

February—March 2021

MOAA Airways



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The MOAA Airways is the bimonthly newsletter of the Fort Rucker Chapter, MOAA which is an Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). MOAA and its Affiliates are nonpartisan.

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**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING & CHAPTER'S 62ND ANNIVERSARY
CHARTER DINNER FEBRUARY 20TH - 6:30 PM,
THE LANDING'S LEGEND BALLROOM, FORT RUCKER, AL**

AGENDA & MENU

Social: 1800
Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance: 1845
Dinner: 1900
 >Mixed green salad w/assorted dressings
 >Pork chops stuffed w/maple kale
 >Roasted sweet potatoes
 >Fresh asparagus
 >Johnny bread & butter
 >Oreo pie
 >Unsweet tea, water, coffee
Cost: \$21 per person

Please make your Reservations by noon Wednesday, Feb. 17th to Mary Rutkowski at (334) 347-4966.



Cash or personal checks only!

Persons not canceling their reservation by noon on the Friday prior to the Dinner Meeting will be responsible to our Chapter Treasurer for full payment of the meals.

2021 Officers & Directors

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President's Message by Ron Kaita

Hello Fort Rucker Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) members. My name is CW5 (Ret) Ron Kaita and I am the newly elected Chapter President sworn in during last month's bi-monthly MOAA dinner. Besides myself, CW5 (Ret) Russ Smith is our newly elected Chapter Vice-President. Just to provide who we are, Russ and I share two interesting personal backgrounds. First, we are both are retired Army Chief Warrant Officers Fives; and secondly, though we are not Aviation, we are both branched as Military Intelligence warrant officers. I would also like to say a special thank you to our recent Chapter President, MAJ (Ret) Lisa Bailey for her outstanding leadership she has provided. It always amazes me in all that she has done for our Chapter over the past two years is breath taking to say the least.

During the December dinner meeting, we enjoyed a new food service vendor at Fort Rucker's Aviation Landing who provided an outstanding buffet style meal for attendees, along with an evening of Christmas sing-along carols led by Chaplain (COL Ret) Dennis Newton, and a highlighted event by our chapter's flag pinning of the MOAA 5 Star Level of Excellence award again. As a testament to our continuing recognition at this level we may need another streamer added to the flag staff! Congratulations to all who make **(continued on page 2)**

(PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE from page 1) our Chapter's 5 Star recognition possible. An example for obtaining this coveted award is our chapter sponsorship and support to our veterans in our purchasing and laying 270 Wreaths Across America at Meadow Lawns Memorial Cemetery Park in Enterprise, Alabama. This event is a coalition of military and veteran associations like our Chapter, Fort Rucker's US Army Warrant Officer Silver Chapter Association, the Disabled Veteran's Association, the Veterans of Foreign War and VFW Auxiliary, the American Legion, and other civic and local government organizations. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place, we held a smaller scaled event with limited participation this year.

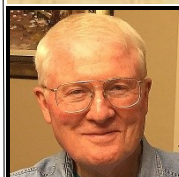
For January's Alabama Council of Chapter Zoom meeting held on Tuesday, 12 January 2021, the 2021 focus for the Council continues to be on membership and advocacy for veteran suicide prevention. Due to the COVID-19 issues across the state, Zoom is the venue of choice in practicing social distancing and communications. I'm by no means an expert on this app, but in the short few months of using it for our Chapter and now state Council meetings I'm getting the hang of it. Just have to remember to unmute that button! LOL.

I am still working with the US Army Warrant Officer Career College (USAWOCC) for the production and handing over the Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS) Distinguished Honor Graduate award and the Leadership award to the Senior TAC Officer for each graduating class as usual. However, due to the COVID-19 issues and CG General Orders I am still prevented in engagements with the warrant officer candidates for MOAA recruiting and personal mentorship brief. This has drastically reduced the recruitment numbers for MOAA headquarters and our chapter. February has two WOCS classes that will be the first graduations for 2021.

One of our most recent additions to our chapter is CPT Edward Williams. Please welcome him and his wife Jennifer at our actual "62nd Chapter Anniversary" bi-monthly dinner engagement scheduled for Saturday, 20 February 2021 at the Ft Rucker Aviation Landing. If you would like to become more active in the chapter, please don't hesitate to attend one of our board meetings and see what needs doing. There is a great need for fresh ideas and for help in all our activities. Our meetings are held at the Silver Wings Golf Course Regimental Room and are usually on the second Monday of each month at noon. Join us for lunch at the Divots Lounge at 1100 hours prior to the meeting. Our next meetings are scheduled for 8 February and 8 March 2021, but be prepared for them to be diverted to the Zoom (**continued in right-column**)

application. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me or any other board member.

