



# AIRWAYS



February/March 2018

The 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.

Ft. Rucker Chapter MOAA

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**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING & DINNER**  
**FEBRUARY 17, 2018**  
**1800 HOURS AT THE LANDING**

**GUEST SPEAKER**

**William "Billy" MacDonald III**

Mr. MacDonald is a Birmingham native, who has written The Shadow Tiger: Billy McDonald, Wingman to Chennault about his father, an Alabama native who had a front row seat to some of the most unique moments in aviation and world history. For more information, see **SPEAKER** page 4.

**Social: 1800**

**Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance: 1845**

**Dinner: 1900**

*Fresh fruit salad*

*Chicken Cordon Bleu*

*Steamed rice*

*Balsamic grilled vegetables*

*Rolls & butter*

*Oreo pie*

*Unsweet tea, water, coffee*

**Cost: \$21.00 per person**

**PLEASE—Cash or personal checks only!**

**Please make your Reservations by  
noon Wednesday, February 14th to  
Mary Rutkowski at  
(334) 347-4966.**



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.

# A Message from the Chapter President - Charlie Wigglesworth



WOW!! 2017 is gone and 2018 is here. I pray everyone had a great 2017 and wish all a great and prosperous 2018!

It never ceases to amaze me how time marches on and slows down for no one. I have often found myself saying, "I will do that tomorrow," and the next thing I know; tomorrow is a couple weeks ago. I told the board members at our last meeting I was sure that Frank would love to have our articles sooner than later. I had all intentions of going home and taking care of my article that evening. Next thing I know, I am out of town and now in the panic to put a few words on paper the day before the deadline. As I stopped to think about it, I pondered the question, "What happened 100 years ago that is different than today."

Technology is so much different. Today we send a quick email and expect an answer immediately. Remember the days of hand carrying a staff action to all the different action officers? We had to wait! Today that same action is sent to everyone at the same time and then we forget to let everyone know what we said on our part of the action. Stop for a moment and think about how General Jack J. Pershing felt in World War I when he had to send a wire to the War Department to ask for oats. Did he just say oats? I sure did! General Pershing realized that there was a serious oat shortage in France and that was going to affect the formation of American Cavalry units. Horses need oats! Believe me; I am sure that General Pershing would have loved to send an email or a Tweet. Today we tell Logistics to get the Chinooks in the air, the Cavalry needs diesel now! Time stands still for no one. I am glad that technology has advanced us to where we are today. I truly admire the sacrifices that those who came before us paid as they often waited patiently for their answers. We are greater as an Armed Force because of their sacrifices and hard work.

Now you are probably wondering, what is Charlie trying to share with us? For those who were at our last dinner meeting, I shared with you that I was going to fulfill one of my lifelong dreams. Today we call it a bucket list. I am going to be an Over the Road Truck Driver! Someone has to deliver your groceries, furniture, and cars. I thought I was too old but I found out I am not. I realized that time was moving and if I was going to do one of my dreams, I needed to get moving.

If you have a dream or something you always wanted to do and are still able to do it, GO FOR IT! Time stands still for no one and we are all in a race with Father Time. I feel 20 years young!

As always, keep all of our military members who stand on the front lines for the freedoms we enjoy each day in your prayers.

# Legislative Report by Charlie Block



The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) has both good news and not so good news. The five big issues in the bill are:

**GOOD NEWS.** 2.4% Pay raise for Active Duty personnel. This will reverse the trend in previous years where the pay raises failed to keep up with the Cost of Living increases and fell way behind the private sector.

**GOOD NEWS.** The Defense Department had proposed changing the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) but could not convince Congress. The Defense proposals would have severely cut the allowance that is received by two married service persons.

**NOT SO GOOD NEWS.** Tricare Pharmacy rates will increase significantly starting in 2018. The cost increase to active duty and retirees will result in a \$22 Billion saving by 2022. The Congress appears to be paying the bills for readiness and modernization of the force on the backs of the active duty and retirees. Not part of the NDAA, but worth noting is that both Tricare Select and Tricare Prime will see significant cost increases starting this year. Yet another bill payer for readiness and modernization.

**GOOD NEWS.** Active duty end strengths have been increased as follows. Army 7,500; Navy 4,000; Marine Corps 1,000 and Air Force 4,000.

