

STONES RIVER MOAA CHAPTER

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

CW4 (Ret) Keith R. Prather, MSW



Reflections of 2025!

Reflecting back over the past two years, I am amazed at how quickly the time has passed. In fact, authoring this last article for 2025, as your chapter President, is one that makes me feel especially appreciative of you all. You inspired me to serve when I initially joined the chapter, and it has been an honor serving in leadership. Previously serving as both 1st and 2nd Vice-President was equally rewarding and necessary. During our January 2026 meeting, I will have the distinct pleasure of installing a new leadership team. Moreover, I believe in them and that they will continue to advance the magnificent work of our Stones River Chapter.

We have made noteworthy progress and had meaningful accomplishments that you can feel extremely proud of achieving. Beginning with our goal of increasing the membership numbers, we have exceeded our goal and now have 130 members. Additionally, we have revitalized our scholarship program and conducted two successful fundraising campaigns that have yielded over \$12,000.00. Furthermore, we continue to support the community with our annual food drive contributions, and clothing drive efforts, for the residents at the Tennessee State Veterans Home, as well as other local community initiatives.

Also, we celebrate the revival of our Chapter Newsletter. Thanks to our Editor Malinda Gilbert, it became a Four-star award winner in the first year. Also, we continue to increase our chapter activity by contacting our federal Representatives and Senators via our MOAA advocacy portal. Please stay engaged and visit the portal often to make your advocacy known. In addition, you can personally attend our local TN Day on the Hill each year with the TNVET coalition and meet with our elected State politicians.

Lastly, I thank each member of the Board who has served during my tenure, for your dedication and commitment to the chapter. As a team, we have continued to move our chapter forward. Now, as I begin my service, as 2nd Vice-President, on the MOAA TN Council of Chapters, I will continue to represent the Stones River Chapter and all our members in Tennessee. I pray that you had a very safe and happy holiday season!

Never Stop Serving!

Keith

Mission Statement 2025

The Stones River Chapter of MOAA is an association of officers and surviving spouses carrying out our role and responsibility to represent and support service members of all ranks across all services at every stage of their careers. We continue to work with our local, state, and federal civic and government leaders to ensure that compensation and all benefit matters for all members of the uniformed services community are sustained and improved. We support and promote the initiatives and directives of the Military Officers Association of America.

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Published by the Stones River Chapter Military Officers Association of America

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National MOAA and Stones River Chapter are nonpartisan.

Printed and posted by malindacgilbert@gmail.com and dianamoaa1@gmail.com

Salute to Service Discount—Tennessee State Parks

Tennessee State Parks is proud to celebrate all branches of service and offer a "Salute to Service" with complimentary camping and golf to veterans on each service branch birthday leading up to the 250th anniversary of the United States of America. All veterans of any service branch are eligible for a complimentary one-night camping stay and waived green fees on the following dates:

- Monday, Nov 10, 2025 (Marines)
- Tuesday, Nov 11, 2025 (Veterans Day)
- Saturday, Dec 13, 2025 (National Guard)
- Saturday, Dec 20, 2025 (Space Force)
- Sunday, June 14, 2026 (Army)

For more services and information available to veterans and active duty military, visit

https://tnstateparks.com/about/veterans?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Learn%20More&utm_campaign=emma-salute-to-service-launch-24



Wreaths Across America

Middle Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery

December 13, 2025

Photo by Betty Sue McDaniels



For this annual event, organizers targeted around 14,400 wreaths which needed volunteers who laid wreaths on every grave. Each wreath was made of Balsam fir from Maine and tied with a red bow to honor our veterans. Please consider being a donor for next year and volunteer your time to help lay the wreaths. This event is coordinated with the ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. **Remember, Honor, and Teach**

Holly Kyle—Surviving Spouse
Liaison



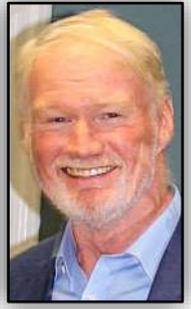
Surviving Spouse get together
after the holidays.
This time we will meet at my home for
conversation, coffee and munchies.

When: January 22, 2026
Where: 3028 N. Thompson Lane,
Murfreesboro, TN
Time: 10:00 AM

Holly Kyle

Council of Chapters

Submitted by Pete Warner



Chapter Leaders, et al

Please pardon me for not sending out a short synopsis of our great council meeting this past Wednesday (15 Oct 2025) at Sammy B's restaurant.

First, I want to thank everyone that was able to participate both in-person or via Zoom. We understand that the Chattanooga Chapter could not make it due to paying final respects at the funeral of Benny Ray Adkins.

Here are the key highlights and takeaways from our council meeting:

The council voted on new officers for 2026-2027 and they are:

- President - Pete Warner (Stones River Chapter)
- 1VP - BJ Keepers (Chattanooga Chapter)
- 2VP - Keith Prather (Stones River Chapter)

The council also voted on sending \$250 to the MOAA Crisis Relief Fund which was matched by \$250 from the council president and secretary on behalf of the TNCOC.

The council was pleased to welcome in person the treasurer and secretary of the newly named Smokey Mountain Chapter from Knoxville. Both Eric Nichols and Don Rifkin gave a great briefing on the newly formed chapter, and it was great to welcome them back into the fold!

