

The Volusia Officers Call

West Volusia MOAA Chapter, INC. (WVMC)
An Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America



Vol 31, No 7, MAR 2023

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MOAA's Mission

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a nonprofit veterans' association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors. Membership is open to those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any component of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, or NOAA and their surviving spouses.



President's Perspective—

It is hard to believe that we have just three more lunch meetings before we break for summer recess. Looking back, we started out in September with 54 members. Since then, we have experienced net losses and gains resulting in 53 members currently with a goal of 58 members. I extend a hearty welcome to our new members, Col Jim Pugh, CW4 Ted Seaman, and Maj Kathleen Voelbel. We continue

moving forward and with everyone's support we will achieve the goals that we have set. A special thanks to Col Jim Winter. Everyone who has attended our membership meetings can attest that Jim has provided us with excellent speakers and topics of interest to us all.

Our next event is "Operation Camaraderie" that takes place on April 27, 2023. This is an open air BBQ at Gemini Spring Park in DeBary. The information flyer was distributed by email and appears in this newsletter. Come out and take part in this fun activity. The next major calendar event is the Florida Council of Chapters (FCoC) Annual Convention on May 19-21, 2023, in St. Augustine. Please RSVP online at the FCoC website.

Following the FCoC Leadership Conference in January 2023, I was approached by the council president. He asked if our chapter would consider hosting the 2024 Annual Convention. This was presented to the Board and enthusiastically embraced. And so, I am announcing that the WVMC will host the convention in May 2024. The Planning Committee led by Maj Pete Durnell met with FCoC President, CMD Pat Kluever, on February 16th, and Sam Pollack of the Daytona Beach Visitors Bureau on February 17th.

(Continued on page 5)

WEST VOLUSIA MOAA CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

OFFICERS

President:

MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET

386-366-4473 majgonz@earthlink.net

First Vice President:

LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET

Second Vice President: vacant

Secretary:

LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET

717-729-8281 flygirlltc@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Maj Pete Durnell, USAF, RET

321-443-6264 petedurnell@aol.com

DIRECTORS

Col Jim Winter, USAF, RET

386-801-1849 **jwwinter42@gmail.com**

MAJ Shirley Burtnett, USA, RET

215-776-6599 2dtsailing@gmail.com

Maj Mick Cotten, USMC, RET

386-490-7343 mickcotten@icloud.com

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

1LT Raymond Parker, USA, FMR

305-775-4291 rap@phrst.com

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Chief of Staff:

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET

386-479-3400 LgtCurt@gmail.com

Chaplain:

CH LtCol Christopher Hoffmann, USAFR, RET

863-398-6265 cahoffmann60@gmail.com

ROTC/JROTC Liaison:

LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET

Community Relations:

CW4 Tom Jackson, USA, RET

540-604-7163 Thoas.d.jackson@outlook.co

Legislative:

CAPT Suzanne Bonner, USN, RET

386-738-7752 sable 5662002@yahoo.com

Membership:

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET

Personal Affairs:

LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET

Scholarship:

LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET

Webmaster:

MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET

Editor:

COL John Burtnett, USA, RET

215-776-6599 **volusiaofficerscall**@gmail.com

Surviving Spouse Liaison:

Mrs. Lisa Hightower

386-216-3767 lisamh4550@yahoo.com

MOAA Take Action Center -

http://takeaction.moaa.org

Legislative -

Understanding the ABCs of RMDs

As you near your 70s, you need to be prepared for when required minimum distributions from your retirement accounts kick in. "The RMD is something the government plans for us — on their schedule, not yours," said Maggi Keating, CFP®, a financial planner at FBBCapital Partners and the spouse of a retired Marine Corps colonel.

Many savers have amassed hefty pretax retirement account balances, and RMDs are calculated off those balances.

"These distributions are becoming more sizable, and becoming more of a tax issue," said Keating.

