



Greetings Members and Friends,



75 years ago, on 6 June 1944, the United States and Allied troops invaded Normandy and launched the drive across Europe to defeat Germany and end WWII. It was the largest air, land, and sea invasion in history. 160,000 Allied troops participated in the invasion, 9000 were killed or wounded. Today, America's servicemembers continue to serve the cause of freedom around the world. As we go about our day this month, let's spend a few minutes remembering the sacrifices that these brave young American's and their families are making for us.

As a reminder, **June, July, and August are lunch meetings -- social time begins at 11:30am followed by lunch at 12:00. There will be no formal program but there may be some informal presentations and/or discussions.**

Like we did last year, the July meeting will be moved to the second Thursday in the month so we will not conflict with family plans for the July 4th weekend. Please mark your calendar that the July Chapter meeting will be on Thursday, July 11th.

The Ladies of the Chapter will be recognized during this month's meeting. Join us and thank our MOAA Ladies for the many, many contributions they make to our Chapter!

Cynthia and I wish you all a wonderful summer. Enjoy your families and friends and your many activities and travels. Have fun and be safe!

Our next Meeting is June 6th; social time begins at 11:30am. Hope to see you all there.

Respectfully,

Wes

Volume 119 Issue 6 June 2019

Officers' Call

Greater Birmingham Chapter Military Officers Association of America

President Wes Cox, Col, USA (Ret)

1st VP Mac Chandler, LTC, USA (Ret)

2nd VP Don Lehman, LTC, USMC (Ret)

Treasurer Doug Markham, CAPT, USN(Ret)

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Legislative Affairs Wes Cox, Col, USA (Ret)

Personal Affairs Anne Hartline

Surviving Spouse Liaison Donna Martin

Newsletter Linda DeMarco, LTC. USA (Ret)

Statement of Publication

Officer's Call is the newsletter of the Greater Birmingham Chapter—Military Officers Association of America. It is published once each month to inform the membership of issues and activities of interest to all.

GBC MOAA is a non-profit 501(c)19 entity in the state of Alabama organized to represent the membership and to support the activities of the Alabama Council and MOAA National.

MOAA and its affiliated chapters and councils are non-partisan.

Advertising contained in the newsletter is not endorsed by MOAA or its affiliate the Greater Birmingham Chapter, and does not represent any recommendation to the membership. Opinions expressed in articles contained herein are not necessarily those of the membership as a whole or the Chapter. Questions should be directed to newsletter@moaabirmingham.org.

June Meeting

GBC MOAA Ladies Recognition

Ladies Recognition is an annual event that acknowledges the contributions of our surviving spouses, spouses of living members and female officers. All ladies present will be introduced according to their military branches. The second GBC MOAA Surviving Spouse/Spouse of a Living Member Excellence Award will be presented. This award, modeled after the MOAA National Surviving Spouse Excellence Award, is based on service to the chapter and our community. All ladies are encouraged to attend this special meeting.

MAY MEETING



Wes Cox presenting the Chapter Challenge Coin to May speaker John O'Malley of the Krulak Marine Alliance of Alabama and Wes received the Krulak challenge coin.



Don Lehman and Wes Cox showing off the Communication awards for 2018. Five-star award for the Newsletter and Four-Star award for the website

Thursday, June 6, 2019

Social Hour: 11:30 hrs. Lunch: 12:00 hrs.

- **Cost:** \$18.00 per person. (NOTE: Summer Hours)
Payment for meal is due at the door (checks are preferred).
- **Location:** Danberry at Inverness, 235 Inverness Center Drive, Birmingham, AL 35242.
- **Reservations:** Contact CAPT Doug Markham, 205-420-2631 or dgmarkham3143@gmail.com by 1200 Noon on Monday June 3rd to make your reservation. Note: Your reservation is not complete until you have received a confirmation call or email.
- **Menu:** BUFFET: Watermelon salad, Entrée: FRIED CHICKEN AND HONEY BISCUIT, MACARONI & CHEESE and STEAMED CABBAGE. Dessert: PEACH COBBLER AND VANILLA ICE CREAM
- **No Cash Bar**

