

August-September 2024



President's Message
by Ron Kaita

I would like to provide our chapter the crib notes with the latest efforts our MOAA national leadership is focused on for the upcoming 2025 National Defense Appropriations Act (NDAA). As you probably know, we finally have this year's NDAA signed and in the books. Unfortunately, we are less than six months in the making for next year's 2025 budget request proposals in February 2025. This document will be a political struggle as both political parties must grapple with exploding budgets, inflation, crippling national debt, but most importantly the election impacts coming this Tuesday, 5 November 2024.

Below are the top legislative priorities for our association's top leadership:

The Major Richard Star Act: Over two-thirds of Congress has

supported this legislation that would provide concurrent receipt for combat-injured servicemembers. I believe it has a very good chance of crossing the finish line this year.

BAH Restoration Act: Service members and young military families across the country are facing financial strain, and housing costs back to 100%.

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC): The bipartisan Expanding America's National Cemetery Act ensures the nation keeps its sacred promise to veterans and families when ANC eventually will run out of space, and proposed eligibility reductions will end the benefits for some veterans and their families. However, Congress must provide a long-term solution to designate the "next ANC" rather than reduce the benefit. This must be incorporated into next year's NDAA.

Respect for Grieving Military Families Act: When a retired

servicemember dies, the DFAS (Defense Finance and Accounting Service) recoups the last month of their retirement pay. This action adds terrible financial stress to a grieving spouses would stop recoupment and prevent the financial shock experienced by many surviving spouses. It should be a part of the must-pass defense bill.

There are other additional actions that MOAA is actively pursuing on Capitol Hill, but I have outlined the four in my opinion needing higher priority for our military and their families...you may disagree, but I owe you my opinion on where I stand.

What can you do? Easy...vote in this year's elections. IF you DON'T, you have no reason to complain. It is that simple. Our right to vote which we and many others have sacrificed over the many years of military service gives us that right. I was recently provided a quote from a very (*see PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE page 2*)

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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, SATURDAY AUGUST 17, 2024.
ST. MICHAEL'S ROOM, THE LANDING, FORT NOVOSSEL, AL *Guest Speaker—Shannon Smith; Congressman Barry Moore's spokesperson.*

SCHEDULE & MENU
Social: 6:00pm..... Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance: 6:45pm..... Dinner: 7:00pm
 >Tossed Salad w/assorted dressings
 >Salmon w/pineapple/mango sauce
 >Zucchini/yellow squash blend
 >Rice Pilaf
 >Rolls & butter
 >Oreo Pie
 >Sweet & unsweet tea, water, & coffee
Cost per meal: \$ 23.00/person

Please make **Reservations by noon Monday August 12th** to Susanne Bailey at (931) 237-1118.
Cancellations must be made by NOON Friday August 16th.
Cash or personal checks only!
 Persons not canceling their reservation by noon on Friday prior to the Dinner Meeting will be responsible to our Chapter Treasurer for full payment of the reserved meals.



(PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE from page 1) close friend I want to share with you. It is engraved on a monument (location unknown) to me that reflects my utmost belief that says:

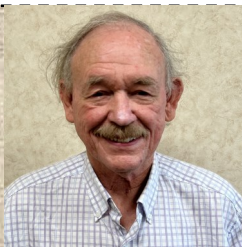
"SOME PEOPLE LIVE AN ENTIRE LIFETIME AND WONDER, IF THEY HAVE EVER MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD. A VETERAN DOESN'T HAVE THAT PROBLEM." Ronald Reagan, 40th President, USA.

Please do not forget our next Chapter Dinner Meeting on Saturday, 17 August 2024. We are grateful that the Landing continues to support our dinner meetings. Please let us make this a great dinner with full attendance if you can attend with a very special Guest Speaker. If you need transportation, please let me know soonest and arrangements can be made.

I wish all Chapter MOAA members, families, and all veterans to always remember to live our lives by MOAA's motto...Never Stop Serving.

Member Spotlight—Ray Collins

Ray was born in 1946 in Moulton, AL and graduated from Morgan County (AL) High School in 1964. While attending high school, he met his future wife, Mary Jane. They were married in 1968 in Hartselle, AL.



He graduated from Florence State College in Florence, AL in January 1969 with majors in Zoology and Geography and was part of the Army ROTC program. Mary Jane graduated from the University of Alabama with a major in Education. Upon graduation Ray entered the Army as a Military Service Corps 2LT.