RMDs could spike you into a higher tax bracket as they add to your ordinary taxable income, which may already include military retirement pay and Social Security, among other sources of retirement income. Plus, if you fail to take out the right amount, you can incur a penalty from the IRS.

Understanding the rules for RMDs not only helps you avoid trouble with the IRS, but that knowledge can also present strategic opportunities to make the most of your nest egg, and in some cases, even keep your tax tab to Uncle Sam in check.

The First RMD

The federal government previously raised the starting age for RMDs to age 72 from age 70½, and the new SECURE Act 2.0 law further raises the age original owners of retirement accounts must begin taking RMDs.

No matter the starting age, for your first RMD only, you get an option to delay taking it. You can take the first RMD by the end of the year in which you reach RMD age. Or you can wait to take it until April 1 of the year following that birthday (that April 1st is known as your required beginning date, or RBD).

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Last Meeting (1 FEB 2023) -

President, MAJ Raul Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 1145 hours.

Attendance: 35

CH LTC Chris Hoffmann gave the invocation followed by The Pledge of Allegiance.

MAJ Gonzalez welcomed our guests and members: welcome to new members COL Jim Pugh, Maj Kathleen Voelbel, CW04 Ted Seaman; welcome to longtime member Bill Quirk; and welcome to our guest speaker Bob Watson USMC, (Ret) Director of Volusia County Veterans Services and Scott Olsen USMC, (Ret) Volusia County Veterans Service Officer

Lunch was served: Salmon, Rice, Green beans, and Chocolate Cake with Ice Cream.

MAJ Gonzalez asked Maj Curt Voelbel to pin the Chapters 5 Star of Excellence medallion on our Chapter's ribbon on our flag.

MAJ Gonzalez asked Maj Curt Voelbel that the 50/50 drawings be done at this time. Followed by the members' free lunch drawing.

LtCol Twila Davis won the free lunch for the 1March 2023 meeting/luncheon.

MAJ Gonzalez introduced the guest speaker: Bob Watson is the Director of Veterans Services for Volusia County Florida. As Director Bob trains, coordinates and leads a team providing assistance to veterans in determining and obtaining potential VA benefits. Bob started as an accredited Veterans Service officer in 1993. Bob grew up in Pinson Alabama and lived there until he joined the United States Marine Corps in 1972. He retired from the Marine Corps in 1992 as a Master Gunnery Sgt. Upon his retirement from the Marine Corps, he became a staunch advocate for veterans and to this day it remains his passion.

Bob is married to Gwen Watson and resides in Deland, FL.

Mr. Watson stated Florida is the most Veteran Friendly state and Volusia County is ranked first in providing support to veterans. Florida is ranked #2 nationwide, with Texas ranked as #1 and California is #3. Mr. Watson stated Volusia County has approximately 72,000 veterans.

Mr. Watson stated the most important take aways for today are:

- 1. If someone offers to help you file a VA claim and charges you a fee -RUN away. All veterans need to visit one of the Volusia County Veterans Service Officers. Offices are located in DeLand, Orange City, Daytona, and New Smyrna Beach.
- 2. Mr. Watson stated if there are any veterans that would like to volunteer to help other veterans, Volusia County has a Veteran's Court to oversee cases of veterans. If you would like to be a mentor, please let him know and he will connect you with the program manager.

Mr. Watson then introduced Scott Olson, Veterans Services Officer to explain some of the VA benefits.

Mr. Olson explained there are two sides to the Veterans Administration: VHA Veterans Health Administration and VBA- Veterans Benefit Administration. He recommends all veterans register in the VA Health system. Especially with the passing of the PACT Act which opened up benefits to Gulf War Veterans. Mr. Olson explained there are several different categories of covered medical conditions: Direct---while on active duty you were running and fell and injured your left knee; Secondary-you develop a right knee condition secondary to the left knee injury, Aggravation-the is an aggravation of a pre-existing condition, and Presumptive—conditions that are assumed to be secondary to military service/ exposures---like agent orange. (Continued on page 4)

Last Meeting - continued from page 3

Mr. Olson stated surviving spouses may qualify for benefits such as VA Pension-the criteria is same for the veteran and is need based; and VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) - surviving spouse, child or parent of a service member who died in the line of duty, or from a service-connected injury or illness disability. Please refer any spouse or family member to the Veterans Services Officer for assistance.

