



# The Volusia Officers Call

## West Volusia MOAA Chapter, INC. (WVMC)

An Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America



**Vol 32, No 4.DEC 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—**

As I prepare this article, we are just a few days from Thanksgiving Day 2023, quickly followed by Christmas and New Years Day. The year has flown, and I'm reminded of how blessed we are. Surrounded by friends and family it's a time for making lasting memories with loved ones, enjoying the Thanksgiving menu of roasted turkey with delicious trimmings, and expressing an abundance of gratitude for the blessings we've received throughout the year. That's right! In between the preparations (we all know how hectic things can get), it's so important to take a moment and express a heartfelt thanks to everyone. A simple card, a quick text letting someone know how appreciated they are and hope to share the sentiment in person as you gather around the dinner table. There are so many ways to show your gratitude. I thank God every day for putting you in my life and hope you have a blessed Thanksgiving. Don't forget The Halifax Area MOAA Chapter's Holiday Dinner on December 21<sup>st</sup> from 5pm – 9pm. The RSVP is in this newsletter. Also, the 2024 FCoC Convention is coming in May 2024. Planning is ongoing and we can use your help. Please join us at the December 6<sup>th</sup> Luncheon for more information.

MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET  
President

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**MOAA Take Action Center -**<http://takeaction.moaa.org>**Legislative -****Last Chance: MOAA Needs Your Input on 2024 Advocacy Topics**

While MOAA's signature advocacy event won't take place until April, the planning is well underway – and that's why we need to hear from you soon.

We are getting ready to determine our topics for this year's Advocacy in Action (AiA) campaign, where members from across the nation will join MOAA staff to bring our message in force to lawmakers on Capitol Hill. This is your last chance to share your thoughts on potential topics you would like MOAA to prioritize within these advocacy categories:

Compensation and Service-Earned BenefitsMilitary HousingHealth Care for Currently Serving and RetireesHealth Care and Benefits for VeteransService FamiliesSurvivorsGuard and Reserve

MOAA's advocacy mission would not be possible without support from the councils and chapters, and the many members who stay engaged. The core of our advocacy mission is to protect service-earned benefits which, from time-to-time, are put at risk.

**MOAA-Backed Bill Would Help Veterans, Survivors Qualify for Housing Assistance**

A bipartisan House bill would make more veterans eligible for federal housing assistance by eliminating their service-earned disability benefits from Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) income calculations.

The Home for the Brave Act (H.R. 6179) also removes Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from such calculations, making these benefits available to more survivors. Other federal agencies, such as the Internal Revenue Service, already exclude such service-related compensation from income.

VA payments to veterans and survivors "should not restrict their access to housing programs when in (Continued on page 6)

**Last Meeting (1 NOV 2023) -**

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, LTC Laura Wickett called the meeting to order at 1144 hours.

Attendance: 24

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

LTC Wickett welcomed our members and guests: DeBary Mayor Karen Chasez and Christina Raimundo, Head of DeBary's Hometown Heroes Program.

Lunch was served: Grilled Chicken Sandwich, Fruit cup, Broccoli and Cauliflower, and Bread Pudding for Dessert.

LTC Wickett asked Maj Curt Voelbel that the 50/50 drawings be done at this time. Additional drawings for handmade pillowcases donated by Aurora and Maj Curt Voelbel followed. Then the members' free lunch drawing.

CW04 Ted Seaman won the free lunch for the 6 DEC 2023 meeting/luncheon.

LTC Wickett introduced DeBary Mayor Karen Chasez:

Karen Chasez was elected mayor of DeBary in 2018, seated in January 2019. She retired from her last executive position as vice president, procurement with a large publicly traded company in 2011 and had been active in community affairs between her retirement and her election to city office. She and her husband built their home in DeBary in 2008. They have three children and two grandchildren.

Mayor Chasez introduced Christina Raimundo, Head of DeBary's Hometown Heroes Program and explained that banners honoring 5 veterans will be hung in front of DeBary City Hall starting tomorrow. She stated the Hometown Heroes

Program committee will meet 2-3 times per year to discuss program goals.