I hope to see many of you at our meetings and dinners. Until then, please take care of yourselves and your families, and thank you for your trust in myself and Russell Smith for the next two years leading your Chapter.



Membership Report

by Othan Gilbert

Our chapter membership count is currently 142.

We all know that there are a lot of retired officers in our area. While many are not members of MOAA National, many are but are still not members of our chapter. It is hard to understand why some have no interest in joining our chapter, particularly since our chapter dues are so low at \$12 per year. In recent years, our board has maintained a policy that new members get the first year of their chapter dues gratis to encourage joining. In any case, perhaps they need some encouragement from you to join. It is important that all chapter members are involved in chapter recruitment. Experience has shown that the best candidate for membership into the chapter are those that are already members of MOAA National. When you find someone that wishes to join, have them go to our chapter website, download a chapter application, fill it out and return to our post box at the Fort Rucker post office. Last year we only added one new chapter member. Let us all work together to make 2021 a banner year. Remember, we are not a social club and membership with MOAA National is a prerequisite to chapter membership.

The national MOAA website is moaa.org and our chapter website is fortruckermoaa.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 ten sponsors of our newsletter. They help to support the chapter and deserve our consideration.

Legislative Report

by Charlie Wigglesworth



2021 is here! I believe that we need to look forward not back! I have been looking at what to share in this newsletter but in the end, I feel sharing the letter to President Biden from MOAA is the most appropriate. I have taken the liberty to take out some of the content that did not touch on the immediate issues. The meat remains!

No TRICARE Fee Increases – Include no proposals for TRICARE fee increases in the administration budget request.

Full Pay Raise – Include a full servicemember pay raise in the President's FY 2022 Budget ([2.7% for FY 2022](#))

Reconsider Medical Billet Cuts – These plans to eliminate approximately 18% of medical billets could have negative impacts on medical readiness and beneficiary access to care.

30-Day Reserve Component Orders – Require the use of federal orders in increments over 30 days for members of the reserve component activated to help with future COVID-19 support or vaccination efforts.

Military Installation Modernization – Direct DoD to include military installation family housing, childcare facilities, barracks, and facility buildings as part of the designated strategic support area that requires modernization, and to explore predictive maintenance sensors that detect moisture and mold problems that have cost taxpayers billions in construction and health care.

Plan the Future of Our National Cemetery – Direct DoD to designate a location for the next national cemetery that affords full military honors once Arlington National Cemetery reaches capacity, and grandfather those currently eligible.

Improve Dependent GI Bill Transfer Process - Review the service obligation process and inter-department communication for GI Bill transfers to dependents. [Administrative errors](#) are leading to dependents being required, unfairly, to pay back GI Bill payments.

Address Agent Orange Presumptives – Add hypertension to the list of Agent Orange-connected diseases. It has met the same scientific standard as bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism, all of which were added via the FY 2021 NDAA.

Restore the 48-Hour Review Period – The VA's decision to rescind this review will lead to more errors in claims, clog the appeals process, and ultimately harm veterans. Multiple veterans service organizations, including MOAA, [have joined in this effort](#).

Support Death Certificate Review of Veterans Who Pass from COVID-19 – The survivors of veterans with underlying service-connected conditions who died from COVID-19 are at risk of their Dependency and Indemnity Compensation being denied. The VA policy for COVID-19 deaths should be updated to require an additional medical screening if any service-connected disabilities are not listed as principal or contributory causes of death.

Waive Dependent Debt for GI Bill Administrative Errors – Direct the VA to waive dependent GI Bill debts stemming from [administrative errors](#) that led to servicemembers failing to complete obligated service. *(continued on Page 4)*

Retired Officer Wives Association (ROWA)

by Mary Jane Collins



Winter Greetings Everyone. With the joy and blessings of Christmas accompanying us from 2020, Christmastide transcends us into the New Year of 2021 and the month of January.

Nature has brought the winter beauty of snow on the mount and azure blue skies appearing behind the clouds. January is a time of reflection and new beginnings with a future to be written. ROWA remembers well in reflection of managing to meet in accordance with the virus rules. Manage we did regardless and continuing, God willing, we will with "strength for the day and hope for the morrow" as military wives find a way.