MAJ Gonzalez thanked Mr. Watson and Mr. Olson for speaking to the Chapter today and presented a certificate of appreciation to Mr. Watson.

MAJ Gonzalez asked if there were any corrections to the 4 JAN 2023 Meeting Minutes as posted in the Volusia Officer's Call (VOC). Motion was made to accept the minutes as published by Maj Mick Cotten and seconded by MAJ Shirley Burtnett. Motion carried.

MAJ Gonzalez called for reports: Secretary's Report: LtCol Twila Davis-nothing to report

Treasurer's Report: Maj Pete Durnell reported a balance as of 31 JAN 2023 of \$ 5598.91. Treasurer's report is given for informational purposes and is subject to audit.

Directors and Committee Reports:

LTC Laura Wickett -1st VP – nothing to report as 1st VP;

2nd VP- vacant -MAJ Gonzalez stated he would like a member to step up to fill this position.

Maj Mick Cotten -Director-nothing to report at this time

Col Jim Winter - Director- nothing to report

MAJ Shirley Burtnett -Director -nothing to report

LTC Laura Wickett- Scholarship Chair- LTC Wickett stated the JROTC award ceremonies are coming up and she is looking for members to attend and assist in presenting the awards. Please contact her if you are interested.

CAPT Suzanne Bonner -Legislative Chair – asked all members to continue looking at the MOAA National website and take action on legislative matters.

Maj Curt Voelbel -Chief of Staff and Membership Chair- we have 53 current members our goal is 58. Encouraged everyone to invite prospective members.

Maj Voelbel stated he is working on the Slate of Officers for 2023-2024. There is an opening for a Legislative Affairs Officer. Please contact Maj Voelbel if interested.

CW04 Thomas Jackson- Community Relationsnothing to report

Past President- 1LT Ray Parker- excused.

CH LTC Chris Hoffmann- Chaplain- CH Hoffmann stated we need to be the light for those individuals in need especially those that are "stuck" and are unable to cope with life's challenges.

COL Jack Burtnett – Editor – asked everyone that has not had their picture taken for the Membership Photo Directory -to please see him.

Ms. Lisa Hightower – Surviving Spouse Liaisonnothing to report

OLD BUSINESS:

- MAJ Gonzalez asked all members to submit a Bio to LtCol Twila Davis.
- 2. MAJ Gonzalez stated the planning committee is working on the Spring Event:

(Continued on page 5)

Last Meeting - continued from page 4

"Operation Comraderie". More information to come.

- 3. MAJ Gonzalez stated we are conducting a WVMC Scholarship Fund Raiser. To keep donations private, members will be receiving an envelope in the mail with a donation card and return envelope.
- 4. MAJ Gonzalez stated he and LTC Laura Wickett (who was representing the American Legion) attended the Volusia County Veterans Council. The council encourages organizations to look at ways to support the veterans in the community.
- 5. MAJ Gonzalez reminded members to look at the Chapter's website and read the VOC for the latest information.
- 6. MAJ Gonzalez stated the FCoC 2023 Convention will be held at the Renaissance Hotel World Golf Village, St, Augustine, FL May 19-21, 2023. Registration closes April 27, 2023.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Our next luncheon meeting will be 1
 March 2023 and our guest speaker will be Volusia County Councilman At-Large Jake Johansson.
- 2. The Chapter will be visited by CAPT Jim Carman, a representative from MOAA National at our April meeting.
- MAJ Gonzalez stated our Chapter has been asked to partner with the Halifax MOAA Chapter to host the 2024 FCOC Annual Convention. The Board of Directors have approved our participation in this event.
- 4. MAJ Gonzalez announced upcoming events:

- a. The 4 Chaplains Tribute When: Saturday February 4, 2023 Where: Historic American Legion Post 187, 415 W. Voorhis Ave Deland Time 12:00PM.
- b. Ormond Strong Military Veteran, First Responder and Community Family Appreciation Day When: Saturday February 25, 2023 Where: Rockefeller Gardens 25 Riverside Dr. Ormond Beach, FL Time: 12:00pm-4:00pm

GOOD OF THE CHAPTER:

- 1. DeLand Police Department is hiring.
- 2. There will be a Chili Cook Off at the Emory Bennett Nursing home on February 25, 2023.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Executive Board Meeting will be held on 8 February 2023 1000 hours at the Debary Country Club. Members are welcome to attend.

Next luncheon meeting will be 1 March 2023 at Debary Country Club.

Meeting adjourned at 1337 hours.

Prepared by LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, (Ret)

President's Perspective—continued from page 1

Planning is in progress. It is both an opportunity for us to demonstrate our leadership and generate much needed funds that can be used to impact our community. Make no mistake, this is an exciting time for our Chapter and I'm seeking your support. I know we can do this! Please join me.

MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET

Roul Gonzalez

President

New Members-

We have added some new members over the last few months. Please greet them at our meetings and make them feel welcome.



Michael Magee LTC, USA (Ret)





WVMC members having a great time at the VFW Port Orange on 21 January. From left to right Laura Wickett, Twila and Bert Davis, and Suzanne Bonner. Photo by Raul Gonzalez



Ted Seaman CW4, USA (Ret)

WVMC February Guest Speakers

President Raul Gonzalez presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Bob Watson and Scott Olson at our February meeting. Our guest speakers are from the Office of Veterans Services for Volusia County. *Photo by Ernie Tauber*





Chief of Staff Curt Voelbel pins the MOAA 5 star Levels of Excellence award for 2022 to the MOAA flag. The event took place at the Feb 2023 meeting/luncheon.

Membership -

Ask yourself why you joined MOAA and our Chapter. Having brainstormed that, now you're armed with all you need to start a conversation with a potential new member. It really is that simple, merely tell your story! You may even want to develop a one to two minute elevator speech so you are always ready to look for a recruitment opportunity. Remember to invite them to our next luncheon. So what else does it take? Well, much like all successful actions it takes being intentional. Help us reach our goal of having 58 members; we are currently 5 short of this goal. We have accomplished this in prior years; let's make it happen again.

We welcome new members Col Jim Pugh, Maj Kathleen Voelbel, and CW4 Ted Seaman. Col Jim winter has secured very informative guest speakers and there are more interesting ones to come. We encourage you to read their biographies that we send you to entice potential new members.

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET Membership

NEVER STOP SERVING®

Legislative—Continued from page 2

But then "the problem is you have to take two in one year," said former Capt. Keola Elobt, USA, MBA, AIF, a West Point graduate who is now the group head of MAI Retirement at MAI Capital Management. If you delay your first RMD, you also have to take your second distribution in the same year. The second and all subsequent RMDs must be taken by Dec. 31 of each year.

Consider how doubling up your RMDs might affect your tax bill. If doubling pushes you into a higher tax bracket, you might want to forgo delaying and take the first RMD in the year you reach RMD age.

Extracted from MOAA's News website; for more on this subject go to https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/news-listing/

The next meeting, 1 Mar, will be held at the DeBary Country Club, 300 Plantation Club Drive, DeBary, FL 32713. The meal will be grilled chicken breast alfredo over a bed of linguine, Chef's vegetable along with rolls, coffee or tea. There will also be Chef's choice of a small dessert. The lunch cost is \$24 per meal. We ask that you either pay by check or with cash (exact change helps) at the door. The guest speaker will be Jake Johansson, Volusia County Council Member At-Large. He will provide information about the current "state of Volusia County" and the future outlook for our governmental challenges.

Please bring your unexpired pantry items for the Salvation Army.

