



The Volusia Officers Call

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



Vol 32, No 9, MAY 2024

Inside this Issue:

President's Perspective
Page 1

Club Leadership
Page 2

MOAA Take Action
Page 2

Legislative
Page 2

Last Meeting Minutes
Page 3

Membership
Page 5

Chief of Staff
Page 5

Obituary for Mick Cotten
Page 6

Chaplain's Corner
Page 7

Upcoming Meetings
Page 7

FCoC Convention Flyer
Page 8

Items to Note
Page 9

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—



By our next Membership meeting we will be 2 weeks away from the start of the 2024 Florida Council of Chapters Annual Convention in Daytona Beach. Many months of preparation by the Planning Committee, under the leadership of Maj Pete Durnell, will finally come to fruition. Beginning 12 through 15 May we will host MOAA members from across the State and Re-

gion, many sponsors, and dignitaries. This is a local event for us, and I am asking for robust attendance by our chapter. Please plan to participate.

On May 1st Maj Lorraine Holland, East Central Area Vice President, will install our Board for 2024-2025. We invite you and your guests to join us at this last monthly meeting before our summer break. As a reminder, we resume our membership meetings again on September 4th, 2024. Meanwhile we wrap up this meeting cycle with Memorial Day activities. We will participate in flag posting ceremonies at two locations and need 2 volunteers per location:

May 27, 2024 – 10am to 11:30am - Deltona Memorial Gardens, 1295 Saxon Blvd

May 27, 2024 – 12:30pm to 2:00pm – Deltona Veterans Memorial, 1291 Evard Ave

NOTE: This is the museum that Maj Mick Cotten helped to create and was curator.

I need 4 of you to volunteer. Other VSOs are also participating. Please contact me at 386-366-4473.

(Continued on page 6)

**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**

321-604-6694

lrwickett52@gmail.com

Second Vice President:**CAPT Suzanne Bonner, USN, RET**

386-738-7752

sable5662002@yahoo.com

Secretary:**LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET**

717-729-8281

flygirltcl@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

vacant

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

Thomas.d.jackson@outlook.com

Legislative:**LTC Michael Galaty, USA, RET**

203 606-3848

Mglty@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 -****MOAA Assembles on Capitol Hill**

April is always an exciting month for MOAA. Annually dedicated MOAA members and staff canvas the halls of Congress, visiting every member's office to discuss issues of importance to the uniformed services and veteran communities. MOAA's Advocacy in Action (AiA) event held on April 17th put constituents front and center to represent and advocate on behalf of MOAA's 360,000-members.

The association's AiA topics are carefully selected each year and approved by our board of directors.

This year on April 17th, MOAA and our campaign participants will have discussed three critical issues:

- The Major Richard Star Act (H.R. 1282/S. 344): Supports combat-injured veterans by ending an unjust offset for those who lose a dollar of service-earned retirement pay for every dollar of VA disability compensation.
- The BAH Restoration Act (H.R. 2537/S. 1823): Reverses a DoD policy capping the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) at 95% of local rental and utilities costs — a policy that's placing a financial burden on military families.
- Protect TRICARE For Life (TFL): This remains a key issue for all MOAA members — those already covered by TFL and Medicare, as well as those who'll use the benefit when they turn 65.

Do Your Part – Take Action – Be an Advocate*LTC Michael Galaty Jr, USA, RET**Legislative*

Last Meeting (3 APR 2024) -

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

Attendance: 24

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

MAJ Gonzalez welcomed our members and guests: LtCol William Quirk, CAPT Charles McLaughlin and CDR Judith McLaughlin. And the guest speaker David Cooke.

Lunch was served: Oven Roasted Pork with Apple Chutney, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans with Vanilla Cake with Carmel Sauce.

MAJ Gonzalez asked Mrs. Frances Gonzalez that the 50/50 drawings be done at this time. Then the members' free lunch drawing. Ms. Lisa Hightower won the free lunch for the 1 May 2024 meeting/luncheon.

