

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM MOAA BHAM
REMEMBER OUR SERVICE MEN & WOMEN





Enjoy the holidays!

I can't believe the year is almost over; it has been an eventful one; new president, new government soon and lots more to come.

November was a busy month; we started off by having four of us volunteer for the Alabama Memorial Park brick dedication ceremony. I would like to thank Donna Martin, Randall Roberts and James Oliver again for helping. The next Memorial Park ceremony will be the Sunday before Memorial Day weekend 2025. Some of us attended the Veteran's Day dinner on November 10th and celebrated our Dan Phifer receiving the MOAA Veteran of the Year award; photos of the same herein. It was a great event and congratulations again to Dan and his family! We enjoyed Col Jay Skinner speaking to us again about the National Guard for our November meeting and of course, the Veterans Day parade on the 12th. We have Ray Reach with us for our December 5th meeting, presenting a festive holiday program. So be sure to RSVP and look for to seeing you there.

In January, we will have a change of command with Harold Coghlan replacing me as your president. It will be one month short of a four-year term; we survived COVID and many other eventful things! Niki Sepsas has accepted to be our January speaker with the topic to be determined. Also, since the first Thursday of January is the 2nd, please take note that we have decided to move our January meeting to Thursday January 9th!

Chapter dues renewal notices will be sent out soon; National MOAA has had issues with their new online payment system and should be resolved next week. You will be notified via individual email if you need to renew.

The chapter made a nice donation to the local Toys for Tots program and will go to purchase toys for children here in Birmingham. Thanks again to all who participated. It's time for family and fun over the next few months, so enjoy, be safe and see you soon!

Respectfully,
Don & Patricia

Volume 124 Issue 12 December 2024
Greater Birmingham Chapter
Military Officers Association of America

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:* Donna Martin
- Past Pres:* Wes Cox, Col, USA (Ret)
- Director:* Mark Melanson, Col USA (Ret)
- Director:* Jeff Newton, BG, ANG (Ret)
- Director:* Doug Markham, CPT, USN (Ret)
- Director:* Vacant
- Chaplain:* Dan Phifer, LTC, USA (Ret)
- Legislative Affairs:* Mark Rubino, LDCR, USN (Ret)
- Personal Affairs:* Anne Hartline
- Surviving Spouse Liaison:* Lynn Phifer
- Newsletter:* Jimmy Langley, 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.



Website

MEETING
December 5, 2024

Danberry at Inverness
235 Inverness Center Drive
Birmingham, Al 35242
205-443-9500
Social 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:30 pm

MENU

Roast Beef w/Gravy
Herb Roasted Potatoes
Squash Casserole
Tossed Salad
Cheese Garlic Biscuits
-White Chocolate Blueberry Bread Pudding

Online Dinner cost will be \$25 per person.**

**Meal cost at publishing was unknown and may be slightly more than \$25 to us, so a donation may be requested for the difference

Reservations must be made by noon Monday, Dec 2, 2024.

Preferred method:

RSVP and pay by credit/debit card at:

[December 5, 2024 - Reservation and Payment - Cheddar Up](#)

or alternate method:

Email / call Donna Martin at contact@moaabirmingham.org or 205-876-6274.

Entertainment:



Ray Reach
Professional vocalist, and pianist

Come join us for a night of fun and entertainment! Ray Reach will be singing holiday songs and playing the piano for us. He is a Birmingham native and nationally renowned for his musical talents. So don't miss it and hope to see you there. Read more about Ray and hear some of his songs at:

<https://rayreach.com/home>

RECRUITER'S CORNER

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Eligibility: Honorably serving, former, or retired Warrants, Chief Warrants, or commissioned officers of the armed forces (Regular, Reserve, National Guard) as well as current, former, or retired USCG, NOAA, USPHS commissioned officers and surviving spouses from all branches are eligible to join MOAA. If you know of anyone who may qualify to belong to the chapter, have them contact us or better yet, invite them to an upcoming meeting.

Dues: Until it changes, 1-Year dues are still only \$20 (2 Years = \$35). The 3-Year chapter renewal option is the best bargain at \$50.

