

An Affiliate Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America

Save the Dates  
2024

<u>BOD Mtgs.</u>	<u>Chapter Mtgs.</u>
January 20	<b>February 24</b>
April 20	June 1
July 20	August 17
October 19	November 16

The Western North Carolina Military Officers Association (WNC-MOAA) is an affiliate chapter of National MOAA, is nonprofit and politically nonpartisan.

The mission of WNC-MOAA is stated in the bylaws and referenced in the newsletter and website.

Board of Directors and Chapter Meetings will be held on Saturdays.

Kenmure Country Club  
100 Clubhouse Drive  
Flat Rock, NC 28731

Dress Code: Country Club Casual

Registration information for the February 24th Chapter meeting is included in this newsletter.

Spouses and guests are welcomed to all Chapter meetings!



A Warm Welcome from the President

Dear WNC-MOAA Chapter Members,

Happy 2024!!! I am thrilled and honored to address you as the newly elected President of the WNC-MOAA Chapter. It is an honor to serve such a dedicated and passionate community. Stepping into this role fills me with enthusiasm, and I am eager to work collaboratively for the growth and success of our incredible organization.

Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting with our dedicated elected Board members to discuss our shared vision for the chapter's future. Together, we have outlined several goals and objectives that reflect our commitment to serving our members and our broader community. As we embark on this journey together, I am confident that with your support, WNC-MOAA can achieve new heights and make a lasting impact in Western North Carolina.

As we move forward, I encourage each of you to actively participate in these initiatives. Your input and engagement are vital to the success of our chapter. I am confident that, together, we can create a vibrant and supportive community that reflects the values of the WNC-MOAA Chapter.

Mark your calendars for our upcoming event—the February 24th Luncheon at Kenmure Country Club. This gathering promises not only to be a platform for important updates but also a chance for us to come together, listen to an informative presentation, and enjoy each other's company. Your presence would mean a lot to me and to the entire WNC-MOAA Chapter community.

I am genuinely excited about the possibilities that lie ahead and am committed to making our chapter a thriving community for the uniformed Officers and their families in WNC. Together, let's make the WNC-MOAA Chapter a place where camaraderie, shared goals, and meaningful connections flourish.

Looking forward to seeing each and every one of you at the February 24th Luncheon!

Warm regards,  
Steve Watkins  
President,  
WNC-MOAA Chapter  
[president@wnc-moaa.org](mailto:president@wnc-moaa.org)



2024 Goals for WNC-MOAA BOD — Cont. on page 2



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## **2024 Goals for WNC-MOAA BOD (cont. from President's Welcome)**

**1. Member Engagement:** One of our key initiatives is to increase member engagement by introducing a variety of informal social activities throughout our Chapter area. While our quarterly membership business luncheon meetings are vital for conducting official business, we believe that fostering connections in a more relaxed setting will strengthen our bonds and foster a sense of camaraderie and unity.

**2. Communications:** Improving communication is crucial to our success. We plan to enhance the chapter's public visibility, revamp our communication strategies with members, and publish board meeting minutes in a timely manner for your review. Transparency and effective communication are essential for a thriving organization.

**3. Governance:** We are committed to ensuring that the Board adheres to the chapter bylaws. This will serve as the foundation for a well-organized and smoothly functioning chapter, allowing us to better serve our members and our community.

**4. Recruitment:** We will continue our efforts to bring in new members, expanding our chapter family. Additionally, we're excited to develop WNC-MOAA swag, including shirts, hats, and more, to foster a sense of pride and unity among our members.

**5. Veteran Support:** Our most important goal remains unwavering—to continue supporting veterans and their families in Western North Carolina. We will actively seek opportunities to make a positive impact on the lives of those who have served our country.

Steve Watkins  
President, WNC-MOAA Chapter  
president@wnc-moaa.org



## ***Time to pay 2024 Chapter Dues!***

***Support our mission and goals***

### ***Options:***

- Mail your dues***
- Bring your dues to Feb mtg***
- Go to the MOAA website***



***Or you can use our new Dues payment option***

***<https://wnc-moaa-annual-dues.cheddarup.com>***

*payments with QR code or cheddarup link incur a service fee*

## Your Voice Matters: Federal Legislation Advocacy in Action 2024

Vivianne C. Wersel, Au.D., WNC MOAA Legislative Team (Federal)

The Military Officers Association of America's (MOAA) most extraordinary mission is to improve the lives of active duty military, Guard and Reserve, Veterans, Retirees, Survivors, and their families, mainly achieved through tireless advocacy efforts in our nation's capital.



Advocacy in Action is an annual event where members nationwide meet with their elected officials in the House and Senate to educate them and gain their support regarding MOAA's top three legislative priorities. A selected group from North Carolina MOAA Chapters will represent our state at the Advocacy in Action event in Washington, DC, on April 17, 2024. However, as a member of the MOAA, you can participate through the outstanding Action Center section on the MOAA's Website without traveling to Washington.

**Why Get Involved?** Being actively engaged in advocacy empowers you and the broader military community. Your participation encourages others to join the cause, creating a network of support that strengthens our collective impact. Learn about ongoing initiatives and how you can continue to be involved in advocating for the issues that matter most. FYI: Share with your friends; **you need not be an MOAA member** to use the Legislation Action Center (see link below).

Your involvement in Advocacy in Action can shape policies and initiatives that directly impact the lives of our community. Your input to the NC Advocacy in Action Team will provide us with powerful support regarding your own personal challenges; by sharing your concerns, you become an essential part of the force driving positive change and progress. Your engagement matters, and together we can make a difference.

