



One more month of zooming

I trust everyone had a great Veterans Day week. Yes, there was a lot going on for the entire week and more. Some of our members were involved in many activities and their assistance was greatly appreciated by the organizations. Another busy time coming up with Thanksgiving week, so everyone please be safe and enjoy.

December looks to be another zoom meeting. More information will be sent out prior soon; we may even have a hybrid zoom/live event if things come together...more to come. Date is still Thursday, December 2nd so please put it on your calendar. Time and place TBD if we have live meeting. With a little luck and hopefully decreasing COVID numbers, Danberry as a meeting place in January is a good possibility.

I look forward to seeing everyone's smiling face on the December Zoom! Happy Turkey Day, stay safe, be well and see you soon.

Respectfully,
Don

Volume 121 Issue 12 December 2021

Officers' Call

President Don Lehman, LTC, USMC (Ret)
1st VP Harold Coghlan, CW4 USA (Ret)
2nd VP Michael Walker. LTC, USA (Ret)
Secretary Margie Argo, LTC, USAR (Ret)
Treasurer Doug Markham, CPT, USN (Ret)
Past Pres. Wes Cox, Col, USA (Ret)
Director J.D. Crawford, Col, USA (Ret)
Director Mark Melanson, Col USA (Ret)
Director Bob Barefield, Col USA (Ret)
Director Richard McKinley, CPT USAF (Ret)
Chaplain Mac Chandler, LTC, USA (Ret)
Legislative Affairs Eless Brown, Col USA
Personal Affairs Anne Hartline
Surviving Spouse Liaison Donna Martin
Newsletter Linda DeMarco, LTC. USA (Ret)

Statement of Publication

Officer's Call is the newsletter of the Greater Birmingham Chapter—Military Officers Association of America. It is published once each month to inform the membership of issues and activities of interest to all.

GBC MOAA is a non-profit 501(c)19 entity in the state of Alabama organized to represent the membership and to support the activities of the Alabama Council and MOAA National.

MOAA and its affiliated chapters and councils are non-partisan.

Advertising contained in the newsletter is not endorsed by MOAA or its affiliate the Greater Birmingham Chapter, and does not represent any recommendation to the membership. Opinions expressed in articles contained herein are not necessarily those of the membership as a whole or the Chapter. Questions should be directed to newsletter@moaabirmingham.org.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.² (This was the first census that took place while^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.)³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born,⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told

May God bless you, your family, the men, and women serving in our military today, and our veteran's; may He bless the leadership of our great State; and may He continue to bless these United States of America.

Mac Chandler
LTC, IN, U.S. Army (Ret)'



NOVEMBER'S ACTIVITIES

National Veterans Award Dinner



Wes Cox receiving award



MOAA MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Ret. Lt. Col. Gene Cushman

If you met Gene Cushman, you would never guess he was 101 years old. Mid 80s maybe, but with his thick silver hair and tall stature, only his birthday of Sept. 24, 1920, confirms his actual age.

Ret. Lt. Col. Gene Cushman 1942-1969, of the U.S. Air Force, served as a pilot and pilot instructor in the early 1940's during World War II.

He began flying when he was attending Baylor School in Chattanooga. An instructor let him fly for \$3 per hour, so he used the \$10 per month his father sent him to get in three hours of flight time. At 20 years old, Cushman headed to San Antonio for preflight training then on to Fort Worth for primary flight training. He flew the PT-19, BT-13, and BT-15, graduating from flight training in 1943. Ranked 2LT, his next assignment was in Waycross, Georgia.

"I wanted to be a fighter pilot," Cushman said. "At Waycross, I was trained in how to fly in formation. They also taught gunnery, because if you're a fighter pilot and can't shoot, you're worthless."

"I flew 56 different airplanes, 42 were military and the others were civilian," he said. "My favorite planes were the P-51 and the P-40. I never had a crash in all my years, never even dented an airplane."

