



Greetings Greater Birmingham Chapter (MOAA)  
Members and Friends,

March is the gateway to Spring. According to Wikipedia, "Spring and "springtime" refer to the season, and also to ideas of rebirth, rejuvenation, renewal, resurrection and regrowth."

At the February meeting, COL John Reitzell, USA (Ret) gave a very informative program on his participation in the U.S. response to the hijacking of the Achille Lauro. John is also a member of U.S. Representative Bradley Byrne's leadership coalition and he gave good insight on Reps. Byrne run for the U.S. Senate in 2020. These were really great presentations by a true patriot.

March begins the process to elect our President, Congressional and State representatives, and local officials. This is an important process, and voting for those running for these positions is our right under the U.S. Constitution. As a citizen, it is also our responsibility to vote. **Remember to vote in Alabama Primary Election on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

March 28th is the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Dedication of the Scenic Overlook at the Alabama National Cemetery in Montevallo. The ceremony begins at 10am at the Ceremonial Flag Pole. GBC MOAA member COL Bob Barfield, USA (Ret), his wife Nancy, and his committee worked extremely hard to make the Scenic Overlook a place where family members and friends of service members can reflect on their love ones who have their final resting place at the cemetery. I would encourage you to attend the ceremony and thank Bob and the committee for their work in making the Scenic Overlook a reality.

Our next Meeting is March 5th; social hour begins at 6:00pm. Hope to see you all there!

Respectfully,

Wes

Volume 120 Issue 3 March 2020

## Officers' Call

### Greater Birmingham Chapter Military Officers Association of America

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

*1<sup>st</sup> VP* Don Lehman, LTC, USMC (Ret)

*2<sup>nd</sup> VP* Michael Walker, LTC, USA (Ret)

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

*Past Pres.* Mark Rubino, LT, USN

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

*Director* Vacant

*Director* Vacant

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

*TOPS Liaison* Vacant

*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, March 5, 2020 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 March 2, 2020 to make your reservation. Note: Your reservation is not complete until you have received a confirmation call or email.

**Menu:** Pear salad- mixed greens topped with sliced pears, dried cranberries and candied walnuts. Served with house dressing. Entrée: Rack of lamb with roasted potatoes, asparagus and heirloom carrots- topped with demi glaze and fresh parsley. Dessert: Key lime pie

**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





## MARCH SPEAKER

Niki Sepsas

Niki Sepsas, a renowned speaker, historian, tour guide and author, will be our speaker for the March meeting. He spoke to us several years ago on the topic of **The Normandy Invasion: What if . . . ?????**, which was very interesting and thought provoking. His topic at our March meeting will be:

**Valor in the Ardennes: The Battle of the Bulge.** More than 600,000 men would participate in the largest and bloodiest battle of World War II during Christmas 1944 when Adolf Hitler's last great counteroffensive would result in the epic clash in the Ardennes Forest of Belgium and Luxembourg.

### CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

There is a saying that March roars in like a lion, and out like a lamb. If you've been here in Alabama long enough, you would likely agree with this statement. In March we seem to run the gamut of torrential rains, tornados, and blizzards, all followed by perfect spring like weather in the 70's. Isn't it great to see God's majesty being displayed right before our eyes!

There are a couple of dates that are important this month. We "Spring Forward" into Daylight Savings time on Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup>. On the 17<sup>th</sup> it is St. Patrick's Day, so remember to wear something green that day. Also on the 17<sup>th</sup> March Madness begins. Looks like the SEC will have a few teams in the mix again this year.

I was pondering about spring today, and wondered how "spring" is dealt with in the Bible. More than a season, most often the word spring is mentioned as a source of water; someplace calming; a place of refreshment, or sustenance. The promised land was "...a wonderful land, a land with streams of water, springs, and wells that gush up on the hills... (Deut 8: 7). In the Psalms, spring is both water and growth...God's salvation is very close to those who honor him so that his glory can live in our land. Faithful love and truth have met; righteousness and peace have kissed. Truth springs up from the ground; righteousness gazes down from heaven. (Psalm 85:9-11. Again, in Isaiah, ...you will draw water with joy from springs of salvation. (Isaiah 12:3).