**GOOD NEWS.** The SBP/DIC offset, referred to as the Widows Tax is no longer in jeopardy of being lost each year. The Congress has made the payments permanent. The payment is still a long way from where it should be, in my opinion, but this is a step in the right direction. MOAA will continue to lobby for increases in the payments.

We are now awaiting a budget so these changes can be implemented. We are now operating on a Continuing Resolution, which is no way to fund the defense of our country. MOAA continues to oppose the limits imposed on the Defense budget by Sequestration and hopefully we will see some changes that will allow increases in the future. The problem is that one side of the isle wants to lift Sequestration to allow increased Defense spending while the other side of the isle insists on like increases in non-defense spending.

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# Membership Report

by Othan Gilbert



of your officer friends, ask them if they are a member of MOAA. If they are, see if you can convince them to join the chapter. A chapter membership form can be found on our chapter web site.

I regret to inform you that one of our chapter members, COL Herman "Stan" Heath, recently died. COL Heath was a resident of Enterprise and will be missed. Our condolences are extended to his family.

I am pleased to report that we recently gained two new chapter members: MG Peter Berry (wife Gail) of Ozark and COL Don Cullen (wife Susan) of New Brockton. MG Perry and his wife are natives of Maine and spend 6 months every year there. Both officers are life members of MOAA National and are very much welcomed into our chapter.

Remember the national MOAA website is [moaa.org](http://moaa.org) and our chapter website is [fortruckermoaa.org](http://fortruckermoaa.org). If you have ever considered upgrading your MOAA National membership to a life membership, MOAA makes it easy. You can purchase a lifetime membership by making 10 monthly payments via a credit card **PLUS** you get a 10% discount **IF** you call and speak with a membership representative. This discount is **NOT** applicable to life memberships purchased online. The phone number for MOAA National is 800-234-6622.

Quite frankly, MOAA National has found that the best prospects for chapter membership are those officers who are life members of National which reflects commitment to MOAA and its mission. Based on information from National, there are quite a few MOAA National life members who live in this area that are not chapter members. Next time you meet one

**SPEAKER** (from page 1): For the first time, the adventures of William C. McDonald Jr. are captured in a new book, The Shadow Tiger. The story provides a unique first-hand account of events leading up to and during World War II, based on more than 30,000 pages, letters and photos the aviator shared with friends and family during his 11 years as a pilot both in the United States and in China.

The Shadow Tiger traces McDonald's flying career from its beginning at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery to his time as U.S. Army cadet and wingman in General Claire Chennault's famed aerobatic flying group Three Men on a Flying Trapeze. Much of the book focuses on McDonald's time in China where he worked hand in hand with Chennault to lay the foundation for what would become the Flying Tigers, served as a combat pilot, trained the Chinese Air force, and made hundreds of life saving flights through the Himalayas. Through McDonald's own letters and photographs, readers will experience first-hand adventures

including the Japanese invasion of Hong Kong, a harrowing landing in the middle of the Yangtze River, and countless flights ferrying world-famous passengers and high-value cargo for the China National Aviation Corporation.

Billy is most proud of recently getting the DFC and Air Medal posthumously for his dad. He has spoken to the Montgomery, Fairhope, and Mobile Chapters of MOAA. He has also spoken at the National WWII Museum and the livestream app has the video. His father's papers were requested by the Smithsonian, and he and his wife, Nancy went in August to sign them over, when he spoke and autographed books. As you will see, he and his wife are very passionate about his father's story, and they encourage others to dig up stories and documents to preserve their history.

We will be provided a 20 to 30 minute presentation with time for questions and he also has books that he can autograph. We are sure to be entertained and learn a bit along the way. Go to [billy@shadowtiger.org](mailto:billy@shadowtiger.org) for more information.

# Treasurer's Report by Loel Ewart



This report is for the period 12/04/17 through 01/08/18

12/04/17 Starting balance of:	<u>\$28,651.07</u>
Total Deposits	<u>\$1,506.06</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$2,669.49</u>
Account Net Decrease	<u>\$1,163.43</u>
01/08/18 Current Balance of:	<u>\$27,487.64</u>
Minus reserves:	(-\$24,055.48)
Minus savings:	(-\$5.41)
<u>Check book operating Funds:</u>	<u>\$3,426.75</u>

The Chapter is starting 2018 in good shape financially. We are maintaining a dual reserve of \$24,055.48 for the Life Trust Fund for future payouts, and for our general fund (rainy day unknowns/future years operations), shown as one reserve balance. The Chapter has no outstanding bills.