**Your Voice Matters:** Advocacy in Action is a testament to our commitment to ensuring that the voice of the military community is heard on crucial issues affecting us. Your participation is critical to amplifying MOAA's collective voice and meaningfully impacting the issues that matter most. Also, this event provides a platform to voice your concerns, share personal experiences, and advocate for issues that resonate with you. Your unique perspective contributes to a more comprehensive and effective advocacy effort. Once the legislative priorities are selected, an email with instructions will be sent to allow you to participate and submit your letter to your Senator and Congressperson.

**Voice Your Concerns:** Click [MOAA - Meet MOAA's New Legislative Action Center](#) to learn more about Advocacy in Action. Also, you may contact me directly at [DrvivianneWersel@gmail.com](mailto:DrvivianneWersel@gmail.com), (252) 646-2678 (mobile) for more support on how to use the Action Center or to share your story. Your input is valuable for our team to share with our policymakers. Participating makes you an integral part of crafting policies that address critical issues such as veterans' healthcare, educational opportunities, and retirement benefits. The decisions made due to MOAA's Advocacy in Action can shape the future of the active military, Guard and Reserve, veterans, retirees, and their families.

Never Stop Serving!

### MOAA Named to The Hill's Top Lobbyist List for 17th Straight Year

MOAA's work on Capitol Hill on behalf of the uniformed services community has been recognized again by *The Hill*, one of the nation's top Beltway-focused news outlets, with a position on the [publication's Top Lobbyists list](#) for the 17th straight year.

MOAA was among the honorees in the 2023 Grassroots category, which included AARP, Burn Pits 360, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

"This honor reflects not just the work of our Government Relations team on the Hill, but our entire headquarters team and our members and supporters throughout the country," said MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret). "

**For the full article, go to:**  
<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/moaa-named-to-the-hills-top-lobbyist-list-for-17th-straight-year/>

## MOAA IN ACTION

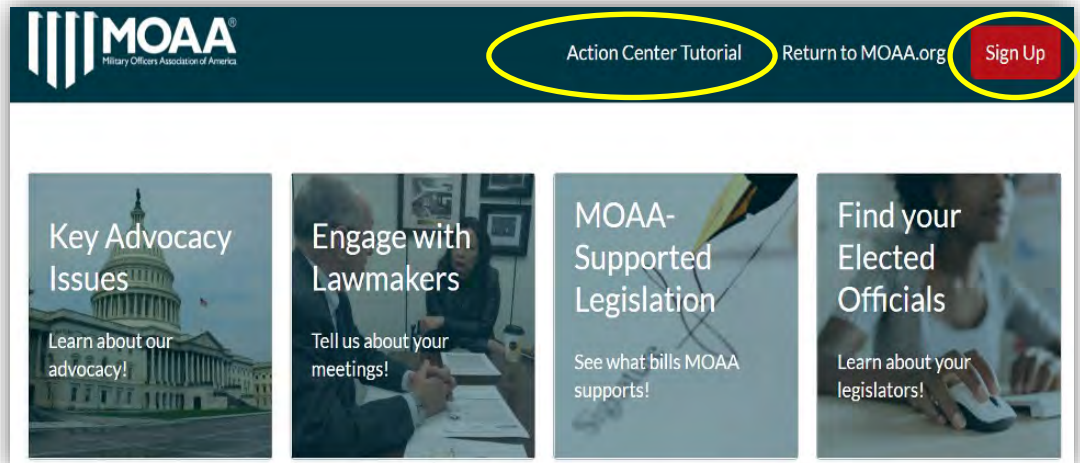
Every week, MOAA's advocacy leaders and other experts discuss issues of importance to our members and the uniformed services community. Watch the latest entries below, check out our [Advocacy Update playlist](#) for older entries, and [subscribe to MOAA's YouTube channel](#) for even more video. Head back to our [Legislative Advocacy Center homepage](#) to engage with your lawmakers on some of these critical topics.

### The MOAA Advocacy Update: 2024 Legislative Priorities



To watch this video and others, go to:

[https://youtu.be/uOz7RGe\\_TSw?si=pSulemSggsbXCgyf](https://youtu.be/uOz7RGe_TSw?si=pSulemSggsbXCgyf)



### To Get Started Using the Dashboard:

- 1) Go to <https://moaa.quorum.us/>
- 2) Click on **“Action Center Tutorial.”** - Takes 11 1/4 mins
- 3) After completing the tutorial, now Click on **Sign Up.**

**For help Call (800) 234-6622 and ask for the Member Service Center**

### MOAA: Pay and Benefits Resources

Looking for information on your military and retiree benefits? You've come to the right place: Links to detailed information can be found below, as well as links to pay and benefits publications that are exclusive to MOAA members. Members can also contact MOAA's experts directly with questions about their benefits.

<https://www.moaa.org/content/benefits-and-discounts/pay-and-benefits/pay-and-benefits/>





## State Legislature - LTC(R) Tricia Vinson & COL(R) Michael Padgett

Happy 2024! Lots to inform so I will do my best to give a synopsis of what we see as being important to veterans for the upcoming short state legislative session. As a reminder, our state general assembly works in a two-year cycle, with a long and a short session. The short session coincides with elections. As you might assume, most of the heavy legislative lifting is done in the long session; the short session is limited to bills that were approved by either the House or the Senate. Of course, exceptions exist, mostly associated with budget corrections or emergency considerations. As mentioned in the Fall 2023 newsletter, only six bills associated with veterans fit the criteria for consideration during the short session, none would make a significant impact.

One of the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs (DMVA) responsibilities is to run the NC Veteran's State Home program which provide skilled nursing care. There are currently five locations around the state; Salisbury, Kingston, Black Mountain, Fayetteville, and one that just opened in October 2023 in Kenersville. Funding and oversight are managed and approved by the state legislature. Medicare, VA, insurance, and other funding support the program and the medical care is contracted in 5-year increments, currently awarded to Pruitt Health. The NC Dept of Health & Human Services inspects to ensure standards are being met and/or exceeded.