To join or renew, please complete the application/renew form below. Unfortunately, National MOAA's online renewal system has been undergoing an upgrade and is not available yet for our use. You can still join National MOAA online and or use the fillable PDF form on our website page link below.

<https://www.moaabirmingham.org/membership/>

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Zig Ziglar wrote a little piece about BEING A DIFFERENCE. I think it is worth reading!

Most people are familiar with the fact that on October 8, 1871, fire broke out in Chicago and claimed more than 200 lives and destroyed more than 7,000 buildings. But many people do not realize that on the same day, fire broke out in Peshtigo, Wisconsin. That blaze claimed an estimated 1,500 lives and scorched 1.28 million acres of timberland. The news media of the day were centered in and around Chicago, whereas Peshtigo was small and off the beaten path. Consequently, the attention was minimal. But I think all of us would agree that the Peshtigo fire was significant. Because it didn't get the publicity, however, very few people are aware of it today.

That's the way it frequently is in life... Literally thousands of people are doing significant things every day to help a neighbor, a homeless individual, or those who do not have fuel to heat their homes or food for their tables. These silent angels of mercy do these things because they want to do them and because they believe they are their brothers' keepers. The joy and satisfaction of doing something with no thought of recognition, reward, or return are all the pay these unsung heroes want. They do their good deeds for unselfish reasons.

Without them, who knows what state of affairs our world would be in? I certainly don't, but I can guarantee you one thing -- it would be much worse than it is today. Be a *difference maker* for others and it will make a difference in your life.

Blessings to you and yours especially this December!

Chaplain Dan Phifer
U.S. Army Retired

MOAA speakers for 2024:

- **December 5** – Holiday program. Ray Reach, vocalist/pianist.
- **January 9** - Niki Sepsas **Tentative TBD**

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

To see where each member of Congress ranks on the Lugar Center's Bipartisan Index, visit <https://www.thelugarcenter.org/ourwork-Bipartisan-Index.html>.

Please visit the MOAA Legislative Action Center for information on these and other issues and how you can help make a difference for our service members and veterans: <https://moaa.quorum.us/>.

Caring for those who care for veterans

November was National Family Caregivers Month. There are over 14 million military and non-traditional veteran caregivers in the U.S., representing 5.5 percent of the adult population. Most of the veterans they care for have a chronic condition and/or vision/hearing impairment, and 40 percent have a diagnosed mental health condition or substance use disorder (compared with 24 percent of civilian care recipients).

Across all caregivers, 80% spend up to 30 hours per week providing care. Military/veteran caregivers provide services valued at a minimum of \$119 billion, but they spend approximately \$8,500 in out-of-pocket expenses because of their caregiving, forgo \$4,522 in earnings, and are mostly not accessing benefits that they are likely entitled to receive. A greater proportion of military/veteran caregivers who provide most care remotely met criteria for excessive burden, high stress, and depression, compared with those who provide most care in person.

The authors of the recent RAND report, *America's Military and Veteran Caregivers: Hidden Heroes Emerging from the Shadows*, found that only approximately two-thirds of military/veteran caregivers felt that health care providers did not seek their input or listen to them about the care recipient. Also, one-third of military/veteran caregivers reported experiencing hassles in health care, such as having to remind staff to do things for the care recipient or experiencing delays in completing paperwork.

Elizabeth Dole Home- and Community-Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act

The Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act ([H.R. 8371](#)) sits stalled in the House, with no corresponding bill in the Senate. On December 5, 2023, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Elizabeth Dole Home- and Community-Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act (H.R. 542, 2023). This proposed legislation would expand home and community-based care services to veterans, including raising the cap on how much VA can pay to cover home care costs. It would also provide additional respite services to caregivers of veterans receiving VA home care programs.

Help MOAA drive Congress to take decisive action. [Reach out to your lawmakers](#) today and urge them to pass the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act.

