



Happy Thanksgiving

Our October 1 meeting featured an excellent presentation by Colonel David Mollahan, USMC (Ret), president of Marion Military Institute.

Our November 5 meeting will be held at the Danberry at 1800 hrs. Our own Colonel Mark Melanson, USA (Ret) will give his presentation, *Safari of Self*. Melanson will share adventures from Kenya's Lewa Wilderness Conservancy and reflect on its people, landscapes, and wildlife.

Please remember the National Veterans Day Dinner and the parade the following day. Chapter member Lt Col Jim Langley, USA (Ret), will be honored at the dinner. (see details inside)

I am thankful for our Greater Birmingham Chapter members and all you do for one another. I hope to see you at the November meeting and Veterans Day Dinner!

Our September 23 Ladies' Luncheon at Hoover Country Club was a great success. Audrey Atkins shared suggestions for preserving family memories through journaling.

Thank you for making our chapter welcoming to officers and spouses and strengthening our camaraderie and fellowship. Trish and I will be in Chile during the November meeting. Past president Don Lehman will lead in our absence, and we will be thinking of you.

Thank you for being a Birmingham MOAA Chapter member. Stay safe!

Respectfully yours,

Harold A. Coghlan
CW4, US Army (Ret)
Blessed to be your president

Volume 126 Issue 11 NOVEMBER 2026

Officers' Call

President: *Harold Coghlan, CW4 USA (Ret)*
1st VP: *vacant*
2nd VP: *vacant*
Secretary: *Margie Argo, LTC, USAR (Ret)*
Treasurer: *Donna Martin*
Membership: Trish Coghlan, 1LT, USA (Ret)
Past Pres: *Don Lehman, LTC, USMC (Ret)*
Director: *Mark Melanson, Col USA (Ret)*
Director: *Doug Markham, CPT, USN (Ret)*
Director: *James Oliver LTC, USA (Ret)*
Chaplain: *Dan Phifer, LTC, USA (Ret)*
Personal Affairs: *Vacant*
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.

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Website

November 5, 2026 Meeting

Danberry at Inverness
235 Inverness Center Drive
Birmingham, Al 35242
205-443-9500

Social 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:30 pm

MENU

Kebab chicken, tzatziki sauce,
Zorba the Greek salad,
Mediterranean potatoes,
rolls with butter,
sweet and unsweetened tea,
and peach cobbler for dessert

Dinner cost will be $25 per person.
Reservations must be made by noon Monday, November 2, 2026
$30 after deadline

Preferred method:
RSVP and pay by credit/debit card at:
(AND NOW YOU DO NOT PAY ANY CREDIT CARD FEES!)

https://november-2026-reservation-and-payment.cheddarup.com/

or alternate method:

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

The new chapter challenge coins. If you wish to purchase one, they are $15 each.

https://challenge-coin.cheddarup.com/



RECRUITER'S CORNER

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Your continued support is much appreciated and allows us to support veteran initiatives and issues at the local, state, and national levels. You may pay your GBC chapter dues via debit/credit card at: https://my.cheddarup.com/c/moaa-gbc-renewal/items?cart with NO credit card fees!

If you have any questions about your dues renewal or membership, please email us at contact@moaabirmingham.org. Please note, chapter dues are separate from national MOAA dues!
GBC Chapter dues are: 1-Year $20, 2-Years $35, 3-Years $50

MOAA eligibility: All honorably serving, former, or retired warrant/commissioned officers of the armed forces (Regular, Reserve, National Guard), as well as USCG, Space Force, NOAA, and USPHS. Surviving spouses are also eligible to join MOAA and our chapter. If you know of someone interested in MOAA and our chapter, have them contact us at contact@moaabirmingham.org or better yet, invite or bring them to a meeting. Note, you must be a National MOAA member, at least the FREE Basic membership, to belong to the local chapter.

To join or renew your MOAA membership, you may also print, complete, and return the paper application below to the address on the form. You may also join/renew online at: https://www.moaabirmingham.org/membership/

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

"Nobody wants to be average, do they?

Why do so many of us trudge down the middle lane of life?

Why do we race through a whole year, rip the month of December off the calendar and wonder what it's all been worth."