Gratefully we met at Ingrid's Castle Café in autumn and then The Landing for the Christmas season. A special guest, Simone, wife of Col. Erik Ruizendaal, the Netherland Liaison at Ft. Rucker, shared some of the traditions of their Christmas which was similar to ours. The ornament exchange was enjoyed as always. ROWA members also enjoyed the MOAA Christmas Dinner meeting, another highlight of the year.

The ROWA 2021 January meeting began the 48th year of the Retired Officers Wives (Auxiliary first) Association. Guests Mrs. Sandra Staffin from Arizona and Mrs. Diane Irley from Dothan were welcomed. Best wishes were extended to Martha Boyle's daughter Victoria upon her wedding engagement. It was noted that ROWA had made a donation to the American Red Cross.

The Annual FRCSC Holiday Bazaar was cancelled due to the virus. Hopefully there can be one in the spring, substantial enough for Scholarships and Community Grants. After lunch some history and events related to January and the significance of the Garnet birthstone were given and discussed. Members enjoyed sharing their interest in this stone and jewelry, some which included the Garnet stones on their parent's property.

Please note ROWA dates: Feb. 9 and March 9, locations to be determined.

Reservations: Mary Rutkowski by the Friday before and location given then.

May you be blessed with good health, strength and divine peace this New Year.



ROWA in the Ballroom

(LEGISLATIVE REPORT from Page 3) stop until the pandemic is over.

Reinstate Public Facing Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) – The removal of these documents limits a veteran’s ability to independently submit a doctor’s medical evidence in a format consistent with VA requirements. Provide a public portal for access to the DBQ forms.

Pause VA Contract Exam Changes – MOAA seeks this delay to address whether these changes would negatively affect exam quality and timeliness. The GAO and VA’s Office of the Inspector General have expressed similar concerns.

Restart Military Lending Act Supervisory Compliance Exams – Monitoring compliance is necessary for this act to work the way it was intended. Work with Congress to pass legislation to restart the exams and ensure they won’t be stopped again.

Support Defrauded Students – Rescind the 2019 borrower defense rules that limit the ability for defrauded students to get their tuition reimbursed.

Fix Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) – Simplify the PSLF process for those who have met the public service requirement to have student debts repaid. Servicemembers who have served on active duty since the creation of the program need to have their service recognized.

Track Military Spouse Unemployment Rates – Require the Bureau of Labor Statistics to create methods to better quantify this issue at the heart of financial security for many military families.

Improve Military Spouse Licensure – Require the Department of Labor to prioritize state-level technical assistance training to educate occupational licensing boards on current military spouse licensure laws and compacts.

End Forced Arbitration – Support rulemaking to end forced arbitration for Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act disputes.

Preserve Parole in Place (PIP) – Allow PIP to continue for the families of military members and veterans, and direct the United States Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) to process applications for those in removal proceedings and adjudicate all PIP applications within 60 days.

Support Servicemember and Veteran Naturalization – Ensure servicemembers have access to expedited paths to citizenship by:

- Rescinding DoD memos requiring O-6 certification of honorable military service.
- Restoring Basic Training Naturalization through a USCIS directive.
- Directing USCIS to expedite processing of all servicemember and veteran applications.
- Directing USCIS to provide resources to assist qualified members of the armed forces to navigate the application and naturalization process (as outlined in Public Law 115-91, Section 530).

Coordinate Stimulus Payments with the VA – Simplify and expedite the process for veterans who aren’t required to file income taxes to receive future payments. Veter-

TREASURER’S REPORT *by LTC (Ret) Loel Ewart*



Net Worth of the Fort Rucker Chapter of MOAA as of 01/11/2021 is **\$29,260.49**. These funds are in one checking account, one savings account and one Money Market Account in the AllIn Federal Credit Union.

Activities Since Last Report:		(12/14/20) Starting balance of;	\$30,878.28
DEPOSITS	ACTION		
12/15/20	Annual due (2021)	\$84.00	
12/21/20	MOAA Dinner (\$12 dues;\$40 scholarship)	536.00	
12/28/20	MOAA dues (2021)	84.00	
12/30/12	Money Market Interest (December)	<u>12.38</u>	
		Deposits Total	\$716.38
CHECKS	EXPENDITURES:		
1896	12/14/20 U.S. Treasury Gift Fund (Ft. Rucker Emergency food)	\$500.00	
1897	12/18/21 MOAA Covid-19 Fund	250.00	
1898	12/18/20 MOAA Scholarship Fund	500.00	
1899	12/18/20 Veterans Recovery Resources Fund	250.00	
1900	12/19/20 Mary Rutkowski (Christmas decorations)	127.93	
1901	01/05/21 IMWRF (Christmas Dinner)	518.75	
1902	01/06/21 AL Council Chapter (2021Dues)	73.50	
1903	01/06/21 IRS Payment (Form990n registration fee)	49.99	
1904	01/08/21 U.S. Postal Service (PO Box Rent)	<u>64.00</u>	
		Expenditures Total	\$2,334.17
		Net Decrease	<u>\$1,617.79</u>
		01/11 /21 Current Total Balance of;	<u>\$29,260.49</u>
		All In checking	\$4,879.89
		All In Savings	\$5.41
		All In Money Market	\$24,375.19
		Reserve Total: (Minus Reserve);	-\$24,375.19
		Life Membership	\$9,390.00
		MOAA reserve,	\$14,985.19
		Minus Savings:	\$5.41
			-
			<u>\$4,879.89</u>

