



# THE DEFENDER

A monthly publication of the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association  
[www.nwfmoa.org](http://www.nwfmoa.org)

Vol. 27 No. 07

Serving All Branches of The Uniformed Services

JULY 2021

## Lunch Meeting & Discussion

**When:** Thur, 1 July 2021

**Time:** Gathering 1130, Lunch 1200

Program to follow

**Place:** Fort Walton Yacht Club

180 Ferry Road, NE, FWB

**Program:** Patrick Johnson

FBI SWAT Team Leader

Please:

- MAKE A RESERVATION

- Wear a name tag

- Bring proper change:

\$14.00 for everyone

Reservation deadline is Friday at noon prior to meeting. Go online at [www.nwfmoa.org](http://www.nwfmoa.org) and select the link where it says "Click here to make reservations", or email Fred Westfall at [nwfreservations@gmail.com](mailto:nwfreservations@gmail.com), or call 850-609-8075 if you are attending.

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## Samuel Lombardo LTC Ret. US Army

PENSACOLA - Samuel Lombardo LTC Ret. US Army passed away on June 11, 2021 at 101 in Pensacola, FL. Born July 12, 1919 in Caraffa, Italy to Pietro Lombardo and Agata Iofrida, he emigrated with his mother and 2 sisters in October 1929 joining his father who was established in Juniata Gap, a few miles north of Altoona, PA. There he grew up during the depression hunting and fishing in the woods behind his home to help feed the family. In 9th grade he quit school to help his father learning the stone mason trade and ultimately becoming a Master Stone Mason himself. On Nov 11, 1939 he enlisted in the Pennsylvania National Guard and went on to Officer's Candidate School in Ft. Benning GA. As the war progressed he volunteered for combat duty and joined the 99th Infantry Division which landed him in Normandy in November 1944. He and his platoon fought through the Battle of the Bulge, the Remagen bridgehead, the Ruhr pocket and on to Berlin. During this time his platoon made the first American flag to cross the Rhine River for the 99th division from scraps of material they found along the way. It is now displayed at the Infantry Museum in Ft Benning, GA. During the war he received 2 Bronze Stars, one with valor and a Silver Star.



**Samuel Lombardo  
LTC Ret. US Army**

After the war he and his family moved to Southern California where he re-enlisted and had a 20 year career to include time in Japan, Korea and Vietnam as an Intelligence Officer. He also married June Peralta and had two children. He graduated from the Army Language School in Japanese and could speak, read and write fluently. Upon retirement, he worked in Civil Service retiring to an avocado ranch in Fallbrook, CA. Always learning new things, he made award winning wine, grew the giant pumpkin and

Continued on page 3

# From the President's Pen

By Michael Griffith

## Thoughts on Independence Day

At our July meeting and luncheon, we expect to have NWFMOA member Patrick Johnson as our guest speaker. He plans to talk about some of his experiences while on active duty, and also during his second career as a SWAT team leader for the FBI. He asked me to warn you that some of the combat and crime scene photos in his presentation are graphic. However, in a military group such as ours, most of us have seen similar things, and can handle images of what soldiers and law enforcement officers must deal with.

On another subject, our meeting will be only a few days before Independence Day – a good time to reflect on why most of us have served in the US military. There are those who will tell you, “America was never great,” and there’s really nothing special about this country compared to others. Therefore, why would any rational person volunteer to kill or be killed merely to protect the political construct known as the United States of America? Is America really so “exceptional” that it’s worth defending?

For me, the answer to such a question is a resounding yes. Some of the reasons why are documented in the book “Death by Government,” by political science professor R.J. Rummel (Transaction Publishers, 1994). His book, based on years of research, provides statistics and other details concerning what Rummel calls “democide” – the wholesale murder, by governments, of large segments of their own populations. From ancient times to now, from Genghis Khan to Hitler,



**Mike Griffith,  
NWFMOA President**

Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, and the Taliban, Rummel shows how the slaughter of innocent people has been the single most important function of many governments throughout history.

