



The Volusia Officers Call

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



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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.

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President's Perspective—



History tells us the Pilgrims and the Native Americans of Virginia celebrated a festival of the harvest after the second year's harvest. Each year thereafter people throughout our nation celebrated in some fashion the fall harvest and were thankful for the time to gather and share. President George Washington proclaimed the nationwide thanksgiving on November 26th, 1789. It wasn't until the 1870s that Thanksgiving became a national celebration.

This Thanksgiving I am especially thankful to live in a country where our civil liberties and civil rights are protected just as the Founders of our country intended. I am thankful for our ability as a nation to recognize the errors in our history and the ability to move forward and to continually strive to protect these rights of all our people. My ancestors from Norway saw this country as an opportunity to achieve their dreams through hard work and perseverance.

All that being said, I wish you all wonderful Thanksgiving and safe travels, both near and far.

LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET
President

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MOAA Take Action Center -

<http://takeaction.moaa.org>

Legislative -

The 119th U.S. Congress officially begins on **January 3, 2025**, immediately following the adjournment of the 118th Congress, as specified by the U.S. Constitution.

As the legislative slate is wiped clean for the 118th Congress, our support becomes even more vital to achieving MOAA's 2025 advocacy objectives.

MOAA's summer campaign brought remarkable growth to our advocacy network, with more than 700 new registered advocates joining the ranks to help send more than 17,000 letters to members of Congress.

However, MOAA still needs our help to keep the momentum for existing priorities in addition to our new 2025 objectives and new emerging issues, often necessary to keep up with the stop-and-go pace of legislation.

To keep connected, ensure you are signed up for [The MOAA Newsletter](#) and [register as an advocate](#) at the MOAA Legislative Action Center.

Here is a look at MOAA's priorities, in support of the 50th anniversary of our all-volunteer force and to address the challenges facing our uniformed community. Note: MOAAs advocacy team remains active on many other issues not listed here; their priorities will be shaped throughout the year depending on concurrent successes or emerging

(Continued on page 5)

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.

Last Meeting (6 NOV 2024) -

President LTC Laura Wickett called the meeting to order at 1146 hours.

Attendance: 26

Maj Curt Voelbel gave the invocation followed by The Pledge of Allegiance.

LTC Wickett welcomed our members and guests: MAJ Lorraine Holland, USA, (Ret) FCoC East Central VP, and Dr. Harold Borrero-Almodovar- guest speaker.

Lunch was served: Beef Brisket sandwich with Coleslaw, Baked Beans, and Peach Cobbler for dessert.

LTC Wickett asked Maj Curt Voelbel that the 50/50 drawings be done at this time. Then the members' free lunch drawing.

Ms. Karen Wiltuck won the free lunch for the 8 JAN 2025 meeting/luncheon.

LTC Michael Magee introduced our guest speaker Dr. Harold Borrero-Almodovar. Dr. Borrero-Almodovar is a distinguished professional dedicated to enhancing veteran's services and advancing healthcare education. He has been serving as the Program Specialist for Veterans Outreach Programs at the Orlando VA Healthcare System, where he plays a critical role in promoting awareness about essential services and benefits like the PACT Act. Harold's dedication to veteran advocacy is also evident in his roles on the Orange County and Orlando City Mayor's Veterans Councils where he actively works to ensure that veterans and their families receive the support they deserve. Having honorably served in the United States Navy, he remains passionate about ensuring every veteran receives the benefits they have earned,

Dr. Borrero-Almodovar has been with the VA for 10 years. His focus is community outreach events to provide education and contact information to Veterans so they can gain access to VA health care, Exposure to different chemicals during military service i.e. Agent Orange, Tear Gas Chambers, Burn Pits, Firefighting

Foam etc. impacts veterans' health and information about these items are shared. Approximately 1.2 million Veterans signed up for PACT Act exposures. Because of this, claims are backed up about 5 years. Dr. Borrero-Almodovar is hoping the VA Budget will be expanded to allow hiring of more claim's adjustors.