**The background above is important** because at the end of November 2023, a structural assessment of the Fayetteville home was made and determined to require significant infrastructure repairs costing over ~\$20 million. Sadly, even if those repairs would be made, the ground is unstable and future infrastructure issues would develop, so a decision

was made to close the Fayetteville home by 1 February 2024. A new state home in Fayetteville on stable land will be needed. Originally a 150-bed home, maintenance concerns previously had closed a wing limiting the home to 85 beds. At the time of this writing 30 veterans still need to be provided a new skilled nursing care home.

Sadly, some of the DMVA verbal promises to the veterans that are being displaced haven't materialized. Senior leadership initially promised that the DMVA would cover any increased nursing care costs and help with wait list issues due to the short notice displacement. Hopefully, that support will be forthcoming, and we will be able to report a better result in a future newsletter.

Within the State Legislative Short Session, they can deal with emergency budget issues. The emergency closing of a 150-bed veteran state home fits that category. Just as the WNC Chapter had board elections this fall, the NC MOAA Council of Chapters (COC) also had its board elections. Of consequence to this article is that Tricia Vinson has been elected as one of two VPs of Advocacy (state & federal) which connects your chapter to the state level advocacy. She also retains her position representing MOAA on the NC Veterans Council (NCVC) which connects all the Veteran Services Organizations (VSO) so they can speak with one voice as needed. The MOAA NCCOC has already voted to support and prioritize their state advocacy efforts for the short session towards the Fayetteville veteran state home replacement. This normally takes 1/3 state funding and 2/3rds federal funding, although we believe we have found ~\$21 million in federal funds already on hand that could be redirected by state legislative approval towards this

effort. Lots of work ahead for all the VSO state legislative team representatives.

One issue we are aware of that needs to be resolved by the DMVA dates to the 2021-2022 state legislative session. In the appropriations, the legislative oversight directed the DMVA to write a report that would be used to develop a state-wide long-term plan due in spring 2022. They were given \$250,000 and directed to work with the Department of Health & Human Services to assess long term care needs, current homes, services, wait lists, incoming and outgoing costs as well as partnership opportunities. Veteran demographics, satisfaction surveys, etc. were also part of the list of requirements with updates provided annually. From our research, that report was never prepared, with specific NC information, with only generic VA reports provided instead. We have heard they are currently working on that report. That is an issue that will need to be resolved between the state legislature and the DMVA, but we recognize the potential impact to any effort to rebuild the Fayetteville Veterans State home. Hopefully the long-term plan can be developed concurrently with the rebuild of the Fayetteville Veterans Home and maybe the visibility of this effort will provide a positive result.

We want you to be aware of our efforts, of what is happening to the veterans' home in Fayetteville and to gain your support if we need it with our state legislators. We want to support our fellow veterans and ensure they have a strong voice within our state legislature and know we speak as a veteran family across the whole state. This is an election year, and we have brothers and sisters in need and a goal to initiate a replacement home in Fayetteville.



## November 2023 WNC-MOAA General Chapter Meeting Highlights

Western North Carolina MOAA held their general chapter meeting on Saturday, November 18th, 2023 at the Kenmore Country Club in Flat Rock, NC. Col. Jim Brumit, USA (Ret), Past President of North Carolina Council of Chapters had the honor of installing the new WNC-MOAA Board of Directors, and surprise award of the MOAA Leadership Award to outgoing chapter president, Capt. Donna Culp USAF (Fmr).

Donna congratulated COL Steve Watkins, USA (Ret) as the new WNC-MOAA President presenting him with the MOAA Chapter President pin. Steve in turn presented Donna with the MOAA Past Chapter President pin that will accompany the MOAA Leadership Award pin. Guest speakers at the meeting were Congressman Chuck Edwards (District 11), and Dr. Molly McGaughey, Geriatric Specialist at Charles George VA Medical Center, NC.



Jim Brumit awarding Donna Culp the MOAA Leadership Award, and John Culp Pinning.



Donna's New MOAA Bling



Jim Brumit congratulating



Donna Culp, now Immediate Past President, and Steve Watkins, Incoming President, after exchanging pins.



Congressman Chuck Edwards being welcomed by WNC-MOAA during roundtable greetings.



Jim Brumit, NCCOC Past President, conducting the instillation of new officers (L-R) Doug Abbott, Treasurer, Kevin Ritter, 2nd VP, Steve Watkins, President.

Congressman Edwards addressing questions during Q&A following his presentation about U.S. Military issues being addressed by congress.



Dr. Molly McGaughey (CGVAMC) presentation on the PACT Act, and the effects of Toxic Exposure.





## WNC-MOAA Honorary Member Receives Summit Award

Congratulations to WNC-MOAA Honorary Member Jeff Miller. Jeff was honored by the Western North Carolina Association of Fundraising Professionals on November 15th, 2023 and was presented with the Summit Award for his efforts founding what is now Blue Ridge Honor Flight.

### Excerpts from Philanthropist.com

His entire life, Jeff Miller has liked nothing better than sitting at the side of a World War II veteran listening to stories about the war and life after. It came naturally as the only child of a Navy veteran who served in the Pacific and nephew to an Army Air Corps B-24 bomber pilot who lost his life in 1944 during a bombing run in Czechoslovakia.

"I always had a real passion for the World War II generation," Jeff said. "I guess some people would say I am obsessed with them. I grew up in an extremely patriotic home."

