



Greetings Greater Birmingham Chapter MOAA Members and Friends!

The June luncheon meeting at Lloyd's restaurant was well attended by about 23 members and spouses. We will repeat with the July luncheon meeting again at Lloyd's on July 1st at 11:30, lunch at noon. It was great seeing everyone, and we had one new member join our group, retired USAF LtCol John Jerakis; welcome aboard John. I am looking forward to seeing even more of you at the July luncheon!

The fourth of July is coming up, a time to celebrate our independence and could not be done without the sacrifice and dedicated service of yourself and our armed forces brothers and sisters. We live in great country and enjoy a lot of freedom and opportunities that are taken for granted. I hope all of you will be enjoying the holiday with your friends and family.

Stay safe, be well and look forward to seeing you soon!

Respectfully,
Don

Summer monthly luncheons

Location: Lloyd's Restaurant on 280

Time: Gather at 11:30, lunch at noon July 1, 2021

Cost: Buy your own from the menu

Please RSVP so they can have an estimated count, to Doug Markham; text or call 205-420-2631 or email to dgmarkham3143@gmail.com

See you there!

Volume 121 Issue 7 July 2021

Officers' Call

President Don Lehman, LTC, USMC (Ret)
1st VP Harold Coghlan, CW4 USA (Ret)
2nd VP Michael Walker, LTC, USA (Ret)
Secretary Margie Argo, LTC, USAR (Ret)
Treasurer Doug Markham, CPT, USN (Ret)
Past Pres. Wes Cox, Col, USA (Ret)
Director J.D. Crawford, Col, USA (Ret)
Director Mark Melanson, Col USA (Ret)
Director Bob Barefield, Col USA (Ret)
Director Richard McKinley, CPT USAF (Ret)
Chaplain Mac Chandler, LTC, USA (Ret)
Legislative Affairs Eless Brown, Col USA
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.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Greetings everyone! Can you believe it....2021 is already half over! It appears that our nation is turning the corner on the Covid-19 pandemic, and we are ever so slowly getting back to normal, whatever that is. As Psalm 68 says, "Sing to God, sing praises to his name." I would also add Hallelujah!

This year July 4, INDEPENDENCE DAY, is on a Sunday. We get two days to celebrate, both Sunday and Monday, and it is my hope that as a country we will reflect on what this day means to ALL OF US. The Continental Congress, meeting in Philadelphia in 1776, declared that the thirteen American colonies were no longer subject (and subordinate) to King George III, and were now united, free, and independent states. The Congress voted to declare independence two days earlier, on July 2, but it was not DECLARED until July 4. HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY YA'LL!

This month I would like to offer a Prayer for Independence Day, originally published at the Open Doors United Methodist Church, Wells, MN. "Gracious God, as we reflect on our upcoming Independence Day, we give thanks for our country. We thank you for the ideals of freedom, equality, and inclusion that our country seeks to have. We pray for our leaders and ask that you guide them in making wise decisions that benefit the whole, not just a few. And we ask that you help us discern the division between country and faith so that all may have the same freedoms we so enjoy.

May we also be reminded of all those who have sacrificed for our freedom, following the example of your son, Jesus Christ. May we not take our freedom, both physical and spiritual, for granted. May we always remember that our freedoms come at an extremely high cost; our freedoms have cost many their very lives.

Lord, bless those who have served, as well as those who continue to serve, offering their lives to maintain our freedoms. With favor and bounty meet their needs and watch over their families.

Help us to live our life in a way that glorifies you. Lord, give us the strength to be a blessing in someone else's life, and grant us the opportunity to lead others into the freedom that can be found in knowing Christ." Amen.

Mac Chandler LTC (Ret) U.S. Army



The Glorious Fourth

by Lenore Hetrick

In seventeen hundred seventy-six
A mighty document was born!
Around the table our forefathers
Gathered on that famous morn.
There before them lay the paper
With its words of lasting fame.
The Declaration of Independence!
Oh glorious Fourth of glorious name!