He attended flight training and served as a helicopter pilot for 23 years. He served in Vietnam for 12 months from 1969-1970 as a pilot rescuing wounded soldiers from the field. He was shot down twice; the second time his aircraft had 47 holes in the aircraft. For his first engagement in 1969 he received the Distinguished Flying Cross. For his second engagement in 1970 Ray was awarded the Silver Star and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. Because of his many flying hours, Ray suffers with back issues even today.

He retired in Ozark in 1997 after 28 years of service as a Lieutenant Colonel. His last duty station was at Fort Rucker where he and Mary Jane had previously built a home in Ozark in 1988. They are very involved with the Methodist Church in Ozark and travel frequently back to Hartselle, AL to visit family. During part of these years Mary Jane was a high school teacher at various locations and currently enjoys providing beautiful flower arrangements for churches and other locations.

In 2023 Ray and Mary Jane were recognized for their many volunteer hours registered under the Fort Novosel Volunteer program.



Membership Report

by Othan Gilbert

Our chapter membership count is currently 122.

I am pleased to welcome COL (ret) Christopher Carlile as a new chapter member. He is a life member of MOAA National and he and his wife, Sandy, live in Enterprise. COL Carlile is the Executive Committee Chairman of the Army Museum Foundation. He was also our guest speaker at our dinner meeting on 15 June. If you were fortunate to have attended this dinner, you would have heard a great presentation about the current and future operations of the museum. This is another reason why you should attend our bi-monthly dinner meetings.

On a personal note, I have noticed a marked improvement in the speed and efficiency of the operation of Lyster Clinic in the dispensing of prescriptions over the last 2 years. I feel this improvement in operations is largely due to the prior commander of the clinic, LTC Garrett Holt, who has now moved on to another duty assignment. He was our guest speaker at our 21 August 2023 dinner meeting. As previously mentioned, our outstanding guest speakers should motivate you to come to our bi-monthly dinner meetings.

There are 350,000 MOAA national members but only 15% belong to chapters and the average age of chapter members is 75. There are many MOAA National members in this area that are not, for various reasons, members of our chapter. It is apparent that we need to get some of our younger members to join our chapter. The best recruiter is you. If you are reading this column, then you know how much MOAA has meant to the military community (including enlisted). Please be a strong advocate of MOAA and see if you can get your friends to join MOAA on the national and local level.

The national MOAA website is moaa.org and our chapter website is forttrucker-moaa.org. Please check the chapter website from time-to-time as photos from our past dinners, minutes from our board meetings, and chapter finance reports are posted there. The phone number for MOAA National is 800-234-6622. If you would like to purchase a MOAA National life membership, it is better to do so by calling them direct and speaking with someone. If you do that (vs doing so over the web), they will give you a 10% discount, give you credit for your current premium membership (if applicable) and arrange payments over an extended period.

Remember to patronize the sponsors of our newsletter. They help to support the chapter and deserve our consideration.

Sponsor Spotlight—Circle Insurance Agency

Circle Insurance Agency was started in 1979 by Durwood Judah and Aubrey Leatherwood (who were brothers-in-law). It is now owned by Sammy Judah and is located on Andrews Avenue in Ozark where it has been since 1985. Sammy started working there in 1983. Sammy and his wife, Susan, have two children (son and daughter) and two grandchildren. Sammy was raised in Ozark but met Susan while attending Enterprise Junior College. Susan was a military “brat” whose father was in the Army and living in different locations was part of her life. Sammy graduated from the University of Alabama in 1978 and Susan graduated from Auburn in 1979. His degree was in Marketing and Business and her major was Education. Susan was a schoolteacher for many years. Their son was in pro-baseball for several years and now has a career in golf, traveling around the world putting on demonstrations on behalf of the World Long Drive Association. Circle has 6 employees and provides excellent service. One of his top employees is Donna Shuman who was hired in 2002. Donna is pictured above with Sammy. While the agency provides the normal homeowner’s policies and car insurance, a large part of their business is providing coverage for schools and other municipal government buildings. They represent many insurance agencies such as Auto-Owners, Travelers, Progressive, All-State, and Alabama Municipal Insurance Corporation.



Retired Officer Wives Association (ROWA) by Mary Jane Collins

Greetings Everyone. It is summer time in Alabama and in the middle of July, it is a time to enjoy and celebrate our country which was born to form a nation that was built by honorable men and women who continue to serve with honor and also manage to carry on their service even with times of hardship.

However, we have Freedom Fest to celebrate the day our nation was born which reminds us of how blessed we are.

This day brings multiple vendors, food, aircraft displays, musical performances, and the highlight of the day with bright fireworks in the sky.

We are in the times of change, some are preparing to leave and some are arriving.

We are truly blessed by General McCurry and Mrs. McCurry and their children. May God bless and keep them in their new assignment. We are blessed to welcome and meet General and Mrs. Clair Gill and family.