After a 27-year career, Cushman retired from the Air Force and headed back to the U.S. and began his next chapter working in the insurance business. He worked for Protective Life and became a top-level salesman. He retired at age 80 and spent time traveling and playing golf. For more information:

<https://280living.com/people/flying-high/>

Application for Membership/Renewal – Greater Birmingham Chapter MOAA (Please print or type)

First Name MI Last Name Grade Rank Preferred Name Name of Spouse

Branch of Service: Army Air Force Navy Marines Coast Guard Other: _____

Status: Active Duty Retired National Guard Reserve Former Member Surviving Spouse

Mailing Address City State Zip Code

Telephone #: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Email Address: _____

National MOAA Membership Number: _____ National Membership Type: Basic Premium Life

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Renewal or New Membership (membership runs by calendar year)

Regular Membership or Surviving Spouse: \$20/year \$35/2 years \$50/3 years

Supporting Membership (\$50) or Sustaining Membership (\$100)

ROTC Affiliation (electronic communications only – no cost)



Mail this form to Greater Birmingham Chapter MOAA, P.O. Box 530153, Birmingham, AL 35253



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Still No Budget and No NDAA for FY 2022: Here's Why It Matters by Allison Reilly and Brenden McMahon

The last year Congress and the White House enacted the necessary legislation on time to fully fund the government for the upcoming fiscal year was for FY 1997. FY 2022 started like every other year since then, with no budget and the need for a continuing resolution (CR) to ensure the government kept its doors open. Missing the Oct. 1 deadline has tangible consequences: Implementation of new programs is delayed, DoD and other federal agencies cannot modify or discontinue existing programs, and agency leaders begin the new fiscal year with the burden of an unpredictable budget. Even if Congress passes the necessary legislation the damage has already been done. MOAA has long advocated for Congress to address their habitual reliance on continuing resolutions in lieu of passing the annual budget and NDAA on time. Increased party division, political grandstanding, the decline of military experience in Congress, and other environmental factors have only worsened these two decades-long trends.

2023 Could Bring Largest Military Pay Raise in Decades. But Is It Enough? By Mark Belinsky

The Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) unmasked its third-quarter [Employment Cost Index \(ECI\) figures](#) for private-sector wages and salaries Oct. 29, giving a glimpse at the pay raise military members likely will receive at the start of 2023. The 4.6% figure, if it holds, would be the largest raise since a 5% hike in 2002, but will it hold, and even if it does, will it be enough? MOAA closely tracks ECI reports because, by statute, military pay raises are tied to the index unless the administration or Congress intervenes to change the law, as they did by cutting the raise from 2014 to 2016. The military pay raise fell a total of 2.6 percentage points behind ECI those three years. It's tracked with ECI since then, including this year – the 2020 ECI benchmark of 2.7% is part of both the House and Senate versions of the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), and the final compromise bill will all but certainly include that figure when it heads to the president's desk for signature. The gap created in 2014-2016 has contributed to some alarming problems. Since that time, uniformed families have experienced soaring spousal unemployment rates, significant shortages of childcare capacity across installations, increased out-of-pocket PCS costs, and a growing demand for food banks and pantries on base. With a looming \$3 trillion deficit, and large infrastructure and social welfare bills on the table, appropriations will be a challenging environment for the next few years. Lawmakers are already discussing flat DoD budgets and will surely look for savings through personnel costs in the future. As DoD looks to protect modernization priorities, some lawmakers are very concerned about junior uniformed families. Vigilantly monitoring military pay and protecting service-earned benefits will require MOAA's continued commitment and focus.

Women Who Serve Pay Too Much for Uniforms by Mark Belinsky

The Military FATIGUES Act of 2021, recently introduced by Sens. Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.) and Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), finally seeks to correct the problem of uniform cost disparity. In some cases, women are paying almost twice as much for the same uniform item as their male counterparts. The Act is straightforward legislation that will require DoD to provide a report to establish consistency across the services and identify how to reduce out-of-pocket costs. MOAA remains committed to improving conditions for those in uniform by supporting legislation like the FATIGUES Act for inclusion into the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

Chapter dues renewals

Chapter dues renewals are in full swing, and we have until the end of the year to renew everybody coming due. A lot of our members renew online. The national MOAA website dues renewal process is fast, easy, and secure at <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx>

The goal is 100% chapter renewal

There are a few left who have yet to renew for the upcoming 2022 calendar year. Time is running short. To keep from forgetting, please go ahead and renew as soon as possible. Courtesy reminders will be sent out to those who have not yet renewed by the day after Thanksgiving. GBC aligns dues renewals to each calendar year.

