



The Volusia Officers Call

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



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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

Photos
Page 6

Chaplain's Corner
Page 7

Upcoming Meetings
Page 7

Items to Note
Page 8

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—



To my fellow officers and spouses, as a veterans organization dedicated to the advocacy of military and veteran's benefits, we enter a new year, with a new Congress and Senate and a new presidential administration. During the most recent Florida Council of Chapters (FCOC) Leadership and Training Conference, the message of advocacy for our service members, veterans and their families was the central theme throughout every meeting. We can do this by registering at moaa.org as an advocate. Our Representatives and Senators are very aware of the strength of MOAA. Once again, MOAA was recognized as the number one grassroots lobbying group for the military service members, veterans, and family members. Their efforts were paramount in the recent passage of the Elizabeth Dole Act which focuses on caregiver support, home-based community services, and expanding access to home and community-based care programs for veterans.

We have a challenge before us, that is to **recruit new members**. New members bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm. They are a fresh voice and source of energy. So, let's get to work as advocates for all our military, veterans and all those families.

LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET
President

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MOAA Take Action Center -

<http://takeaction.moaa.org>

Legislative -

As the legislative slate resets for the 119th Congress, MOAA member engagement will become even more vital to achieving our advocacy objectives. MOAA needs your help to build support for new objectives and emerging issues.

Register as an advocate in [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#). If you're already registered, send the link to a family member or friend. Remember, the Legislative Action Center is open to all who support the uniformed services community.

Following are Key MOAA priorities for 2025:

Currently Serving (Unaccompanied housing): Recent reporting from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) revealed the challenges facing service members in unaccompanied housing. MOAA seeks to improve funding and transparency.

Retirees/Veterans (Toxic exposure): MOAA supports and will advocate for veterans exposed to toxic materials.

Family/Survivors (Spouse employment): Passing the Military Spouse Hiring Act will provide another important lever needed to address the critical issue of spouse unemployment.

DoD Health Care (Access to care): MOAA seeks a digital MHS assistance platform allowing beneficiaries to report access-to-care challenges

(Continued on page 6)

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 (8 JAN 2025) -

President LTC Laura Wickett called the meeting to order at 1145 hours.

Attendance: 26

CH(Fr.) LtCol Chris Hoffmann gave the invocation followed by The Pledge of Allegiance.

LTC Wickett welcomed our members and guest: Zach Zacharias- our guest speaker

Lunch was served: chicken Milanese, green beans, potatoes and dessert: brownie and ice cream.

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

LtCol Twila Davis won the free lunch for the 5 FEB 2025 meeting/luncheon.

LTC Michael Magee introduced our guest speaker: Zach Zacharias is a Native Floridian born and raised in Miami, Florida. He holds degrees from Florida State University with a degree in communications, University of Central Florida with a degree in American history, and Nova Southeastern University with a master's in education.

Zach has worked for 30 years at the Museum of Arts and Sciences in Daytona Beach and until recently oversaw the educational programming at the museum and has worked with exhibits such as Picasso, Salvadori Dali, Dale Chihuly, Glories of Ancient Egypt, Great Asian Dinosaurs World War II, and many more! Zach is a current member on the Volusia County Historic Preservation Board and is the current chair. Zacharias has created programs at the museum such as, Florida History Con, Natural History Festival, Afternoon with Florida History, Volusia Collects, September with the Smithsonian, and many other programs. Zach has given lectures and presentations all over Central and North Florida on various Florida history topics.

Zach Specializes in Florida History, Florida natural history and Florida historical landscapes. He has self-published a book on Florida forts titled

"Florida Forts on the Edge of Empire" Zach is a cast member of a local PBS Show with 21 episodes called the Fossil Hunters about fossiling in Florida. Zach is a member of Deland Lunch Rotary and is a Paul Harris Fellow and Rotarian of the Year for 2019 and 2022.

Zach explained details of 7 of the estimated 400 Forts located in Florida. Information included the type of construction of the forts, the battles that took place there and the current status of these forts. Many are now state parks and can be visited.

LTC Wickett presented Zack Zacharias with a certificate of appreciation and thanked him for speaking to us today.