MAJ Gonzalez introduced the guest speaker: David Cooke currently serves as the FDOT District 5 Rail Administration Manager. He has over 30 years of public and private sector transportation experience. A graduate of the University of Central Florida with a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration. He is a native Floridian and lifelong resident of Volusia County.

Mr. Cooke gave an overview of SunRail and an update on current expansion projects. The original intent for SunRail was to provide a means of transportation for commuters connecting the City of Orlando, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, and Volusia counties. The trains currently run Monday through Friday, no weekend service. The current system spans 49 miles and services 16 stations. There are 40 SunRail trains in operation per day. The trains are ADA accessible with restrooms. Many train riders bring their bicycles on the train.... over 200 per day. The trains are available for sponsors to provide transportation to specific events.

The construction of the Phase 2 North expansion includes the addition of a new SunRail station adjacent to the current DeLand Amtrak Station situated on the existing Central Florida Rail Corridor. The project will add 12.2 miles to the SunRail corridor expanding service from the DeBary SunRail Station to the new DeLand Station with the projected opening the end of May 2024. CSX, Amtrak, and FCEN (Florida Central) operate daily as tenant railroads on Central Florida Rail Corridor (CFRC). FDOT owns the tracks.

MAJ Gonzalez thanked David Cooke for speaking to the WVMC today and presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation.

MAJ Gonzalez asked if there were any corrections to the 6 March 2024 Luncheon Meeting Minutes as posted in the VOC. Motion to approve the minutes as posted in the VOC was made by LTC Laura Wickett and seconded by COL Jack Burtnett. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

MAJ Gonzalez asked LtCol Twila Davis to read the Slate of Officers to be elected. He then asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There being none, MAJ Gonzalez asked for a motion to elect the officers as listed in the slate. Motion to elect the WVMC Officers for 2024-2025 as read from the Slate of Officers was made by LtCol William Quirk and seconded by LTC Ernie Tauber. Motion carried. MAJ Gonzalez congratulated the newly elected officers and thanked them for stepping up. Installation of officers will be held at the 1 May 2024 luncheon meeting.

MAJ Gonzalez stated our Chapter is hosting the FCoC Conference 12-15 May 2024 at the Shores Resort and Spa 2637 S. Atlantic Ave, Daytona Beach, FL. And asked Maj Pete Durnell for an update. Maj Durnell stated that everything is set to go. The committee is in the process of collecting silent auction items. We need volunteers to help

(Continued on page 4)

Last Meeting - continued from page 3

with this event. Still collecting "Brick" ads for the booklet. Members can submit them in memory of a loved one. The cost is \$15.00. Registration is open on line at FLMOAA.org.

MAJ Gonzalez stated the Chapter's Past President Plaque is being updated and will be displayed at every meeting.

MAJ Gonzalez stated our Chapter will be participating in a Memorial Day service. Final plans will be announced at the May meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

MAJ Gonzalez announced there will be an open house at the new Daytona Beach VA Clinic, 1776 N. Williamson Blvd, Daytona Beach on 25 April 2024 from 3:00PM-5:00PM

MAJ Gonzalez called for reports:

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

Treasurer's Report: Maj Pete Durnell reported the checking account balance as of 31 March 2024 is \$ 4,671.58 and \$ 3200.72 in savings. The total earmarked for the ROTC Scholarships is \$ 3272.00 and \$500.00 for Barracks of Hope. Treasurers report is given for informational purpose and is subject to audit.

Directors and Committee Reports:

LTC Laura Wickett -1st VP – nothing to report.

2nd VP- CAPT Bonner – excused.

Director—Vacant.

Col Jim Winter— Director – emphasized the importance of our members to support the MOAA Advocacy to protect the benefits we have earned. He explained it is an easy process online through the MOAA website.

MAJ Shirley Burtnett—Director – nothing to report.