Our checking, money market, and savings accounts are with AACFCU.

You can see a monthly, detailed report of our account activities and financial status, as of 01/08/18, on our web site ([www.fortrucker-moaa.org](http://www.fortrucker-moaa.org)). Each month follows the same format to allow our members to monitor all transactions and approvals. The treasurer's records are available for review/inspection by any member, with prior notice.

**Note:** It is highly recommended you pay by cash or check for the dinners. There are problems with the club card system not accepting individuals' Credit Cards used for our dinners.

**NOTE:** If you have reserved for the dinner and did not attend, have not canceled three days before, then you are responsible for payment of the dinners.

Our February dinner will be a great evening with an excellent meal and speaker. Hope to see you there.

Loel Ewart  
Treasurer



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# Retired Officer Wives Association (RWOA)

by Mary Jane Collins

*Winter Greetings and Happy New Year everyone!*

At this writing the falling snow continues at the high of 20 degrees in our Upper Alabama "winter wonder land" with sparkling white trees, roofs, and fields. Making snow cream is a foreseen possibility now that the ground cover deepens. Hopefully, your Christmas was joyful and peaceful. As 2017 closed the year with memories and highlights, 2018 began with fresh hope and promises of new beginnings and possibilities.

ROWA's December and January luncheon meetings held both. Our December luncheon at



The Landing was a holiday celebration theme, complete with festive Christmas sweaters, cookie jars as table decorations and door prizes, followed by the annual lively ornament exchange. Shared highlights of 2017 included travels, the ROWA fashion show, ROWA sweet shop volunteers at the Ft.

Rucker community spouses club bazaar, the Twelfth Night open house hosted by ROWA President Sam and LTC(R) John Newton, the Ft. Rucker Holiday Concert.

The January luncheon met 2018 at The Landing with a theme of reflections and resolutions as table companions shared memories and possible resolutions. Door prizes adhered to the commitment with decorative wise owl's wisdom and journals for recording the resolve, the process (often reluctant), and progress. Door prize winners are shown at left and sweater ladies below.

Please note our luncheon dates and consider joining us at 10:30am. May each day of the New Year hold many blessings for you!

- > **Feb. 13:** Valentines with special guests at The Landing
- > **Mar. 13:** Mad Hatters at The Landing
- > **Reservations:** the Friday beforehand to Mary 334-347-4966



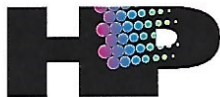
(L to R) Barbara Laumeyer, Gloria Loser, Susanne Bailey, & Nan Couper



(L to R) Mary Jane Collins, Dot Bedsole, Milrae Seamons, Barbara Laumeyer, Nancy Presson, Gloria Loser, Peggy Sabiston, Gisela Spreeman, & Mary Rutkowski.

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## Chaplain's Corner by Ben McKee

This month we have been working with the Veterans organizations and the local churches to bring the movie, **"We are Stronger"** to Clark Cinemas in Enterprise. Most of us have heard about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), but until I watched the Premier showing by SGM (Ret) Bill Baker with the Pastors of the local area, I did not realize this illness involved others outside the military. This disorder applies to all those first responders: Military, Medical, Police, Firemen, and anyone who has had to live and cope with a significant emotional event in their lives including those within our own families. Most of us have to work through some type of emotional event or events in our lives and there is so much to learn from this dramatic portrayal of a family plagued with this invisible, emotional, physical, and spiritual disturbance I cannot say enough about what I learned from this well produced, plotted, dramatic movie other than to encourage everyone to see it when it returns to the area. After seeing the movie, I attempted to contact as many of you as possible, but I'm sure I missed some. It showed here 19 through 25 January, but it should be showing in nearby areas soon. Please go see it if at all possible. You will be glad you did.