All of our chapter presidents and their officers are doing a great job of recruiting and retention, community engagement, and advocacy at both the state and national level despite the heavy headwinds of our aging demographics.

Special thanks to Don Thompson (Chair/Mountain Empire), Edward Jewell (Chattanooga) and Jeff Rice (Gen. Andrew Jackson) for their work on the nominating committee - they ensured we have the requisite council officers in place for future years.

Finally, I want to personally thank our council officers for their service these past two years. Without them, we could not have accomplished our goals and maintained our record as one of MOAA's most rock-solid councils.

- Doug Minton - Membership Chair
- Monroe Gildersleeve - Treasurer
- Patricia Berquist - Surviving Spouse Liaison
- Eddie Sumbler - Chaplain
- Bill Summers - Legislative Liaison
- Steve Singleton - Legislative Liaison
- Ivan Adames - Past Council President
- Sandy Warner - Secretary

The dedication and commitment shown by our chapter members, along with our chapter and council officers, exemplify the remarkable achievements we can attain together in service to our nation and veterans through MOAA.

Very Respectfully,

Pete Warner
TNCOC-MOAA

All-President's Message —MOAA's Revised Privacy Policy From National

Submitted by Pete Warner



CAPT Frank J. Michael, USN (Ret)

Dear Council and Chapter Leaders:

This All-President's message is dedicated to explaining MOAA's revised privacy policy, what we have learned about the complexity of data privacy regulations and best practices, our plan to execute the policy, and important recommendations for you as council and chapter leaders.

Summary:

As many of you know, MOAA headquarters has been working to share more national MOAA member data with our affiliates to help promote chapter membership and engagement. Over the past 18 months, and after consulting with outside legal counsel, MOAA has adopted a new privacy policy, which is being integrated now, and will dictate how we collect, protect, use, and disclose personal information, as well as how members can exercise their rights under data privacy laws to opt-out of chapter communications.

Most important for our volunteer leaders, the implementation of this new policy will open engagement channels to many non-chapter affiliated MOAA national members whose previous communication settings precluded direct affiliate communication. MOAA began communicating with national members, identified within various cohorts, in mid-October with the anticipation that many will accept the communication setting default allowing council and chapter communications. Following a 30-day period to opt out of these communications, contact information, to include mailing address, preferred phone number, and preferred e-mail address, on these new prospective chapter members will be made available to affiliate leaders. A more complete explanation of the new privacy policy and important implementation recommendations to council and chapter leaders follow.

As we prepare for this anticipated increase in prospective member data provided to our volunteer leaders, it is important that affiliate presidents and membership chairs have working access to the Committee Module, Near Real Time (NRT) Report, and Do Not Contact Report to process and document their new members and to respect national members' privacy preferences.

Background:

Prior to October 2018, MOAA national policy was to default all new national members as opted out of communication with chapters unless they expressly agreed to such communication. The unintended consequence of this pre-October 2018 policy was to preclude chapters from communicating with upwards to 270,000 national members for the purpose of chapter recruitment. After this date, MOAA revised its policy to default all new national members as opted-in to receive chapter communications unless expressly choosing to opt-out.

Members joining national MOAA after October 2018, and not specifically opting out of chapter communication, have had their personal contact information available to chapters – primarily shared monthly via the Near Real Time Report (NRT). Specifically, chapter presidents and membership chairs, registered and participating in the NRT, were alerted to new national members living within their catchment area, national members reporting a change of address into their catchment area, and national members that subsequently opted in to receive communications from chapters.

Privacy Policy Implementation Milestones:

- The week of October 20: A privacy policy change notification e-mail was sent to national membership. All national MOAA members with an e-mail address on file were apprised of our new privacy policy.
- October 24 to November 24: Allowance period for members to express their communications preferences to MOAA national.
- On or about December 1: MOAA national will begin sharing national member contact information with affiliates.

Implementation Guidance:

Based on our experiences with member recruitment and retention, we offer these recommendations:

First, please note that new prospective chapter member information generated as a result of MOAA's privacy policy change will NOT be transmitted to chapters via the Near Real Time Report (NRT) due to the volume of data expected to be provided. We are developing a means to securely transmit this additional prospective member data and will advise in the coming weeks.

Following the initial transition period, the NRT will continue to provide prospective member data with the current operating guidelines after the new privacy policy is implemented. MOAA national members who contact our Member Service Center after the initial implementation period and choose to opt-out of chapter communications will be listed on the monthly Do Not Contact Report.

Also note that normal NRT operations will be interrupted during the time members will have to express their communications preferences.

Safeguarding of Member's Personal Information:

As always, the obligation of national MOAA and our affiliates to safeguard members' Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is paramount. With the potential for many thousands of members now having their PII data in the hands of our affiliate leaders, more than ever we need to ensure this information is protected with the greatest integrity and discipline. At a minimum, leaders are asked to take the following actions as a prerequisite to receiving national MOAA membership data:

- Password protect your personal computer systems;
- Update your operating systems with the most current release and all patches;
- Ensure no one in your council or chapter sends PII via any unsecure channel, including but not limited to email, Teams or other collaborative platform, or as an attachment sent via any unsecure channel; and
- Install and update the latest version of malware, computer virus, and intrusion protection software.