However, Rummel’s research also shows that in the United States, and other democracies, mass murder by government has occurred far less frequently and on a much smaller scale. Rummel demonstrates that unrestrained political power is the cause of democide. As he put it, “Power kills, and absolute Power kills absolutely.” He goes on to say that in democracies, where power is not absolute, but restrained by various checks and balances, and where rulers are accountable to their people, mass murders by those in power occur very rarely, and end quickly.

“The problem,” says Rummel, “is power. The solution is democracy. The course of action is to foster freedom.”

What makes America exceptional, in a world too often ruled by bloodthirsty despots, is that we have one of the first governments deliberately designed for the purpose of protecting the rights of its citizens rather than subjugating them. That, I believe, is what makes America special, and worth fighting for. At our meeting, I plan to take a few minutes to read aloud the Declaration of Independence and the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution, to give us all a chance to reflect on what America stands for.

## Public Service Announcement from Eglin AFB

Effective immediately, all fully vaccinated DOD personnel, (to include retirees, dependents, contractors, and civilians) at least two weeks beyond their final dose, are no longer required to wear a mask on the installation.

This policy will not apply to Eglin’s medical or dental facilities. Healthcare professionals will continue to comply with mask-wear guidance. Patients, visitors and all others entering base healthcare facilities will continue to wear masks while in these facilities to reduce transmission of COVID-19.

Non-vaccinated personnel will continue to mask and social distance in all circumstances.

\*\*\*Hurlburt AFB guidance is similar, but more fluid. Go to <https://www.hurlburt.af.mil/COVID-19-UPDATES/Hurlburt-Updates> for the latest update.

## PUBLIC RECORD

### In Memorium

Gigi Allen, wife of Lt Col Bob Allen, 5/27/2021

Col Mel Bryant, 6/2/2021

Lt Col Sam Lombardo, 6/11/2021

Michael La Garde, LTC, USA, 6/16/2021

### New Members:

Jeffrey P Brown, LCDR, USN

# Why Join a MOAA Chapter?

By Scott Berry

Yes, I know I'm preaching to the choir. That's not my intent so don't ignore me, but continue reading. You'll get some valuable information.

There are tons of members who belong to national MOAA but not a local chapter. They frequently think that dues for national cover the local dues (Wrong!). So there are definitely some misconceptions. My intent here is to give you some fodder when talking to your military retiree friends about joining the chapter and having a rational answer when they give you reason for not joining.

Which organization does the most to actively lobby Congress on behalf of all military members, their surviving spouses, and children? Most people would say national MOAA, the local chapter doesn't do that, and therefore there's no reason to join a local chapter. I only agree with the first part. There are several members on the MOAA staff who are certified/licensed/whatever official lobbyists. That is their sole function and a chapter would have to be very large and very focused to match that effort; however, that doesn't relieve us of the responsibility of what we can and do--contact our national congressional delegation at any time. The MOAA web site has made it easy to do that and the monthly magazine frequently has pre-printed inserts that can be easily mailed so don't allow others to continue thinking that a local chapter is a mushroom when it comes to lobbying at the national level.

Here's a more fundamental rebuttal. Without local chapters, there would be no national MOAA. By supporting a chapter, a member is supporting national MOAA. A parallel would be that the President of the United States, with all the authority and power of the office, would be nothing without United States.

And the chapter has vital missions at the local level. We can influence and lobby for state legislation that national MOAA cannot and we certainly have an impact at the county and city levels. We give back to the community in a big way with our scholarship program being the most, but not the only example. Finally, there's the camaraderie and networking with fellow officers that is geographically difficult to do with someone who lives in Washington, D.C.

So there you have several good reasons to encourage chapter participation. As for being a member of MOAA at

all, whether at the national or chapter level, I'll plagiarize an elevator speech I've heard on several occasions by our national president. Ask the potential member if they have insurance on their house (duh). Ask them if they have insurance on their lives (highly probable). How about insurance on their car? (yup). After all their obvious responses which will be positive, ask them if they have insurance on their military benefits. What? Uh, no they say. MOAA membership is their insurance to do just that and at a fraction of the cost of other forms of insurance.

