist residents that are veteran and/or veteran spouses on receiving benefits. She has been part of the South Tampa Chamber Military Affairs Committee for over a decade. She continues to volunteer to assist MacDill Air Force Base by working with the Commander’s Chalet for AirFest, assists the Airmen & Family Readiness offices and provides donations to the dorm residents.

Renée has been an active part of the military community after marrying Travis in 1998 while he was stationed at Hunter Army Airfield with the 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion. Then, she was a key spouse while Travis was part of the Florida National Guard in Tallahassee. She was instrumental in starting the Yellow Ribbon Campaign at the Florida State Capitol. Since moving to Tampa over twelve years ago, she has supported USSO-COM, SOCCENT, 6<sup>th</sup> & 927<sup>th</sup> Wings.

### Professional and Community Affiliations:

Chair of the Tampa Chapter MOAA ~  
Surviving Spouse Committee  
927<sup>th</sup> Reserve Wing ~ Board of Directors  
South Tampa Chamber of Commerce member  
GFWC Tampa Woman’s Club member  
MacDill Alliance member  
Project GoodWorks co-founder with Janeen  
Salzgeber to support smaller 501C3 needs

### Education:

Bachelor and Master Degrees Health Science from  
Armstrong Atlantic University in Savannah, Georgia  
with a focus on senior health and wellness.

### For Assistance:

brunelle.renee@yahoo.com

## MOAA Luncheon

11 April 2019 - 11:30 a.m.  
**Bay Palms Golf Complex  
Tournament Room**  
1803 Golf Course Avenue  
Members and Guests Cost: **\$16.00**

### Menu

Greek Pasta Salad, Grilled Pita Bread  
Greek Chicken Kabobs with Tzatziki  
Sauce Green Rice,  
Lemon Garlic Potatoes, Baklava  
Order Fruit or Chef’s Salad  
When you make your reservation

### Program

The Honorable Carl C. Hinson

### Reservations

Call 813-676-4676  
by noon 5 April

**Known April Birthdays**

- 9 Mildred Sides
- 26 Nicky Siegman



**This And That**

**Elaine Taylor** wrote, "I just bought a house on February 28<sup>th</sup>. I'm having some remodeling done and I'm looking forward to the completion in a month. I purchased a 2 bedroom / 2 bathroom home. I miss Florida and hope to return someday after I retire from my job with the State of CA. ☺"

**Renée Brunelle** wrote, "March 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> I will be on a Civic Leader flight with the 927<sup>th</sup> Reserve Wing. We are taking one of the KC-135's to San Antonio to meet their Civic Leaders. I will give a report next month."

**MOAA April Speaker**



**The Honorable Carl C. Hinson  
Unified Family Court:  
Domestic Relations/Family  
Law, Division B**

JUDICIAL BIOGRAPHY  
Year elected to the bench:  
17 January 2017

Assignments:  
Family Law - Domestic  
Relations Division, -  
Present

EDUCATION  
Law School:  
Nova University Law  
School,  
Juris Doctorate - 1986

Undergraduate:  
University of South Florida, Bachelor of Arts in  
Management - 1982  
Hillsborough Community College, Associate of Arts  
Hillsborough High School

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES  
Member of the Florida Bar  
Member of the Hillsborough County Bar Association  
Justice of the Phi Alpha Delta Fleming Chapter, Nova  
University Law School

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT  
Member of St. Lawrence Catholic Church  
Member of Krewe of Sant' Yago, Board of Directors

**Sign Up For This!**

If any of you are interested in meeting for tea in April, I have a few dates in mind: Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup> or Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup>. Empress Tea Room is located in Carrollwood 12924 North Dale Mabry Hwy Text or call Kathy Kennett 813-494-0124 Or email [rpkennett@earthlink.net](mailto:rpkennett@earthlink.net)

**PEOPLE ARE EXCITED  
ABOUT THE NEW IPHONE  
BUT NO ONE HAS CAUGHT  
UP WITH THE AWESOME  
TECHNOLOGY OF USING YOUR  
BLINKER WHEN YOU DRIVE.**



**Jim Roy won the Raffle Bear presented by Scottie Cleland**

*Ann (Annie) McClinton passed away on March 9 after a brief illness. She celebrated her 105<sup>th</sup> birthday on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Annie joined MOWC in 1981. Her husband, CWO/USAF Robert L. McClinton died March 3, 2000.*

