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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, SATURDAY APRIL 20, 2024, ST. MICHAEL'S ROOM, THE LANDING, FORT NOVOSSEL, AL Guest Speaker—*Shannon Smith: U.S. Representative Barry Moore's Office (see page 5 for bio).*



President's Message by Ron Kaita

I start my portion of our Newsletter with a heavy heart with the loss of Mary Rutkowski as she travels to Arlington National Cemetery to be laid to rest with her beloved husband Joe. Please keep her daughter Alexis in your prayers for strength, peace, and love during her loss.

Now that Spring as officially arrived let's shake off the doldrums of winter and celebrate the beginning of a beautiful time of year as flowers blossom, trees come to life, and yes...a year's worth of yardwork begins, and decorations for the celebration of Easter blessings.

Currently we are looking at a 4.6% pay raise as our leaders on Capitol Hill work on the planning phase of this year's National Defense

Authorization Act (NDAA). There is a ton of money being requested for the many needs of our military as we continue to support our men and women in uniform, military, civilians, and those who build and maintain the apparatus of the strongest military power the world has ever seen. We have many challenges ahead and we need you, your family, friends, and neighbors' support to keep our armed forces strong and prepared for the next fight yet to come.

Our elections this year forthcoming is the biggest test of our Nation as we decide the direction and way ahead for our country. Please choose wisely and ask local and national candidates the tough questions on your views for what is most important for you, your family, our state, and our nation. November will soon be here before we know it, so be prepared to

educate yourselves of some of the most critical aspects to protect our freedom and liberties and our American way of life.

The one thing we can all agree upon is our economy is in shambles. Gas prices are killing us, groceries are so expensive that even a simple night out for a burger, fry, and drink is becoming a luxury. Our junior soldiers are using food stamps and extra sustainment pay to make ends meet for their families. We cannot allow this to continue. Please help them in ways to continue to serve those who are on called upon to protect our nation and our security against those who want to destroy our culture, our way of life, and the American exceptionalism of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. A recent event trouble me greatly. The officer ideals of duty, honor, country is being replaced with "Army (*see President's Message page 2*).



Please make Reservations by noon

Monday April 15th to Susanne Bailey at (931) 237-1118. **Cancellations must be made by NOON Friday April 19th.**

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.

SCHEDULE & MENU

Social: 6:00pm.... Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance: 6:45pm.....Dinner: 7:00pm

- >Tossed salad w/ Assorted Dressings
- >Stuffed chicken breast w/ spinach & goat cheese, wrapped in bacon
- >Vegetable medley
- >Rice pilaf
- >Rolls & butter
- >Oreo pie
- >Sweet & unsweet tea, water, & coffee

Cost per meal: \$22.00 /person

Membership Report

by Othan Gilbert



Our chapter membership count is 122.

I regret to report the death of COL Joel Mikuta, CW4 Joe Guthrie, and Mary Rutkowski. COL Mikuta lived in St. Petersburg, FL. He was one of the older members of the chapter. His military decorations included the Silver Star. He died 10/28/23 and, unfortunately, his wife, Jean Ann, died shortly thereafter on 11/6/23. CW4 Guthrie lived in Chancellor, AL, and died 3/3/24. He will be remembered by many because he was a JROTC instructor at Daleville High School for more than 20 years. Our condolences are extended to his surviving spouse, Becky. And we are also sad to report the death of Mary Rutkowski on 3/6/24. She was a long-standing member of our board of directors and served as our

Banquets Coordinator and ROWA representative. Her husband, Joe (previously deceased), served as our chapter president in 2005-2006. We extend our condolences to her daughter, Alexis McCullors.

Remember to patronize the thirteen sponsors of our newsletter. In this issue we welcome a new sponsor: Yancey Parker's located in the Westgate Shopping Center in Enterprise. They have been a popular clothing business in Enterprise for many years, and we hope you will visit them. We appreciate the support of all our sponsors who deserve our consideration. This issue we are providing a spotlight of one of our earliest sponsors—Houston Printing Company. We plan to focus and provide information about one of our sponsors in each of future editions of this newsletter.

(President's Message from Page 1) Values." I don't know about you, but I believe today's Army Values don't float my boat. General MacArthur's farewell speech given in May 1962 resonates within me the ideas I will give a lifetime of service to our Nation and willingly fall on my sword as long as I live. We cannot continue to go down this path of destroying our legacy. Ok, off my soap box.

Please do not forget our next Chapter Dinner Meeting on Saturday, 20 April 2024. We will have Ms. Shannon Smith, Congressman Barry Moore's spokesperson as our guest speaker. We should hear the latest and greatest news as actions that impact on many topics of interest to us, and I am sure what is in store for the future. Let us make this a great dinner with full attendance if you can attend. If you need transportation, please let me know soonest and arrangements can be made.