ROWA members, I hope you and other friends have a great summer with joy and peace. Let us also pray for our upcoming President.

We will resume in September.



Legislative Report by Ray Collins



The potential best time to really make an impact with Senators Tuberville and Britt and Representative Moore is coming up next month while they are in recess and probably back in the state.

Support for the Maj Richard Starr Act H.R.1282 and S.337 is increasing steadily. There are currently 74 members of the Senate and 327 members of the House that support the Starr Act. It is almost unbelievable that it has taken so many years to see a possibility of correcting this horrific stain on our countries governing branches. Of course the major reason for the delay is congressional pinch penny antics. There is little or no concern for the service members who laid their lives on the line and in the process harm was done to their bodies. Due to the Congressional Budget Office’s gross over estimation of the bill for correcting this travesty, Congress still has failed to do the right thing.

The lack of potential recruits for our military can be directly tied to this failure to treat our combat wounded veterans with fairness and respect. The uncommon fact that our nation’s military is less appealing to able bodied American today because of the obvious disregard for the military service members shown by entities such as Congress in matters of appreciation.

PASS THE BILL!

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TREASURER'S REPORT by LTC (Ret) Loel Ewart

Net Worth of the Fort Novosel (Rucker) Chapter of MOAA as of 07/08/2024 is **\$28,499.79** These funds are in one checking account, one savings account and one Money Market Account in the AllIn (FCU).

Activities Since Last Report: (06/10/24) Starting balance of;		\$29,004.32
DEPOSITS	ACTION	
06/17/24	MOOA Dinner Receipts	\$723.00
06/30/24	Savings Interest	00.01
06/30/24	MM Interest	<u>9.83</u>
Deposits Total		\$732.84
CHECKS:	EXPENDITURES:	
2005	06/15/24 Ron Kaita (Pens)	\$125.00
2006	07/17/24 IMWRF (MOAA Dinner Payment)	658.50
2007	06/25/24 VOID	-----
2008	06/25/24 Web Hosting (Dennis Newton)	428.87
2009	06/28/24 VOID (Carolyn Wooley) lost check bank fee	<u>25.00</u>
Expenditures Total		\$1237.37
Net Decrease		<u>\$504.53</u>
(07/08//24) Current Total Balance of;		<u>\$28,499.79</u>
		All In checking \$6,743.89
		All In Savings \$5.48
		All In Money Market \$21,750.42
Reserve Total: (Minus Reserve);		- \$21,750.42
		Life Membership \$7,090.00
		MOAA reserve, \$14,660.42
Minus Savings:		- \$5.48
* Usable Funds as of June 10, 2024 (Minus reserve/savings)		<u>\$6,743.89</u>
No outstanding bills. Scholarship Fund= \$186.00		

ATTENTION!!!

You are our best recruiter. If you have a friend, colleague or coworker who is eligible to join MOAA National, bring him/her to a Chapter dinner meeting. You would be doing both them and the Chapter a favor.

The PACT Act and your VA benefits

The PACT Act is a law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances. This law helps us provide generations of Veterans—and their survivors—with the care and benefits they've earned and deserve. And starting March 5, 2024, we're expanding VA health care to millions of Veterans—years earlier than called for by the PACT Act. Visit www.va.gov or call 800-698-2411 (TTY: 711).

Important Dates for MOAA

Board of Directors' Meeting	Newsletter Input Suspense	Bi-Monthly Meeting
8-12-2024		8-17-2024
9-9-2024	9-18-2024	
10-14-2024		10-19-2024
11-11-2024	11-20-2024	
12-9-2024		12-21-2024
Dinners will be on Saturdays at 1800.		

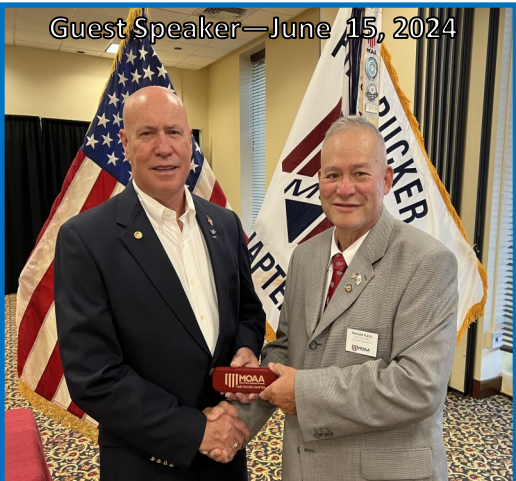


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Guest Speaker—June 15, 2024



At a recent dinner meeting of the local chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), the speaker was COL (Ret) Christopher Carlile who is the Chairman of the Army Aviation Museum Foundation Executive Committee. He provided a detailed outline of the major events, displays of aircraft and programs currently underway at the Museum including steps to be the only accredited Army museum. MOAA has a national membership of approximately 350,000 members and is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. It is an advocate of a strong national defense and represents the interests of military officers and their families at every stage of their careers. Shown in the accompanying photograph is Carlile and CW5 (Ret) Ron Kaita, the President of the chapter.