That is a quote from a book by Florence Littauer titled "It takes so little to be Above Average".
I am proud to be part of an organization which has served our nation as "Above Average" members of the United States Military.

We have learned what it takes to serve our nation honorably in the various capacities which God has put before us. We might call these opportunities to serve, help, enable, defend, support, repair, organize or lead. There are more action words, but these are just a few which we have all been caught up in at different times in our service to this beautiful country we call our America.

It takes so little, but it takes a lot of commitment to serve in some of those assignments we each had. Thanks to God for keeping us going in the right direction to serve our country honorably, with strong dedication, and His guidance to accomplish our mission. You are ABOVE AVERAGE! You have done the mission with true dedication. You are Above Average for sure!

In His Service,
Dan Phifer
Chaplain (LTC)
U.S. Army Retired

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

visit Legislative Action at http//www.moaa.org)

Legislative Action Center

MOAA REPORT

November 2026

Serving Those Who Have Served

November is a special month for those of us who have worn the uniform. Veterans Day gives us an opportunity to pause and remember the men and women who have served our nation, while also recognizing that military service does not end when we take off the uniform.

That is one of the reasons the **Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)** remains so important. MOAA continues to advocate for the benefits and earned rights of military officers, veterans, retirees, surviving spouses, and their families. The organization works at the national level to ensure that those who served are not forgotten when important decisions are made in Washington.

MOAA's work covers issues that affect our everyday lives, including military retired pay, health care, survivor benefits, veterans' benefits, and quality of life for military families. Through its legislative efforts and grassroots involvement, MOAA gives its members a voice on Capitol Hill.

As we observe Veterans Day this November, let us remember that military service comes in many forms. Some served during war, some during peace, some spent years on active duty, and others served their country through the Reserve or National Guard. Regardless of when or where we served, we share a common bond.

I encourage our members to continue supporting MOAA and to invite other retired and active-duty officers to learn more about our organization. Our strength comes from our membership and from our willingness to stand together.

This Veterans Day, let us remember those who served before us, honor those serving today, and make sure that the promises made to America's veterans are kept.

Legislative Action

Four ways to get there:
Direct link: MOAA.quorum.us
Text "MOAA" to 1-855-547-6921
Go to: MOAA.org > Advocacy > Legislative Action Center
Or scan the QR code to the left with your phone:

MILITARY SPOUSE'S CORNER







Twenty ladies gathered at Hoover Country Club on Wednesday, September 23, for the Surviving Spouses Luncheon. Hosted twice yearly by the Greater Birmingham Chapter of MOAA Ladies Committee, the event brings together surviving spouses, member spouses, and women military retirees for fellowship.

Margie Argo created the autumn décor, with help from Nancy Barefield and Heidi Mueninghoff. Dottie Garner, Cynthia Cox, and Lynn Phifer served on the planning committee, while Donna Martin managed registration and logistics. Nancy also shared a moving tribute to Vietnam veterans and all who have served, then offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Guest speaker Audrey McDonald Atkins is an award-winning Southern writer and author of *They Call Me Orange Juice*. Her work has appeared in *The Washington Post*, *The Bitter Southerner*, *This is Alabama*, *It's a Southern Thing*, and *Mobile Bay Magazine*. She also teaches creative writing, hosts People Reading Prose in Bars, and produces the Alabama State Council on the Arts podcast *Arts Fell on Alabama*.

In "Journaling Your Way Through Family, Faith, and the Future," Audrey encouraged attendees to reflect on their lives and aspirations—and to write down their dreams as a first step toward realizing them.

Each guest received a journal and pen, along with a copy of *"Southern Lady" provided by Hoffman Media*.

GREATER BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER INFORMATION

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Lynda Pointer	1
Shirley Ferrick	2
Bill Bradley	10
Mark Melanson	10
Martha Killian	10
Anne Hartline	14
Bill Aderholt	16
Joe Garner	16
Patricia Lehman	20
Bob Shinpaugh	26
Linda Maxwell	26
Charlie Marvin	28
Pat Fiol	30

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: donnamaemartin@aol.com.