One by one our bold forefathers
Took the pen in hand to sign.
On that fine historic paper
All the names fell into line.
Fame eternal to the signers
Will be ever their reward!
On that eminent Fourth of old
They took a stand so bold.

Triumphant in our history,
And distinguished to the waiting world.
A new nation to the stars
And stripes the splendid flag unfurled.
In seventeen hundred seventy-six
Upon a day we love to praise,
The first heroic Fourth arrived –
And since, it's been our day of days!



JUNE MEETING



A FUN TIME WAS HAD BY ALL



CATCHING UP

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



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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

A Battle Is Brewing Over the Rising Costs of VA Health Care By René Campos

Unlike most federal agencies, each year the administration proposes a budget for the VA that covers not only the upcoming fiscal year operations, but also additional funds for the following fiscal year. The additional request is called an “advance appropriation.” In a nutshell, the additional funding is to serve as a bridge between fiscal years to ensure the department can provide continuity of the health care and benefits to veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors without disruption should unforeseen circumstances prevent Congress from getting a VA budget signed into law before the Oct. 1 start of a new fiscal year. In recent years, government shutdowns and continuing resolutions prompted Congress to establish advance appropriations as safeguard protections for seven VA accounts. VA medical services, community care, and other medical programs have been receiving advance funding since October 2009 with the enactment of the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act. Advance appropriations for other VA benefit programs became law a few years later. However, some members of Congress are ready to take the VA to task to find out how the department has spent its appropriations in recent years. A battle is brewing around the unsustainable trajectory and rising costs of health care and what to do about it. According to the VA, a significant factor in the rising costs of health care is because of community care in recent years, particularly with the implementation of the MISSION Act. The budget increases appear reassuring but the details of how the VA plans to execute the various elements of its health care budget remain elusive, including its community care account. Such details are important for ensuring the department is funded at the necessary levels, so veterans have uninterrupted care and the best health outcomes possible. Rest assured lawmakers will delve more deeply into the VA’s budget proposal during hearings in the coming weeks as part of the congressional appropriations process. Meanwhile, MOAA remains engaged in the process and will do everything it can to work with the secretary and the Congress to ensure the final passage of an appropriations bill meets the needs of veterans and honors them for their service.

Does the Budget Threaten a Key TRICARE Improvement? By Karen Ruedisueli

The [DoD budget request](#), released as part of the [administration’s budget proposal](#) to Congress on May 28, includes some limited details on TRICARE utilization trends. MOAA is concerned the budget narrative related to civilian urgent care use may indicate a potential threat to referral-free urgent care for TRICARE Prime beneficiaries. The request cites rising private-sector urgent care utilization as a factor in the department’s TRICARE cost increases. This could serve as an early warning sign toward targeting referral-free urgent care in future cost savings efforts; such a move would represent a significant step backward for beneficiaries’ access to timely, appropriate care. MOAA understands the importance of utilizing direct care system capacity when available and ensuring military families get the right care in the right setting. MOAA looks forward to working with the Defense Health Agency to fully understand private sector urgent care and emergency department utilization rates and trends. MOAA also stands by to help raise awareness of the Nurse Advice Line (1-800-TRICARE, select Option 1; or [chat online](#)), a valuable service that allows military families to get health care advice from a registered nurse, obtain recommendations for the most appropriate level of care, and schedule same- or next-day appointments at the military hospital or clinic where the beneficiary is enrolled (when available).

RECRUITER'S CORNER

The GBC MOAA 2021 Recruiting Season Continues

LTC Daniel Phifer recently upgraded his National MOAA membership to Life. Thank you, LTC Phifer. National MOAA recognizes our chapter for your increased commitment to the entire MOAA organization.

As you know, National MOAA offers the 3 membership levels of Basic, Premium, and Life. Each National membership level has its own set of unique benefits. For "Non-lifers", please consider upgrading. Permanent benefits accrue when upgrading National MOAA membership to Life status. For further information, refer to [National MOAA Life membership](#) and the [National MOAA Membership Brochure](#) to make an informed decision. GBC recorded several national MOAA membership upgrades last year.