Prospective Chapter Member Frequency of Contact Guidelines:

Chapters should reach out to MOAA national prospective members no more than four times a year. This will prevent the triggering of spam filters which will divert and potentially block email communication to potential members. Also, many of our national members have not specified if their preferred phone number in the MOAA national database is a mobile number or landline. Therefore, we recommend you do not use text for your initial communication with prospective chapter members. Further, mass texts may run afoul of privacy laws and could expose a chapter to fines and legal action.

Restrictions on Sharing National Member Data with Third Parties:

As affiliates of national MOAA, councils and chapters are specifically prohibited from selling or sharing, in any manner, member contact information obtained from national MOAA with third parties.

Recruiting Best Practices:

Leaders are asked to make use of the many resources available when preparing to reach out to new prospective members. These resources include:

- Chapter Recruitment Guide, revised July 2025: 2025-chapter-recruitment-guide.pdf
- Leaders Resource Manual: MOAA - Council and Chapter Leaders Resource Manual
- Recruitment and Retention Roundtable, July 2025: MOAA - July 2025 Council and Chapter Virtual Roundtable

When considering the long-term health and effectiveness of our chapters, there is a clear imperative to recruit younger members. These members, generally defined by our association as 40-60 years of age, bring relevant experience and leadership, and provide longevity in membership and leadership potential. To attract and retain these younger members, chapter leaders are implored to reimagine their current activities, social gatherings, and overall culture. Our younger demographic is made up of doers, people who value being involved in activities that promote our mission and support the military and veteran community. A chapter that exists primarily as a "social club" or whose meetings are dominated by partisan political discussion simply will not resonate with this demographic. Likewise, chapters that meet exclusively in smaller lunch and dinner venues, often during working hours, will not attract these younger members who are in a different stage of life.

A sample opening paragraph for your initial e-mail to prospective chapter members follows:

I/We are writing because we understand you are a member of MOAA national and reside in our chapter's service area. Accordingly, I/we would like you to consider joining our chapter and supporting our work in service to the military and veteran community.

Reminder and Recognition of Members' Right to Opt-Out of Local Communications:

When contacting prospective chapter members via e-mail, you are required by law to afford them the opportunity to opt-out of communications with your chapter. While these prospective members will initially be given 30 days to opt out after they are advised of our new national privacy policy, you must also provide that opportunity in all electronic correspondence with prospective chapter members. Further, local and virtual chapters must maintain records of national

MOAA members opting-out of communications with your chapter, and you must honor their expressed preference. Failure to do so could result in legal liability for your chapter.

A sample opting-out paragraph to include in your e-mail communications follows:

You are receiving this e-mail communication because you are a MOAA national member and are eligible for membership with your local MOAA chapter. If you do not desire to receive further communications from our (council or chapter), please reply to this e-mail and add “unsubscribe” to the subject line.

Unsubscribe requests must be honored, and no additional e-mail communications are permitted. We recommend this paragraph be placed at the end of all council and chapter communications with non-chapter affiliated national MOAA members.

With the implementation of this new privacy policy, MOAA national also expects to receive requests from national members who prefer not to receive chapter communications. We will continue to share this information with councils and chapters via the monthly Do Not Contact Report, and we ask you to respect these communications preferences.

Conclusion:

As you are now aware, this revision of MOAA’s privacy policy is complex and will inevitably be a work in progress, even after we begin sharing more prospective chapter member information. We will use every training opportunity in the foreseeable future to help educate, discuss, and capture best practices and lessons learned. Our association is committed to maintaining the health and effectiveness of our affiliate system. As our volunteer leaders, you will play a critical role in seizing the prospective membership growth opportunities this revised privacy policy enables. Your Affiliated Councils and Chapters team at MOAA headquarters stands ready to help facilitate your recruitment efforts, to include reviewing your new member chapter invitation templates and overall outreach plan.

Thank you for your leadership and we look forward to sharing the membership and leadership success this revised policy will bring.

Very Respectfully,

CAPT Frank J. Michael, USN (Ret)
Senior Director, Affiliated Councils & Chapters
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
201 N Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2539
800.234.6622



Pete and Sandy Warner

Photo by Malinda Gilbert

SRCMOAA RECRUITING



This has been a slow year for recruiting with only four new members. The MOAA Community Module that we heavily depend on for leads in our area has been down for the past two years except for one brief month. So, we depend on our current membership for recruitment. You are encouraged to be on the lookout for new prospects. A warm welcome to our new chapter members for 2025:

Dennis Gailbreath John Sharp Rob Moreland John Kitchen

For those nonmembers reading this newsletter, there is an application form below. We represent all components of the uniformed services with a focus on **support of the military, legislative advocacy, philanthropy, and camaraderie**. The chapter meets monthly on the third Thursday (6:00 PM) at Through the Grapevine, 630 Broadmor Blvd. Murfreesboro, TN. All enjoy socializing, having a great buffet meal and listening to interesting, invited speakers. Our intent is to have speakers share information, or their experiences, on local, state, or national-important topics. Complementing our monthly dinner meetings are the annual picnic and Christmas program. The chapter has also taken trips such as a resort in Germany and an overnight trip to Arnold AFB with dinner at the o'club and guided tour of the base. Another trip to Germany is in the planning for 2026.