The Orlando VA Health Care System received a 5 Star Rating. The highest rating in the nation.

The Orlando VA Healthcare System offers: Women's Health Care, Homeless Program Support, Social Workers, Respite Caregivers Support, Recreational Therapy and Art Therapy, Whole Health and Nutrition, Acupuncture and Chiropractic Care. The Orlando VA serves approximately 150,000 Veterans.

It is important that every Veteran enrolls in the VA Health System because the government funds the VA by enrollment numbers. Please share this with every Veteran.

LTC Wickett presented Dr. Borrero-Almodovar with a certificate of appreciation and thanked him for speaking to us today.

LTC Wickett asked if there were any corrections to the 2 OCT 2024 Luncheon Meeting Minutes as posted in the VOC. Motion to approve the minutes as posted in the VOC was made by CW04 Thomas Jackson and seconded by Ms. Lisa Hightower. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. LTC Wickett reminded the membership that we are collecting non-perishable foods for the Salvation Army, and gently used, clean clothes for men, and hygiene goody bags for the Barracks of Hope. We also collect monetary donations for our JROTC Scholarship Fund and for Veteran's causes.
2. Our Chapter will have a float in the Volusia County Veterans Day Parade in DeLand on 9 NOV 2024. We will meet in the parking lot of the First Baptist Church, 725 N. Woodland Blvd, Deland at 0800. Members are invited to ride on the float.

(Continued on page 4)

Last Meeting - continued from page 3

3. LTC Wickett announced there will be a burial ceremony for CAPT Hank Clay, USN, on 25 November 2024 at 1100 hours at Oakdale Cemetery; and one for Capt Marshall Vance, USMC, on 10 December 2024 at 1300 hours at Bushnell National Cemetery.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. LTC Wickett announced there will not be a WVMC Membership Luncheon meeting in December. Our next membership meeting will be 8 JAN 2025.
2. LTC Wickett announced there will be a Veteran's Day Ceremony at Bill Dreggors Park on Monday, November 11, 2024 at 9:00am.

LTC Wickett called for reports:

Secretary's Report: LtCol Twila Davis-reminded the Board members to review the WVMC By-laws and bring recommended edits to the Board meeting next Wednesday.

Treasurer's Report: Maj Pete Durnell reported the checking account balance as of 30 OCT 2024 is \$ 3,245.31 and \$ 12,741.56 in savings. Treasurers report is given for informational purpose and is subject to audit.

Directors and Committee Reports:

1st VP /Speaker Coordinator-LTC Michael Magee - stated he has pocket booklets of The U.S. Constitution and Declaration of Independence to give to anyone interested.

2nd VP - MAJ Raul Gonzalez:

1. The FCoC Leadership Training/Mini Convention will be held at the Rosen Centre Hotel 17-19 January 2025. All members are invited to attend; go to FLMOAA.org to register.
2. MAJ Gonzalez stated we will meet at the corner of Oakdale and Woodland Blvd at 0800 on 9 NOV 24 for the Veterans Day parade.
3. After the Veterans Day Parade in Deland on

9 NOV 2024 at 3:00pm, our Chapter will be honoring Veterans at the Grand Villa Nursing home. Members are invited to attend.

4. See MAJ Gonzalez if you would like a name tag. They are \$15.00
5. The WVMC Christmas Party will be on 14 DEC 2024 5:00pm-8:00pm at American Legion Post 6. Cost is \$20 per person. Flyers are on the table. Reservations are required. POC is MAJ Gonzalez.
6. MOAA National Roundtable Zoom Meeting is 21 NOV 2024. Go to MOAA.org to register.
7. Happy 249th Birthday to the U.S. Marine Corps on 10 NOV

Director - COL Jack Burtnett - nothing to report

Director - Maj Curt Voelbel - nothing to report

Director - MAJ Shirley Burtnett - stated the members are welcome to ride the float in the Veterans Day parade and those that have done it in the past have had fun.