## **Ann McClinton**

-Ginger Heath, Vice President interviewed Annie about 2014



In 1913, a first class postage stamp was two cents, Woodrow Wilson was named the 28<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, and the Woman's Suffrage movement for the right to vote was making headlines. Yet, in the midst of it all, a baby girl by the name of Ann came into the world. That birth is once again celebrated as family and friends from all over the world continue to bestow Ann McClinton with cards, letters, flowers and special commemoratives befitting her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Brightly smiling and wearing a vibrant pink sweater adorned with beautiful brooches, Ann recalled her wonderful well-wishers as she shared these many items of adornment with me, including her most special congratulatory letter of all – the one signed by President Barack and Michelle Obama. On the morning of her birthday many friends from across the U.S. called to say they had seen Ann's photo and birthday announcement on the Today Show!

Although not actually born in Tampa, Ann calls this city her native home since it was where she spent the majority of her life. As Ann was talking about her early years, she fondly recalled the Stetson area and its Oak Avenue neighborhood that still continues to mean so much to her. An only child, Ann reflected on the large family of aunts and uncles and cousins that formed her society of values, and the special aunt that was like another mother to her. Ann smiled as she shared how some thought she was a bit "spoiled", but yet she doesn't quite agree. She attended Hillsborough County Schools through high school graduation, and received her B.S. from Florida A & M, and continues to be a member of Beta Phi Beta. Ann then went on to New York University where she received her teaching degree in education which would someday enhance young lives in a positive way.

Telephones, televisions, and air-conditioning were unheard of when Ann was a girl. But segregation was alive, especially in the south. When Ann mentioned this to me, I replied that it must have been hard to deal with. Ann disagreed and said, "I kept my pride; I didn't let it bother me". Ann held her head high, maintained her self-respect and dignity, and chose love over hate. There was also a certain amount of Ann's positive demeanor and strength that was derived from her faith. In 1922 Ann began attending Sunday School at Greater Bethel Baptist Church on West Jefferson Street in Tampa, and continued on through her adult life including walking down the aisle of that very same church to one day marry the man of her dreams.

One evening while in college, a sorority sister, who was married to a Chaplain at MacDill AFB, invited Ann and other sorority sisters to have dinner with the troops. Ann fondly recalled how at the after-party, she and her four "sisters" paired off with five young men that they met after the dinner. "Believe it or not", Ann said, "all of those five couples that met that night stayed together through life with the mates they had chosen that evening". A Chief Warrant Officer with the USAF, Robert McClinton, was one of those young men in that group, and more specifically, the one who stole Ann's heart. Although he passed away in 2000, Ann's devotion and love for Robert still flourishes – you can see it in her eyes and hear it in her voice as she talked about the life they shared together, and their marriage at Greater Bethel Baptist Church.

Travels across the continents to Guam, Azores, cities in Europe and Asia were only a few of the stops along the way for Ann and Robert. There was also time spent in Riverside, California where Ann's teaching expertise was a welcome addition to a school for the Native American children. Ann fondly recalled working with children from the Apache, Hopi and Alaskan tribes. The loving and gentle ways that Ann exhibits must have been eagerly welcomed by these young children who were now living away from their families. And to Ann's teaching merit, she was proud to share how many of her students then went on to college and professional successes in life.

Robert and Ann had a child of their own, Charles, who has a Ph.D. in Medical Administration and lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. With four grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, Ann has beautiful photos on display, as well as many new memories in the making. Hand-drawn and colored pictures from the little ones to Great-Grandmother Ann brighten her walls.

Ann's flair for fashion and her decorative touch lends beauty to her apartment surroundings. Ann keeps a busy social calendar! She shared with me that she was a bowler up until four years ago and laughed as she told me why she stepped away from bowling: "If I took a fall, they would have put it in the paper!" Ann moved to Aston Court from Twelve Oaks four years ago, and absolutely loves her new home and family of friends. As she took me on a guided tour of Aston Court, tens upon tens of friends stopped her to say hello, share a hug, and tell me what a wonderful inspiration Ann McClinton continues to be to those who surround her daily life.

