



Greetings Members and Friends,



Summer is all but over and it's time to adjust our focus on the beginning of a new school year, fewer beach and lake visits, and, of course, High School and SEC Football. My favorite time of the year!

At our last meeting, I spoke about MOAA's "2019 Summer Storming." This effort focuses on Chapter contact with Legislators while they are in Alabama during their summer recess and specifically to ask their support for elimination of the Widow's Tax and to maintain medical billets at a level that will support the active force. I know that some of our members attended townhall meetings with Rep. Bradley Byrne and Rep. Gary Palmer. Hopefully, each of you took the time to support this effort. Thank you.

Every year MOAA affiliates compete to receive a four- or five-star Levels of Excellence Award. This year, 132 of MOAA's very best councils and chapters earned five-star awards. Because of your efforts and support the Greater Birmingham Chapter was again recognized as a 5-star Chapter. Thank you all for your support of legislative actions and community support of our veterans.

Veterans Day activities are in the planning stages throughout Birmingham. Here is a list of a few key dates:

- November 10<sup>th</sup> – Veterans Day and Stepstone Ceremony at Alabama Veterans Memorial Park
- November 10<sup>th</sup> – Birmingham National Veteran's Day Dinner and recognition of the Veterans of the Year.
- November 11<sup>th</sup> – Birmingham National Veteran's Day Parade

The next meeting is September 5<sup>th</sup>. September begins our Dinner/Meetings. Social Hour begins at 6pm followed by dinner at 6:30pm. Hope to see you all there!

Respectfully,

*Wes*

Volume 119 Issue 09 September 2019

## Officers' Call

### Greater Birmingham Chapter Military Officers Association of America

*President* Wes Cox, Col, USA (Ret)

*1<sup>st</sup> VP* Mac Chandler, LTC, USA (Ret)

*2<sup>nd</sup> VP* Don Lehman, LTC, USMC (Ret)

*Treasurer* Doug Markham, CAPT, USN(Ret)

*Secretary* Ginger Branson, LTC, USA (Ret)

*Past Pres.* Thomas Ruffing, LTC, USA (Ret)

*Director* J.D. Crawford, Col, USA (Ret)

*Director* Robert Williams, Maj, USA (Ret)

*Director* Vacant

*Chaplain* Mac Chandler, LTC, USA (Ret)

*TOPS Liaison* Al Wood, LTC, USA (Ret)

*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](mailto:newsletter@moaabirmingham.org).

**Thursday, September 5, 2019 Social 6:00 pm, Dinner at 6:30 pm**

- **Cost:** \$26.00 per person
- 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 Noon on Monday September 2, 2019 to make your reservation. Note: Your reservation is not complete until you have received a confirmation call or email.

**Menu:** Mandarin Orange Salad with Arugula, Goat Cheese, and Pecans, Roasted Chicken with Balsamic Bell Peppers. Mashed Potatoes. Steamed Cauliflower. Assorted Bread, Strawberry Cheesecake with caramel

**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



## SEPTEMBER SPEAKER

JESSICA IVEY

Researchers estimate that up to 80% of chronic diseases could be prevented by eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, not smoking, and maintaining a healthy weight. Join Registered Dietitian, Jessica Ivey, from St. Vincent's One Nineteen to learn basic guidelines for healthy habits to help prevent or manage heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic diseases.

[Jessica Ivey](#) is a Registered Dietitian and chef with a passion for teaching people to eat healthy for a happy and delicious life. She loves spending time in the kitchen creating original recipes to help busy families eat well and enjoy more meals together. Her practical approach has helped her teach consumers to eat healthy and deliciously in the real world. Jessica counsel clients regarding healthy eating at [St. Vincent's One Nineteen](#).