The principle parts of PTSD with which a person must deal is: Physical, Emotional, and

Spiritual. The couple in the movie went through all three. Being a Pastor and the Chaplain I will only briefly discuss the Spiritual aspect in this article. There comes a time in most of our lives when we question God—as to why He allowed something to happen. Vietnam combat was rough on those of us who participated in it, but when I lost all three of my children to death, I definitely questioned God as to WHY! The movie has the family going through all three aspects of help for PTSD—the Mighty Oaks Retreat for their Spiritual recovery. The Church helped me work through mine. You see, pain shared is pain divided. I learned. as did the couple in the movie. that God does not cause terrible things to happen to us—He placed us here and gave us a free will to run our lives. He actually weeps when terrible things happen to His people. Look how He wept when His friend Lazarus died. Yes, He brought Lazarus back to life but that was for the purpose of showing others that He was the Christ. Lazarus later died like the rest of us will. We must overcome these life wrenching occurrences. and we can with the help of God. He helps us come to grips with self, family, friends, other people, and most of all, with Him. Please, if you have the opportunity, see the movie, **"We Are Stronger."**



## IN MEMORIUM

**Colonel (Ret.) Herman S. "Stan" Heath**, age 75, passed away on January 4, 2018 due to chronic medical conditions. Funeral services were held on Monday, January 8, 2018 in the chapel of Sorrells Funeral Home & Crematory in Enterprise. Burial was with full military honors will follow in Meadowlawn Cemetery. In a career spanning 28 years, including a combat tour in Viet Nam, Stan served in various Army Aviation command and staff positions from company to brigade level. Awards earned during his military career include the Legion of Merit, four Meritorious Service Medals, Bronze Star (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Air Medal (32 awards), Army Commendation Medal with "V" device, and numerous other service medals.

## Meadowlawn Memorial Park Ceremony

Meadowlawn Memorial Park invited everyone to join them in REMEMBERing our fallen U.S. Veterans; HONORing those who serve; TEACHing our children the value of freedom by helping us during our annual Wreath Across America ceremony, as the nation honored our fallen Veterans at Arlington National Cemetery as well as over 1,200 additional locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea, and abroad. Many came to help honor nearly 1500

service members buried at Meadowlawn. The ceremony was conducted on 16 December.

The event featured a short symbolic ceremony before the public was asked to help lay the donated wreaths at Veterans grave markers. For additional information please contact Nancy Rathburn at 334-464-2222 or Julian Boyd at Meadowlawn Memorial Park. Below are some photos of the event.



On 13 December, 2017, the Fort Rucker Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) donated \$300 to the Holiday Food Assistance Program for the Fort Rucker military community. This program is administered by the Army Community Service at Fort Rucker. Pictured are Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Loel Ewart, representing the chapter, and Ms. Beth Gunter who is an Army Emergency Relief Officer.





**PICTURES FROM DECEMBER 16th MOAA MEETING & DINNER**



**John & Sam Newton**



**Gwen & Johnny Davis and  
Dee Gilbert**



**Dot & Ken Bedsole**



**Ann Estes and Gail & Peter Berry**



**Louise Coursey, Rhonda Gilbert, &  
Karen Morales**



**Susan & Don Cullen**



**Allen & Karen Dunham**



**Dale Moates, Gwen Neal King, & Charlie Wigglesworth**

**THANKS**  
To all who attended and supported our event. You are the lifeblood of our Ft. Rucker MOAA Chapter.



**Peter Berry &  
Frank Estes**

# Important Dates for MOAA - Fort Rucker Chapter Calendar Year 2018



Board of Directors' Meeting	Newsletter Input Suspense	Bi-Monthly Dinner Meeting
12 February		17 February
12 March	21 March	
9 April		21 April
14 May	16 May	
11 June		16 June
9 July	18 July	
13 August		18 August
10 September	19 September	
15 October		20 October
12 November	21 November	
10 December		15 December

**WOA Above the Best Silver Chapter**  
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Chapter Contacts  
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**WOA Above the Best Silver Chapter**

Chapter calendar  
Memorabilia  
Community Events

<https://sites.google.com/site/fruckerwoa/>

To our Google Site

**Coffee County Arts Alliance**  
*and*  
**Center Drugs & Home Health**  
Present

	<b>MJ LIVE</b> A Michael Jackson Tribute Concert	Feb 13, 2018 7:00 pm	Enterprise High School
	<b>PINEY WOODS ARTS FESTIVAL</b> A Juried Arts & Crafts Show	Apr 7 9am-5pm Apr 8 Noon-4pm	Enterprise State Community College

Tickets & Information: 334.406.ARTS (2787)  
[www.CoffeeCountyArtsAlliance.com](http://www.CoffeeCountyArtsAlliance.com)



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**MOAA Membership Application**  
**Fort Rucker Chapter**

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**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](http://www.FortRuckerMOAA.org)**