



I hope all is well and that we can get past the Delta variant soon. We will Zoom our October meeting once again and hopefully be back to live meetings at Danberry before the end of the year. We have had some great guest zoom speakers and have another one planned for October. Our own Eldon Woodie will be presenting on the "Missing in America" project, which he is heavily involved in. It should be very interesting, so please plan to tune in. More information and the Zoom link will be sent out soon. The meeting will be October 7th at 3:00 PM.

Patricia and I will be attending the MOAA National's annual awards banquet in Washington DC on October 15th and 16th, where our Chapter will once again be presented with the 5-star Level of Excellence (LOE) award. Plus, we get to witness our own Donna Martin being honored as the National Spouse Liaison of the year. A great honor and we are all very proud of her. She has spent many countless hours behind the scenes, helping to keep our chapter running at a high level. All of you members make our chapter what it is and I am very grateful for the help in receiving this recognition for our chapter.

I look forward to seeing everyone's smiling faces on the October Zoom! Stay safe, be well and see you soon.

Respectfully,
Don

Volume 121 Issue 10 October 2021

Officers' Call

- President* Don Lehman, LTC, USMC (Ret)
1st VP Harold Coghlan, CW4 USA (Ret)
2nd VP Michael Walker, LTC, USA (Ret)
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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

Fall is in the air, candy corn is for sale in all the stores, pumpkins are showing up all over the place, and Christmas decorations are out at Hobby Lobby. This can only mean one thing: it's October! I really love this month because it is one of the most beautiful seasons to be living in Birmingham Alabama. Those folks up in Vermont and Maine got nothing on us here in Alabama! Do they even play football up there?

There are a couple of important dates on the October calendar: October 11 is Columbus Day, unless of course you are woke; in that case, you now call it Indigenous Peoples Day. The 16th is Boss's Day. Since most of us are now retired, this day should probably be Spouse's Day (or in my house, Yes Dear Day!). Then there is every kid's second favorite holiday: Halloween. It falls on a Sunday this year, which may mean that many communities will celebrate it on Saturday, but who knows.

A favorite Bible verse for me for Halloween, surprisingly, is Hebrews 13:2. This verse says, "Do not neglect hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it." I absolutely love seeing the little ones in their cute costumes, some so shy, some so bold. What a fun evening. I have another favorite verse for this time of year: Matthew 19:14. The disciples were turning away the children who were coming to Jesus, "but Jesus said, "Leave the children alone, and do not forbid them to come to me: for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Friends, while our federal government and leadership often appears to be a Nightmare on Elm Street, remember these two verses above, and pray for the children of this country. Pray for our service members, and their families. Pray for our friends in MOAA. Lift our wonderful and brave "Mee Maw "and protect her, and the state of Alabama, and continually pray for our United States of America.

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



COLUMBUS
DAY

A 3D graphic featuring the words "COLUMBUS" and "DAY" in large, white, block letters with blue shadows. The text is set against a light blue background with a pattern of white stars and red and white stripes, reminiscent of the American flag. The letters are slightly tilted and have a textured, brush-stroke-like appearance.

GBC MOAA VETERAN OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Col Wes Cox USA (ret) – Our GBC MOAA Veteran of the Year!

Congratulations to Wes Cox, our immediate past president, who led our organization for three years. He will be honored at the annual Veteran's Day dinner and awards ceremony on the evening of November 10th. Tickets are available for purchase per below:

The dinner will be held at the Sheraton Downtown Birmingham Ballroom on November 10, 2021 beginning at 6:00pm. The Chapter will again sponsor 2 tables of 8. Tickets are \$45 each. If you would like tickets contact Wes Cox at 803-761-2176 or email wescox72@charter.net.

OCTOBER SPEAKER

October 7th – Chapter Zoom meeting at 3:00 PM

Topic – Missing in America project

by Col Eldon Woodie, USAF (retired)

Eldon Woodie, one of our chapter members, will present an interesting talk on the “Missing in America” (MIA) project for our October zoom meeting. Some of you may remember Eldon as a former chapter member, who must have gotten tired of moving around and has settled once again here in the Birmingham area; and hopefully for good!

Col Woodie is retired USAF. He commanded the AFJROTC program at Thompson HS, Alabaster, AL from 2007-11, then was the Asst Director South Florida National Cemetery, Director Fort Bliss National Cemetery, Asst Director Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery, Director Alabama National Cemetery and Fort Mitchell National Cemetery. He retired again in 2019 but is keeping very busy as the state Coordinator for the Alabama Missing in America Project and as 1st Vice Chairman of Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery.

His presentation will explain the purpose of the MIA Project, which is to locate, identify and intern the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations. Their mission is to provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes. A PowerPoint presentation and short video will be shown. A brief update on the Alabama National Cemetery and review of military burial benefits will also be covered. Be sure to tune in!





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

(visit Legislative Action at <http://www.moaa.org>)

Montgomery and Dependent GI Bill Payments Are About to Increase by Jim Absher (Originally appeared on Military.com)

Beginning October 1, the fiscal year 2022 monthly GI Bill payment rates will rise an average of 2.6% over last year's rates. The annual cost-of-living allowance is being rolled out for all GI Bill programs except the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which received its increase on Aug. 1. The increased payments will be seen in the Nov. 1, 2021, payment.

Reach Out to Your Lawmakers and Support Military Survivors by Kevin Lilly

MOAA supported legislation designed to benefit military survivors in the days after their loss could be added to the House version of the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) as a floor amendment. The Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act ([H.R. 2214](#)) would prevent the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) from immediately recouping any of a retiree's final retirement check; instead, survivors would be able to pay back any amount owed over 12 months, and would have the ability to request debt forgiveness. MOAA and The Military Coalition, a group of organizations collectively representing nearly 5.5 million members of the military community, [have supported the legislation](#).