LTC Wickett asked if there were any corrections to the 6 NOV 2024 Luncheon Meeting Minutes as posted in the VOC. Motion to approve the minutes as posted in the VOC was made by CW04 Ted Seaman and seconded by COL Jack Burtnett. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

The FCoC Leadership Training/Mini Convention will be held at the Rosen Centre Hotel 17-19 January 2025. All members are invited to attend.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. LTC Wickett asked for a motion to approve the recommended edits to the Bylaws. Motion to accept the edits to the Bylaws that were posted in the VOC was made by COL Jack Burtnett and seconded by Maj Curt Voelbel. Motion carried.

2. LTC Wickett stated there was some concern about the appearance of the Chapter's Presidents display board. MAJ Gonzalez got an estimate of \$950.00 from Trophy Factory to replace the board with a new plaque and brass name plates. A motion was made by LtCol Twila Davis and seconded by Col Jim Pugh that the president's board be replaced with a new president's plaque. Motion carried.

LTC Wickett called for reports:

(Continued on page 4)

Last Meeting - continued from page 3

Secretary's Report: LtCol Twila Davis-reminded the members that the MOAA LOE awards will be due in February. Any input should be submitted to LtCol Davis by 15 JAN 2025.

Treasurer's Report: Maj Pete Durnell – excused. MAJ Shirley Burtnett reported the checking account balance as of 31 DEC 2024 is \$ 2,047.46 and \$6,756.81 in savings. There is a 12/month CD of \$6,000.00. \$2000.00 is earmarked for a JROTC Scholarship. Treasurers report is given for informational purpose and is subject to audit.

Directors and Committee Reports:

LTC Michael Magee – 1st VP /Speaker Coordinator–nothing to report.

2nd VP - MAJ Raul Gonzalez –excused; LTC Wickett gave MAJ Gonzalez's input:

Retiree Appreciation Day event will be held at UCF, 12715 Pegasus Dr, Orlando on 22 March 2025 starting at 0900 hours. This event is sponsored by Fort Stewart Retirement Services Office.

Heroes' Mile- addiction treatment facility for Veterans- is accepting gently used men's suits or business casual clothing for their residents.

Directors:

Jack Burtnett – Director- nothing to report.

Maj Curt Voelbel – Director – nothing to report.

MAJ Shirley Burtnett – Director – remember to vote in the primary elections.

MAJ Pam Ring – Scholarship Chair – nothing to report.

LTC Mike Galaty – Legislative Chair - reminded members to vote.

Maj Curt Voelbel – Chief of Staff and Membership Chair - stated we have 48 members and our goal is 60 members. Please keep recruiting.

CW4 Thomas Jackson – Community Relations - excused.

CH LtCol Chris Hoffmann - Chaplain –This morning in the scriptures John states that perfect love casts out all fears. That sounds good, but I don't think it is true. We can love and yet still have fears. We are afraid of many things. God actually gave us a self-preservation will. Plus, due to original sin we have inherited fear from our first parents. However, we can work through our fears and do courageous things. Those of us who were in combat know that is true. As Christians we are called to trust in God knowing that He is in charge. That is one way that love can help us overcome fear.

COL Jack Burtnett – Editor – nothing to report.

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

LtCol Twila Davis - Personal Affairs – sent a get-well card to CAPT Chip Beedle and Maj Pete Durnell.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

LTC Wickett announced:

Executive Board Meeting will be held on 15 January 2025, 1000 hours at the DeBary Country Club. Members are welcome to attend.

Our next luncheon meeting will be 5 February 2025 1100 hours at the DeBary Country Club.

Meeting adjourned at 1327 hours.

*LtCol Twila Davis, USAF, RET
Secretary*



Membership -

At the end of each calendar year, the Board has the unpleasant task of dropping members who have not renewed their dues. Unfortunately, we begin 2025 with 48 members, lower than the past several years. So, our challenge to meet our goal of 60 will take intentional recruiting. Although we have already started planning some events that will target new members, it is the efforts of all of you that has proven successful in the past. We implore you to get the word out, talk to friends and associates, neighbors, church members, even in public places. If you see someone wearing a military hat or T-Shirt, start a conversation, meet a new friend and if they happen to be an officer, invite them to our next luncheon and have them contact Maj. Curt Voelbel @ 386-479-3400 or LgtCurt@gmail.com.

As military officers, it is our duty to not only to take care of the troops: veterans, those currently serving, family members, and military inclined students but each other as well. That includes hosting social events and being there at critical times such as providing support to those who are hurting or on the death of a spouse. Remember, the larger our numbers, the greater our impact on our community and advocacy.