Mayor Chasez discussed the plans for DeBary Main Street: the area is newly designed to include townhomes designed for live/work units, restaurants/coffee shops, and a community plaza with a park.

She also explained that DeBary is an area with Eco-Tourism opportunities to include fishing, disc-golf, biking and hiking. The city purchased 170 acres of undeveloped land off of Florida Rd along the St. Johns River called Alexander Island. Some of the ideas for this area include: biking and hiking trail along the river, kayaking kiosk, observation tower, and the site of a research and education center operated by Aquatic Preserve Alliance, a private nonprofit environmental organization. The planning committee is open to suggestions from the public. Please forward your ideas to the City of DeBary.

The City of DeBary was established on December 31 1993. To celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary there will be a dinner dance on December 30, 2023. It is a ticketed event, all are invited.

LTC Wickett thanked Mayor Chasez for speaking to the WVMC today.

LTC Wickett asked if there were any corrections to the 6 September 2023 and 4 October 2023 Luncheon Meeting Minutes as posted in the VOC. Hearing none the minutes are approved as published.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

LTC Wickett stated the chapter will participate in the DeLand Veterans Day Parade on 11 November 2023 1000 hours. COL Jack Burtnett is the point of contact for the parade. Members are welcome to ride on the float.

(Continued on page 4)

**Last Meeting - continued from page 3**

There will be no speaker for 6 Dec 2023 meeting. The meeting will be for socializing with other members and discussing chapter goals for the future.

Our Chapter has been invited to the Halifax Holiday Dinner Dance, Halifax River Yacht Club, 331 S. Beach St, Daytona Beach, FL on Thursday 21 December 2023 from 5PM-9PM. RSVP to MAJ Raul Gonzalez NLT 14 DEC 2023.

**NEW BUSINESS:** none

LTC Wickett called for reports:

Secretary's Report: LtCol Twila Davis- nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report: Maj Pete Durnell reported checking account balance as of 31 OCT 2023 of \$5,468.40 and savings account balance of \$2000.33 for total assets of \$7,468.71. \$2698.00 of the total is earmarked for the ROTC Scholarships. Treasurers report is given for informational purpose and is subject to audit.

**Directors and Committee Reports:**

LTC Laura Wickett -1<sup>st</sup> VP – nothing to report  
2nd VP- CAPT Bonner – excused

Maj Mick Cotten -Director- excused

Col Jim Winter -Director –excused

MAJ Shirley Burtnett -Director – nothing to report

LTC Laura Wickett- Scholarship Chair – nothing to report

LTC Mike Galaty -Legislative Chair – excused  
Maj Curt Voelbel –Chief of Staff and Membership Chair- reported we have 56 current members. Our goal is 58. Keep recruiting.

CW4 Thomas Jackson- Community Relations- announced on November 10, 2023 at 10:00 AM there will be a Veterans Day Ceremony at Bill Dreggors Park, Deland; November 11, 2023 at 10:00 AM is the DeLand Veterans Day Parade -WVMC and the American Legion Post 6 will

have floats. Members are invited to participate; November 4, 2023 2:00 PM-6:00PM is Thank a Vet Event at American Legion Post #6 DeLand; and Parachutes for Patriots event will be held on 22-23 March 2024. POC is CW04 Ted Seaman.

LTC Wickett announced on November 13, 2023 at 2:00 PM here is a Veterans Day event at Emory L Bennett VA Nursing Home, 1920 Mason Ave, Daytona Beach.

LTC Michael MaGee announced there is a motorcycle Heroes Ride on November 11, 2023 in support of Veterans and Law Enforcement.

Starting point is J&P Cycles 253 Destination Daytona Ln, Ormond Beach, FL; Ending Point is OB's Restaurant 1750 N. Woodland Blvd, DeLand, FL. Register online at <https://theheroesride.com>

Past President- 1LT Ray Parker- excused.

CH LtCol Chris Hoffmann- Chaplain-stated there is always someone in need and one way to help is to consider organ donation.