Please note: If you are not coming due at the end of December, you can still pay ahead of time and acquire years in addition to what you already have. Before the rules change on this, you can renew with GBC for more than one year at a time even before coming due. For example, in December of last year Major Ego selected the 2-year chapter dues option for \$35. He is therefore not coming due at the end of this year. Despite this, Major Ego decided to pay \$50 today for an additional 3-years of chapter dues using his extra COLA money. That means the next time he comes due will be 4 years from now, and he also saved on the reduced cost available to our members using the 2-year and 3-year chapter dues renewal option.

A significant proportion of GBC members do in fact select the multi-year chapter dues payment option from the dropdown menu. As you know, chapter dues are \$20 for a single year. However, you can cut cost on chapter dues by selecting the \$35 for 2 years option, or the \$50 for 3 years option. Thanks to all for supporting our local chapter each year, and those who pay years ahead on chapter dues.

At this time, you may also mail chapter dues payments to –

Greater Birmingham Chapter MOAA
P.O. Box 530153
Birmingham, Alabama 35253

Most of our regular members are already national MOAA Life members.

Continuous chapter membership is important, and the top priority for December is renewal of members coming due before the end of the year. Thank you for helping our chapter with continuous membership.

Michael A. Walker
LTC(Ret), USA
2VP/GBCMOAA Membership Chair
zxywalk@gmail.com
contact@MOAABirmingham.org



There's a Facebook Group for That!

By: Nancy Mullen

Are you wondering where to go to get information about issues affecting surviving spouses and families? Are you looking for a supportive, nonjudgmental group to assist you in learning and keeping up to date on benefits and legislation impacting our surviving families? Need a pick-me-up or to connect with others who share similar interests as you? Join the [MOAA Surviving Spouses and Friends Facebook page!](#)

Who can join? Our membership includes not only surviving spouses but also our families, military spouses, council, and chapter surviving spouse liaisons, advocates, and others with an interest in issues that impact the survivor community, regardless of MOAA membership. Particularly in these times of COVID-19 restrictions, we all need a way to connect with others whom we have common interests.

This is a private group, and there are no fees or dues. You are required to answer a couple of brief questions and be approved by the administrators of the group to join. These questions are designed to ensure we provide a safe place to share information and connect with other like-minded people as well as protect the group from those who do not have a legitimate interest in our issues.

The group's rules are simple, and members may be removed at the discretion of the administrators. When you sign up the dos and don'ts are provided and are meant to create a courteous and respectful environment:

We intend this page to be not only an efficient way to disseminate information on benefits, proposed legislation, advocacy efforts, etcetera, but also a way for all of us to connect and uplift one another. Feel free to share an encouraging or funny meme and pictures of your loved ones and pets and post comments supporting each other.

Our group is expanding, and we would be happy to welcome more members. We would love to get to know each of you and look forward to your comments on our page.

GREATER BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER INFORMATION

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Traudy Richmond	1
Wade Humphries	9
Esther Merriam	9
Kathleen Ladner	14
Gigi McGraw	16
Sandy McEwen	18
Greg Vitalis	20
Stella Gamble	21
Joy Toffel	21
Mike Stripling	21
Marilyn Bassett	27
Ann Langley	27
Mark Rubino	28
Mamie Flynn	31
Joan Bailey	31
Lin Musgrove	31

MOAA on-line photo directory

Below is a sample of our chapter on-line photo directory, available via a private link to our members only on our website. It can be found at: <http://moaabirmingham.org/#>. You will need to request a log-in/join if you have not already in order to access the "Members Only" page. If you and/or your spouse do not have and would like to have your photo(s) in the directory, please send a selfie or photo to Donna Martin at: donnaeamaemartin@aol.com.