Should you choose to join, just fill out the application and send it back by email or fed mail to me. The chapter dues are \$20.00 annually (made payable to SRCMOAA) and can be mailed to me or paid at the monthly dinner. Additionally, if you haven't already done so, you'll be asked to join the National MOAA Organization. You can accomplish this by accessing their on-line application at MOAA.org. At the top of the opening page, you should select the Join box and enter your information to complete the process. Three categories of membership are offered: Life, Annual, or Basic. The Basic membership is FREE!

We look forward to meeting you and your plus one if applicable. To assist you in joining, or just visiting with us, please contact me—information follows. I am excited about speaking with you further about our group and its great people. Come join us!

I have enjoyed my two years as Membership Chairman. The experience has allowed me to meet all the new members and assimilate them into the Chapter. Please continue to support the 2026 incoming Membership Chair in the coming term.

Larry D. Ellis, Lt Col, USAF (ret)
 2323 Lionheart Drive
 Murfreesboro, TN 37130
lellis1143@outlook.com
 615-339-6039

Print page; fill out information below. Scan and email or mail to Larry Ellis.



Application for Membership
 Stones River Chapter
 MOAA



(Please print or type) Date: _____

Full Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Grade: _____ Service: _____ Duty Status: Retired Active Former Officer Widow(er)
 Component: Regular Reserve National Guard

Mailing Address: _____
(Number and Street)

_____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip Code)

Telephone #: (____) _____ E-Mail Address: _____

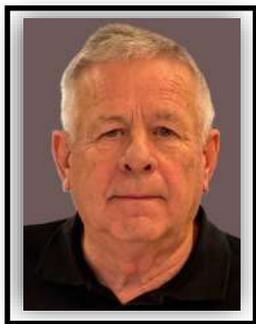
Birthdate: (mm/dd/yyyy) _____ Spouse's Name: _____

MOAA Member Type: Life, Premium, Basic Member Number: _____
(Circle one)

Signature: _____

Stones River Chapter, MOAA Legislative Report

Submitted by Philip Short—Legislative Representative



First, Suzanne and I wish all our chapter members and their families a very Merry Christmas and best wishes for a Happy New Year! We are blessed to have you all dear friends and thankful for the fellowship we have shared during 2025.

Now, on to business. This year saw an action by Congress which substantially hurt Americans and degraded military readiness. Legislation ending the longest federal government shutdown in U.S. history passed the House 222-209 on Nov. 12 after clearing the Senate two days earlier, with a continuing resolution set to keep the government open through Jan. 30. The president signed it into law late in the evening. It's the first step in rebuilding a broken trust between lawmakers and the uniformed services and veteran communities. But it's far from the last.

Here are three moves Congress should make to further that process.

1. Pass a full budget for 2026 and beyond. This Congress' inability to pass a budget before the end of the fiscal year continues a pattern that's lasted decades. Lawmakers haven't passed a full slate of appropriations legislation on time since FY 1997, and the resulting continuing resolutions have lasted anywhere from a few days to a full year. The latest continuance buys lawmakers a few weeks to get their house (and Senate) in order. Further extensions aren't the answer: Full funding for what's left of the fiscal year will give service members, veterans, and their families, caregivers, and survivors the certainty they need after months of doubt.

2. Pass protections for those in uniform. As a personal note we have two young, newly commissioned naval officers who went without pay during the shutdown while they were in officer training school. This type of situation is unacceptable for those who are serving in defense of our nation. Passing a timely budget should be a top priority for all legislators, but seeing such a trend reversed in short order may be unlikely. That's why it's important for lawmakers to ensure service members and their families are protected from future funding-lapse fall-outs – not through emergency bills introduced as the budget clock ticks down, but through bipartisan legislation passed outside the frenetic appropriations cycle.

As service members have shown in recent weeks, and during past funding lapses, their duties don't stop even when their paychecks do. We know they will continue to serve, so they should know we will continue to pay them what they've earned through service and sacrifice.

This legislation should include all in uniform, not just the armed services – members of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps missed checks while serving shoulder to shoulder with armed services personnel, and NOAA Commissioned Corps members missed checks while flying into hurricanes. They should not be neglected by lawmakers.

3. Change USPHS/NOAA retirement funding. Military and federal-service retirees saw their paychecks continue throughout the shutdown. Retired USPHS and NOAA Commissioned Corps members and survivors did not, even though they served honorably.

USPHS and NOAA Corps retirees receive their checks from the Coast Guard Pay and Personnel Center (PPC). During the recent shutdown, the PPC noted that these retirees would still receive pay slips, which are "automatically generated as part of the overall payroll process," but wouldn't get paid. Adding insult to injury, they also were instructed to coordinate with TRICARE and other insurance providers to make direct payments in lieu of allotments.

This isn't a simple oversight – this is a threat to the financial well-being of these retired service members, many of whom live on fixed incomes. After the 2018-19 shutdown threatened Coast Guard retirees in the same fashion, Congress acted: The FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) contained a provision moving that service's retirement pay under the Military Retirement Fund, ensuring it would continue during a shutdown. A similar move would protect the pay of current and future USPHS and NOAA officer retirees in the event of a funding lapse.