COL Jack Burtnett – Editor – nothing to report  
Ms. Lisa Hightower – Surviving Spouse Liaison- nothing to report

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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

Our next luncheon meeting will be 6 DEC 2023. Meeting adjourned at 1313 hours.

*LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET  
Secretary*



### Chief of Staff -

As you are aware, we are hosting the Florida Council of Chapters meeting in Daytona Beach Shores, May 12-14, 2024. As such, we will need volunteers to help make this a memorable event that will recognize our chapter. See Pete Durnell or Raul Gonzalez to sign up.

Remember to stop by the table at our luncheon to purchase a bunch of potential winning 50-50 tickets @ 3 for a dollar. Somebody has to win!

Sample tee shirts and hat with our local chapter logo will be on display for you to purchase or order. If you prefer, you can bring your own shirt and have our logo printed on it for a very reasonable price.

### Veterans Causes

Barracks of Hope in Daytona provides transitional housing for up to 9 months to male and female veterans who have struggled with homelessness, addiction, and mental health. Single occupancy rooms are provided, along with mental health counseling, case management, and three meals per day. You can help by bringing to each luncheon a quart size Zip "Hygiene Bag" filled with Toothpaste, Brush, Shampoo, Soap, Deodorant, etc.

Additionally, we will collect unexpired Pantry items for The West Volusia Salvation Army.

At our luncheon, cash donations may be dropped in the buckets at the door for Veteran's Causes and JR ROTC Scholarships.

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET  
Chief of Staff

### Membership -

With 56 members, we are closer to meeting our membership goal of 58. However, our strength will certainly decrease significantly by year end as **13** current members have **FAILED** to pay their annual dues and will be dropped from our roster!

This is our last and final plea - we really do not want to lose your valued membership. Please pay your dues at our Dec 6 luncheon.

If you are unable to attend the luncheon, mail your \$35 annual dues check made out to WVMC to: Maj Pete Durnell at 319 E Victoria Trails Blvd. Deland, FL 32724.

If you are not a current dues paying member of MOAA National, we encourage you to join by going to the MOAA Website - <https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa/> Information on Premium and Life membership is described. When on the website, scroll down to join.

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET  
Membership

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## The Chaplain's Corner -



Sometimes traditions have many origins, so it is hard to know exactly how things develop. We know that there was a bishop who was from Myra in Asia Minor who lived in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Because he was so beloved in both the Western church and the Eastern church it seems logical that he was a holy man who made an impact on people.

Among the legends about St. Nicholas is that he heard about a father who couldn't provide dowries for his three daughters. They might have to become prostitutes. Nicholas would not allow that to happen. So, at night he threw bags of gold secretly into the home on three separate occasions. The poor man's daughters could marry properly.

It wasn't much of a stretch for that story to morph into a gentle man who gives gifts to children. The Dutch who settled in what would become New York had a devotion to Sinter Klaas. The English speakers translated that into Santa Claus. Gift giving on his feast was Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> in the Dutch world.

So, how did we get to the notion of Santa being at the North Pole with reindeer? That was largely a creation of Thomas Nast a cartoonist of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In Harpers Daily an article appeared in which among other things in this drawing, Santa is also in a sleigh pulled by reindeer.

Some wonder, is the whole gift giving with Santa a pagan custom. Well, as you see above, there are lots of influences. One of those was celebrating the return of the sun god by the Romans. Around the winter solstice there was a feast that was very popular. It included food and drink. Some think that when the Roman

empire became Christian it was easier to translate the feast to a celebration of the Son of God than to suppress the celebrating.

I hope your celebrating this Christmas season or Hanukkah reminds you of God's goodness and his care for us, His human creation.

*LtCol Chris Hoffmann, USAF, RET  
Chaplain*

## Legislative -Continued from page 2

need," MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), said in support of the bill. "MOAA urges Congress to swiftly enact the Home for the Brave Act and expand housing opportunities for those who have sacrificed for our country."