Driving Instructions - Danberry at Inverness, 235 Inverness Center Drive, Birmingham, AL 35242

- **Traveling from I-65 (South or North):** Take the I-459 interchange toward Atlanta. Proceed north on I-459 and take Exit 19 onto Highway 280 toward Childersburg. Travel approx. 2.2 miles on Highway 280 and turn right onto Inverness Center Drive (Fresh Market shopping center on right). Travel approx. 1/2 mile and turn left into Danberry at Inverness.
- **Traveling South on I-459:** Take Exit 19 onto Highway 280 toward Childersburg. Travel approx. 2.2 miles on Highway 280 and turn right onto Inverness Center Drive (Fresh Market shopping center on right). Travel approx. 1/2 mile and turn left into Danberry at Inverness.
- **Traveling West on Highway 280:** Turn left onto Inverness Center Drive (Fresh Market shopping center on the left). Travel approx. 1/2 mile and turn left into Danberry at Inverness.

Application for Membership/Renewal – Greater Birmingham Chapter MOAA (Please print or type)

First Name MI Last Name Grade Rank Preferred Name Name of Spouse

Branch of Service: ☐ Army ☐ Air Force ☐ Navy ☐ Marines ☐ Coast Guard ☐ Other: _____

Status: ☐ Active Duty ☐ Retired ☐ National Guard ☐ Reserve ☐ Former Member ☐ Surviving Spouse

Mailing Address City State Zip Code

Telephone #: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Email Address: _____

National MOAA Membership Number: _____ National Membership Type: ☐ Basic ☐ Premium ☐ Life

Signature: _____ Date: _____

☐ Renewal or ☐ New Membership (membership runs by calendar year)

☐ Regular Membership or ☐ Surviving Spouse: ☐ \$20/year ☐ \$35/2 years ☐ \$50/3 years

☐ Supporting Membership (\$50) or ☐ Sustaining Membership (\$100)

☐ ROTC Affiliation (electronic communications only – no cost)



Mail this form to Greater Birmingham Chapter MOAA, P.O. Box 530153, Birmingham, AL 35253



Recruiter's Corner

Hoover Day!

Our MOAA chapter had a table for Hoover Day on April 27th at Veteran's Park on Valleydale Road. The weather was wonderful, and I hope many of you had a chance to out to be with the other estimated 15,000 locals that attended. Hoover provided a table and set-up for us at no cost; we recruited one new member and had five others interested. This is a function that we should attend each year. (See pictures on page 5).

Website

Please visit our website at www.MOABirmingham.org. We will be making improvements soon, so check it frequently for updates.

Semper Fi,
Don Lehman, LTC, USMCR (retired)
Membership Chair
don.lehman1@gmail.com

Chaplain's Corner

June is a fun month. The kids (or in many of our cases, the grandkids) are out of school, and vacation time begins for many families. The beaches and lakes are a hubbub of activity. We celebrate Flag Day on June 14th, as well as the birthday of the Army. The U.S. Army was founded on **June 14, 1775**, when the Continental Congress authorized enlistment of riflemen to serve the United Colonies for one year. The **14 June** date is when Congress adopted "the American continental army" after reaching a consensus position in The Committee of the Whole. Would there even be a country if there had been no Army?

Father's Day is on June 16th this year, accompanied by a full moon on the 17th. The pastor of my church has been preaching for the last several weeks on the story of the prodigal sons, found in Luke 15: 11-32. What I want to pray for is that everyone who is a father, or grandfather, or father to be, can be like the father in this parable. He showed unconditional love to his son who "was dead, and is alive. He was lost and is found." Happy Father's Day to all you fathers.

Mac Chandler, LTC, IN, U.S. Army (Ret)

HAPPY FATHER'S Day!