Report Calling for Troop and Retiree Pay Cuts Is Grossly Misleading by MOAA Staff

A recently published report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a nonpartisan think tank, has repackaged old, outdated stats to argue military personnel costs are too high and "unsustainable." The author's suggestions include cutting annual pay raises, putting more money into skill-targeted bonuses, shifting more health costs to military beneficiaries, and considering further housing allowance reductions, among others.

The report may have a 2021 date on it, but it is a bald-faced rehash of statistics from almost a decade ago, comparing personnel cost changes between 2000 and 2012. And its recommendations are the same wrongheaded suggestions MOAA has been fighting for decades by presenting Congress with more relevant figures and highlighting the true costs of service. The figures used in the CSIS report were grossly misleading in 2012 and are even more so now.

The "unsustainable" argument crumbles under objective scrutiny. MOAA's research shows the percentage of the defense budget made up of personnel and health care costs remains stable – 30% to 32%, or lower – and has remained so over many decades. In other words, they have been the exact opposite of "unsustainable."

Congress recently passed new, significant cuts to military retirement benefits for 2018 and subsequent entrants to fund new benefits for those who leave service short of a career. In addition, Congress enacted new health care fees for younger retirees and significant pharmacy copay hikes for the vast majority of retired beneficiaries. For active duty personnel, Congress imposed a 5% cut in housing allowances. If our nation persists in again going down the well-trodden route of successive, incremental cuts to military compensation, none of us should be surprised when crises of the past reemerge as the next war or next crisis only to find our uniformed services unready. Fighting to preserve these earned benefits remains at the core of MOAA's mission.

Recruiter's Corner

Chapter Membership Report

The fall membership renewal drive is finally here. Please go ahead and renew your GBC dues at this time. It is pretty easy. **The goal is 100% renewal of current members.**

It is hard to believe that next week, we will already be less than ninety days out from 2022, but it is true.

To start the GBC renewal season, this message counts as the first individual chapter dues reminder to go out between now and then. Sometime late in the month of October and into November, a courtesy reminder email will go out for all those GBC individuals with upcoming 2022 chapter dues. After that, for those we have not heard back from in a while, you will likely get a reminder phone call.

If you have not gone online to renew yet, please respond kindly to these various personal outreach efforts. We are trying our best to keep you.

There are 2 primary ways to renew membership:

1. You can mail payment to the following GBC MOAA physical address:

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

2. The easiest method to renew is online at <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx>

Dues Options

Until it changes, GBC has three dues options:

- 1 Year dues are \$20
- 2 Year dues are \$35
- 3 Year chapter dues are \$50 and is the best renewal bargain

It is always a good time to consider upgrading to Premium or even Life membership with National MOAA.

Thank you to those who have shown continuous support.

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



Resources for Caregivers

By: Barbara Ann Bowman

Each caregiving journey is unique. My role of caregiver for my husband expanded from not only getting him to medical care but also making legal decisions in his stead. Common issues that affect most caregivers include navigating VA procedures, obtaining help with specific disabilities and diseases, learning how to deal with dementia, organizing paperwork, and knowing what legal documents are needed with regard to consent issues, legal capacity, and decision making.

During my journey as a caregiver, I found the following resources to be beneficial:

- **MOAA and VA.** Talk with members of your local chapter, join the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter whose outreach includes current spouses (mssvc02@gmail.com), and take a look at pertinent [MOAA publications](#). Veterans service organizations will help with disability claims, requests for respite care, and pay for long term care, as well as other benefits. The VA and MOAA have planning brochures and guidebooks to help you collect and organize necessary paperwork.
- **Health agencies.** Search for caregiver resources on the [National Institutes of Health](#) and [Department of Health and Human Services](#) websites to find helpful information.

Disease-specific associations. Contact organizations like the [Alzheimer's Association](#), the [ALS Association](#), and the [American Heart Association](#). These groups have educational information and support groups available to caregivers.
- **Military family support groups.** [TAPS](#), [Gold Star Wives of America](#), and [American Gold Star Mothers](#), and others provide a wide variety of support services to military families and friends.
- **Respite care.** Organizations such as the [Elizabeth Dole Foundation's Hidden Heroes](#) and the [Yellow Ribbon Fund](#) provide resources and support specifically tailored to military caregivers.

[RELATED: [How Military, Veteran Caregivers Can Apply for Well-Earned Respite Relief](#)]

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, caregivers need to take care of themselves. Eat healthful foods, stay active, ask for help, and pamper yourself. Like the pre-flight instruction says, "Put your face mask on first." If you don't take care of yourself, you won't be able to take care of your loved one.

GREATER BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER INFORMATION

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Preston Huddleston	1
David Lyles	1
Vicki Edwards	2
Bill Satterfield	9
Emma Vaiton	13
Margie Argo	16
Barbara Stone	21
Janice Houck	22
Reuben Melton	27
Dorsey Ingram	31
Christy Spruiell	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: donnamaemartin@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)



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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

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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.

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We invite you to call us for more information.



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

205-879-3401 RidoutsValleyChapel.com

Donald Lehman

LtCol USMCR (retired)

Consulting Petroleum Geologist

AAPG CPG #4560

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don.lehman1@gmail.com

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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



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Tony Marino
Tournament & Events Marketing Manager

C: 205-296-2271
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Hours

Thursday 4–10PM

Friday 4–11PM

Saturday 3–11PM

Sunday Closed

Monday Closed

Tuesday 4–10PM

Wednesday 4–10PM

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Zoom meeting Oct 7