### Chaplain's Corner

September is finally here! College football season with all its pageantry (and silliness) has finally returned! The Braves are in contention, as are my beloved Yankees. No more watching reruns of Love It or List It on HGTV! Seriously, the busy season has begun, as most vacations are over (except for those lucky folks who are retired and can now go to the beach and miss all the crowds!) Speaking of football, many of us will be traveling to and from various football stadiums all over the Southeast, and some further away. I urge you to be safe and be alert. Our guest speaker this month will be teaching you some very important lifestyle information. I urge you to please pay attention to what she has to say. Have a safe and fun Labor Day weekend and may your favorite college football team have a good showing. I'd like to address another more serious subject: violence in the U.S. We have all been shocked, yet not likely surprised by the recent shootings in Ohio and in California. These acts of random violence are evidence that EVIL does exist. This month I would like to leave you with these verses from Galatians 6: 9-10: "...Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." Let's all "do good" this month and every month. After all, isn't that what the Golden rule is all about?

P.S. If you know of a member who is under the weather, or has had a recent loss, please inform either me or Anne Hartline. We would like to stay active in taking care of our group.

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

### RECRUITERS CORNER

#### **New members**

We recently reached out to former chapter members and had 6 of them rejoin our ranks! Please welcome them at a future meeting when they may attend. The former/renewed members are:

MG Robert H. G. Waudby

Col George Singleton

Col C. Kent Jackson

Col Rudolph W. Morgan

LtCol Robert Shinpaugh

James W. Musgrove

Their challenge coin is waiting for them and we hope to see them at a meeting soon!

#### **Recruiting**

We have many new members, so please come to a meeting, welcome them, get acquainted and make new friends!

#### **On-line Chapter dues payment**

We are now set-up for on-line Chapter dues payment with a credit/debit card through the National MOAA website. Our Chapter dues are separate from National dues and are on a calendar year, January 1 to December 31. The web link for our dues will be provided as renewal season approaches. If you are a Regular National member (i.e. NOT Life or a Basic membership), you will now be able to pay both your National and Chapter dues at the same time.

#### **Website**

We are in the process of making some changes to our website. Be sure to check it out soon and let us know what you think at [www.MOABirmingham.org](http://www.MOABirmingham.org)

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

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Jerry Ingram	1
Beth Smith	2
George Singleton	4
Len Mueninghoff	8
Leo Deason	9
Ron Bradstreet	11
Jim Langley	16
James Wilson	17
Michael Walker	21
Susan Bradshaw	23
Bob Barefield	24
Cynthia Cox	24
Gene Cushman	24

## **Ladies Luncheon**

for

**Surviving Spouses**

**Female Officers**

**Spouses of Living Members**

**Wednesday, October 2, 2019**

**10:30 am**

**Hoover Country Club**

**3140 Club Drive, Hoover, AL 35226**

**"Legal Issues"**

**Erin Stone, JAGC, USN (Ret)**

**Program Director, MOAA Council and Chapter Affairs**

**"MOAA Legislative Updates on Benefits"**

**COL Wes Cox USA (ret), GBC President**

**Your check will be your reservation.**

**Make check payable to: MOAA GBC**

**Mail to: Anne Hartline**

**2612 Swiss Lane**

**Vestavia Hills, AL 35226**

**205-823-1924**

**hartline.anne@gmail.com**

**Cost: \$20 Reservation deadline: September 26, 2019**

### Legislative Update

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

#### **MOAA's 2019 Summer Storm: Local Action for National Change**

MOAA is asking local Chapters to "Storm" our representative's offices while they are in recess for "district and state" work periods. The full Congress will be back in session on September 9<sup>th</sup>. The Summer Storm can consist of attending townhall meetings, personal visits, letters, emails or phone calls. The important thing is to ensure our representatives understand what issues are important to servicemembers, veterans, and spouses.

The two issues MOAA would like our focus is the Widow's Tax and Military Medical billet reductions. Detailed information on both issues can be found in the Legislative Action section on the MOAA website, [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org).