The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, along with the National Coalition for the Homeless, joined MOAA in endorsing the legislation, introduced Nov. 6 by Reps. Salud Carbajal (D-Calif.) and Lloyd Smucker (R-Pa.). Both representatives have sponsored similar legislation in previous years, dating back to 2017.

*Above items are extracted from the MOAA website's "News & Info"*



The next meeting, 6 Dec, will be held at the DeBary Country Club, 300 Plantation Club Drive, DeBary, FL 32713. The meal will be smoked beef brisket sandwich, served with rolls & butter, iced tea or coffee, and chef's choice of 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. This month we will not have a guest speaker.

Please bring your unexpired pantry items for the Salvation Army,

**Upcoming Meeting: 6 DEC 2023**

**Following Meeting: 3 JAN 2024**

**Upcoming Board Meeting: 13 DEC 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.

## DeLand Veterans Day Parade -



Moving into our starting position (position 4) for the 11 November 2023 DeLand Veterans Day Parade.

From left to right: Judy McLaughlin, Chuck McLaughlin, Jack Burtnett, Laura Wickett, Pete Durnell, Lisa Hightower, Tom Jackson, Maria McLaughlin, and Shirley Burtnett.



Along the route—Pete and Judy showing the Colors.

Howry Ave. and the end of the parade route. A great time was had by all, and a special thanks to Mike York for his time and effort in pulling the trailer. An extra special thanks to the City of DeLand residents who lined the streets to cheer us on!





## THE WEST VOLUSIA MOAA CHAPTER (FL30)



***FOR THE 2024  
FCoC 47TH ANNUAL  
CONVENTION***



**May 12-15, 2024 at  
The Shores Resort & Spa  
Daytona Beach, Florida**

**"CAMARADERIE WITH A PURPOSE"**





**2024 FCoC Convention Update** (Available online at the FCoC website)

A very happy holidays to you and your family. I hope you will have a rewarding Christmas Season and are looking forward to the new year. Speaking of the new year, I again remind you to make sure you have saved the date of the 2024 FCoC Convention to be held the 12<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> of May at the Shores Resort and Spa in Daytona Beach. If all goes to plan, registration for the convention will start the 1<sup>st</sup> of February and I encourage you to make your reservation as soon as you can as registration will close rather quickly. By mid-April the Shores is requiring us to provide them with attendance numbers and a breakout of who will want to do what so that our catering plan works. Numbers are important when dealing with a hotel vendor especially when they are providing meals as they usually order their supplies in advance. The room count is equally important as the hotel will want us to meet our room night goal or release them back to the hotel so they can sell them. An empty room is not a situation any hotel wants. Please, please, please get your registration in as soon as you can once it is open to do so.

I mentioned before that the Shores has agreed to allow our attendees to stay one or two extra nights post the convention at the same room rate as has been negotiated for the convention. Once registration is open, please look for this on the registration form and consider staying that extra night or two, either Wednesday or Thursday or ideally both.

So why do this? Besides the obvious attraction of the Shores Resort and Spa sitting directly on the beach with a large deck, a pool, a hot tub, and a Tiki Bar there is direct access onto the beach itself where, in famous Daytona Beach style, you can hire a bike or scooter to go up and down the wonderful sands of Daytona.

Daytona Beach earned fame because of the beach which was hard packed enough to allow racing on the sands. Over the years as cars became faster and faster, on the beach racing had to stop and racing moved inland. Today that racing, as I hardly need tell racing fans, takes place at Daytona International Speedway. You can visit a tribute to racing at the Motorsports Hall of Fame right next to the speedway. You may want to have the whole racetrack experience by having a tour of the actual speedway. This is offered only on specific days and times but not on the Monday of our convention because of a concert at the speedway on that weekend. Check out [DaytonaInternationalSpeedway.com](http://DaytonaInternationalSpeedway.com) for more information.

If you do arrive early for the convention then Sunday has **Welcome to Rockville, Florida's Biggest Rock Music Festival** at the Speedway. Or how about a visit to the ballpark where Jackie Robinson played. Games are on Tuesdays and Sundays when you can watch the Daytona Tortugas Minor League Baseball team play. Seniors can get in for \$20 with a \$3 parking charge. See [milb.com](http://milb.com).