Scholarship Chair - MAJ Pam Ring - excused

Legislative Chair - LTC Mike Galaty - nothing to report

Chief of Staff and Membership Chair - Maj Curt Voelbel - stated we have 58 members and our new goal is 60 members. Please keep recruiting.

Community Relations - CW4 Thomas Jackson - stated Barracks of Hope is not taking donations of women's clothing at this time.

Chaplain - CH LtCol Chris Hoffmann - excused

Editor - COL Jack Burtnett - nothing to report

Surviving Spouse Liaison - Ms. Lisa Hightower - nothing to report

Personal Affairs - LtCol Twila Davis - nothing to report

(Continued on page 5)

Membership -

Being Members of MOAA and our Chapter, we are committed to protecting the earned benefits of servicemembers, veterans and their families from the National- to the local levels and maintaining healthy, thriving and growing membership numbers is vital to achieving those goals. Membership has two components – retention and recruitment. Thanks to many of you, we have a strong history of gaining new members, including this year as we met our goal of 58 and set a new one at 60. On the other hand, retaining current members has been a challenge over the past several years. As of this writing, we stand to lose 20 (38%) members if dues are not paid by Dec 31, 2024. I have sent a Last Call reminder to those who have failed to renew. When you are ready to renew your annual \$35 dues, you may pay with cash, check, or credit card by calling our Treasurer, Pete Durnell at 321-443-6264. If mailing your payment, send a check made out to WVMC and send it to at 319 E. Victoria Hills Blvd., DeLand, FL 32724.

Do a friend a favor—If you know of someone eligible to be a chapter member, tell them about us and point them to our Website:

www.wvmoaa.org and Curt Voelbel at 386-479-3400 or LgtCurt@gmail.com. The larger our numbers, the greater our impact!

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



Last Meeting - continued from page 4

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

LTC Wickett announced there is a car show at the American Legion Post 6, DeLand on 9 NOV 2024 from 12:00 pm-3:00pm.

Col Jim Winter and LTC Mike Galaty will be honoring Veterans of John Knox Village on Veterans Day.

Executive Board Meeting will be held on 13 November 2024, 1000 hours at the DeBary Country Club. Members are welcome to attend.

Our next luncheon meeting will be 8 January 2025 1100 hours at the DeBary Country Club.

Meeting adjourned at 1333 hours.

LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET
Secretary

Legislative—continued from page 2

issues that warrant an all-hands approach.

- [Compensation and Service-Earned](#)
- [Military Housing](#)
- [Health Care for Currently Serving and Retirees](#)
- [Health Care and Benefits for Veterans](#)
- [Service Families](#)
- [Survivors](#)
- [Guard and Reserve](#)

Do Your Part – Take Action – Contact your Representative – Be an Advocate

LTC Michael Galaty Jr, USA, RET
Legislative

The Chaplain's Corner -



Thanksgiving is a day to remember our blessings. Yet, it should be symbolic of our desire to thank God every day for what we have received. Most people will recall the thanksgiving of the Pilgrims that landed in Massachusetts in 1620. They weathered the winter there and the following year had a harvest which was due in part from the assistance they received from the Indian tribes living in that region. They offered thanks to God and invited their Native American neighbors to join with them. Yet, I wonder if you knew that wasn't the first Thanksgiving.

When Pedro Menendez de Aviles landed his ships in what is today St. Augustine he asked Fr. Lopez, the ship's chaplain, to offer Mass in thanksgiving for their safe arrival. They had a meal in which the native Timucuan were invited. Their meal was bean soup and whatever provisions were still available on the ship they arrived on. This Thanksgiving took place on September 8, 1565.

Thanksgiving really revolves around a meal. There aren't gifts to give or cards to send. The focus is spending time before, during, and after a dinner with family and friends. It's also important to remember that even in difficult times there is always something to be thankful for.