Chapter members attended townhall meetings with both Representatives Bradley Byrne and Gary Palmer in August. Your support will go a long way in the continued fight to preserve our benefits.

**The National Defense Appropriations Act (NDAA)** is progressing through the House and Senate. While both versions are far from approval, the below MOAA provided chart will help you keep track of what is being considered.

ISSUE	ADMINISTRATION PROPOSAL	HOUSE NDAA	SENATE NDAA
<b>Military Pay:</b> Pay Raise	3.1% increase	Same	Same
<b>Health Care:</b> Medical billet reductions	Reduce military Medical personnel By 18,000 billets	Require analysis and congressional Review on how cuts will affect readiness	No language on billet reduction
<b>Health Care:</b> TRICARE and TRICARE For Life	No proposed Increases to TRICARE/TFL fees	Same	Same
<b>Guard and Reserve:</b> Service Records	No specific language	Requires the SDEF to establish and Implement a standard record of service for members in the Reserve components	No specific language
<b>Occupational/ Environmental Health:</b> Exposure to burn pits/ toxic chemicals	No specific language	Requires service documentation Of exposure to toxic airborne Chemicals or other substances. Requires automatic enrollment Of members in burn pit registry.	Similar provision To House. Also Includes DoD Provider and VA Information Sharing of burn pit registry

#### **Update: Widows Tax Repeal**

(Extract from MOAA Article by Amanda Dolasinski, staff writer)

Nearly 70 senators have made a passionate plea to repeal the "widows tax," the unfair law that force surviving military spouses to forfeit part or all of their Survivor Benefit Plan when they begin to receive the VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

Sens. Doug Jones, D-Ala., and Susan Collins, R-Maine, have led efforts to pass the Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act of 2019. Now they are joined by senators from both parties, asking that the final National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2020 include a provision for full repeal of the widows' tax, also known as the SBP-DIC offset.

"We have an obligation to make sure that we are taking care of our military families who have sacrificed so much," the letter reads. "This problem goes back decades, but this year we can finally solve it once and for all. It is our time to do our duty not only to support the brave men and women of our military, but also to support their families."

"There has never before been more bipartisan support in Congress for repealing the SBP-DIC offset," the letter reads. "Currently, there are 75-cosponsors of legislation to repeal the widows tax in the Senate and 371 co-sponsors in the House."

That marks the highest number of co-sponsors ever for each version of the legislation.



★★★★★ **SAVE the DATE** ★★★★★

MAYOR ASHLEY CURRY AND  
THE CITY OF VESTAVIA HILLS  
ARE HONORED TO PRESENT A

*Veterans Day Celebration*

FEATURING PATRIOTIC-THEMED  
MUSICAL PERFORMANCES & SPEAKERS

Thursday, November 7, 2019

Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church  
2061 Kentucky Avenue  
Vestavia Hills, Alabama



## Armed Forces Officers Wives Club

Please join us for recruitment event:  
September 12, 2019  
At the home of Mary Jensen  
2001 River Lake Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35244  
10:30 a.m.

Contact  
Jane Galik  
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.

### Surviving Spouse Corner

The Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter met July 30, 2019. The following is a short recap of the meeting.

Micki Costello, co-chair of the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter (SSVC), called the meeting of the SSVC to order. She reminded participants that 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.

ADM Walt Doran, MOAA Board Chairman, spoke of the new Summer Storm initiative whereby MOAA members are being asked to contact their congressional representatives in both houses to ask for support for MOAA's top two issues: repeal of the SBP-DIC offset and protection of military medicine. Other parts of the GBC newsletter have the current status of the SPB DIC offset

Anne Hartline introduced CAPT (USN Ret) Erin Stone, Program Director, MOAA Council and Chapter Affairs, to speak on legal issues of interest to Surviving Spouses. Capt. Stone was the primary speaker with lots of information relating to legal issues. It was very informative. There was too much information for this short summary.