(Continued on page 10)

If shopping is your thing, then Daytona Beach Flea Market is on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday with over 1,000 booths ([DaytonaFleaMarket.com](http://DaytonaFleaMarket.com)) or there's Tanger Outlets, Bucee's. and One Daytona. For a special meal how about a wonderful view over all of Daytona at Top of Daytona restaurant

right next to the Shores (TopofDaytona29.com or call 386-322-7232). Remember that Sunday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, is Mother's Day and Top of Daytona, as well as other restaurants, will offer specials and will likely be very crowded.

If you are interested in learning about **Embry Riddle Aeronautical University**, you can take a 30 minute golf cart (for 5 people) or a 45-60 minute walking tour. We have reserved time on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Please indicate on your registration if you are interested.

So, what else can you do to keep you at the Shores after the convention? Here's a quick list of things to do:

- Ponce Inlets Lighthouse and Museum.

- The Marine Science Center collocated with the Lighthouse.

- Golf at the LPGA Golf Courses.

- Hankster's Hot Rods Classic Car Showroom.

- Angell & Phelps Chocolate Factory

- Luau Fire and Hula Dinner Show

- Lady Dolphin of Daytona Dinner and River Cruise

- The Cici & Hyatt Brown Art Museum (all Florida art)

- The Museum of Arts & Sciences (MOAS)

- Tank America (in Orlando) to drive a tank

These and many other attractions are ready for you to visit. To get a better idea of what's available, check the Daytona Convention and Visitors Bureau web site at [daytonabeach.com](http://daytonabeach.com).

Take the opportunity to see and experience what Daytona has to offer and extend your stay and extra day or two. You'll be glad you did.

*Maj Pete Durnell, USAF, RET*  
*2024 Convention Planner*

**MOAA****HOLIDAY DINNER DANCE****Halifax Area MOAA & Guest Chapters**

Halifax River Yacht Club, 331 S Beach St., Daytona Beach, FL 32114

**Thursday, December 21, 2023****5 PM – 9 PM****MUSIC BY HOST, KEVIN TOBIAS****FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT AND DANCING PLEASURE****ShBoom Entertainment Productions****DINNER MENU:****SALAD:** House Salad with Romaine Lettuce, red onions, grape Tomatoes, Goat cheese; Choice of dressings & fresh rolls**Entrées Choice of:****#1** – Wild caught Salmon with Lemon Caper Sauce  
OR**#2** – Queen Prime Rib with Horseradish Cream Sauce  
Both served with mushroom risotto and vegetable of the day  
OR**#3** - Vegan: Roasted winter Squash with Spinach, Carrots & goat cheese,  
Served with Grilled Vegetables & Quinoa**DESSERT:** **HRYC** Cheesecake, Coffee, and Tea; CASH BAR**COSTS:** \$ 50.00**VEGAN:** \$ 40.00

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Please cut on the above line and return RSVPs with check made payable to Halifax Area MOAA.  
Mail to: Raul Gonzalez, 1515 Teddington St., Deland, FL 32720. No later than Dec 14th, 2023

Please Reserve \_\_\_\_\_ Seats for the Halifax Area Chapter Holiday Dinner.  
A check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Entrée Choice # \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Entrée Choice # \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Entrée Choice # \_\_\_\_\_





**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.

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](mailto:volusiaofficerscall@gmail.com)

#### Final Dues Notice - -

Members are reminded that dues are now due for the year 2023-24. The dues are **\$35**. Please get a check or MO to Treasurer Pete Durnell as soon as practicable. Pete's address is Peter Durnell, 319 E Victoria Trails Blvd, DeLand, FL 32724.

Check out **OUR** website at [www.moaafll.org/Chapters/VolusiaMOAA](http://www.moaafll.org/Chapters/VolusiaMOAA) 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 LTC Laura Wickett at the monthly meetings or by contacting her at: [lrwickett52@gmail.com](mailto:lrwickett52@gmail.com). The cost is \$15.

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