

**Maybe?**

**We are hoping to be able to meet back live at Danberry on the evening of April 7<sup>th</sup>!** However, we may not know for sure until April 1<sup>st</sup> if Danberry will be open to outside groups. So please watch for an email blast around the 1<sup>st</sup> to confirm whether we will be live or Zoom for our next meeting.

**We will also be having Niki Sepsas speak to us again,** who is a fantastic speaker. His topic will be **“Pandemics! Altering the Course of Human History”**, very timely and should be a very interesting talk.

We did have a last-minute live lunch meeting for March that was attended by 25 members and spouses! The meeting was totally social, everyone had a great time and the location and venue were perfect; The First Watch restaurant on 280. It was great to see some familiar faces that I had not seen in a couple of years.

By the time that you receive this newsletter, the first MOAA Ladies luncheon in over two years will have been held. Thanks again to Donna Martin for planning and coordinating this event. It is a great thing that we do. I know Donna is having a great turnout and I'm sure that all had a fun time.

With a little bit of luck, we will be back to normal, or as close as we can get, by the April meeting, so watch for a MOAA email at the end of this month. In the meantime, stay well, be safe, have a great Easter and I hope to see you soon!

Respectfully,  
*Don*



Website

Volume 122 Issue 4 April 2022

## 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)*  
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*Past Pres. Wes Cox, Col, USA (Ret)*  
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*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).

## APRIL SPEAKER

**Niki Sepsas will speak. His topic will be:**

### ***Pandemics! Altering the Course of Human History***

The Plague of Athens in the 5th Century before Christ. The Plague of Galen eight centuries later in Rome. Constantinople and the Plague of Justinian, Europe's Black Death, London's bubonic plague, and the diseases brought by the conquistadors to the New World in the 15th and 16th centuries that figured prominently in the conquest of the great Aztec and Inca civilizations. This program chronicles the deadly pandemics that have swept our world and altered the course of human history.

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Do you love HISTORY like I do? I enjoy reading about what happened "*way back then.*" If you do not know what happened *back then*, you may have to learn it (painfully) by your own experience.

I remember on March 15 in Latin Class at Phillips High School here in Birmingham dressing up in a Toga (a sheet). Mrs. Senn, our Latin teacher, would recap some "Latin" history.

It was the "**Ides of March**" the 74th day in the Roman Calendar, corresponding to 15 March. It was marked by several [religious](#) observances and was notable for the Romans as a **deadline for settling debts**. In 44 BC, it became notorious as the date of the [assassination of Julius Caesar](#) which made the *Ides of March* a turning point in Roman history.

The *Ides of March* is best known as the date on which Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 BC. Caesar was stabbed to death at a meeting of the Roman Senate. As many as 60 conspirators, led by Brutus and Cassius were involved. A seer had warned that harm would come to Caesar on the *Ides of March*. On his way to the Theatre of Pompey, where he would be assassinated, Caesar passed the seer and joked, "*Well, the Ides of March are come*", implying that the prophecy had not been fulfilled, to which the seer replied "*Aye, they are come, but they are not gone.*" Caesar is warned by the soothsayer to "beware the Ides of March."

March 15<sup>th</sup> was historically the day our Federal Tax Returns must be filled. Years ago, the date was changed to April 15, our new deadline for filing the IRS Forms (***our deadline for settling debts.***)

In Matthew 22:15-22, Jesus answers the question about paying taxes. The Pharisees had a plan to trap Jesus and discredit him. They ask Him if it is OK, according to the religious law, to pay tax. Jesus knew that they were trying to trap Him. He asked to see a coin and tell Him whose face was on the coin. They responded "The Emperor's, Caesar's."

Jesus responded, "***Pay unto Caesar that which belongs to Caesar and Pay to God what belongs to God.***"

And when they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

Remember our deadline for settling our Tax Debt is April 15.

Our deadline for serving our Lord is every minute in thanksgiving for all His gifts to us.

Blessings,

Chaplain Dan Phiifer



## RECRUITER'S CORNER

### Chapter Member Challenge

Welcome to all members that joined, rejoined, or renewed their GBC MOAA membership since the New Year. We retained at least 93%. This is the time of year that we issue a challenge for all members to contact someone you know to join our chapter. It takes only seconds to join, renew, rejoin, or reinstate with GBC at <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx>

### Community Events

Don't miss a chance to attend the upcoming Hoover Day at the end of April, where GBC recruiting is in support. Anyone who comes to mind to join can meet us. If it's raining, we'll announce a reschedule date.