We at the MOWC are privileged to have Ann's friendship, support, and love, and look forward to having her with us at our upcoming December Holiday Tea! Thank you, Ann, for your inspiration –we wish you many more blessed birthdays ahead!

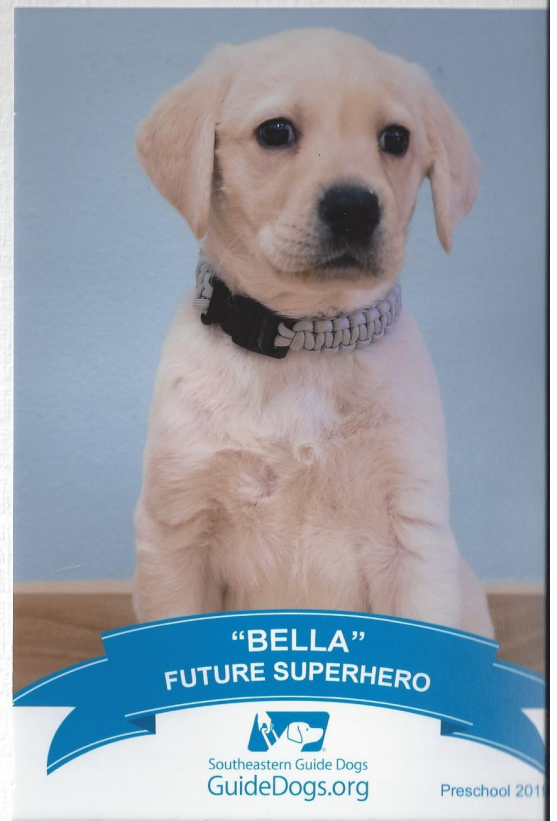


***Someday, she'll be freedom.  
Someday, she'll be confidence.  
Someday starts here.***

**Southeastern Guide Dogs  
Presents**

**"Bella"  
Superhero in Training**

**With special thanks to:  
Military Officers Wives Club  
For providing this generous sponsorship**



Superhero in Training



*Bella*



Birthday:

December 15, 2018

Sponsored by:

*Military Officers Wives Club*

*This puppy is named Bella thanks to the generosity of the Military Officers Wives Club - Tampa Chapter.*



Southeastern Guide Dogs  
GuideDogs.org

## **Truly, this was "The greatest generation"**

Van T. Barfoot died... Remember the Guy who wouldn't take the flagpole down on his Virginia property awhile back? You might remember the news story several

months ago about a crotchety old man in Virginia who defied his local Homeowners Association, and refused to take down the flag pole on his property along with the large American flag he flew on it.

Now we learn who that old man was. On June 15, 1919, Van T. Barfoot was born in Edinburg, Texas. That probably didn't make news back then but Twenty-five years later, on May 23, 1944, Near Carano, Italy, that same Van T. Barfoot, who had in 1940 enlisted in the U.S. Army, set out alone to flank German machine gun positions from which gunfire was raining down on his fellow soldiers.

His advance took him through a minefield but having done so; he proceeded to single-handedly take out three enemy machine gun positions, returning with 17 prisoners of war. And if that weren't enough for a day's work, he later took on and destroyed three German tanks sent to retake the machine gun positions. That probably didn't make much news either, given the scope of the war, but it did earn Van T. Barfoot, who retired as a Colonel after also serving in Korea and Vietnam, a well-deserved Congressional Medal of Honor.

What did make news...was his neighborhood association's quibble with how the 90-year-old veteran chose to fly the American flag outside his suburban Virginia home. Seems the HOA rules said it was OK to fly a flag on a house-mounted bracket, but, for decorum, items such as Barfoot's 21-foot flagpole were "unsuitable".

Van Barfoot had been denied a permit for the pole, but erected it anyway and was facing court action unless he agreed to take it down. Then the HOA story made national TV, and the neighborhood association rethought its position and agreed to indulge this aging hero who dwelt among them.

"In the Time I have left", he said to the Associat-

ed Press, "I plan to continue to fly the American flag without interference." As well he should. And if any of his neighbors had taken a Notion to Contest him Further, they might have done well to read his Medal of Honor citation first. Seems it Indicates Mr. Van Barfoot wasn't particularly good at backing down.