### DEVELOPING THE HONOR FLIGHT NETWORK

Jeff and Earl Morse met in person for the first time in Washington on Sept. 23, 2006, the day of HonorAir's first flight. The two then decided to create a "Mother Ship" to combine efforts into one place for disseminating information and for gaining bargaining power. A summit was held in February 2007 and since Earl had begun the first program, it

was agreed to call it the Honor Flight Network. The program branched out across the nation with development of Regional Honor Flight hubs in 42 states to reach veterans in different parts of the country. With the rapid decline of WWII veterans, the program began to also serve Korean War and Vietnam War veterans with WWII vets always going to the front of the list.

In his local area, Jeff serves as president of HonorAir, Inc., and is founder of Blue Ridge Honor Flight, in addition to being co-founder and former president of the Honor Flight Network's national board.

"I have a board here that is just I incredible. My credit is for having really smart and passionate friends. The only way it works is to put a hell of a team together," Jeff said. "It is about a team and their mission."

### THE OVERALL PICTURE

To date, the Blue Ridge Honor Flight hub has flown 36 flights to Washington with about 100 veterans per flight, Jeff said. Jeff's push to take Honor Flight national has been a huge success and he has spent many hours traveling the country to help set up programs and even flying with some of the other hub flights, a sacrifice his family has been honored to make.

Humbly, he said the only time he really takes a hard look at the magnitude of the Honor Flight Network and its accomplishments honoring heroes who sacrificed to keep America free is when he is in Washington, D.C.

The work of the Honor Flight Network, which has already served some 230,000 mostly WWII veterans, will continue with the veterans of other wars as they are honored for their service to America.

They will also be transported to the memorials of their respective wars at no cost to them. Efforts made by Jeff Miller and Earl Morse to honor veterans will long be remembered. The two men were recognized by Sen. Bob Dole in 2008 when he nominated them for the Presidential Citizens Medal, one of the highest civilian awards given in the U.S., second only to the Presidential Medal of Freedom. A presentation was made to them that year in the Oval Office by President George W. Bush.

Anyone interested in the program, how to support the movement or how to help a veteran get listed on a flight anywhere in the U.S., can visit [HonorFlight.org](https://HonorFlight.org) or in Jeff's local area at [BlueRidgeHonorFlight.com](https://BlueRidgeHonorFlight.com)

For the whole story got to <https://philanthropist.com/jeff-millers-respect-for-world-war-ii-veterans-acquired-a-life-of-its-own/>



Jeff holding the mic for veteran to read a poem he wrote.

Blue Ridge Honor Flight  
October 14th, 2023

## WNC-MOAA Participates in the Third Annual NC Works Career Fair and Expo

December 6th NC Works held the third annual Mountain Community Career and Resource Expo with emphasis on veterans and veteran families. Held at Harrah's Cherokee Resort and Event Center, representatives from the U.S. Army, NC State Troopers, various colleges, Charles George VA medical Center, General Electric, and many others were there. As first time participants, WNC MOAA had a table where information about MOAA and our chapter was made available by providing copies of Military Officer Magazine, business cards, and join forms for prospective eligible members. Three of the Army participants were pleasantly surprised to learn about MOAA and our mission of advocacy. Although not residents of North Carolina, they were happy to accept copies of Military Officer magazine for further reference. Free food, door prizes, demonstrations, and exchanging resource information with other vendors proved informative and fun.

**"Team Culp" raising awareness about MOAA and inviting potential eligible members to join.**



**WNC-MOAA recognized as one of the event's sponsors.**

**Overview of the event center buzzing with vendors and visitors gathering information and checking our potential job opportunities**



## North Carolina Council of Chapters Veterans Day Cruise 2023

REPORT FROM NCCOC 1ST VP Kenneth W. Klassen, CDR USN (Ret)

80 MOAA members and guests from North Carolina and other states enjoyed a Veterans five-day cruise from Charleston, SC to the Bahamas November 11-16, 2023. We had pleasant days at sea and two port visits in Nassau and Half Moon Cay, Bahamas. The cruise was open to all MOAA members from the 14 MOAA Chapters in North Carolina and their guests. We had guests from as far away as California and Boston, MA. A special feature of the Veterans Cruise was a four-part lecture series on major Pacific campaigns in WW II, including the Battle of the Coral Sea, Midway, Guadalcanal, Leyte Gulf, Okinawa and the dropping of the atomic bombs in August 1945. MOAA and Southeastern Chapter (NC-07) member Ron Henderson, RADM USN (Ret) was our featured speaker. Social times were the order of the day and night as we spent time with friends from NC Chapters and made many new friends during excursions, meals, casual visits around the ship decks and Veterans Appreciation events scheduled by the ship's cruise director. It

was warm and sunny on the beaches and around the pool and spas on-board. Thanks to our tour agent and the on-board staff, a private appreciation cocktail party was included as an amenity for MOAA guests on the last day at sea. The party was enjoyed by all attendees and when asked if they would like another cruise next year, a hearty response was heard from all. Wonderful memories, enjoyable days at sea, educational lectures, great food and accommodations are hard to beat!