I think most Christians are familiar with the story in the book of John about Jesus meeting the Samaritan women at the well. Jesus said to the woman ..." If you recognized God's gift and who is saying to you, 'Give me some water to drink,' you would be asking him and he would give you living water." (John 4: 10). Jesus further tells the woman, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks from the water that I will give will never be thirsty again. The water that I give will become in those who drink it a spring of water that bubbles up into eternal life."

This March, let's see how God is once again making things new, and celebrate, as the Lord says in Revelation 21: 6..."to the thirsty I will freely give water from the life-giving spring.'

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

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

March is the start of an exciting political year. The Primary Elections are on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and the General Elections will be held on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Alabama citizens will have the opportunity to vote for the President/Vice President, one U.S. Senate seat, 7 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and various State and County offices. In our Districts (6&7), we will vote for President/Vice President, a seat in the U.S. Senate, 2 seats in the House of Representatives, and various Local and County officials.

The Alabama Secretary of State publishes a Voter's Guide which contains information on which Offices are included in the election year, election dates, crossover voting rules for the primary and general elections, voter registration deadlines, voter eligibility, and many other topics which will help navigate the voter system. The Voters Guide can be accessed online at: [www.sos.alabama.gov](http://www.sos.alabama.gov).

Even though we are focused on the national elections this year, we still need to stay focused on MOAA issues and make our elected officials' aware what legislation is important to serving and retired servicemembers. Below is an article I borrowed from the Take Action section of the MOAA website ([www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org)) which is applicable for both serving legislators and those running for elected offices.

### **MOAA's 6 Tips for Engaging Congress**

- 1. Identify your congressional representatives.** A quick Google search can usually tell you who represents your congressional district, but if you aren't sure, reach out to MOAA staff directly. And if you're an active duty servicemember or spouse living outside the district you vote in, make sure to engage with your representatives at your home and in the district where you currently live.
- 2. Choose a specific issue.** Identifying a targeted topic and outcome can help focus the conversation with your representative. It's even better if you can share your personal connection to the issue.
- 3. Call your representative's offices directly.** MOAA provides a direct number to the Capitol Switchboard, which will connect you directly to the office of your members of Congress.
- 4. Use the MOAA Take Action Center.** MOAA provides email and letter templates for engaging on timely issues of importance to our members, as well as a system to submit them directly to your representatives. Visit [takeaction.moaa.org](http://takeaction.moaa.org).
- 5. Start a social media campaign.** Engage with your representatives on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media platforms, and encourage your friends and family members to do the same. The greater the number of comments on an issue, the more likely it is to grab the attention of a congressional office and encourage staffers to respond.
- 6. Show up.** If your representatives are at home in your district, attend their town halls and other public events, and make sure to do your homework. Also, even if you can't attend the annual Storming the Hill event in March, be sure to participate from home by calling, emailing, and posting on social media using #MOAA Storms.



### **Chapter dues renewals:**

We are down to a handful of members that would still need to pay 2020 Chapter dues to maintain membership status. A couple of you have contacted me already and urge those that have not to consider that it would greatly help the chapter. I want to make a personal appeal to the following to take just a moment, and if so inclined to continue, to go ahead and renew with us at <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx> Even if you cannot make dinner meetings or feel you cannot be as active as you would like, you would be more than welcome!

Balkovetz, Dorothy  
Connor, Mike  
Dayhood, Sam  
Edwards, James  
Fleming, Cliff  
Hines, Danielle  
Huffstutler, Miles  
Little, Jerry  
Parker, Chip  
Rath, Charlie  
Smith, Charlie  
Sumlin, Kelvin  
VanWinkle, Albert  
Waller, Nancy  
Wood, Al

National and Chapter dues support legislative action to protect benefits for service members, retirees, veterans, and local veteran organizations in the greater Birmingham area such as the Birmingham Veterans Day Parade, the Alabama National Cemetery, Alabama Veterans Memorial Park, the Blue Star Foundation, Wreaths Across America, and accredited Veteran-focused research activities. Someone wanting to renew or even join GBCMOAA for the first time can now pay Chapter dues online at:

Thank you to all members who have shown continued support.

### **Chapter membership numbers:**

The chapter membership count is 174 and projecting 200 members by the end of the year.