LTC Laura Wickett- Scholarship Chair –stated

the ROTC Scholarship application packets have been given to the Senior Military Instructors and Guidance Counselors of the 5 area high schools. No applications have been received to date.

LTC Mike Galaty -Legislative Chair –excused.

Maj Curt Voelbel –Chief of Staff and Membership Chair– excused. MAJ Gonzalez reported we have 54 current members. Our goal is 60. Keep recruiting.

CW4 Thomas Jackson- stated the Parachutes for Patriots event on 22-23 March 2024 was a success. CW4 Jackson stated the DeLand VFW had a fire. The building was destroyed. The Mayor of DeLand put out a letter of support for the VFW.

CH LtCol Chris Hoffmann- Chaplain- wished everyone Happy Easter. He also offered his assistance to anyone, of any faith, that might need assistance. CH Hoffmann then shared about doubting Thomas- the skeptic who refused to believe the resurrected Jesus had appeared to the ten other apostles until he could see and feel Jesus's wounds. Faith is tested because we want proof. CH Hoffmann stated we have to take things on Faith.

LTC Michael Magee-Speaker Coordinator- nothing to report.

COL Jack Burtnett – Editor – nothing to report.

Ms. Lisa Hightower – Surviving Spouse Liaison - stated several of the WVMC members attended the services for Rutha Corley.

LtCol Twila Davis- Personal Affairs- stated she attended the visitation/wake for Rutha Corley and sent a sympathy card to LTC Milt Corley from the WVMC members.

(Continued on page 6)

Membership -

We currently have 54 members with a CY 2024 goal of **60**. At previous luncheons, I have handed out "recruiting" business cards to everyone. Be sure to keep a few in your wallet or purse and share them with potential members. Just point them to me and I will take it from there. If you have been unable to attend our luncheons but would like to have a few of these recruiting cards, give me a call at (386-479-3400) and I will put them in the mail for you. Even though we do not meet in June, July, and August, recruiting should never stop!

When you do get to speak to a potential eligible member, remember to let them know that Legislative Advocacy is our primary mission. The chapter provides grassroots support for MOAA National's legislative agenda, initiatives that help all Veterans.

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.

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET
Membership



From the Chief of Staff -

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 and 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

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 LgtCurt@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.

Last Meeting - continued from page 4**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

CW4 Thomas Jackson announced 4-5 May 2024 is Volusia Valor Day, Honoring Heroes at Volusia County Fairgrounds. More information available at ww2armor.org

LTC Ernie Tauber announced the Volusia County's Veterans Services Division is hosting a Veterans Stand Down 19-20 April 2024 at the Volusia County Fairgrounds, 3150 E. New York Ave, DeLand. This event provides free services to homeless Veterans.

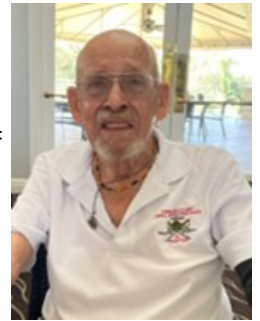
Executive Board Meeting will be held on 10 April 2024, 1000 hours at the DeBary Country Club. Members are welcome to attend. Our next luncheon meeting will be 1 May 2024 1100 hours at the DeBary Country Club.

Meeting adjourned at 1320 hours.

LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET
Secretary

President's Perspective – continued from page 1

On a final note, Maj Marion "Mick" Cotten passed away on April 14, 2024. Mick was a long-time member of our Chapter, involved across the county with other VSOs, and a devout Catholic and member of The Knights of Columbus. Mick was the driving force in creating the Deltona Veterans Memorial Park and was its curator for many years. R. I. P.