MOAA has partnered with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation to provide an online resource outlining legal and financial support available to multiple generations of caregivers, *Tips for Lifelong Caregiving*: <https://www.moaa.org/micro/caregiver/homepage/caregiver-homepage/>

LCDR Mark Rubino, USN (Ret)

**Legislative
Action Center**



Four ways to get there:

Direct link: [MOAA.quorum.us](https://moaa.quorum.us)

Text "MOAA" to 1-855-547-6921

Go to: [MOAA.org](https://moaa.org) > Advocacy > Legislative Action Center

Or scan the QR code to the left with your phone:

Then follow the instructions on how to register. Each of your devices, i.e., phone, laptop, iPad, must be registered separately. It's a great way to keep up with all MOAA's advocacy issues, plus links to all your congressional representatives.

Link to MOAA's new Legislative Action Center and FAQ's:

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/advocacy/meet-moaas-new-legislative-action-center/>



MILITARY SPOUSE'S CORNER

The Poinsettia

Poinsettia is a commercially important flowering plant species of the diverse spurge family Euphorbiaceae. Indigenous to Mexico and Central America, the poinsettia was first described by Europeans in 1834. It is particularly well known for its red and green foliage and is widely used in Christmas floral displays. It derives its common English name from Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first United States minister to Mexico who is credited with introducing the plant to the United States in the 1820's. Poinsettias are shrubs or small trees with heights of 0.6 to 4 meters (2.0 to 13.1 feet). Though often stated to be toxic, poinsettia is not dangerous to pets or children. Exposure to the plant, even consumption, most often results in nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. They became associated with the Christmas holiday and are popular seasonal decorations. Every year in the US, approximately 70 million poinsettias are sold within a six-week period.

I want to share with you a poem I found entitled, "The Poinsettia". The author is unknown.
I will start today serenely *With a true and noble aim;*
I will give unselfish service *To enrich another's name.*
I will speak a word of courage *To a soul enslaved by fear;*
I will dissipate drab discord *With the sunshine of good cheer.*
I will be sincere and humble *In the work I do;*
I will praise instead of censure *And see the good in you.*

As we begin to prepare for Hannukah and Christmas, we will decorate our homes, offices, schools and places of worship. Poinsettias will be used. Let's look at this holiday plant as a beautiful reminder of what the true meaning of this season is as we celebrate with family and friends.

Sincerely,
Lynn M. Phifer,
Surviving Spouses Liaison

Finally went on a date everything was great till she asked me boxers or briefs I said depends ..She just turned around and left.

**WITH ALL MY ACHES
AND PAINS I'M
AFRAID I HAVE THAT
CHINESE DISEASE...
"YUNG NO MO"**

ENGLISH LESSON

Tsunami — T is silent
Honest — H is silent
Psychology — P is silent
Knife — K is silent
Wife — Husband is silent
Class dismissed ...

GREATER BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER INFORMATION

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Wade Humphries	9
Esther Merriam	9
Lisa Phillips	12
Kathleen Ladner	14
Lynn Phifer	14
Stella Gamble	21
Joy Toffel	21
Mike Stripling	21
Marge Jeffries	24
Al Lassiter	25
Marilyn Bassett	27
Jerry Picantine	27
Ann Langley	27
Mark Rubino	28
Mamie Flynn	31
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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 gave 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: donnaemaartin@aol.com.

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

VETERAN'S DAY - LTC DAN PHIFER - MOAA BHAM VETERAN OF THE YEAR





APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

First Name (Preferred name) MI Last Name Rank / Grade Spouse

Member of National MOAA? Yes No Mem # (if known) _____

Branch of Service		Status	
<input type="checkbox"/> Army	<input type="checkbox"/> Marines	<input type="checkbox"/> Active Duty	<input type="checkbox"/> National Guard
<input type="checkbox"/> Air Force	<input type="checkbox"/> Navy	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> Former Member
<input type="checkbox"/> Coast Guard	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Reserve	<input type="checkbox"/> Surviving Spouse

Postal Address City State Zip Code Home Phone #:

Date of Birth Cell phone # Email Address

Member: _____

Spouse _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Local Membership (Greater Birmingham Chapter) runs by calendar year.

The remainder of your first calendar membership year is complimentary.

Following yearly membership dues: \$20/year \$35/2 years \$50/3 years)

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

Thank you for your support!



Meeting December 5, 2024