**(Top) Group photo of cruise members.**



**(L) Carnival Cruise Lines honored all veterans on the cruise with a special assembly.**



## Black Mountain

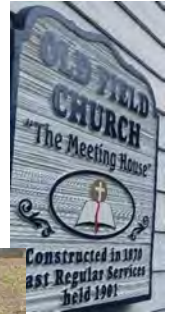


## Green Hill

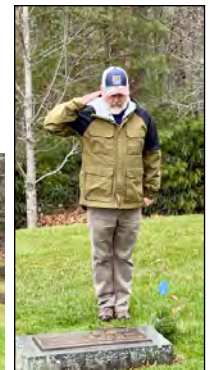
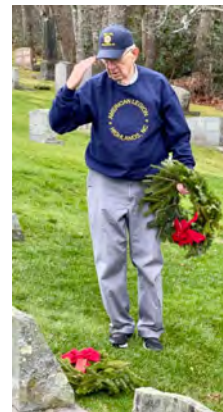


## Western North Carolina Honors Veterans with Wreaths Across America 2023

## Sylva



## Highlands







## Veterans' Writing Class

**Military life holds unique and powerful memories. Through their stories, veterans can bear witness to moments of honor and heartbreak, loneliness and loss, camaraderie and sacrifice.**

**Join our writing class and feel the healing powers of writing your story! Let your legacy be written and shared with your family. The time is now! Together then, together again.**

**Dates: January 23, 2024 (8 sessions) Ends: March 12**

**Location: Land of Sky Church, 15 Overbrook Place, Asheville**

**\*Free of Charge\***

**Please contact the following for participation:  
Ron Toler, 1treehouse@charter.net  
Brothers and Sisters Like These Website:  
<https://brothersandsisterslikethese.com>**

Dear VA Community Partners and Stakeholders,  
I wanted to pass along additional information pertaining to the 2023 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report that was recently released:

[Home - Suicide Prevention Annual Report \(va.gov\)](https://www.va.gov/suicide-prevention-annual-report/)

The attached PDF and link above highlight the most recent trends and statistics, important resources, and key themes for calls to action. The Anchors of Hope listed on the website further stress the importance of transforming our hope into action in our endeavors to decrease suicide in the community.

Please feel free to pass this on widely. Thank you for all that you do.

Jonathan Calloway, LCSW, LCAS  
Community Engagement and Partnerships

**Available day and night  
for confidential crisis support**



**Dial 988 then Press 1**



**Chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat)**



**Text 838255**



## Veterans Town Hall

The Charles George VA Medical Center will host a Town Hall meeting for Veterans Jan. 23, 2024, at 5 p.m., in the atrium of the main hospital building.

Veterans, their spouses, and caregivers are invited to hear updates from VA leadership and employees. There will also be informational tables set up around the perimeter of the atrium to provide information and answer questions.



## WNC-MOAA Welcomes New Chapter Satellite—"Woodfin Satellite"

Now serving chapter members North of Asheville, WNC-MOAA officially welcomes "Woodfin Satellite," chaired by Rod Honeycutt, COL, USA (Ret). Meeting all of MOAA's requirements, Woodfin Satellite has been approved and endorsed by WNC-MOAA BOD, NC Council of Chapters, and has been submitted to MOAA.

MOAA recognizes that not all members find it convenient to attend chapter meetings, especially for those who live in more rural areas. In the early years of WNC-MOAA, the first chapter satellite was formed (Circa 2004/05) to provide chapter members in and around Black Mountain the geographic convenience of chapter involvement with "Black Mountain Satellite." Next came the "Smoky Mountain Satellite" (Circa 2013) to accommodate chapter involvement for members living West of Buncombe County. Satellite chairs represent their respective satellites as voting members of the WNC-MOAA BOD. All chapter and satellite members are members of national MOAA, WNC MOAA, and are recognized by their chapter satellites by virtue of Zip codes.

### Welcome Woodfin Satellite!



(L) Donna Culp and Rod Honeycutt signing the WNC-MOAA MOU officially accepting Woodfin Satellite.

(R) Rod and Donna shaking hands with the MOU in front of the Man Cave where Woodfin Satellite meetings are held.



## Edwards Honors Military Academy Nominees as "Cream of the Crop"

Freshman Congressman Chuck Edwards says he learned a lot from the selection process. "It's really been invigorating for me to see such top notch individuals apply for these military academies," Edwards said. "So many people are down on youth today, for various reasons, but it was so special for me to get to meet each individual here and see their high academic achievements, their energy and their passion for serving our country. And it was very easy decision to put every one of their names forward as a nominee."

"These folks here are the cream of cream of the crop," he adds. "They're going to be true leaders in our society and in our military forces."

Edwards also thanked members of the congressional district committee, made up of retired military officers who graduated from a service academy, for vetting and interviewing the applicants.

**Committee members are** \* Maj. General Rick Devereaux, USAF (Ret) chair; \* Maj Richard G. Augur, USAF Reserves (Ret); CAPT Kevin C. Albright (USN) Ret); COL Walton Wright Curl, MD, US Army (Ret); \* CAPT George H. (Herb) Mensch, USN (Ret); and \* COL John Plant, USA (Ret).



U.S. Merchant Marine Academy board Michael Puzerewski and Anita Zureytkova, who will attend the Naval Academy, pose with U.S. Rep. Chuck Edwards.

For the whole story from the Hendersonville Lightning: <https://www.hendersonvillelightning.com/news/13486-service.html>

**Submitted by:**  
Jeff Snyder, JROTC Liaison, WNC-MOAA BOD

**\* Special thank you to WNC-MOAA members who served on this committee.**



## Purpose of the Western North Carolina Chapter, Military Officers Association of America, Inc.

The purposes of the Chapter shall be to promote the purposes of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA); foster fraternal relations among retired, active duty, and former officers of the uniformed services and their reserve components; protect the rights and interests of active duty, retired, and reserve component personnel of the uniformed services and their dependents and survivors; provide useful services for members and their dependents and survivors; and serve the community and the nation.