\$5.41*Usable Funds as January 11, 2021 (Minus reserve/savings)
Other News* No outstanding bills. Scholarship Fund= \$40.00

Important Dates for MOAA		
Board of Directors' Meeting	Newsletter Input Suspense	Bi-Monthly Dinner Meeting
8 Feb 21		20 Feb 21
8 Mar 21	17 Mar 21	
12 Apr 21		17 Apr 21
10 May 21	19 May 21	
14 Jun 21		19 Jun 21
12 Jul 21	21 Jul 21	
9 Aug 21		21 Aug 21
13 Sep 21	15 Sep 21	
11 Oct 21		16 Oct 21
8 Nov 21	17 Nov 21	
13 Dec 21		18 Dec 21

ans with service-connected disabilities and survivors receiving Dependency and Indemnity Compensation [faced uncertainty](#) about the status of past payments; this experience was frustrating to many because the VA had all the information required for an accurate payment. Fixing this process will ensure our most vulnerable receive support quickly.

PICTURES FROM DECEMBER 19th MOAA MEETING & DINNER



Outgoing President Lisa Bailey



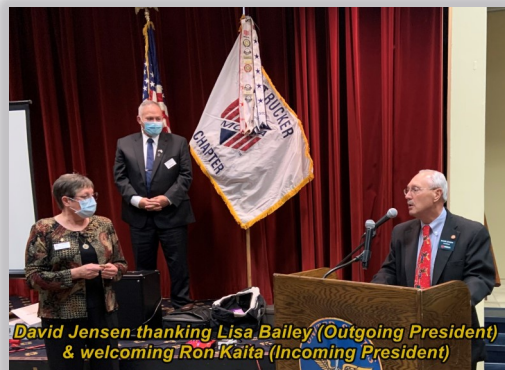
Ron Kaita (center) places 5-Star 2019 pin on ribbon of Chapter's Flag



Ron Kaita (Incoming President)



Swearing in Officers & Directors



David Jensen thanking Lisa Bailey (Outgoing President) & welcoming Ron Kaita (Incoming President)



Ron & Lark Kaita



Ron Kaita (Incoming President & Russell Smith (Incoming VP Programs)



Lisa Bailey & Dennis Newton entertaining during dinner



Lisa Bailey & David Jensen



Al Apel & Dennis Newton



Nancy & Mark Jankoski



Dave & Sissie Jensen



Russell & Darlene Smith



Loel Ewart & Mary Rutkowski



PICTURES FROM DECEMBER 19th MOAA MEETING & DINNER (continued)



Dinner attendees (1)



Gloria Loser



Dinner attendees (2)



Karen Dunham - Dennis Newton - Allen Dunham



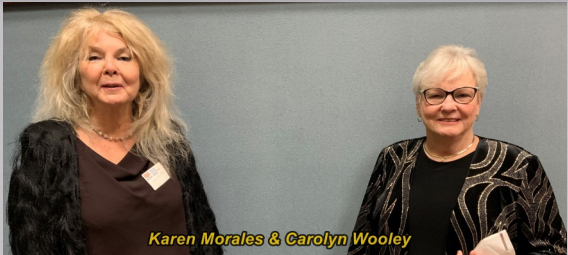
Karen Dunham & Allen Dunham



Dinner attendees (3)



Dinner attendees (4)



Karen Morales & Carolyn Wooley



Lisa Bailey & Fred Latremore



Barbara & Loel Ewart



Dinner attendees (5)



Dinner attendees (6)



Susanne Bailey



Mike Milton & son Mike



Sissie Jensen & Dee Gilbert



Dinner attendees (7)

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Ft. Rucker, 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 Rucker, 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!

Web address: www.FortRuckerMOAA.org