MOAA will continue to urge lawmakers to move forward in all three of these areas throughout this extended budget cycle and into the new year. Doing so is the definition of "supporting the troops" – words that ring hollow under the threat of missed paychecks, cuts to programs and services, last-second changes to orders and PCS schedules, and other annual budget-fueled problems. As MOAA members and patriots, we must make our concerns known to our legislators and urge them to end the budget wars that hurt all Americans.

NATIONAL AWARDS for SRCMOAA



Harry Shoemate received the Ambassador for Peace Award, an Official Proclamation for being a Korean War Veteran Pilot. A huge congratulations to you and thank you for your service, Harry!

Photos by Malinda Gilbert



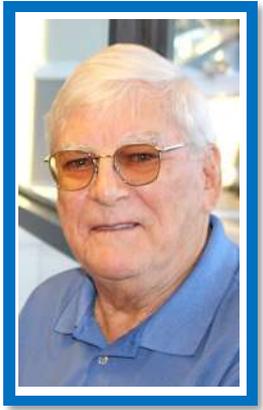
Malinda Gilbert—Editor



As editor of two military organizations, Malinda Gilbert produces Stones River Chapter's MOAA Newsletter and the Dept of Tennessee's ROA Newsletter. She won these two awards at the October ROA National Conference in Washington, DC. and a Four-Star Award for our SRCMOAA. These make the sixth editor's awards won nationally from both MOAA and ROA during her three years of creating their newsletters.

Honoring Veterans Day

Submitted by James Witherspoon



The First Methodist in Murfreesboro had a Veterans dinner with 200 people in attendance. That speech was also presented at the MTSU Veterans Memorial event which had 70 present. Here were the thoughts I shared with those in attendance.

Vet Talk at Middle Tennessee State University

From the Halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli....so goes the first line in the USMC Hymn, the first official song of the US Armed Forces. Many won't know where those places are located...but more on that later.

The USMC was founded in 1775 at Tun Tavern located in Philadelphia, PA. On hearing, founded in a tavern, some comment, "Well, that explains a lot!"

The USMC is responsible for conducting expeditionary and amphibious operations with infantry, artillery, aerial and special ops forces. That means they send us wherever they need us.

The USMC is usually made up of about 170,000 active marines and 38,000 reserve marines. About 10% of that number are women marines. Somewhat unique to the marines is that all noncommissioned recruits are first trained as infantry. Basic training bases are located at Parris Island, SC, and San Diego, CA. These bases are well known for their "beauty salons," well...barber shops where recruits usually lose more scalp than hair with their first haircuts. Most officers, including pilots, lawyers, etc. are first trained as infantry platoon commanders. All are trained for a common goal...Meet and Destroy Foes.

Since its founding the USMC has performed with honor throughout American history. Name a war and there's a marine story. Probably most famous were marine actions in the Pacific against Japanese forces in WWII. The battle for the island of Iwo Jima resulted in 26,000 US and 22,000 Japanese casualties. During this action, the raising of the US flag on Mt Suribachi was photographed. This event became a symbol of the marines. Dr. Derek Frisby, marine combat veteran and member of our MTSU Vet Committee, who conducts historical tours, bought me a vial of sand from Iwo Jima. I value that. Thank you.

Another famous marine action was the landing of marines at Inchon, Korea. This action resulted in changing the course of the war. The last major USMC beach assault, that you probably will never hear about, took place in Quang Nia Province, South Vietnam, in January 1966. We later thanked our navy friends for not dropping us too far from the beach.

Following Korea, marines fought in the global war on terror, Operations Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom and others. Still areand, sadly, will be.

Some nicknames that can be used here in mixed-company are Jarheads, Devil Dogs, Leathernecks. Some of the tag lines you may recognize about marines are "You don't join the marines; you become a marine. Send in the marines. Semper fidelis. The proud, the few, the marines. Once a marine, always a marine. Looking for a few good men." (My army and navy buddies usually chuckle and comment, "Yeah, but they are willing to make exceptions.") And this one's for Hanna, "If the USMC had wanted you to have a wife, they would have issued you one."

I could go on and on but wanted to give you a little background on the branch of service that made an exception and allowed me to serve.

Let me wrap up with more about the USMC Hymn. The Halls of Montezuma refers to the assault on the palace in Mexico City during the US vs Mexico War in the 1840's. Shores of Tripoli remind us of action against the barbary pirates in the early 1800's. The third verse which usually is used during a toast goes like this:

"Here's health to you and to our Corps which we are proud to serve;
In many a strife we've fought for life and never lost our nerve;
If the Army or the Navy ever look on Heaven's scenes;
They will find the streets are guarded by United States Marines."

So, **Happy 250th Birthday, Marines.**
Semper Fil!

Events

Celebrating Veterans Day



43rd Annual Salute to Veterans and Armed Forces

Presented by



vs.



Nov. 8 | 2 PM

Schedule of Events

9:30 AM Veterans Memorial Service

Honoring the 250th Anniversaries of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Marine Corps, along with the 10th Anniversary of the MTSU Charlie and Hazel Daniels Veterans and Military Family Center

Location: Keathley University Center Theater

11:15 AM Pregame Picnic & Veteran Village

Complimentary food available for veterans, active duty service members, and their families.