HOOVER DAY

DON LEHMAN



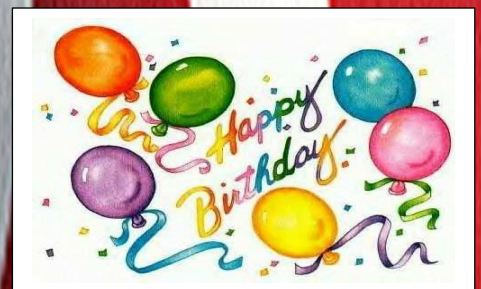
GINGER BRANSON



MOAA MEMBERS – If you participate in a military event, submit pictures and information about event to lhdemarco@bellsouth.net

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Hazel Vest	2
Sandy Vitalis	2
JD Crawford	6
Helen Green	8
Pat Singletary	10
George Lord	11
Sam Faires	12
David Hicks	15
Miles	
Huffstutler	18
Harb Moore	19
Bud Jensen	22
GT Merriam	26
Tim McGraw	29



Legislative Update

(visit Legislative Action at <http://www.moaa.org>)

Storming the Hill 2019

The MOAA website (moaa.org) Events dropdown contains information and pictures of this year's effort to influence Serving and Veterans legislation. Also, at the Legislative Action dropdown under Advocacy tab (TV Spotlight: MOAA's Fight Against the Widows Tax, Apr 26) see our own Anne Hartline discussing the "Widows Tax" with Alabama Senator Doug Jones.

Navy Vet Lawmaker Introduces Measure to Repeal Tax Hike for Gold Star Families

(This article by Patricia Kime originally appeared on Military.com, the premier resource for the military and veteran community.)

A bipartisan coalition of lawmakers are backing a bill that would repeal a tax increase on benefits paid to families of U.S. service members who died in the line of duty.

The 2017 tax reform law increased the taxes on certain payments to survivors of the fallen, primarily children who receive survivor benefits from the Defense Department. These benefits were previously taxed at rates of 12% to 15%, but now are taxed at 37% -- the rate used to calculate taxes on income on trusts and estates.

Rep. Elaine Luria, D-Virginia, a retired Navy Commander and graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, introduced the legislation, the Gold Star Family Tax Relief Act, or H.R. 2481, which would classify survivor benefits as earned income, reducing the tax burden of the payments.

The bill would affect military widows and widowers who put some of their survivor benefits in their children's names -- a move taken by many to ensure that they don't lose a portion of their Defense Department survivor payments and Veterans Affairs payments.

When it comes to survivors' benefits, DoD allotments are taxable; Veterans Affairs payments are not.

MOAA Seeks Meeting with SecArmy on Arlington Eligibility Changes (By Caitlin Hamon)

MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret), has reached out to Army Secretary Mark Esper to discuss proposed eligibility changes for burial at Arlington National Cemetery and to offer possible solutions.

This fall, the Army will unveil new eligibility criteria at Arlington. Esper is due to submit recommendations no later than Sept. 30.

The ACANC's proposal could limit eligibility to: servicemembers killed in action; members who died on active duty; former POWs; and recipients of medals of distinction, including the Medal of Honor, Purple Heart, and above. Additionally, the committee proposed above-ground inurnment for the remaining WWII and Korean War Veterans, regardless of whether they fall under the above qualifiers. If the Army moves forward with these recommendations, the majority of the living generation of servicemembers would become ineligible for either above-ground inurnment or internment. (Continued on next page)

Legislative Update (continued)

MOAA remains committed to our stated position, which asserts in order to preserve the promise of Arlington National Cemetery, the currently eligible population with expectations of interment be allowed to execute their end-of-life plans. To that end, MOAA recommends:

- Take no action restricting eligibility for the military retiree population, other than reserving a set number of plots for specific honorees, such as those killed in action or those who receive a Medal of Honor;
- Continue appropriate funding to undertake acquisition and development of adjacent land, including the Southern Expansion project currently underway; and
- Appropriate funds for the study and eventual acquisition of noncontiguous land to be used as an Arlington annex.



#AxeWidowsTax

VETTES for VETS

Vettes for Vets, a Birmingham based 501c (3) nonprofit organization, is the primary sponsor for a yearlong study of the need, availability, and efficacy of support programs for veterans.

The assessment will be conducted and supervised by an experienced social scientist, Dr. David Albright, of the University of Alabama and his staff in the University's School of Social Work, Office for Military Families and Veterans. Dr. Albright is also a US Army veteran and was named by the Governor to be on the Alabama Executive Veteran's Network in addition to his other national level work.