Ref: WNC-MOAA bylaws updated, amended, and approved

November 20th, 2021 can be found on our website at

<https://wnc-moaa.org/chapterbylaws/>



## Treasurer's Report submitted by Doug Abbotts:

### WNC-MOAA— 2023 Cash Flow

WNC MOAA CASH FLOW					
	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	YTD
<b>INCOME</b>					
Membership Dues	\$ 2,535	\$ 810	\$ 895	\$ 690	\$ 9,170
Miscellaneous Income/Donations	\$ 922	\$ 190	\$ 128	\$ 68	\$ 2,548
VA Donations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 108	\$ 108
Satellite Donation NC Council	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100	\$ 100
Feb. 18, Chapter Meeting	\$ 1,050	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,100
May 13, Chapter Meeting	\$ 30	\$ 1,500	\$ 210	\$ -	\$ 3,480
Aug. 19 Chapter Meeting	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,240	\$ -	\$ 2,480
Nov. 18 Chapter Meeting	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,525	\$ 1,525
Badges	\$ 50	\$ 40	\$ 85	\$ 90	\$ 440
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 4,587</b>	<b>\$ 2,540</b>	<b>\$ 2,558</b>	<b>\$ 2,581</b>	<b>\$21,951</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
NCCOC	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
NCCOC MOAA Dues	\$ 231	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 462
BCVC	\$ 50	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100
Recruiting & Retention	\$ -	\$ 161	\$ 315	\$ 354	\$ 1,306
Liability Insurance	\$ -	\$ 323	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 646
Aprons	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 81	\$ 81
Post Office Box & Postage	\$ 182	\$ 109	\$ 4	\$ -	\$ 590
Web Hosting	\$ 160	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 320
ROTC Awards	\$ 130	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 260
Speaker Gifts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 88	\$ 79	\$ 255
Chapter Banner & Flag	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 286	\$ 286
ZOOM	\$ 150	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300
IRS Form 990	\$ -	\$ 40	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 80
Badges	\$ 64	\$ 103	\$ 89	\$ 77	\$ 589
Refund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30	\$ -	\$ 60
<b>Donations</b>					
Chapter Meetings	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
February 18th Chapter Meeting	\$ 1,274	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,548
May 13th Chapter Meeting	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,000
August 19th Chapter Meeting	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,730	\$ 1,909	\$ 5,369
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 2,247</b>	<b>\$ 2,836</b>	<b>\$ 2,256</b>	<b>\$ 2,786</b>	<b>\$17,464</b>
<b>Total Income (Loss)</b>	<b>\$ 2,340</b>	<b>\$ (296)</b>	<b>\$ 302</b>	<b>\$ (205)</b>	<b>\$ 4,487</b>
<b>Bank Balance</b>	<b>\$11,734</b>	<b>\$11,438</b>	<b>\$11,740</b>	<b>\$11,535</b>	

## Hails and Farewells

### Hails

CDR Brent Embry, USN (Ret) -  
Spouse: Catherine

LTC Kent Campbell, USA (Ret)

COL Peter Champagne, USA (Ret)  
- Spouse: Marlene

2LT Noah Honeycutt, USAR  
(Active)

Col David Peeler, USAF (Ret)

2LT Dalton Piercy, USAR  
(Active) - Spouse: Cadence

LTC Wesley Pike, USA (Ret)

CW2 Traci Smith, USA (Ret)

LTC Warren Seymour, USA  
(Ret) - Spouse: Karen

Col Robin Garrett, USMC (Ret)

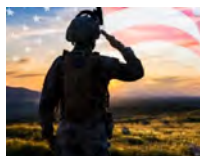
LTC John Shawkins, USA (Ret)

### Farewells

None Reported

### TAPS

CAPT Walt Boyer, USN (Ret)



## Welcome

Doug Abbotts  
WNC-MOAA Treasurer

**Standing with you  
at every stage.**

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100392



## NEVER STOP SERVING ... CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



**We Honor Veterans** - Since November 2014, WNC MOAA, in partnership with Four Seasons Hospice, has honored **over 990** veterans with special pinning ceremonies to salute veterans in hospice care and thank them for their service.

To learn more and get involved, contact **John Knapp, 828-702-3317** [j.knapp4@att.net](mailto:j.knapp4@att.net)



**Veterans  
Restoration  
Quarters  
(VRQ)**

**VRQ** - The chapter continues to serve our area's homeless veterans by providing a lunch prep/serve crew on the 4th Wednesday of every month at the Veterans Restoration Quarters (VRQ). We also provide the 5th Wednesday lunch crew in applicable months. The VRQ is a converted motel that provides shelter, counseling, and vocational training for the area's homeless veterans. Chapter members arrive at 9:30 to prepare for the lunch meal then, at 12:00, serve the meal to the residents of the Veteran's Restoration Quarters. The VRQ staff has been very diligent in implementing COVID safety protocols to ensure all volunteers work in a safe environment. The chapter is very proud to have been serving our area's veterans with this effort since 2015. If you would be interested in joining our crew, please contact the chapter's VRQ volunteer coordinator, **Jeff Snyder, at [jsnyder243@aol.com](mailto:jsnyder243@aol.com)**.



**Blue Ridge Honor Flight** transports American veterans to Washington, DC 2-3 times each year to "visit memorials dedicated to honor their service and the sacrifices of themselves and their friends." There are opportunities to donate, as well as learn more about applying as an honoree, guardian, or volunteer.

For more information, contact **Rick Devereaux, 828-772-6023** [rickdevereaux1@gmail.com](mailto:rickdevereaux1@gmail.com) or [www.blueridgehonorflight.com](http://www.blueridgehonorflight.com) **Next flight: April 27, 2024**



**JROTC** - Active in 18 high schools throughout WNC, JROTC is supported by WNC MOAA with annual MOAA Leadership awards for rising Seniors. As group gatherings have resumed, volunteers are needed to present the awards. For more information about supporting the award presentations, and other information about supporting JROTC contact **Jeff Snyder at 828-684-2359** [jsnyder243@aol.com](mailto:jsnyder243@aol.com)

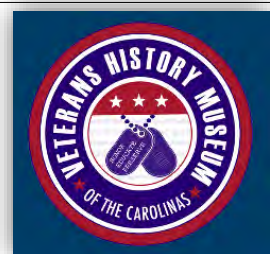


**Veteran Smiles Foundation (VSF)** is dedicated to helping veterans find their dental home all across North Carolina. Continuing the relationship with ECU Dental School of Medicine as established with the Sylva Community Service Learning Center (CSLC), the plan is to systematically establish Vet Smiles programs with the other CSLCs in Brunswick County, Robeson County, Lillington, Ahoskie, Elizabeth City, Davidson County, and Spruce Pine.