Location: Walnut Grove

11:45 AM Raider Walk

12:30 AM Floyd Stadium Gates Open

2:00 PM Kickoff

Complimentary tickets to the game are available for veterans, service members, and their families. Contact the Daniels Center via email at dvmfc@mtsu.edu to request tickets. Tickets will also be available for pick up at the Pregame Picnic.

All fans are encouraged to bring non-perishable food donations to support the MTSU Student Food Pantry and Nourish Food Bank.

JOIN US AT
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
(265 W THOMPSON LANE, MURFREESBORO, TN 37129)
FOR

Night to Honor

An evening to recognize the service of Veterans and current military members, families, and friends. Please join the FUMC Military Ministry as we celebrate with those who have served our community in a variety of ways.

Featuring a meal with:
live music by FUMCM Band &
The Patriot Voices of the Oakland High School Choir
and
Speakers, Frank Pires & Don Witherspoon

FRIDAY

7 NOV 2025

DOORS OPEN AT 4:30 PM

DINNER AT 5:15 PM

Childcare is available. Tickets are LIMITED. They are FREE and available by calling the church office at 615.893.1322 or registering: <https://rebrand.ly/night-to-honor-25>



(Sponsorship Information on back)



Charlie and Hazel Daniels
Veterans and Military Family Center

A DECADE OF SERVICE

10th Anniversary Ceremony

Nov. 3, 2025, 9–10 a.m.
Keathley University
Center (KUC) Theater

RSVP to DeAnne.Hathaway@mtsu.edu



I AM trueBLUE.

October 16, 2025 SRCMOAA Meeting—Guest Speaker Andrew Oppmann Vice President, Marketing and Communications at Middle Tennessee State University



Submitted by Diana Neely, Chapter Secretary

President Keith R Prather led the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer. Secretary Diana Neely stated the next SRCMOAA Board meeting will be Nov. 12, 2025, at noon and the next dinner meeting will be Nov 20. She gave the financial report in the absence of Treasurer James Heuberger: Scholarship fund \$11,527.68. The general fund \$5,389.53. The Board voted to increase the scholarship CD to \$10,000.

Past President Betty Moshea asked the members to bring canned goods to the November dinner meeting to help the community with holiday food. Membership chair Larry Ellis stated that we had four new members for the year with a total of 129 members. Director Phil Short discussed the government shut down and urged all members to contact your congressman to help pass the Richard Star Act. He also brought up "Retiree escapes for MOAA 2026" He is considering another trip to Elderwise in Germany for Oktoberfest. Director Jim Parks brought up the MOAA River Boat cruises and if anyone was interested, book now because they go fast. View Phil Short's comments at <https://youtu.be/S9HKG9ZGIQg>

President Keith R Prather introduced our speaker Andrew Oppmann from MTSU. He spoke about upcoming veterans' events and degree programs.

Andrew Oppmann is an Army Reserve Ambassador and on the board of governors for the civil air patrol. He discussed some signature programs at MTSU. The number one program is Aerospace flight training; they have 50+aircraft. The State of Tennessee is developing a new training airport in Shelbyville, Tennessee, with groundbreaking in a few weeks. The MTSU sound recording industry is also first rate. The school of concrete engineering, the first in the nation, is one of the best and graduates are sought by industry. MTSU received 75 million dollars from the state of Tennessee to renovate Murfee Center. MTSU will be celebrating the 500th win of the Lady Raiders Basketball coach, Rick Insell. The university will be building a new 75-bed hotel and a pedestrian bridge across Tennessee Boulevard. The MTSU hospitality degree program will be running at the hotel under the supervision of professionals.

He discussed MTSU President, Dr. McPhee's meeting and hiring of Lt General, retired, Keith M. Huber senior advisor for veterans and leadership initiatives. MTSU now has the largest veterans center in the US. The MTSU Veterans Center services all veterans--not just MTSU students. There are two federal and two state employees in the Daniel Center. Andrew Oppmann urged all veterans to get their VA rating. Hear Andrew speak at this link: <https://youtu.be/1ody5leQMRQ>

MTSU will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Charlie and Hazel Daniels Veterans and Military Family Center, November 3, 2025, 9 - 10 AM at the Keathley University Center Theater. RSVP to DeAnne.Hathaway@mysu.edu. Andrew Oppmann said MTSU is very proud of their ROTC program and it survived the budget cuts.

President Keith R Prather presented Andrew Oppmann with a certificate of appreciation. Stones River Chapter MOAA Dinner Meeting adjourned at 8pm.



November 20, 2025 SRCMOAA Meeting— Thanksgiving Dinner and Election of Officers for 2026

Submitted by Diana Neely, Chapter Secretary & Doug Gilbert



President Keith Prather called the dinner meeting to order, lead the Pledge of Allegiance, and the devotional. The purpose of the November Stones River Chapter MOAA dinner meeting was to elect new Board members. We had no speaker but enjoyed a delicious Thanksgiving meal provided by Through the Grapevine Restaurant and wonderful fellowship.

Stones Rivers members contributed canned food goods for a Smyrna food bank; Betty Moshe delivered them. Betty also reminded us to bring Christmas cards and white socks for men and women or donation to the Tennessee Veterans Home in Murfreesboro.

Our Stones River MOAA member Harry Shumate received the Korean Ambassador for Peace Medal. This medal is a prestigious honor bestowed upon veterans who participated in the Korean War as a gesture of gratitude and remembrance. It serves as a token of appreciation for their valor and commitment to the shared values between South Korea and its international allies.