I hope I've armed you with some ammunition to refute statements about joining a chapter or MOAA in general. And please remember that everyone is a member of the membership committee!

Berry "OUT"

## Samuel Lombardo (cont.)

Continued from page 1

made superb pumpkin pies, played golf to include a long friendship with Arnold Palmer and continued to use his stone mason talents to build wine cellars.

Eventually he moved back to Pennsylvania settling in Carlise where he and second wife Jean lived for many years. While there he received the 4 Chaplain's Medal and the French Legion of Honor and was recognized by the Pennsylvania Senate as an outstanding citizen. After Jean's death, he moved south to Destin and then to Fort Walton Beach where he lived in a Senior Living home until he required more care and was moved to Pensacola near to his two children Mark and Michele Lombardo along with Mark's wife Cheryl.

When he first arrived in America, his father told him 3 things...learn English, be a good citizen and be an American. He accomplished all 3 to the max.

He was preceded in death by his parents, three sisters (Josephine, Paula, and Agatha, and one brother Peter) and his first and second wives. He is survived by his two children and daughter-in-law, one grandchild Deanna Lombardo and a younger sister Jeanette Motta as well as many nieces and nephews to include family in Italy where he was born.



# Chaplain's Corner

By: Chaplain Thomas Azar

True Confession: "I never realized what a hypocrite I have been all my entire life!

Growing up I told my parents I was doing homework with a friend, but I was smoking behind the gym. I lied straight faced to my concerned mother and father.

I told my school high school teachers I did my term paper by myself and never copied anything out of a book or from a friend, but I cheated. I was a fraud.

When the school coach asked us recruits who played before, I boasted like an imposter just to get on the team.

I would sow my wild oats every Friday and Saturday night and get up Sunday to go to church and put on my happy face. The pastor asked me about my behaviors; I pretended to be the saint I wasn't. I was a charlatan in front of God and the community.

At my first job interview I exaggerated my accomplishments on my resume and to the hiring manager. I deceived her, the company and all the coworkers. I was a sham.

When I filed my taxes all those years I intentionally defrauded my country not reporting all those tips and bonuses. It felt like second nature, I didn't even feel my conscience was stirred.

I'm like all those other 'wolves in sheep skin' politicians and sanctimonious TV preachers who are more interested in their fiefdom than God's kingdom. I always have my own selfish interests first and foremost. I called them two faced but I was blind, just another great pretender.

My mother came for one of my promotions. She overheard me bragging profusely to my children; I masqueraded as a perfect father and officer. She said I was a 'phony baloney,' and I better straighten out real soon. She got to me.

When my friends or coworkers called or texted me, I lied and said 'I never got the message.' I was too self-consumed and busy passing on the latest gossip.

It wasn't until my commander called me into his office and said 'I have proof you are cheating the system. You're a bigot with your peers and a fake to those you lead. I expected more from you.' My world cracked. I was caught and my conscience knew it.

I played dumb at first and gave the deer in the head lights look. For some religious reason he said he would 'give me a second chance if I admitted my wrongs, took responsibility, and was willing to change. What went TDY didn't stay TDY! The sins of my past all at once came to the surface. I was exposed for the imposter I was and I had only two choices."

Then his flushed and weighted head fell into his sweaty hands as he balled uncontrollably in front of his wife in my chapel office. That was the first and most difficult session in a three month counseling course of action. Change had begun.

At times I felt he was talking about me. We three helped each other realize that hypocrisy has no place in the world of military integrity- the root word that comes from integral, a number you cannot divide. For a christian and officer it means you cannot "have two minds at war within you."

We have all been around hypocrites in school, church, military, business, medical, police, etc, and in both leaders and followers. We sometimes smile and look the other way or excuse it, but that makes one just as culpable.

A hypocrite comes from Greek theatrics referring to an actor who on stage pretends to be someone other than himself. In real life it refers to someone who says one thing and does the opposite- a dishonest fraud, charlatan, two-faced deceiver.