Raul Gonzalez
MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET
President

Obituary for Mick Cotton—

Maj Marion "Mick" Cotten, USMC (Ret), age 89, passed away on April 14, 2023, surrounded by family. Mick was born on June 5, 1934, to Andrew B. Cotten and Inez Cotten (Starkey). He grew up in Scottsboro, Mobile, Chickasaw and Fairhope, AL, along with a sister and four brothers. Mick married Pauline Marie Foisy on June 16, 1956. Together they raised four children and volunteered with numerous organizations during his 26-year Marine Corps career. After retiring in Deltona, FL, he was very active in the community and church. He held numerous leadership positions and was an active member of the Knights of Columbus, Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), the American Legion, the Marine Corps League, and the Veterans Community Education Partnership for West Volusia, Inc. where he was the founding chairman. Mick was also a Lector and Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at Our Lady of The Lakes Catholic Church in Deltona, FL. He was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. Mick was predeceased by his beloved wife Pauline. Services were held on April 24 in Bluffton, SC.

Credit Cards now accepted—

Credit cards are now accepted for our luncheons. The meal cost using a credit card is \$25. The additional one dollar is to pay the servicing company that processes the credit cards. The meal cost if paying by cash or check is still \$24.

Notice of Annual Meeting: WVMC will hold its Annual Meeting on Wednesday, 1 May 2024 at the DeBary Country Club. All members are encouraged to attend.

The Chaplain's Corner -



.Memorial Day for many may be a holiday to spend with family. It might mean time off from work or school. While it is all of those things to so many. It is, however, a time to pause and be grateful for those who have served in our armed forces and paid the ultimate sacrifice.

You and I know that we came home when our time in service was complete. Others did not return to a joyous homecoming. Their sacrifice is marked with a gravestone and flowers. They are in our thoughts and memories and we long to be joined with them when God calls us home.

The reason for this day goes back to the Civil War. About 600,000 people died in that conflict. Military cemeteries had been established in many cities throughout the country. Some records indicate that former enslaved people from Charleston, SC were the first to hold commemorations within months of the end of the Civil War. Yet, the federal government in 1966 chose Waterloo, NY as the birthplace of this holiday. There residents gathered annually to remember the fallen and decorate their graves with flowers and flags beginning as early as 1866.

Originally this holiday was called Decoration Day for that reason. It was celebrated each year on May 30th. In 1971 the government declared that Memorial Day would be a national holiday to be celebrated the last Monday of May.

It seems to me that we ought to solemnly celebrate Memorial Day with tributes to our fallen comrades and then celebrate that we are

free. However you celebrate Memorial Day be thankful that when our nation called, those before us responded with all they had. We were fortunate to have served and came home to honor their memory. Now it is our job to teach those who come after us to be thankful and generous in serving if the need arises.

*LtCol Chris Hoffmann, USAF, RET
Chaplain*

The next meeting, 1 MAY, will be held at the DeBary Country Club, 300 Plantation Club Drive, DeBary, FL 32713. The meal will be salmon filet glazed in a sweet Thai chill sauce and served with two sides. There will also be a dessert. The lunch cost is **\$24** per meal if paid by cash or check; \$25 if paid with a credit card. We ask that if paid with cash exact change helps. This month there will be no guest speaker; we will be installing the new officers for the upcoming year.

Please bring your unexpired pantry items for the Salvation Army and your donation of toiletries for Barracks of Hope.

REMEMBER, YOU DON'T HAVE TO EAT A MEAL TO ATTEND THE MEETING.

Upcoming Meeting: 1MAY 2024

Following Meeting: 4 SEP 2024

Upcoming Board Meeting: 8 MAY 2024

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.

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"





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

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

Check out OUR website at www.moaafl.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. The cost is \$15.



**Standing with you
at every stage.**

1-800-247-2192
www.moaainsurance.com/plans

100392



Raul Gonzalez
REALTOR®


Cell: 386-366-4473
 Office: 407-712-2000
raulgsells@gmail.com
www.homewisefl.com

MLS GRADUATE REALTOR INSTITUTE

Let's Go Travel
VacationsByCurt.com



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 Ribaud
 386-668-11705 x1 Lynn@debarycc.com