Elections were held for the new officers. Doug Gilbert was elected as the incoming President, Elizabeth Sharpe the incoming First Vice President, Reese Burk as Second Vice President, Karen Loris as Director-Army, and Larry Ellis as Director-Air Force.

Present Keith R Prather asked for a motion to accept the updated Stones River Chapter bylaws, (a big thank you to 2nd Vice President Elizabeth Sharpe for her work on the by laws), Royce Taylor motioned, Director Jim Parks to accept the motion, all ayes and the motion was accepted.

James Heuberger gave the financial report and reminded us that he had Texas Roadhouse gift cards and medals for purchase as a fundraising effort for our Scholarship endeavor. <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/bwGOosOM7tk>

The December dinner meeting will include installation of new officers, games, dinner, and a social gathering.



Photos by Malinda Gilbert



Happy Thanksgiving

December 18, 2025 SRCMOAA Meeting— Christmas Dinner and Creating Christmas Pictures

Submitted by Diana Neely, Chapter Secretary & Doug Gilbert



President Keith R Prather opened the December 18 Stones River Chapter MOAA dinner meeting with a prayer followed by the pledge of allegiance. Membership chair, Larry Ellis, stated we have five new recruits for 2025 and our membership total is 130. Also, Treasurer James Heuberger recruited new members. Larry Ellis said he had reached out to Oakland and Riverdale High Schools about our scholarship program. As a result, they both intend to submit JROTC students as possible scholarship recipients very soon. Oakland High School asked Larry Ellis to speak to the JROTC

class. Second Vice President Elizabeth Sharp said the bylaws were voted on and ready. Treasurer James Heuberger presented the Financial Report: scholarship fund \$11,895.50 and general fund \$5,353. He had bought 20 Texas Roadhouse gift cards and sold all but three. The proceeds help fund our scholarship fund. Once the three cards were sold, he would buy 20 more. He also recruited George and Wendy Styer for SRCMOAA. They were unable to attend the Christmas dinner meeting due to illness. Surviving spouse liaison Holly Kyle reminded everyone that the next surviving spouse meeting will be January 22, 2026, at her home at 10 AM; everyone is welcome to attend. Returning Secretary, Rachel Reynolds, reminded everyone that the January board meeting and dinner meeting were only one day apart so the board meeting was changed to Wednesday, January 7, 2026 and the dinner meeting will be January 15, 2026. Council President Pete Warner invited all members to attend the 11am January 21, 2026 Council meeting held at Sammy B'S at 705 Cadet Ct, Lebanon, TN. Pete Warner will be re-installed as Council President. Our Chapter President Keith R Prather will be installed as 2nd Counsel President. Sandy Warner reminded us that the council meeting occurs every three months. Pete Warner reminded us about Veterans Day on the Hill, Jan 28, 2026, which is sponsored by TN Vet. Registration starts today, so lobby your representatives at the State House. April is the DC advocacy in action month. MOAA has won the award for the last 19 years. He urged us all to go to the MOAA website, locate Advocacy in Action center, and click on issues you want your representatives Senator Marsha Blackburn, Senator Bill Hagerty, and Representative Scott DesJarlais to support. He stated that Senator Marsha Blackburn is very pro veteran's causes and sits on the Veterans Affairs Committee. U S Representative Scott DesJarlais chairs the Strategic Forces Subcommittee. Pete's remarks at <https://youtu.be/2VBDJR5S1xI>

Council Pete Warner received a president's award which was presented by General Kelly during November in North Carolina for his efforts in putting together the Knoxville MOAA Chapter. Sandy Warner also did much work helping the Knoxville Chapter and brought the finished Directory to SRCMOAA members who opted "in." I thank her and her team for great work! The directory contains useful information; I urge everyone to get a copy. Secretary Diana Neely stated she was very grateful that former secretary Rachel Reynolds will be taking over the SRCMOAA Secretary position for 2026. Former President Betty Moshea reminded everyone to check on their benefits. MOAA retracted getting a new ID but still recommended getting one. If members' ID indicate indefinite, it is not necessary to get a new one.