Please stay safe and enjoy the warming weather we are experiencing. I know the next thing we will be saying is when did all those misquotes and gnats arrive; and man, it's hot outside again... LOL! I wish all Chapter MOAA members, families, and all veterans to always remember to live our lives by MOAA's motto...Never Stop Serving.

Membership Spotlight

Dennis Newton



Dennis was born in 1953 in Whittier, California, and graduated from Sierra High School (in Whittier) in 1971. That same year he met his future wife, Kathleen, at Pine Summit Camp. In 1972 he enlisted into the Army as a Chaplain's Assistant and served four years in Germany. During that period, he and Kathleen were married in 1973. After his enlistment, they attended and graduated together from San Diego State University in 1979 (Dennis received a BA in History), and then obtained a Master of Divinity in Church History from Talbot Theological Seminary in La Mirada, California in 1983. During seminary, he joined the US Army Reserve as a Chaplain Candidate after which he pastored a church. In 1985 he entered the Army as a Chaplain with the rank of 1LT. His career included many assignments, but two are notable. He served as the 101st Division Artillery Chaplain during Operation Desert Storm/Shield deployed to Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and then again as part of Operation Restore Hope in Somalia. His last duty assignment was as the Garrison and Installation Chaplain at Fort Rucker. He retired in 2014 as a Colonel (O6). During his long military career (+42 years), he served in the ranks of E1-E5 and O1-O6. After retirement, he and Kathleen moved to Ozark where they now live. They have one son and two grandchildren. Kathleen was one of the founding staff members of the Healing Hand Animal Hospital in Ozark where she has been serving a vital role as the practice manager for the last 10+ years. Dennis has been a hiker all his life and has walked many miles on many different trails. He hiked the entire 2,159 miles of the Appalachian Trail in 2015 from Georgia to Maine in 5 months and 3 weeks. He currently serves as the President of the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers' Association, as a Steward for Wiregrass Church, Dothan, and as the Chaplain on our Chapter Board of Directors.

Retired Officer Wives Association (ROWA) by Mary Jane Collins



O, how the splendor of nature brings with beauty joy, and peace as March and flowers bloom and colors will shine.

We also welcome St. Valentine, who wrote the first Valentine card symbolizing love and friendship. From Valentine's on February 14th to the coming connections, with Epiphany, Mardi Gras, Lent, and a reflection of Jewish celebration of Passover and the coming Easter.

March is a month of expectations moving forward, growing with insight, renewed with strength, and purpose. March this year has a special meaning for the Retired Officers Wives Association (ROWA).

Our Charter Member Mrs. Mary Rutkowski passed to higher ground in March this year with grace. As a staunch supporter of ROWA and the Military Officers' Association of America, Mary will be well remembered and an example of a military with grace.

May the beauty of nature bless you in joy and peace. God Bless You.

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.

The VA website will help answer your questions about what the PACT Act means for you or your loved ones. You can also call VA at 800-698-2411 (TTY: 711). And you can file a claim for PACT Act-related disability compensation or apply for VA health care now.

(extracted from www.va.gov, 3-20-2024)

Legislative Report by Ray Collins



We now have one quarter of the year in the books. Guess what, we are gearing up to fight the same battles we have engaged in for far too long. I know all you MOAA people are well aware of the issues of which I speak.

I will begin with the injustice to end all injustices. The Major Richard Star Act finally passed last years' session of Congress but went unfunded in the National Defense Authorization Act. We currently have HR-1282 and S-344 with the support of 75 percent of Congress. Now all that remains is for US - - - You and Me, to keep the pressure on Congress to ensure that the funding for these two Bills is included in the FY 2025 National Defense Authorization Act.

The travesty to end all travesty is the Department of Defense (DoD) withholding 5 percent of a service members Basic Allowance for Housing. We can't lay this burden on the door step of Congress; this burden was purely a swipe of the DoD. If DoD is really concerned about the plummeting morale, enlistment, and reenlistment rates, they can go looking for their next swipe somewhere other than the service members bank account. The house bill to correct this morale squelcher is HR-2537 and the Senate is S-1823. There are currently 59 cosponsors for the House bill and two for the Senate.

Beware the Congressional Budget Office. Although there are no legislative actions proposed for TRICARE for Life, the Congressional Budget Office posted a proposal that an annual enrollment fee or cost sharing would be an option to help lower the federal deficit. I seriously doubt a cut in this service-earned benefit would be as lucrative as would closing the borders.