God can't be outdone in His generosity to us. We, in turn, are called to share what we have

with others. Thanksgiving is that natural time to share with those we love. It is a time we tend to become more generous to charities helping the needy. Even if you have already enjoyed Thanksgiving never forget at every meal to be grateful for the many blessings you enjoy.

*LtCol Chris Hoffmann, USAF, RET
Chaplain*



The next meeting, 8 JAN, will be held at the DeBary Country Club, 300 Plantation Club Drive, DeBary, FL 32713. The meal will be chicken Milanese w/lemon caper cream sauce and 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. Our guest speaker will be XXXXXXXX. Please bring your unexpired pantry items for the Salvation Army and your donation of toiletries for Barracks of Hope.

President Laura Wickett presents Dr Harold Borrero-Almodovar, Program Specialist for Veterans Outreach Programs at the Orlando VA Healthcare System, with a Certificate of Appreciation. Harold was the November guest speaker.



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

Upcoming Meeting: 8 JAN 2025

Following Meeting: 5 FEB 2025

Upcoming Board Meeting: 11 DEC 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 Volusia Officers Call
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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.

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.

Check out **OUR** website at www.wvmoaa.org 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.

FINAL Dues Notice - -

Members are reminded that dues are now due for the year 2024-25. 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.

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Contact: Ms. Lynn Ribaud
 386-668-11705 x1 Lynn@debarycc.com

9 November DeLand Veterans Day Parade

WVMC float in the DeLand parade. Picture from left to right: MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG RET, CW4 Ted Seaman, USA RET (background); Bert Davis, Lisa Hightower (background); MAJ Shirley Burtnett, USA, RET, LTC Milt Corley, USA, RET, 1stLt Dick Schuler, USAF (former). Not pictured LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET, COL Jack Burtnett, USA, RET.

Photo by COL Jack Burtnett, USA, RET



Twila Davis, Shirley Burtnett, Laura Wickett, and Liam Garrett, one of our flag-handler-outers (over 300 U.S. flags were handed out). They are standing with one of the American Legion's, FL Post 6, motorcycles.

Dick Schuler, a Korean War vet, waiting for the parade to start.

Photo by MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET



WVMC members honoring the age old military adage, "hurry up and wait".

Photo by MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET

9 November Veterans Appreciation Ceremony at Grand Villa of DeLand



WVMC presented certificates of appreciation and pins to 27 Grand Villa residents who served their country. The WVMC attendees at the ceremony were, from left to right: MAJ Raul Gonzalez FLARNG, RET, Bert Davis, LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET, Maj Pete Durnell, USAF, RET, COL Jack Burtnett, USA, RET, and MAJ Shirley Burtnett, USA, RET.

MAJ Shirley Burtnett presents a certificate and a pin to one of the Grand Villa veterans.

Photo by Col Jack Burtnett, USA, ET



LtCol Twila Davis presents a certificate to a Grand Villa veteran.

Photo by MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET

COL Jack Burtnett presents a certificate to a Grand Villa veteran.

Photo by MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET



Maj Pete Durnell presents a pin to a Grand Villa veteran.

Photo by MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET

11 November DeLand Veterans Day Service at Bill Dreggors Park



DeLand Fire Department Drum and Bagpipe Contingent played "Amazing Grace" during the Veterans Day Service.

Photo by COL Jack Burtnett, USA, RET

LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET, the Commander of American Legion Post 6, and President of WVMC, served as the Master of Ceremony for the DeLand Veterans Day Service.

Photo by COL Jack Burtnett, USA, RET



Students from St Barnabas Episcopal School handing out hand made thank you cards to veterans.

Photo by MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET

Maj Pete Durnell, LTC Laura Wickett, and American Legion member Tom Schell talking after the closing of the ceremony.

Photo by MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET



The DeLand Police Ceremonial Firing Team fired a 21 gun salute to honor all veterans on Veterans Day.

Photo by MAJ Raul Gonzalez, FLARNG, RET