WNC MOAA will continue its partnership with the Sylva clinic and coordinate efforts with VSF and NC Serves to continue to help identify veterans in need of dental care and a dental home for continuity of care. For more information, contact, **David McCracken, 984-233-3350, <https://vetsmiles.org/>**



**Helping with State Level Legislative Affairs** is an opportunity to reconnect with your civic side and connect with North Carolina lawmakers on issues that are key talking points by MOAA, and NC Council of Chapters. If you already have a relationship established with individual legislators or the 4 Senators and 10 Representatives, please contact WNC-MOAA State Legislative Affairs Chair, **Michael Padgett at [sopadgett@aol.com](mailto:sopadgett@aol.com)**



The mission of the **Veterans History Museum of the Carolinas** is to honor our nation's veterans, to educate the public about our country's military history and the contribution of our servicemen and women, and to preserve important and unique historic artifacts. The Museum reflects a love of country and gratitude to those who serve it by remembering and celebrating their service. A world-class museum and great destination for visitors. For more information: **WNC MOAA Museum POC: Duke Woodhull [dukewoodhull@gmail.com](mailto:dukewoodhull@gmail.com)** or go to: <https://theveteransmuseum.org/>



# CAMARADERIE WITH A **PURPOSE**



## Join/Renew Your Local Chapter

Thank you for visiting MOAA's online chapter membership dues site. Whether you are considering chapter membership or renewing, now is the time to add your voice to the thousands of other MOAA members making a difference on the legislative front and in their communities.

MOAA's chapters are critical in helping us do this by building grass roots support for MOAA's legislative goals in their congressional districts. Chapter members let their legislators know what's on their minds and open doors for MOAA's legislative team here in Washington.

Learn more about reasons to join a chapter.

NOTE: National MOAA and local affiliate membership are two distinct memberships. Submitting your dues payment through this online application is for chapter dues (joins/renewals) only. If you are attempting to join/renew for National MOAA, please go to [www.moaa.org/join](http://www.moaa.org/join).

Please use the Chapter Locator to verify your chapter name.

### Getting Started

Do you want to join, renew, or make a donation? *	Donate Only
State: *	North Carolina
Chapter: *	Western North Carolina Chapter, MOAA

NEXT

## MOAA Website Offers

### Way to Join A Chapter - Pay Chapter Dues or Make Donations

If you like paying for things electronically and don't like writing checks, you can now pay for your WNC-MOAA Chapter dues online.

You can do the following all online: make a DONATION to the Chapter's Operating Expenses and you can PAY your Annual Membership Dues.

Go to <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx>

Select "**Renew**" if you are renewing your dues or "**Donate**" if you would like to donate to the Chapter's Operating Expenses.

For the State select "**North Carolina**".

For the Chapter select "**Western North Carolina Chapter, MOAA**".

Click "**Next**".

On the next page complete all of your information and then Click "**Next**".

If you are paying for Chapter Activities enter the cost of the activity in Donation Amount field.

Enter your Payment Information and Billing Information.

Click "**Finish**".



Submitted by Steve Watkins

## WNC-MOAA 2024 - 2025 Board of Directors and Officers

President - Steve Watkins, COL, USA (Ret)

1st Vice President / Programs - Stacie Litsenberger, MAJ, USA (Ret) - NOMINEE

2nd Vice President / Membership - Kevin Ritter, CDR, USN (Ret)

Secretary - Joe Neubert, CAPT, USN (Ret) - NOMINEE

Treasurer - Doug Abbotts, Maj. USAF (Ret)

Immediate Past President - Donna Culp, Capt. USAF (Fmr)

US Army Rep. - Rod Honeycutt, COL USA (Ret)

US Navy Rep. - Herb Mensch, CAPT USN (Ret)

USMC Rep. - VACANT

USAF Rep. - Jeff Snyder, Col. USAF (Ret)

At Large Rep. - Jim Steinbaugh, CAPT, USN (Ret)

Black Mountain Satellite - Kevin Ritter, CDR, USN (Ret)

Chaplain - VACANT

Smoky Mountain Satellite Chair - John O'Donnell, CDR, USN (Ret)

Woodfin Satellite Chair - Rod Honeycutt, COL, USA (Ret)

Senior Advisor - Rick Deveraux, Maj Gen, USAF, (Ret.)

Newsletter Editor - Donna Culp, Capt. USAF (Fmr)

JROTC Liaison - Jeff Snyder, Col. USAF (Ret)

Legislative Affairs - Federal Dr. Vivianne Wersel, Au.D.

Legislative Affairs - State Michael Padgett, COL, USA (Ret) / Patricia Vinson, LTC, USA (Ret)

VA Liaisons - Ed Couser, Lt Col, USAFR (Ret) / Dr. Vivianne Wersel, Au.D.