	Killian, III, Sam P. 4545 Magnolia Drive Birmingham, AL 35242 Email: spkiii@bellsouth.net Spouse: Martha T. Killian marthak36@gmail.com	USN Ret CDR Life 205-408-7721 (h) 205-903-6638 (c) BD: 8/28 BD: 11/10	
	Lehman, Donald D. (Don) 1204 Greystone Parc Drive Birmingham, AL 35242 Email: don.lehman1@gmail.com Spouse: Patricia A. Lehman islandmomma1@gmail.com	USMC Ret LTCOL Life 404-441-3882 (c) BD: 7/10 BD: 11/20 404-725-7152 (c)	

Click on these to
access website
and/or Facebook



[Website](#)



Greater Birmingham MOAA Coins

The new Greater Birmingham Chapter MOAA Challenge Coins are now available to order for only \$10 per coin! This coin will make a wonderful gift and must-have for any challenge coin collection. You can also order coins by contacting: LTC (ret) Don Lehman at don.lehman1@gmail.com. Display cases are available for \$1 each, and orders to be mailed should add \$1 per coin.



WILLIAM C. McDONALD III
Shadow Tiger Press
billy@shadowtiger.org
1401 Blenheim Place
Birmingham AL 35213
(205) 790-7575

the Shadow Tiger

Billy McDonald

Wingman to
Chennault



WILLIAM C. McDONALD III
BARBARA L. EVENSON

RLC
RESORT LIFESTYLE
COMMUNITIES

Cahaba Ridge

Affordable Resort-Style Living Made Simple.

Cahaba Ridge is Vestavia Hills' magnificent, all-inclusive independent living community. We take care of everything with one monthly price and no buy-in fee so you can enjoy the good things in life.



One monthly price includes:

- Month-to-month lease with no buy-in fees
- Live-in managers
- Signature Freedom Dining program
- Social activities & wellness programs
- 24/7 Fitness center
- 24/7 Medical Alert System
- Room service and chef's pantry
- Weekly housekeeping
- Concierge & Valet Parking Services

Call to schedule a private tour and discover the benefits of resort-style living today!

205-259-7758



3090 Healthy Way • Vestavia Hills, AL 35243 • CahabaRidgeRetirement.com





YOU HONORED US WITH YOUR SERVICE.

Now let us honor you.

WE ARE PROUD TO SERVE VETERANS more than any other provider. In fact, we're part of the Dignity Memorial® network, the largest network of funeral homes and cemeteries in North America.

As a member of the Dignity Memorial network, we know more about obtaining everything that is owed to you, including monetary burial benefits, a

government-issued marker, presidential certificate and much more. We are also able to offer a FREE Veterans Planning Guide that includes worksheets and valuable information.

Regardless of whether you choose to be buried in a national or private cemetery, we can help you receive everything you have earned.

We invite you to call us for more information.



RIDOUT'S VALLEY CHAPEL

HOMEWOOD

Lt. Col. (Ret) Mac Chandler, Family Service Counselor

205-879-3401 RidoutsValleyChapel.com

Donald Lehman
LtCol USMCR (retired)

Consulting Petroleum Geologist
AAPG CPG #4560

Lifetime memberships:
MOAABirmingham.org
AlabamaMarine.org
VVA.org - DAV.org

Cell: (404) 441-3882
don.lehman1@gmail.com

Still serving veterans – Once a Marine always a Marine



**PGA TOUR
SUPERSTORE**

Jerry Ingram
General Manager

165-A Inverness Plaza | Birmingham, AL 35242
O: 205-440-4200 | C: 205-218-9772
jingram@pgatss.com@pgatss.com



**PGA TOUR
SUPERSTORE**

Joe Stephens
Assistant General Manager

165-A Inverness Plaza | Birmingham, Alabama 35242
O: 205-440-4200 | C: 205-209-1138
jstephens1@pgatss.com



**PGA TOUR
SUPERSTORE**

Tony Marino
Tournament & Events Marketing Manager

C: 205-296-2271
amarino@pgatss.com

145 1st Avenue West, Alabaster, Alabama



Hours

Thursday 4–10PM

Friday 4–11PM

Saturday 3–11PM

Sunday Closed

Monday Closed

Tuesday 4–10PM

Wednesday 4–10PM

Veteran Owned and Operated



Zoom meeting December