



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 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:dgmarkham3143@gmail.com)

See you there!

Volume 121 Issue 7 July 2021

## *Officers' Call*

*President Don Lehman, LTC, USMC (Ret)*

*1<sup>st</sup> VP Harold Coghlan, CW4 USA (Ret)*

*2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto: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: <input type="checkbox"/> Army <input type="checkbox"/> Air Force <input type="checkbox"/> Navy <input type="checkbox"/> Marines <input type="checkbox"/> Coast Guard <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____           |    |           |       |      |                |                |
| Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Active Duty <input type="checkbox"/> Retired <input type="checkbox"/> National Guard <input type="checkbox"/> Reserve <input type="checkbox"/> Former Member <input type="checkbox"/> Surviving Spouse |    |           |       |      |                |                |
| Mailing Address   |    |           | City  |      | State          | Zip Code       |
| Telephone #: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Email Address: _____  |    |           |       |      |                |                |
| National MOAA Membership Number: _____ National Membership Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Basic <input type="checkbox"/> Premium <input type="checkbox"/> Life  |    |           |       |      |                |                |
| Signature: _____ Date: _____  |    |           |       |      |                |                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal or <input type="checkbox"/> New Membership (membership runs by calendar year)  |    |           |       |      |                |                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Membership or <input type="checkbox"/> Surviving Spouse: <input type="checkbox"/> \$20/year <input type="checkbox"/> \$35/2 years <input type="checkbox"/> \$50/3 years                                |    |           |       |      |                |                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Membership (\$50) or <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Membership (\$100)   |    |           |       |      |                |                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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](mailto: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 |

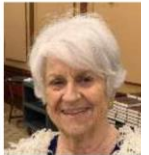
### **MOAA on-line photo directory**

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](mailto:donnamaemartin@aol.com).



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



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1204 Greystone Parc Drive  
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Spouse: Patricia A. Lehman  
[islandmomma1@gmail.com](mailto:islandmomma1@gmail.com)

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



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access website  
and/or Facebook



Website



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### **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.





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**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)

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### Hours

Thursday 4–10PM

Friday 4–11PM

Saturday 3–11PM

Sunday Closed

Monday Closed

Tuesday 4–10PM

Wednesday 4–10PM

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Meetings July1 and August 5