Killian, III, Sam P. USN Ret CDR Life
4545 Magnolia Drive 205-408-7721 (h)
Birmingham, AL 35242 205-903-6638 (c)
Email: spkiii@bellsouth.net BD: 8/28
Spouse: Martha T. Killian *BD: 11/10*
marthak36@gmail.com





Lehman, Donald D. (Don) USMC Ret LTCOL Life
1204 Greystone Parc Drive
Birmingham, AL 35242 404-441-3882 (c)
Email: don.lehman1@gmail.com BD: 7/10
Spouse: Patricia A. Lehman *BD: 11/20*
islandmomma1@gmail.com *404-725-7152 (c)*



Our speaker :

Born in Peabody, Massachusetts, Mark Melanson attended Dickinson College on an Army ROTC scholarship and studied nuclear physics. Commissioned into the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps, he began a thirty-year military career at the 2nd General Hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, where he also met his wife, Deb Parker.

Melanson retired as a colonel and the senior physicist in the Department of Defense. Over the past thirteen years, he and Deb have visited more than 160 countries on all seven continents. A lifelong learner, poet, and author, he has published more than two dozen books and participated in readings and book signings around the world. He is on the leadership team at MOAA Birmingham and he and Deb coordinate our meeting menu .

In his talk, *Safari of Self*, Melanson will share adventures from Kenya's Lewa Wilderness Conservancy and reflect on its people, landscapes, and wildlife.



LTC Don Lehman, USMC (Ret) and Colonel David Mollahan, USMC (Ret), president of Marion Military Institute



Marion Military Institute: A Historic Alabama Institution

Marion Military Institute (MMI), located in Marion, is Alabama's official state military college and the nation's oldest military junior college. Its roots date to 1842, when Alabama Baptists founded Howard College as an all-male school.

During the Civil War, the campus served as the Breckinridge Military Hospital. The historic Chapel, built in 1857, and Lovelace Hall, built in 1854, were used to care for Confederate soldiers.

When the Baptist State Convention moved Howard College to Birmingham in 1887—where it later became Samford University—President Colonel James T. Murfee remained in Marion. With faculty and students who stayed, he reorganized the school as Marion Military Institute, modeling its military discipline and organization after Virginia Military Institute. Alabama granted MMI its charter in 1889.

SAVE THE DATE

2026 National Veterans Day Awards Dinner

Tuesday, November 10, 2026

Boutwell Auditorium | Birmingham, Alabama

Join veterans, service members, military families, civic leaders, and friends for Birmingham's signature National Veterans Day event, themed **"Salute to the First 250 Years of Veterans."**
Reserve dinner seats online and request seating with the "MOAA" group. Donna also emailed the registration link.
Register: https://secure.swell.gives/BirminghamVeteransDinner/tickets/#/ticket

Doors/reception: 5:00 p.m. | **Dinner:** 6:00 p.m.
Honors include the Local and National Veteran of the Year Awards, Soaring Eagle Award, and special recognition for service to the veteran community.

Location: Boutwell Auditorium, 1930 Reverend Abraham Woods Jr. Blvd.; parking at Boutwell Garage, 801 19th St. N.

Security: Screening required; only clutch purses and clear bags permitted. No guns or knives.
Tickets/details: National Veterans Day Foundation website. What
Birmingham: Where America's Veterans Day tradition began.

MOAA Birmingham Veteran of the Year



LTC Jim Langley, a native of Vernon, Alabama, now lives in Hoover's Inverness area with his wife, Ann. A Distinguished Military Graduate of Jacksonville State University, he was commissioned in the U.S. Army Field Artillery in 1971 and served in Alaska, Oklahoma, and Korea. He later retired from the U.S. Army Reserve as a lieutenant colonel and Command and General Staff College instructor. His honors include the Army Commendation Medal, Hoover's 2021 Freedom Award, and a 2022 Quilt of Valor.

After a 15-year career with BellSouth Communications and work with corporate and nonprofit organizations, Langley became a writer, artist, speaker, storyteller, and local historian. He has written books on Hoover history, Southern sayings, and Oak Hill Cemetery and has led numerous history tours. A past president of Hoover New Horizons and the Hoover Historical Society, he edits the MOAA Birmingham newsletter, *Officer Call*.

MOAA
GREATER BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER

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	
___Army	___Marines	___Active Duty	___National Guard
___Air Force	___Navy	___Retired	___Former Member
___Coast Guard	___Other	___Reserve	___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!



PO Box 530153, Birmingham,
AL 35253-0153