So I tell myself and others to keep our eyes on God's guiding truths and Jesus who was not a hypocrite. He in fact confronted hypocrisy comparing the religious leaders of His day to white polished and painted tombstones that look clean and shiny to the people around them but underneath the sanctimonious tombstone and in their soul, they were just dead man's bones rotten to the core.

The religious leaders then and now offer perfumed public prayers and oil their faces as they fast to deceive the multitudes about their shallow piety and holiness. They crossed over on the other side of the road when a wounded man needed help. They preached love your neighbor but made sure they defined who their neighbor was (Matthew 6, 12, 17).

Of course the most flagrant example of duplicity was Judas Iscariot. He followed Jesus and the 11 disciples for 3 years. He acted one way with them and another with the temple leaders. Sadly there are still many who act this way today-deceiving themselves by acting one way at church and another way at home. It will be a rude awakening when they learn that it's not what they think of themselves but what God has observed.

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## VA Will Soon Begin Processing Claims for 3 New Agent Orange Illnesses

By: Patricia Kime from Military.com (*Revised*)

The Department of Veterans Affairs will soon start processing claims for three new presumptive illnesses linked to exposure to herbicides in Vietnam and elsewhere. It also plans to automatically review all previous claims and denials for the conditions, VA officials said May 27.

According to VA Secretary Denis McDonough, the department in coming weeks will issue a policy to implement a law that added bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism -- or Parkinson's-like symptoms -- to the list of conditions considered linked to Agent Orange exposure.

Veterans with a listed condition have an expedited process for receiving health care and benefits from the VA.

The National Defense Authorization Act, approved Jan. 1, added the three conditions to the list of diseases associated with exposure to Agent Orange and other defoliants used during the Vietnam War. Veterans whose claims are approved may receive an earlier date for entitlement to benefits -- a decision that could result in more compensation. "Many of our Nation's Veterans have waited a long time for these benefits," said McDonough. "VA will not make them wait any longer. This is absolutely the right thing to do for Veterans and their families."

The department plans to automatically review previously denied claims and will notify those veterans or their survivors via mail. According to McDonough, benefits could be extended to roughly 52,000 veterans and 6,000 surviving family members "in the first year alone." "This means that any Vietnam veteran suffering from one of these three new conditions can now file and receive benefits and care and, consistent with [a court ruling, *Nehmer v. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*], their survivors who previously filed and those who were denied benefits will have their cases automatically reviewed," he said.


VA officials could not provide a timeline for adjudicating claims and providing benefits. They said the department is looking at ways to accelerate claims processing and has been chipping away at a claims backlog. As of this week, the backlog is 190,000 claims, down from 211,000 in January, according to McDonough.

He has said that veterans should file claims for illnesses they believe are service-connected even if the conditions aren't listed as presumed to be related to service. "Oftentimes, the absence of a presumption serves as a disincentive for an individual vet

to come forward with her claim, which obviously speaks to a trust issue we have on the claims process," McDonough said in late March. "So the first thing I'd say is ... if [veterans] have a claim ... please come forward with it."

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Like to get your own message in the Defender, advertise your company, acknowledge past units or anniversaries? We are going to give you that opportunity. For as little as \$50 you can put a business card sized ad in the Defender for up to three months. Or you can double (\$100) or quadruple (\$200) the size. This will let you get your word out in 400 news letters to local NWFMOA members. If you know business or organizations who might like to advertise please contact them. Examples follow:



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### Happy 92nd Birthday

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For a fill in the blank form go to <http://nwfmoo.org/advertise.html>. Or email a camera-ready ad to [brownaandd@hotmail.com](mailto:brownaandd@hotmail.com). Note: Funds generated will help pay for continuing publication of our National Award winning Defender Newsletter.

### SUPPORT MOAA

Do what you can to support our national organization. To learn what's going on and to find out what you can do go to: <http://www.moaa.org/takeaction/> We all will benefit from your efforts.