Surviving Spouse Liaison - Sharon Woodcock, Donna Culp (Support)

Webmasters - John Culp, LTC, USA (Ret) / Steve Watkins, COL, USA (Ret)

Spouses Activity Group (SAG) - VACANT





New number. Same support.  
**Dial 988 then Press 1**

Please Share The New Phone Option For The  
Veterans Crisis Line: Dial 988 & Press 1

<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>



## Federal Benefits

for Veterans, Dependents,  
Survivors, and Caregivers  
2023 Edition



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ans\\_Dependents  
\\_and\\_Survivors.  
pdf](https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/2023_Federal_Benefits_for_Veterans_Dependents_and_Survivors.pdf)

### TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS



<https://www.taps.org/helpline>

TAPS 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline is always  
available toll-free with loving support and resources at  
800-959-TAPS (8277)

**Moved?**

**New Email address?**

**New phone number?**

**Need to upgrade membership?**

## MOAA:

Call the **Member Service Center** at:

(800) 234-6622 or (703) 549-2311

e-mail [msc@moaa.org](mailto:msc@moaa.org)

## WNC-MOAA:

Use the Join Form included in this news-  
letter to change address, update contact  
Information, join, or renew.

Mail checks to

**PO Box 1984, Hendersonville, NC 28793**

Or go to

<https://www.wnc-moaa.org/>

### The Latest on COVID in WNC

Stay up to date regarding COVID, vaccines, boosters, and  
how we're doing in WNC, throughout the state, and the  
nation. **Dr. Mark Jaben, Medical Director for  
Haywood County** provides weekly updates, which are  
found on the WNC-MOAA website.

[https://www.wnc-moaa.org/covid-  
19information/](https://www.wnc-moaa.org/covid-19information/)

*Thank you  
Dr. Jaben!*



# THE LARGER OUR NUMBERS, THE GREATER YOUR VOICE.

Why WNC-MOAA chapter membership matters.



## WNC-MOAA CHAPTER & MOAA MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_

Active Retired Former Reserve National Guard Surviving Spouse

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

(To ensure deliverability of MOAA communications, please provide a personal email address.)

Are you a MOAA member? Yes No Unknown

MOAA Member Number (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

### Spouse's information

Spouse's name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's email \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's phone \_\_\_\_\_

Is your spouse a MOAA member or eligible to be a MOAA member? Yes No

Your Chapter interest: Attending Social Events Board of Directors Member Recruiting

Legislative Affairs Newsletter Editing Public Affairs Spouse's Programs

**Not a MOAA national member yet? Check here to receive a BASIC Membership at no cost to you.**



And, for only \$4 a month, you can upgrade to **PREMIUM** membership, giving you immediate access to a full spectrum of career and financial resources, exclusive publications, college scholarships for dependents, and countless discounts on products and travel. Visit [moaa.org/join](http://moaa.org/join) to learn more.

How did you hear about MOAA Chapter involvement? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of any other MOAA Chapter(s)? Yes No

If yes, which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

### To complete enrollment:

• Fill in this form on your computer and email it to [membership@wnc-moaa.org](mailto:membership@wnc-moaa.org) as an attachment **or**

• Print it and fill it and mail it to:

WNC-MOAA, P.O. Box 1984, Hendersonville, NC 28793 **or**

Scan it and e-mail it to [membership@wnc-moaa.org](mailto:membership@wnc-moaa.org)

• Go to [wnc-moaa.org](http://wnc-moaa.org) for more information about our Chapter.

You will be opted in to receive e-communications from MOAA and your local chapter. You will be able to opt out of any further e-communications at any time. MOAA will not sell or share personal information.

### Western North Carolina Chapter membership of MOAA

Chapter Dues are due  
January 1  
(No Later Than March 1)

#### Member

\$45 - New Member  
(includes Spouse)

\$30 - Renew

#### Surviving Spouse

\$25 - New

\$10 - Renew

#### Name Badges

(Badges are Magnet type only)

One name badge (for member)  
is included with new  
memberships

5XX]hcbU`#FYd`UW`a Ybh  
Badges!`~ %) each

Badge Bameftk

If you have any questions,  
please contact Steve Watkins  
at: [membership@wnc-moaa.org](mailto:membership@wnc-moaa.org)  
or call/text 608-225-0594

# Join us for a Luncheon!



**Saturday, February 24, 2024**

**Location: Kenmure Country Club  
100 Clubhouse Dr.  
Flat Rock, NC 28731**

**Meeting / Lunch Registration: 11:15 AM Check-in / Social - 12:00 PM Lunch / Program**

***Registration & Payment must be received NLT Monday, February 19, 2024***

## **Registration and Payment options**

### **Option 1**

**Lunch by mailed check - \$30 each**

**Mail Registration & Check to:**

**WNC MOAA  
P.O. Box 1984  
Hendersonville, NC 28793**

### **Option 2**

**Register & Pay link or with QR code -  
\$30 each + processing fees**

***<https://wnc-moaa-feb-2024-meeting.cheddarup.com>***



**Make checks payable to:** WNC MOAA; Enclosed is my check for \_\_\_\_ meal (s) at \$30 per person.

I / we plan on attending the WNC MOAA General Chapter Meeting on Saturday, February 24th, 2024

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Guest: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dress code:** Country Club Casual – *Relaxed attire. Collared shirts required for gentlemen but not jackets. Men in collared shirts, polo tops, and slacks and women in simple blouses, fitted trousers, skirts, and dresses.*

**PARKING INSTRUCTIONS:** Once through the gate, follow signs to Clubhouse, turn right at the Welcome sign to park in either of the parking lots, a shuttle will take you to the Clubhouse. **(If passenger drop off is required, DO NOT turn at the Welcome sign, proceed to the next right to cross the bridge, and proceed to the front of the Clubhouse. You may drop passenger at the ramp or proceed to the portico and drop them at the main entrance.)**



## **Guest Speaker: Jeanine McLaughlin**

Come join AARP North Carolina local lead Veterans Services volunteer, Jeanine, for a presentation about the latest scams targeting Veterans and Military Families.

**Topics**  
***Identity Theft Safety***  
***Operation Protect Veterans***