Michael A. Walker  
LTC, USA (Ret)  
Membership Chair  
[zxywalk@gmail.com](mailto:zxywalk@gmail.com)



## FEBRUARY PICTURES



(L-R) LTC Shaun Davidson, USA (Ret) GBC MOAA, COL John Reitzell, USA (Ret) Byrne Campaign for Senate Leadership Coalition, Derek Chen, Byrne Campaign staff, COL Wes Cox, USA (Ret) President, GBC MOAAA, Glenda Reitzell. Wife of COL Reitzell







## **Armed Forces Spouse Club**

March 12, 2020  
Inverness Country Club

For reservations  
Contact  
Jane Galik  
ladyg8r74@gmail.com  
205-664-8163

The purpose of this organization is to foster friendship among the spouses of active, retired alive and deceased military personnel of the Armed Forces. In lieu of having many speakers this year, we have chosen locations for comradery-won't you please join us!!!



**Greater Birmingham Chapter of  
Military Officers Association of America  
Ladies Luncheon**

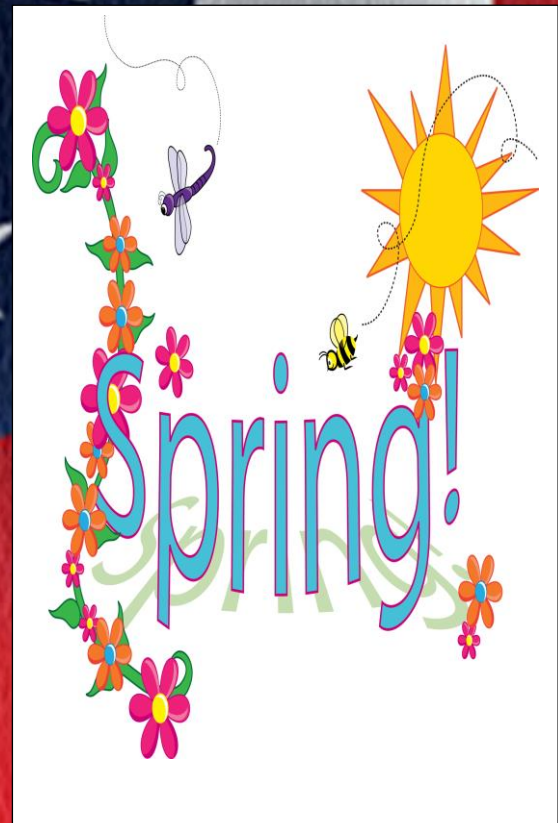
for  
**Surviving Spouses  
Female Officers  
Spouses of Living Members**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2020  
10:30 am  
Hoover Country Club  
3140 Club Drive, Hoover, AL 35226**

**"Comfortable Options for Lifelong Living"  
Sarah Garcia  
Certified Senior Advisor**

**"MOAA Legislative Updates on Benefits"  
COL Wes Cox USA (ret), MOAA GBC  
President**

**Your check will be your reservation.  
Make check payable to: MOAA GBC  
Mail to: Donna Martin  
140 Courtside Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35242  
205-408-4761  
donnamaemartin@aol.com**



## GREATER BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER INFORMATION

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Deb Parker	9
Jerry McEwen	14
Don Baker	15
Glenn Nivens	15
Nancy Todd	21
Linda DeMarco	23
Tommy Carpenter	23
Chris Phillips	23
Wally Womack	25
Ruth Walker	25
Richard McKinley	26
Ed Segner	28
Mary Lou Matthews	28
Josephine Lassiter	29
Walt Sasser	29
Dale Pangman	31

### Jobs and Childcare for Military Families Act of 2020

Copied from the MOAA website

Rep. Donald Norcross (D-N.J.) introduced H.R. 5876, the Jobs and Childcare for Military Families Act of 2020, on Feb. 12 as a companion bill [to the Senate version](#) introduced by Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) last summer. MOAA supports the legislation, which would include military spouses as a target group for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and provide Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) as an employee benefit for servicemembers.

“The Work Opportunity Tax Credit has been instrumental in reducing veteran unemployment rates and could be a vital solution to addressing the high military spouse unemployment rate.” said Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret), MOAA’s president and CEO. “Additionally, every federal agency offers flexible spending accounts as an employee benefit. With the rising cost of health care and child care, now is the time to extend that benefit to servicemembers to give them an option to mitigate these financial burdens.

“MOAA fully supports this legislation and we urge members of Congress to sign on in support of this legislation — our military families deserve no less.”

### 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 with white lettering on white, approximately the size of a business card with magnetic backs are available for \$8.50 each through J.D. Crawford.

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.





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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 05 March and 02 Apr 2020