Michael A. Walker  
LTC(Ret), USA  
Membership Chair

[zxywalk@gmail.com](mailto:zxywalk@gmail.com)

### **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

### MOAA Testifies Before Congress on Top Priorities for Veterans By Kipp Hanley

MOAA outlined its legislative priorities for the VA on March 8, 2022, before a joint session of the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees, stressing the need for more predictable funding and improved oversight and accountability. MOAA's Senior Director of Government Relations, [Cmdr. René Campos](#), USN (Ret), called the continuing use of "stopgap measures" to fund the VA and the rest of the federal government in lieu of passing a budget "a worrying trend – a situation all too common." "MOAA is concerned about what these crises and budget threats will mean for current and future policy changes, which could dramatically alter VA's funding requirements," said Campos, citing [the Independent Budget \(IB\)](#) recommendations for the VA, prepared by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, and Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). Campos also urged the committees to address "systemic issues" by filling the Under-Secretary positions for both the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). These positions, currently being filled in an interim basis, provide oversight and accountability at the top of the VA during its modernization process. Other topics Campos addressed on Capitol Hill included:

- Stabilizing and modernizing the VHA's workforce and support systems.
- Fast-tracking more support for long-term care facilities.
- Improving patient data quality of women, minorities, and underserved populations.
- Investing in behavioral health and suicide prevention.
- Passing meaningful veterans' benefits on issues like toxic exposure.
- Providing better VA home loan oversight.

### Supreme Court Case Challenges VA Rules on Filing Deadlines, Back Pay By *Patricia Kime* originally appeared on [Military.com](#)

The U.S. Supreme Court has accepted the case of a [Navy](#) veteran who believes his [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) disability compensation should have been paid starting from the date he left the military rather than the day he submitted his paperwork, a decision that could mean some veterans who waited years to file claims would be eligible for substantial back pay. The veteran, Adolfo Arellano, served from 1977 to 1981, during which he was assigned to an aircraft carrier that experienced a collision that "killed and injured several of his shipmates and nearly swept him overboard," according to court documents. Arellano developed post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health conditions; 30 years later, he applied for disability benefits, which were approved as service-connected by the VA and backdated to his 2011 filing date. But Arellano appealed, saying he should have received payments retroactive to his discharge, since his service-connected mental health conditions prevented him from filing a claim sooner -- in particular, filing during the one-year grace period given to transitioning service members that expedites their cases. Arellano said the statute of limitations should have been waived since he wasn't mentally able to file a claim before the time limit expired -- a legal concept known as "equitable tolling." In Arellano's petition to the court, his attorneys noted that veterans fail to file claims within the one-year period for reasons other than incapacitation, including that they may be discouraged by others, may not be aware they are eligible for benefits, or they were injured during operations that involved secrecy and fear disclosing classified information. A ruling in Arellano's favor has the potential to affect "thousands of current and future veterans," according to his attorney, James Barney, a graduate of the [U.S. Naval Academy](#) and partner in the D.C.-based firm Finnegan. "It's an unfortunate reality that many members of the [armed forces](#) face a difficult path once discharged from the service," Arellano's attorneys wrote in their petition to the court. "Indeed, the sad irony is that the very illnesses the veterans' benefits system is designed to address, such as PTSD, are often the ones that cause veterans to miss the one-year deadline."

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



## MILITARY SPOUSE'S CORNER



### Spring Ladies Luncheon

The Spring Ladies Luncheon was held March 16. Officer Brian Hale, Detective Mike Davis and Detective Jonathon Chambless gave a presentation of fraud, scams, and safety. They talked about how the scammers work, about how convincing they can sound. Basically, if the caller is asking for a gift card, it is almost a given that it is a scam. Additionally, if it sounds too good to be true it likely is not true and is a scam. Do not call them back using a phone number they provide. Research the internet and call the number you find on the internet. Parking lots are where bad things happen. Be aware of what is going on around you. Trust your gut!!! If you are uncomfortable draw attention to yourself, better to be embarrassed than to be injured or worse. You do not owe it to a stranger to listen to their story. Give a robber what he wants – property can be replaced; you can't be replaced. Much more was said. Officer Hale provided the follow link for tips in various situations - <http://www.hooverpd.com/crime-prevention.php>

Officer Brian Hale and some of the ladies attending the ladies' luncheon



Marge Jefferies, Chita Blakeley, Pat Marvin, Cynthia Cox, Anne Hartline, Margie Argo, Mary Jensen



Ladies from Gadsen Chapter (Chita Blakely and Mariella McNair), Anne Hartline, Don Lehman, Donna Martin





## GREATER BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER INFORMATION

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Peter Hendricks  
Barbara Bess  
Warren Todd  
Frank Smith  
Ed Clark  
Kyle Sample  
Terry Richmond  
Chuck Bailey

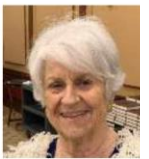
### MOAA on-line photo directory

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 have 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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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)



### ID CARDS

#### **DoD: No Further Extensions Planned for Expired ID Cards!**

Many of us have had our ID cards automatically extended due to the COVID. However, that indefinite extension is now ending on January 31, 2022. If your ID card has an expiration date that is past or expires this month, you will need to renew it ASAP. There are several locations that you can do that here in the Birmingham area, just google "military ID card renewal near me" and a bunch of them will come up. Some may require an appointment and be sure that you have the needed documentation when you go; they can tell you what you need when you call.  
Don Lehman

### 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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## Donald Lehman

LtCol USMCR (retired)

### Consulting Petroleum Geologist

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