Upcoming Meeting: 1 MAR 2023 Following Meeting: 5 APR 2023

Upcoming Board Meeting: 8 MAR 2023

Meetings are held at the DeBary Country Club, 300 Plantation Club Drive, DeBary, FL 32713. Social hour starts at 1100 hrs., lunch served at 1130 followed by an interesting guest speaker, then a short business meeting.

Guest Speaker's Bio -

Jake Johansson began his career as an enlisted sailor in the United States Navy. He attended night school at Troy University and received his commission as an officer in 1989. He was winged as a Naval Flight Officer in 1991.

In his 35-and-a-half-year career he held numerous leadership positions at the line and staff level. He flew combat missions in support of multiple operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was the commanding officer of Patrol Squadron FOUR and they safely flew over 5000 hours of combat missions over Iraq without incident. His staff tours were with the Chief of Naval Operations in the Pentagon, and later in his career with the Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific. He was also personally selected by Vice President Richard B. Cheney as his Naval Aide for three years carrying the "football." He also was selected to command a Naval Base (Naval Support Activity in Norfolk, Virginia) and was responsible for 5 local naval bases of national importance. During these tours he was a guiding force in base operations, infrastructure development, military-civil collaboration, homeland security, ethics training and investigations, and leadership training. He has been awarded an Air Medal, Bronze Star, Legion of Merit and Defense Superior Service medal for actions in defense of our nation.

He has a Master's degree (honors) in Public Administration from Old Dominion University.

Prior to his election as your Volusia County At Large representative he was the City Manager of Port Orange, FL from August 2015 to December 2020.

He has seved on multiple boards and committees in his military and civilian career.

He and his wife currently own and operate Core Concepts Leadership consulting specializing in keynote speaking, executive coaching and organization leadership training. They are facilitators of the Port Orange, South Daytona, Daytona Beach Shores Youth Civic Leadership Training Experience and the Southeast Volusia Leadership program.

He was elected to the Volusia County Council and started serving in January 2023. He has a four-year term.

From the Chief of Staff -

Maj Voelbel, Nominating Committee Chair will be contacting members to serve on the Board. Terms will begin in May, 2023. We will need to fill our Legislative Liaison. If you have any interest or even questions about who does what in our Chapter, let me know at LgtCurt@gmail.com or 386-479-3400.

Remember to stop by our table at the March 1 luncheon and contribute to Veterans causes and our Scholarship fund, both worthy of your consideration. Don't forget those pantry items for The Salvation Army, and certainly be sure to purchase a bunch of potential winning 50-50 tickets @ 3 for a dollar.

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET Chief of Staff

Member Responsibility for Luncheons

We have been having a problem and need your help. People have been committing to come to the WVMC luncheon and not showing up. When we order the meals based on the number of people who have said they are coming, we must pay for them whether everyone shows up or not. Five people who committed did not show up for the January luncheon. The Items to Note on the last page of the VOC has been carrying the following message, "People making reservations for the luncheon/meeting are expected to pay unless they cancel their reservation before the Friday prior to the luncheon." We cannot continue to absorb these losses. We expect those who have committed to showing up to pay for their meals.

If there is a legitimate reason, please notify Maj Curt Voelbel at LftCurt@gmail.com or call him at 386 479-3400, ASAP. If he has time to cancel the reservation, he will; if not, he will bring the situation to the Board of Directors for disposition.



JOIN WEST VOLUSIA MOAA CHAPTER FOR OUR SECOND OUTDOOR OPERATION CAMARADERIE PICNIC

Thursday, April 27, 2023, 10 AM to 3PM



Gemini Springs Park, Pavilion # 5
(37 Dirksen Drive, DeBary, FL 32713)

Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Sides & Fixings.

Soft Drinks included.