GBC members continue to contribute in powerful ways. For those who already upgraded their national MOAA membership status like LTC Phifer did, thank you for your vote of confidence. GBC attains recognition for each National MOAA membership upgrade. Basic national MOAA members have 2 options available: Premium, or Life. More to follow on this subject and keep looking into upgrading.

Upcoming

Summer Luncheons

Danberry meetings (not starting until September at the earliest)

The Greater Birmingham Chapter makes it as easy as possible for eligible individuals to join or renew.

Prospects can literally join or renew in seconds with GBC electronically. If you know of anyone who qualifies to belong to our organization, our chapter's award-winning membership page is the [GBC MOAA Website](#). Please email this hyperlink or ask a prospective GBC member to visit our chapter's website.

Veterans helping veterans is not for everybody, but it is what GBC MOAA is all about.

Another means of someone joining or renewing is the [National MOAA's Join or Renew Your Local Chapter](#). GBC's chapter leadership remains committed to providing the most convenient means of everyone joining or renewing GBC membership. Increasing the ease of joining and sustaining membership in GBC MOAA is our small way of helping veterans.

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





Surviving Spouse Recognition Program

For those surviving spouses, whose veteran was on active duty during the Vietnam war can receive a surviving spouse lapel pin. It is provided by the Society of Military Widows, A Commemorative Partner of the United States Vietnam War Commemoration Commission.

You need to submit a form. The form requests your name, address (where to mail the lapel pin), your email address, veteran's name, branch of service and years of active duty.

The following is a link to the form to be completed.

<https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLScXrjXuzmNIMc.../viewform>

Eligibility: a Surviving Spouse of a deceased Vietnam Veteran who served honorably on Active Duty in the U.S. Military between November 1, 1955, and May 15, 1975, regardless of where the service occurred.

GREATER BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER INFORMATION

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Mac Chandler	1
Don Lehman	10
Shawn Davidson	10
Dan Phifer	11
Mary Jensen	12
James Oliver	15
Dale Murray	16
Ann Munson	16
Jeff Bast	17
Jerri Barnhill	23
AL Goodwin	27
Donna Martin	29

MOAA on-line photo directory

Below is a sample of our chapter on-line photo directory, available via a private link to our members only on our website. It can be found at: <http://moaabirmingham.org/#>. You will need to request a log-in/join if you gave not already in order to access the "Members Only" page. If you and or your spouse do not have and would like to have your photo(s) in the directory, please send a selfie or photo to Donna Martin at: donnamaemartin@aol.com.



Killian, III, Sam P.
4545 Magnolia Drive
Birmingham, AL 35242
Email: spkiii@bellsouth.net
Spouse: *Martha T. Killian*
marthak36@gmail.com

USN Ret CDR Life
205-408-7721 (h)
205-903-6638 (c)
BD: 8/28
BD: 11/10



Lehman, Donald D. (Don)
1204 Greystone Parc Drive
Birmingham, AL 35242
Email: don.lehman1@gmail.com
Spouse: *Patricia A. Lehman*
islandmomma1@gmail.com

USMC Ret LTCOL Life
404-441-3882 (c)
BD: 7/10
BD: 11/20
404-725-7152 (c)



Click on these to
access website
and/or Facebook



Website



Find us on:
facebook®

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.



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





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

Donald Lehman

LtCol USMCR (retired)

Consulting Petroleum Geologist

AAPG CPG #4560

Lifetime memberships:

MOAABirmingham.org

AlabamaMarine.org

VVA.org - DAV.org

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

Still serving veterans – Once a Marine always a Marine



145 1st Avenue West, Alabaster, Alabama



Hours

Thursday 4–10PM

Friday 4–11PM

Saturday 3–11PM

Sunday Closed

Monday Closed

Tuesday 4–10PM

Wednesday 4–10PM

Veteran Owned and Operated



Meetings July 1 and August 5