Warrant Officer Awards



At the graduation ceremony for the Warrant Officer Class 24-14 on 21 May 2024, LTC (Ret) Othan Gilbert presented the Distinguished Honor Graduate Award to WO1 Devin Streeter. WO Streeter received \$100 plus a 3-year premium membership from MOAA National.



At the graduation ceremony for the Warrant Officer Class 24-14 on 21 May 2024, LTC (Ret) Othan Gilbert presented the William Ruf Leadership Award to WO1 Scott McGowan. WO McGowan received \$100 plus a 3-year premium membership from MOAA National.

Johnny's Dust

After church, Johnny tells his parents he has to go and talk to the minister right away. They agree, and the pastor greets the family. "Pastor," Johnny says, "I heard you say today that our bodies came from the dust." "That's right, Johnny, I did," he says. "And I heard you say that when we die, our bodies go back to dust." "Yes, I'm glad you were listening," the pastor replies. "Why do you ask?" "Well, you better come over to our house right away and look under my bed because there's someone either comin' or goin'!"



(L) WO1 Sawyer T. Cobb, Leadership Awardee Class 24-19
(R) WO1 Bryce R. Jessup, Distinguished Honor Graduate, Class 24-19



(L) WO1 Michael R. Moncrief—Leadership Awardee, Class 24-15
(R) WO1 Ian A. Noble, Distinguished Honor Graduate, Class 24-15



Distinguished Honor Graduate and Leadership MOAA Awardee WO1 Michael A. Watts for WOCS Class 24-17.

Extracted from <https://inspire21>—Church Humor



Photos from June 25th 2024 Dinner



Christopher Carlile, Guest Speaker & Ron Kaita, MOAA Chapter President



Dennis & Rose Bergstrazer



Dennis Newton & Nicholas Santana



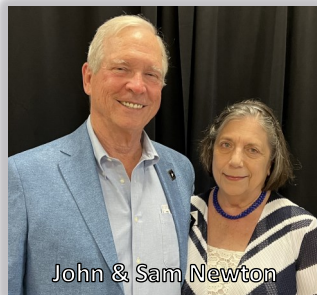
Dee Gilbert, Alexis McCullors, & Susanne Bailey



Dee & Othan Gilbert



John & Cindy Holliday



John & Sam Newton



Roy & Leslie Templin



Stan & Lisa Smith



Ron & Lark Kaita



Charlie & Claudia Wigglesworth



Christopher Carlile during his presentation



Carolyn Wooley & Debbie Godfrey



Ann & Frank Estes



Beverly Odonnell, Our best buddy!

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Barbara & Loel Ewart



Registration desk with Loel Ewart & Susanne Bailey



The gathering.

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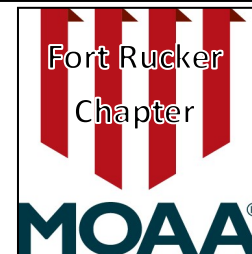


SCAN ME

MOAA, Ft. Rucker Chapter
P.O. Box 620075
Ft. Novosel, AL 36362-0075

Return Service Requested

MOAA Membership Application
Fort Rucker Chapter



Fort Rucker Chapter
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
PO Box 620075
Fort Novosel, AL 36362-0075

Enclosed is my check, in accordance with the schedule below, for membership in the Fort Rucker Chapter of the *Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)*.

Individual joining: 1 Dec – 28 Feb \$12.00; 1 Mar – 31 May \$9.00; 1 Jun – 31 August \$6.00;
 Membership 1 Sep – 30 Nov \$3.00.

NAME: _____ RANK: _____
 BRANCH OF SERVICE: _____ ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
 DATE OF BIRTH: _____ PHONE: _____
 SPOUSE'S NAME: _____
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

NATIONAL MOAA MEMBERSHIP # _____ National Life Member? _____

Membership in the National MOAA is required for membership in our local Chapter. If you are a member of National and do not know your membership number so indicate and we will obtain it from National.

Make checks payable to Fort Rucker Chapter MOAA Thank you for your support!
Webaddress: www.FortRuckerMOAA.org