**WE ONLY LIVE IN THE LAND OF THE FREE  
BECAUSE OF THE BRAVE AND  
BECAUSE OF MEN LIKE VAN BARFOOT!**



**We have two ears and  
one mouth so that we can  
listen twice as much  
as we speak.**

## President's Message for April 2019



**COL Zieres**

March was a very busy month for the Tampa Chapter. Starting with our luncheon on March 14th, we enjoyed a traditional Irish meal of corned beef and cabbage after which our featured guest speaker, Director of the Central Florida USO, Ms. Linda Carbone, gave us an excellent overview of the USO's charter and mission to "Serve those who serve" in the uniformed services and to help families and service members stay connected to home and their loved ones. The USO's based in most major airports she says, "Are especially welcoming to new military recruits, many of whom may be leaving home for the first time, en route to basic training bases."

On March 22nd, the Tampa Chapter once again sponsored a fantastic golf tournament! Supported by a great cadre of volunteers, the Bay Palms Golf Course Clubhouse was packed with 88 enthusiastic golfers, all of whom had a great time playing 18 holes of golf and the weather conditions could not have been better. We have so many folks to thank, because without them, the success of the annual BOB SILAH MEMORIAL Golf Tournament could not have been possible. I'll start with thanking our GOLF TOURNAMENT COORDINATORS, BOB AHERN AND LTC JIM GRIFFIN; thanks to you both for a well-run and well organized golf tournament. Bob has put together the best team from BOOZ-ALLEN HAMILTON that handled our golf tournament registration this year. Our TAMPA CHAPTER VOLUNTEERS and OPERATION HELPING HAND SUPPORTERS also helped with the registration of the golfers handing out "Goodie Bags" as well as with the organization of the raffle and silent auction items. The Golfers enjoyed some of Tampa Bay's best BBQ from HANKS and LUPTON'S CATERING, which was fully donated by both restaurants, along with desserts donated by BLUE BELL ICE CREAM AND MIKE'S PIES. To all of the businesses and sponsors that give so generously to a great cause; the Tampa Chapter is VERY GRATEFUL for your support! I must also thank our wonderful hosts at BAY PALMS GOLF COURSE, LOU HARRIS and RON MATTHEWS, who year after year provide tremendous support of our golf tournament. It is too soon to tell how much money this year's tournament raised for our signature charity, OPERATION HELPING HAND, so stay tuned till we crunch the numbers and reach a grand total. I'll be able to unveil the "big reveal" in next month's edition of the RETROSPECT.

In the meantime, I'd like to remind you that MOAA will "STORM THE HILL" on April 10th. I hope you have taken the time to pull out the postcards from your March MILITARY OFFICER MAGAZINE, sign them and send them to your representatives or e-mail them with a MOAA-suggested pre-written message at "Visit [takeaction.moaa.org](http://takeaction.moaa.org). The issues this year that are being debated are: 1. End the SURVIVOR'S BENEFIT PLAN-DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION (SBPDI) OFFSET, aka the WIDOW'S TAX; 2. Stabilize TRICARE FEES and; 3. Maintain COMPENSATION for currently serving troops. Some members still prefer using the old fashioned means of out-reach to their legislators, the telephone, and MOAA has a direct Toll-free line to the Capitol switchboard as well: (866)272-6622. Either way, you can Storm the Hill, too, without ever leaving your home. Your support for these actions is crucial and the collective action of all of our MOAA members will have a much greater impact when MOAA representatives visit every legislator's office to advocate for these issues on April 10th.

My parting shot for this month's president's message is to start seriously thinking about registering for the June Florida Council of Chapters annual convention. It will be here before you know it! A lot is at stake in being the host chapter, so we truly need everyone's support. Go to [www.moaafl.org](http://www.moaafl.org) and register today.

REMEMBER, "WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK – NEVER STOP SERVING!"



Renée Brunelle and Shirley Helveston



Frank and Valerie Andrews

## Photos from MOAA March Luncheon



Ed and Pat Geasa



Jim and Susan Healan



Jeanne Lloyd



Dick and Nicky Siegman



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**Future Opportunities**

May 9: MOAA luncheon

June 13: MOAA luncheon

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*Spring is nature's  
way of saying,  
"Let's  
party!"  
~Robin Williams*