Reason to be a Chapter Member — We “Never Stop Serving”!

1. Make yourself heard by letting legislators know what is on your mind - influence legislation that benefit all active duty military and Veterans.
2. Give back to our community.
3. Expand your social opportunities.
4. Network with fellow officers.
5. Stay informed of national issues.
6. Find camaraderie with a purpose.

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

From the Chief of Staff -

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

Cash donations may be dropped in the buckets at the door for Veteran's Causes and JR ROTC Scholarships.

Sample T-Shirts and Hats with our local chapter Logo will be on display for you to purchase or order. Pricing TBD.

Veterans Causes

We support Barracks of Hope in Daytona. They provide 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. **Please bring to each luncheon “Hygiene Bags” filled with Toothpaste, Brush, Shampoo, Soap, Deodorant, etc. in a plastic Zip bag.** Additionally, we will collect unexpired Pantry items for them.

Maj Curt Voelbel, USAF, RET
Chief of Staff

NEVER STOP SERVING®



Zach Zacharias, from the Museum of Arts and Sciences in Daytona Beach, gave a very interesting talk on a seven of the numerous forts in Florida. These range from the time of the Spanish, through the Seminole Wars, and the American Civil War.

Photo by LTC Ernie Tauber, USANG, RET

WVMC President, LTC Laura Wickett, USA, RET, presenting Zach with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Photo by LTC Ernie Tauber, USANG, RET



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

Legislative—continued from page 2

VA Health Care (Support for caregivers):

MOAA strongly supports the reintroduction and enactment of the Veteran Caregiver Reeducation, Reemployment, and Retirement Act

Persistent Efforts: There are certain issues that MOAA will always advocate for until they are passed. Among these are cost-of-living adjustments, TRICARE Pharmacy fees and more.

When MOAA Speaks, Congress Listens!

Do Your Part - Learn more about MOAA's key advocacy issues and contact your elected officials using MOAA's messaging platform.

*LTC Michael Galaty Jr, USA, RET
Legislative*

The Chaplain's Corner -



Life is Unfair

Into every life there are wonderful and exciting things that happen. But equally true into most people's lives there are things that happen that are often unfair, occasionally cruel, and always demanding. Some of them we try to escape from. Other things like injustice we should change if we can. But often our problems will not yield to either of these solutions. The only healthy way then forward is to accept life as it really is and deal with it that way.

When a person is facing illness, dementia, or the effects of aging it can be frustrating and lonely. Letting go of things that we took for granted, like driving a car, cooking a meal, or taking a walk become difficult or impossible.

Family and care givers often wonder what they should say to the person facing these things. Sometimes the best thing is to simply listen. Real listening happens all too rarely. Often we are distracted by our own concerns, things on television, difficulties with a family member or co-worker or other things. When someone really listens to you, you realize what a special gift they are giving you. Often because those closest to us are busy people will seek the advice of clergy or a therapist. That is not a bad thing, but wouldn't it be better if you and I could be that person who really listens when someone needs that?

Is someone in your life hurting, grieving, angry, or lonely? Do not be anxious around them because you do not know what to say. Seldom is it important for you to say anything, nor could "the right words" fix their pain. No, most of the time all a hurting person wants is for someone to take the time to hear them, be with them, in silence or in conversation. Just listen.

There is no greater gift you can give in the face of suffering. Listening is better than flowers, better than a casserole, better than good advice. It is the gift every one of us could give, if we would only tone down the other distractions filling our own heads. Let's make it our aim this year to give enough silence and peace to those in need and really listen to the words of another human heart.

*LtCol Chris Hoffmann, USAF, RET
Chaplain*



The next meeting, 5 Feb, will be held at the DeBary Country Club, 300 Plantation Club Drive, DeBary, FL 32713. The meal will be salmon filet with citrus 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 W. Ben Flowers, Jr. Chief Executive Officer of Mainstreet Community Bank.

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

Upcoming Meeting: 5 FEB 2025

Following Meeting: 5 MAR 2025

Upcoming Board Meeting: 12 FEB 2025

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.



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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 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.

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): flygirltcc@gmail.com. If you feel more comfortable, redact your social security number.



**Standing with you
at every stage.**

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

100392



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DeBary Country Club

The Perfect Venue For Special Occasions.
 Partnering with West Volusia MOAA.
 Committed to our members and veterans.

Contact: Ms. Lynn Ribaud
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