My hope is that we will do our part in righting the ship on these costly issues by calling Senators Tuberville and Britt's attention to the thought of losing your vote - - - 202-224-4124 and 202-224-5744 respectively, and Congressman Moore at 202-255-2901.

Sponsor Spotlight—Houston Printing

Houston Printing Company has been printing our MOAA newsletter since 2012. It is a small commercial printing company located in Dothan on Main Street. The company itself has been around since 1912 with 4 different owners including the current owners, Danny and Teresa Cosby, who bought it and have operated it since 2007. It is staffed with 4 employees including Danny and Teresa. Danny is a retired CPA (a graduate from Auburn) who maintained an accounting practice for 40 years. Teresa managed a telephone answering service in the same building where Danny had his office. They have been married for 30 years and have 2 sons: one served as a Marine and the other in the AirForce and have a daughter-in-law who also served in the Marines. Several years ago, Danny was an accounting and finance instructor with Emery-Riddle University when it was located at (then) Fort Rucker. Many of his students were warrant and other commissioned officers. We thank them for their support over the years.



TREASURER'S REPORT by LTC (Ret) Loel Ewart

Net Worth of the Fort Novosel (Rucker) Chapter of MOAA as of 03/11/2024 is **\$28,434.53** These funds are in one checking account, one savings account, and one Money Market Account in the AllIn (FCU).

Activities Since Last Report: (02/12/24) Starting balance of;

DEPOSITS	ACTION	
02/20/24	MOAA Dinner Receipts	\$704.00
02/21/24	Ron Kaita donation	200.00
02/28/24	MM Savings	9.48
03/01/24	Ray Collins (Dinner Payment)	51.00
	Deposits Total	\$964.48

CHECKS:	EXPENDITURES:	
02/17/24	1998 Carolyn Wooley (Printer Ink)	\$102.46
02/20/24	1999 IMWRF (MOAA Dinner)	607.50
02/23/24	2000 Kelly Catering (Holman House)	200.00
03/05/24	----- Bank Check Order (MOAA)	54.85
03/05/24	----- Bank Check Order (MOAA)	30.54
	Expenditures Total	\$995.35
	Net Decrease	\$30.87

(03/11//24) Current Total Balance of;	\$28,434.53
All In checking	\$6,718.59
All In Savings	\$5.46
All In Money Market	\$21,710.48
Reserve Total: (Minus Reserve);	-\$21,710.48
Life Membership	\$7,190.00
MOAA reserve,	\$14,520.48
Minus Savings:	\$5.46 -\$5.46

*Usable Funds as of March 11, 2024 (Minus reserve/savings) **\$6,718.59**
 No outstanding bills. Scholarship Fund= \$70.00



\$28,465.40

At a recent dinner meeting of the local chapter of the Military Officers Association of



America (MOAA), the speaker was CW5 Stephen Napoli who is the Deputy Commandant of the US Army Warrant Officer Career College at Fort Novosel. He outlined the development of curriculum to enhance the professional military education of all warrant officers in a military environment and the expansion of the college facilities at Fort Novosel. 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 (above) is Napoli and CW5 (Ret) Ron Kaita, the President of the Chapter.

Important Dates for MOAA

Board of Directors' Meeting	Newsletter Input Suspende	Bi-Monthly Meeting
4-8-2024		4-20-2024
5-13-2024	5-15-2024	
6-10-2024		6-15-2024
7-8-2024	7-17-2024	
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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!WARNING!

Effective 1 October 2024, the Commissary will no longer provide plastic or paper bags for your purchases, so bring your own bags.

!WARNING!**2024 Officers & Directors**

PRESIDENT—Ron Kaita, 334-677-6734, ronald.kaita@twc.com

VP For PROGRAMS—Randy Godfrey, 912-312-6446, argodfrey@gmail.com

SECRETARY—Carolyn Wooley, 334-400-4603, ckwooley@troycable.net

TREASURER—Loel Ewart, 334-774-0328, lewart@troycable.net

MEMBERSHIP—Othan Gilbert, 334-432-3433, ogilbert@troycable.net

BANQUETS & ROWA REP—Susanne Bailey, 931-237-1118

PUBLIC AFFAIRS—Randy Godfrey, 334-312-6446, argodfrey@gmail.com

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS—Ray Collins, 334-774-2101, hospitality@gmail.com

CHAPLAIN/WEBMASTER—Dennis Newton, 334-465-5079, drnewton@me.com

SURVIVING SPOUSE AFFAIRS—Faye Swinehart, 334-774-8817, jswinehart712@troycable.net

ROTC/JROTC—Ron Kaita, 334-677-6734, ronald.kaita@twc.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR—Frank Estes, 334-797-9196, estesf@troycable.net

RETIREE AFFAIRS—Ray Collins, 334-774-2101, hospitality@gmail.com

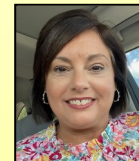
GUEST SPEAKER— SHANNON SMITH**Communications & Veterans' Office for U.S. Representative Barry Moore**

Shannon was born and raised in Enterprise, AL. Graduated from Enterprise High School and Enterprise State Junior College. She received her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Troy University.