Cheryl Toland (WA) spoke about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund and provided the website for more information <https://www.vvmf.org/Ceremonies/>. Judith Thomas (TX) spoke of her involvement in and the commemorative pins available to veterans or their Surviving Spouses through the Vietnam War Commemorative Commission. She has had over 650 requests for pins. This initiative includes veterans with dates of service in Vietnam from 1 November 1955 through 15 May 1975. The Vietnam War Commemorative Commission is a DOD sponsored activity; pins are available free of charge. For more information, see [https://www.vietnamwar50th.com/about/vietnam\\_veteran\\_lapel\\_pin/](https://www.vietnamwar50th.com/about/vietnam_veteran_lapel_pin/).  
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScXrJXuzmNIMcVEFsAB04nC2daEFN83JSy-OW7er8nVP1ttVQ/viewform>

Micki spoke about the Virtual Chapters' and Health Care Team 2020 Bermuda cruise currently being planned through the MOAA Travel Office. Pricing is very reasonable. Jerri Graham, Chair of the Nurses Virtual Chapter and cruise organizer, has devised a questionnaire (also available on the website) to pair people who would like to have a roommate for travel.

## 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](mailto: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.





WILLIAM C. McDONALD III

*Shadow Tiger Press*

billy@shadowtiger.org

1401 Blenheim Place  
Birmingham AL 35213

(205) 790-7575

# *the Shadow Tiger*

Billy McDonald

Wingman to  
Chennault

WILLIAM C. McDONALD III  
BARBARA L. EVENSON

RLC  
RESORT LIFESTYLE  
COMMUNITIES

*Cahaba Ridge*

## Affordable Resort-Style Living Made Simple.

Cahaba Ridge is Vestavia Hills' magnificent, all-inclusive independent living community. We take care of everything with one monthly price and no buy-in fee so you can enjoy the good things in life.



### One monthly price includes:

- Month-to-month lease with no buy-in fees
- Live-in managers
- Signature *Freedom Dining* program
- Social activities & wellness programs
- 24/7 Fitness center
- 24/7 Medical Alert System
- Room service and chef's pantry
- Weekly housekeeping
- Concierge & Valet Parking Services

Call to schedule a private tour and discover the benefits of resort-style living today!

205-259-7758



3090 Healthy Way ♦ Vestavia Hills, AL 35243 ♦ [CahabaRidgeRetirement.com](http://CahabaRidgeRetirement.com)





YOU HONORED US WITH YOUR SERVICE.

*Now let us honor you.*

**WE ARE PROUD TO SERVE VETERANS** more than any other provider. In fact, we're part of the Dignity Memorial® network, the largest network of funeral homes and cemeteries in North America.

As a member of the Dignity Memorial network, we know more about obtaining everything that is owed to you, including monetary burial benefits, a

government-issued marker, presidential certificate and much more. We are also able to offer a FREE Veterans Planning Guide that includes worksheets and valuable information.

Regardless of whether you choose to be buried in a national or private cemetery, we can help you receive everything you have earned.

*We invite you to call us for more information.*



**RIDOUT'S VALLEY CHAPEL**

**HOMEWOOD**

Lt. Col. (Ret) Mac Chandler, Family Service Counselor

205-879-3401 [RidoutsValleyChapel.com](http://RidoutsValleyChapel.com)

## Donald Lehman

LtCol USMCR (retired)



### Consulting Petroleum Geologist

AAPG CPG #4560

*Lifetime memberships:*

[MOAABirmingham.org](http://MOAABirmingham.org)

[AlabamaMarine.org](http://AlabamaMarine.org)

[VVA.org](http://VVA.org) - [DAV.org](http://DAV.org)

Cell: (404) 441-3882  
[don.lehman1@gmail.com](mailto:don.lehman1@gmail.com)



Still serving veterans – Once a Marine always a Marine



Our upcoming dinner meetings will be 05 September 2019 at 6:30 p.m. and 03 October 2019