This study will begin with a series of face-to-face veterans' focus meetings that will set the tone for a robust follow-on electronic survey that will be distributed to as many local veterans as possible for their response and subsequent analysis by Dr. Albright and his staff.

The hope is that this Assessment will enable providers and those that support the providers to be much more selective and effective in meeting our veteran's needs.

Other partnering participants in funding this study includes The United Way's Priority Veterans Program and the local Still Serving Veterans organization.

Results and reporting should be available in the next twelve to fourteen months.

MG Dave Burford, USA (Ret), Chairman of the Board, Vettes for Vets and a GBC MOAA member is leading this effort.

This is a \$22,000 study. Vettes for Vets has committed \$7500 and they are asking MOAA and other Veteran Service Organizations to commit also. Our Chapters Executive Board has reviewed the Project and agree that our Chapter should participate. We have set a donation goal of \$2000 - \$3000 and are asking all members to contribute to this project by the May 2nd meeting.
Hide original message

Members may contribute by sending a check (payable to MOAA and put "Veterans Assessment Program" in the memo line) to our Treasurer, Doug Markham at GBC MOAA, PO Box 530153, Birmingham, AL 35253 or bring your donation to the next dinner/meeting on May 2nd.

Helping our Veterans is why we all stay actively involved.

Sincerely,

Wes Cox
COL, USA (Ret)
President
GBC MOAA



Home Depot Foundation Project

The Home Depot has been an ad sponsor to our local MOAA chapter and a great supporter of veteran housing needs in the Birmingham area. This project was rebuilding the front steps into the house and a raised garden in the back for a needy veteran; and it was hugely appreciated! There will be another veteran project starting in the summer; if any of our MOAA members are interested in helping, please contact Don Lehman at don.lehman1@gmail.com.





Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter

The MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter met April 27 via a conference call.

The purposes of the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter are to:

- provide information and exchange ideas
- find solutions to problems or issues affecting surviving spouses
- to be a resource for surviving spouses
- to reach out to younger surviving spouses and to those living in areas where MOAA chapters are not available
- to be an enhancement to regular chapters—the virtual chapter does not take the place of a regular MOAA chapter.

Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee members in attendance: Regular members Anne Hartline (AL), Barbara Smith (VA), Micki Costello (VA) and virtual member Cindy Bondi (IA). Also, in attendance: ADM (Retired) Walt Doran, Chairman of MOAA Board of Directors, LtCol (Ret) Shane Ostrom, MOAA Program Director, Finance and Benefits Information, Gail Joyce, MOAA Board Member representing surviving spouses and CAPT (Ret) Jim Carman, MOAA VP Council/Chapter and Member Support.

ADM Doran pledged MOAA's support for Surviving Spouses.

Armed Forces Officers Wives Club

Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month from September through May at various locations.

To make reservations, please contact
Jane Galik before May 3, 2019
ladyg8r74@gmail.com
205-664-8163

The purpose of this organization is to foster friendship among the wives of active, retired alive and deceased officers of the Armed Forces, and female officers to promote cultural and educational needs and provide group fellowship.

GREATER BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER INFORMATION

Greater Birmingham MOAA Coins

The new Greater Birmingham Chapter MOAA Challenge Coins are now available to order for only \$10 per coin! This coin will make a wonderful gift and must-have for any challenge coin collection. You can also order coins by contacting:
LTC (ret) Don Lehman at don.lehman1@gmail.com.
Display cases are available for \$1 each, and orders to be mailed should add \$1 per coin.

Personalized MOAA Nametags

MOAA nametags are available for \$8.50 each through J.D. Crawford.

The nametags are black lettering on white, and they are approximately business card size with magnetic backs.

Mail your name, rank and branch of service (or other information as applicable, i.e. surviving spouse, etc.) along with \$8.50 for each nametag ordered to James D. Crawford, 3076 Brookhill Drive, Birmingham, AL 35242.

Make checks payable to James D. Crawford.



<https://www.facebook.com/Greater-Birmingham-MOAA-Chapter-161367134657315/>





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Our upcoming lunch meeting will be 06 June 2019 and note that the July meeting will be the second Thursday, July 13, 2019