In 1995 she met her helicopter pilot husband CW4 (Ret) Robert E. Smith. After her college graduation they moved within the Army Aviation Blackhawk Community for the next 12 years. In 2010, having three young children, the choice was made to retire in Enterprise. We all love to have grandparents around for help.

Shannon's work background is mortgage lending, however, when helping her husband file his Veteran's Administration Disability Claim she found her passion. After multiple discussions with Barry Moore (then State Representative), she decided to help others understand the process. In 2021 she was hired by Congressman Moore to be a constituent advocate and field representative specializing in Veteran's Affairs, Social Security, and Medicare.

Shannon's husband Robert is a contract worker on Ft. Novosel and they have three children ages 21, 21, and 20. They are members of Hillcrest Baptist Church and MOAA since 2010. She is on the board of the Republican Women of Coffee County and the American Legion Auxiliary in Enterprise.

**Warrant Officer Awards**

WO1 Kevin M. Vaughn (Military Intelligence);
Distinguished Honor Graduate [WOC Class 24-09]
WO1 Nicholas A. Waggoner (Military Intelligence);
Leadership Awardee [WOC Class 24-09]



WO1 Yasser D. Ashby (Aviation);
Distinguished Honor Graduate and
Leadership Awardee [WOC Class
24-08]

Good News for Bad Times (Luke 3:1-6) from www.bible.org

In the early 18th century, England was infected with a plague of materialism. The gap between the rich and poor was widening, but moral degeneracy marked every level of society. The Prime Minister, Robert Walpole, led an openly immoral life and often made fun of virtue. Moral laxity pervaded the nation. Drunkenness, gambling, and cruel amusements were an obsession. Crime was rampant, and criminal law was unfair and barbarous, making criminals only more desperate. The Church of England had, for the most

part, ceased to be a vital force. Many ridiculed and railed at the Christian faith without reserve (these conditions summarized from A. Skevington Wood, *The Inextinguishable Blaze* [Eerdmans], pp. 9-16).

God broke into this dismal and seemingly hopeless situation by saving a young man, George Whitefield, who had been raised in his mother's inn and tavern. His friends, John and Charles Wesley, also were saved out of their legalistic religion to a living faith in the Redeemer. Through these men, the good news of God's salvation spread to that decadent society and saved it from the brink of anarchy and revolution. In his biography of Whitefield, Arnold Dallimore observes (*George Whitefield* [Cornerstone Books], 1:25), We shall need to remember that it was among a people broken by gin that Whitefield and the Wesleys went about in the nobility of their ministries, and that there was triumphant meaning to Charles Wesley's lines on the deliverance effected by the Gospel:

Hear Him, ye deaf! His praise ye dumb, Your loosened tongues employ; Ye blind, behold your Savior come, And leap ye lame for joy! He breaks the power of cancelled sin, He sets the prisoner free! His blood can make the foulest clean, His blood availed for me!

That same liberating, powerful message is what we need for our dismal, spiritually dark times. Let's believe it, live it, proclaim it, and pray that God would break through in our day with His powerful Word of salvation!

Photos from February 17th 2024 Dinner



Guest Speaker CW5 Stephen Napoli & Chapter President Ron Kaita



Debbie & Randy Godfrey



Registration Desk: Lowel Ewart & Susanne Bailey



Ron & Lark Kaita



CW5 Stephen Napoli & Dee Gilbert



Barbara Ewart, Gale Brogden, & Loel Ewart



Dee Gilbert & Susanne Bailey



Othan & Dee Gilbert



Ann & Frank Estes



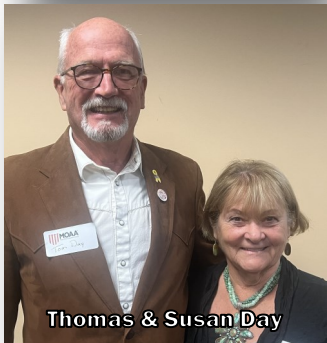
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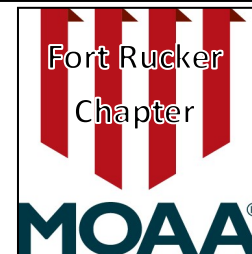
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MOAA, Ft. Rucker Chapter
P.O. Box 620075
Ft. Novosel, AL 36362-0075

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