# Scholarship Fund

by Dave Parisot

It is with great sadness that I acknowledge the recent death on June 11th, 2021, of **Lt. Col. Sam Lombardo**, USA, Ret., at age 101 (just one month shy of his 102nd birthday on July 12th). Sam was a longtime supporter of the NWFMOA Scholarship Fund and became a Gold Club member in July 2018. Part of 'America's Greatest Generation', Sam served his country magnanimously in World War II, the Korean War, and in Vietnam. Lt. Col. Lombardo was a true hero of the Battle of the Bulge in WWII and experienced his final D-Day remembrance on June 6, 2021. May he rest in peace and never be forgotten for his great service to our country.

At the May 6th Scholarship Luncheon and at the June 3rd luncheon we did not hold our normal 50/50 raffles. Instead, we had envelopes on the tables for members and guests to make donations to our MOAA COVID-19 Relief grant and project to purchase commissary gift cards for enlisted airmen and soldier families in ranks E-4 and below. The donations received totaled \$1,042. Thank you to all who donated.

Here is the complete list of **Gold Century Club** members (\$500 cumulative minimum donation since 2015) and **BG Frank Glunn Century Club** members (\$100 minimum donation) for the most previous 12 months of 2019 and 2020 along with our **Business Donors**. Your support is greatly appreciated. Remember, all of these donations are used to fund our scholarships to JROTC cadets. [Note: (R) means Renewal of membership.] **NOTE: COVID-19 has had significant impacts on the local businesses who contribute regularly to the Scholarship Fund, particularly the restaurants. If you are going to eat out or get carry-out, I encourage you to support the restaurants listed below.**

**Gold Century Club:** **Bill Ryan** (Feb 2016); **Ruth Cullen** (Oct 2016); **Dave Parisot** (Feb 2017); **Janet Taylor** (Mar 2017); **Chris Beam** (Mar 2017); **Bob Garcia** (July 2017); **Rod Gerdes** (Nov 2017); **Larry Bush** (Nov 2017); **Dr. Howard & Irene Fisher** (Nov 2017); **Eileen Arpke** (Feb 2018); **Fred Westfall** (Apr 2018); **Clyde Locke** (Apr 2018); WWII, Korea, and Vietnam Veteran **Sam Lombardo** (July 2018); **Dennis Phillips** (Aug 2018); **Karl & Charlotte Eschmann** (Oct 2018); **Carol Baker** (Jan 2019); **Ann Adelsperger** (Feb 2019); **Don Litke** (August 2019); **Fred Boyer** (August, 2019). **Dr. Keith Kulow** (Nov 2019); **Al Bills** (Nov. 2019); **Kay Dent** (Nov. 2019); **Dr.**

**Roger Riggbach** (Dec. 2019); **Robert "Pete" Peterzen** (Dec. 2019); **Nick Marotta** (Oct 2020); **Kathy & Jesse Bush** (Dec. 2020); **Patt & Caroline Maney** (Dec. 2020); and **Kevin Kirby** (April 2021); **Scott & Janet Berry** (May 2021).

**BG Frank Glunn Century Club** (past 12 months) (R=Renewal): June 2020: **Dr. Keith Kulow** (R); **Dave Parisot** (R) (In memory of Mike Mitchell); **Michael Ramirez**; August 2020: **Janet (Ryan) Taylor** (R) (In honor of Major Bill Ryan); **Donald Litke** (R) (In memory of Kay Litke); and **Eileen Arpke** (R). September 2020: **Doug Hardin** (R) (In memory of Gen. Bill Kirk); October 2020: WWII Vet **Sam Lombardo** (R) (In memory of Jean Lombardo); **Nick Marotta** (R); **George Colton** (R); November 2020: **Bob Gramm** (R); **Larry Tashlik** (R); **Howard Fisher** (R); and **Janet (Ryan) Taylor** (R); December 2020: **Robert "Pete" Peterzen** (R); **Dennis Phillips** (R); **Craig Miller**; **Jesse & Kathy Bush** (R); **Larry Bush** (R); **Scott & Janet Berry** (R); **Patrick Boab** (R); and, **Jeffrey Watson**; **Kay Dent** (R) (In memory of Troy Dent and Larry Ketter); **Bob Garcia** (R); **Karl & Charlotte Eschmann** (R) (In memory of B/Gen Bud Day and Mrs. Kay Litke); **Chris Beam** (R); **Les Matheson** (R); **Dave Parisot** (R) (In memory of Mrs. Chong Parisot); and, **Patt & Caroline Maney**. January 2021: **Fred Westfall** (R); **Janet (Ryan) Taylor** (R) (In honor of Maj. Bill Ryan); February 2021: **Rod Gerdes** (R); and **Chris Beam** (R); March 2021: **Dave Davis** (R) (In memory of B/Gen Bud Day); **Fred Boyer** (R) (In honor of Marlene Bosak); **Joy Houck** (R) (In memory of Maj. Stanley Houck); April 2021: **Dr. Keith Kulow** (R); **Kevin Kirby**; May 2021: **Larry Bush** (R); **Patrick Boab** (R); **Al Bills** (R); **Scott & Janet Berry** (R); **Dick Solt** (R); June 2021: **Dave Parisot** (R) (In memory of Lt.Col. Sam Lombardo).