(Wine & Beer Allowed- Bring your own. No Glass Containers & NO HARD LIQUOR



\$10.00 per person (pay at park)

Park Entrance is FREE

RSVP: CAPT Suzanne Bonner 912-339-0988

Or e-mail sable5662002@yahoo.com

RSVP NO LATER THAN 24 APRIL 2023









The Chaplain's Corner -

I don't know if it is a curse that only we as Americans face, but too many people live in the future all the time. We are always thinking about what is next instead of enjoying the time we have right now. I've noticed this in my parish, but even once at EPCOT for the Candlelight Processional I watched people leaving before the music was over. It is sad really. We know that life can only be lived one day at a time, and yet we so often forget that and miss out on the opportunity of the moment.

It seems that even Jesus needed to find ways to be present at each moment because the crowds could be overwhelming. After a day of healing the sick Jesus slipped out of town to find quiet in the wilderness. Peter seeks out Jesus and tells him that everyone needs him and he should come back. Jesus realizes His mission would not allow him to escape. Instead, the solace He found with the Father gave Him the ability to minister to all those who needed him.

Fr. Solanus Casey, a Capuchin priest, spent his life in service to God's people. At the friary door as porter he met thousands of people from every age and walk of life seeking help or wanting a tour or needing confession. He earned recognition as "The Doorkeeper." He was always ready to listen to anyone at any time, day or night. He once said, "Man's greatest holiness lies in being faithful to the present moment." Some say when they met Fr. Solanus they met a living saint. I think he was onto

something. Being present with people, with God in prayer, and with nature can lead us to a greater holiness. (The Catholic Church has declared Fr. Solanus to be Blessed, the step before being declared a saint.)

I've also discovered an insight about being present in the moment. Things that we fear most often do not occur, and things that are good happen more often than we imagine or plan for. Yet, we spend a lot of energy worrying about future possibilities and less time savoring current gifts and blessings. When we are able to pause and realize how often someone has crossed our path and smiled at us, let us go ahead in line at the grocery store, went out of their way to help us with a problem, or just listened when we needed an ear, we would discover that God is present so often, but we miss it.

I try each day to see something beautiful. I pause to notice the sunrise and sunset, the Sandhill Cranes, and the children at play next door. I try to see good in each person and greet them when I am taking a walk. I know I am not successful at it all of the time, but I try to make a conscious effort to be in the now. I pray that you will find the peace that only God can give and that He helps you to slow down so as not to miss the moment.

LtCol Chris Hoffmann, USAF, RET Chaplain







The Volusia Officers Call

West Volusia MOAA Chapter, INC.
An Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America



Items to Note -

Free Meals

Those attendees who win a free lunch from the "ticket drawing" will only be able to claim their free lunch at the NEXT meeting.

To help us serve you better, we are asking all members to send copies of their DD 214 to our Secretary, LtCol Twila Davis at (email): flygirlltc@gmail.com. If you feel more comfortable, redact your social security number.

Notice: WVMC does not endorse any of the paid advertisers.

We have put the BYLAWS for WVMC on our website; how do you find the website; look elsewhere on *Items to Note*.

If you are receiving this via U.S. Postal delivery and if you have email, we can get the VOC to you more quickly and at less expense to WVMC. Please let the editor know your email by contacting him at volusiaofficerscall@gmail.com

Check out **OUR** website at www.moaafl.org/ Chapters/VolusiaMOAA/Default.aspx
It has a lot of information and links to useful information for all vets. The website gives guidance about how prospective members can join MOAA and WVMC.

National MOAA and the West Volusia MOAA Chapter are nonpartisan organizations.

New name tags reflecting the name change for our organization are available from MAJ Raul Gonzalez at the monthly meetings or by contacting him at: majgonz@earthlink.net. The cost is \$15.

People making reservations for the luncheon/ meeting are expected to pay unless they cancel their reservation before the Friday prior to the luncheon.



Curt Voelbel 386-479-3400 Curt@VacationsByCurt.com



DeBary Country Club

The Perfect Venue For Special Occasions. Partnering with West Volusia MOAA. Committed to our members and veterans. Contact: Ms. Lynn Ribaudo 386-668-11705 x1 Lynn@debarycc.com