**2019/2020 Business Platinum Donor** (\$750 minimum donation): October 2019: **Shalimar Cheers Pub** (\$1,000) (R).

**2019/2020 Business Gold Donor** (\$500 - \$749): December 2019: **Eglin Federal Credit Union** (R); **Merrill Lynch (Chris Beam & Tess Bass, Senior Financial Advisors)** (R); **Silver Slipper Casino Hotel** (Bay St. Louis, MS) (In-Kind); May 2021: **Merrill Lynch (Chris Beam & Tess Bass)**.

**2020/2021 Business Silver Donors** (\$250 - \$499): November 2019: **Indian Bayou Golf & Country Club** (In-kind, R); December 2019: **Rocky Bayou Golf Course** (In-kind, R).

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## Scholarship Fund (cont.)

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**2021 Business Bronze Donors** (\$100 - \$249): R); May 2021: Eye MD of Niceville (R)

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NWFMOA Scholarship Fund: “HELPING TO BUILD FUTURE MILITARY OFFICERS AND LEADERS.”

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## Chaplain's Corner (cont.)

Continued from page 4

Paul states that “hypocrites will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Yes there are individuals who say all people are created equal but they define who is equal. They say they are a team player only to be a lone ranger and do their own thing. They say you should not judge others or gossip but are quick to point out the other's sins. I walked away from my teenage church because there was a discrepancy I could not live with between their beliefs and behaviors, between their written doctrines and daily practiced deeds.

My mother said “every time you point your finger at someone else, you have three pointing back at you and your thumb towards heaven's creator God” (go ahead and try it).

I often quote the slogan at the entrance to the Air Force Academy- a nutshell version of Biblical Commandments--“I will not lie, steal or cheat, not tolerate among us anyone who does.”

In the end it was the Biblical compass of a senior officer's concern for one member of his team that made a difference both immediately and eternally. He could have turned a blind eye, kicked the can down the street and PCS'd him.

This noble leader was his “brother's keeper.” We can all make a difference by confronting the hypocritical words and behaviors of others, while simultaneously weeding out our own shortcomings. To say something may be a moment of uneasiness, but to say nothing may have an eternal consequence.



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Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Service \_\_\_\_\_ MOAA Member Number \_\_\_\_\_

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**This application is for:**

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Make Checks payable to NWFMOA or to Northwest Florida Military Officers Assn. Inc. Check here is you do not want your ☐ name, ☐ phone number, or ☐ email address listed in the printed chapter directories. Membership includes a subscription to *The Defender* for the dues period. We are a charter member of MOAA and recommend that our members belong to the national organization. Our association is also a member of the Florida Council of Chapters, itself an affiliate of MOAA.

**\*\*The spouse of a deceased life member is automatically an auxiliary life member**

### Membership Application/ Renewal

**New Members joining this year  
receive membership through  
December 31 next year for \$25.00**

**Membership Renewal  
1 yr--\$25.00, 2 yr--\$48.00, 3 yr--\$65.00**

#### Life Membership Dues\*\*

| Age    | Dues   | Age   | Dues   |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
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| 91-95  | 75.00  | 61-65 | 295.00 |
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