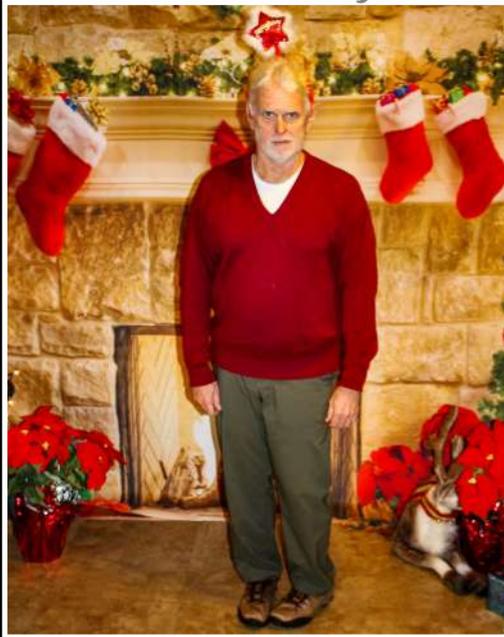
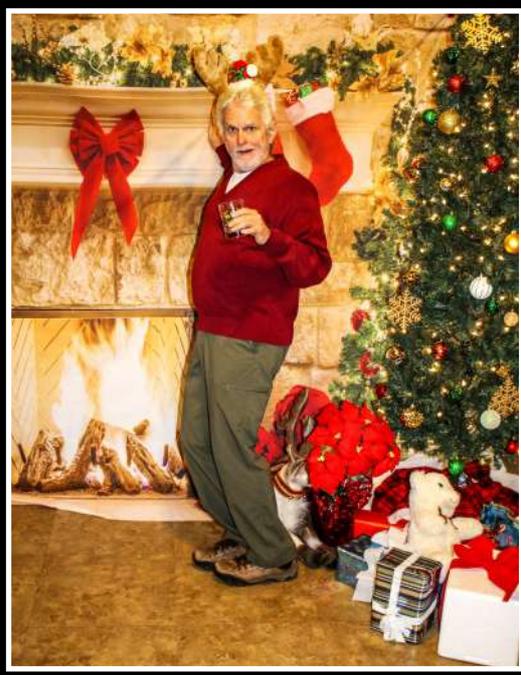
Director Jim Parks introduced a guest Juan Miguel who would like to perform tonight. Juan Miguel was an animated stuffed Chihuahua that played Feliz Navidad for us. President Keith R Prather thanked everyone for their support and introduced new SRCMOAA Board Directors: Chris Reynolds and Betty Moshea. We collected white socks and Christmas cards that will be given to the residents of the TN Veterans Home in Murfreesboro. We enjoyed a good meal at "Through the Grapevine."

I'd like to give a Big Thank You to Malinda and Doug Gilbert for the music and photo scenery with lots of props so members could have creative Christmas pictures made for a video. We had a wonderful time.

View the Christmas video at [2025 Stones River Chapter MOAA Christmas Dinner - YouTube](#)



The Art of Creativity



Member History Lesson

Submitted by Jim Parks

Barry, Wales, UK: Stones River Chapter member, MAJ (R) Jim Parks and wife, Shirley, visited Mr. Glenn Booker, Chairman of the Barry War Museum and WW II re-enactor. Mr. Booker took them on a tour of sites occupied by US forces in preparation for the Normandy invasion. Barry was a major staging area for the Normandy invasion because of the port facilities available. It became a logistics center during the war.



One of the units to occupy Barry was the 115th Field Artillery Battalion (FAB), a Tennessee National Guard unit with headquarters in Murfreesboro, TN. Lieutenant Colonel Hubert L. McCullough of Murfreesboro commanded the battalion. Headquarters and Headquarters Battery and A Battery met in the old rock armory off Old Nashville Highway in Murfreesboro. Upon arrival in Barry, Headquarters Battery was commanded by, then Captain James D. Parks, one of founders of the Stones River Chapter.

Originally a part of the 30th Infantry Division, a Tennessee and North Carolina National Guard unit, the 115th FAB was separated from the Division when the ship carrying the battalion developed problems and returned to Boston for repairs. When repairs were completed, the 115th FAB deployed to Iceland. After approximately nine months in Iceland, the unit was sent to Barry to prepare for the invasion.



Pictured here are Shirley and Jim Parks and Glenn Booker beside the WW II Jeep used to take the tour of Barry. In the background is the eighteenth fairway of the Byrnhill Golf Club where the 115th Field Artillery Battalion established a "tent city."

Mr. Booker has made a study of the 115th FAB which is one of the featured sections of the Barry War Museum. He has published a pamphlet on the battalion and its time in Barry at the Byrnhill Golf Club. His studies led him to twice visit Murfreesboro where he was the guest of the Parks'. In addition to his information gathering, Mr. Booker was shown around Middle Tennessee.

It was interesting to learn that the 115th has maintained a presence at the Byrnhill Golf Club over the years. Service Battery Commander, Captain Mike Coolican, Memphis, TN, was an avid golfer. Because a portion of the golf course was playable, Captain Coolican was a frequent visitor at the club. Before leaving Barry, he presented the "Tennessee Cup", a golfing trophy to be played for annually. The Tennessee Cup was recently joined by the Capt. Jim Parks Cup, presented by the golf club to be played for annually.

MOAA'S RETIREMENT RESOURCES

You've served, and you've saved, but retirement planning is an ongoing process. Let MOAA help you navigate toward your personal and family goals, and rely on MOAA's expert advice for your financial and estate planning needs.

Active Advocacy Campaigns

Stop the 34-Year Wait - Deliver Toxic-Exposed Veterans the Care They've Earned

Millions of veterans exposed to toxic substances during their service are forced to wait decades –more than 34 years, on average – before they can access VA care and benefits for service-connected illnesses. Congress must pass legislation to bolster the legal framework for creating presumptive conditions, ensuring toxic-exposed veterans receive timely care.

Write

Ending the wait for Toxic-Exposed Veterans

Read the joint MOAA-DAV report offering a blueprint for better care for toxic-exposed vets.

The Real Cost of Service: Your Story Matters

Recent media coverage has misrepresented veterans' disability benefits as a system of exploitation, ignoring the reality behind each claim: a story of courage, sacrifice, and resilience. MOAA knows these benefits are not handouts or loopholes, they are promises earned through service and meant to address the lasting impact of that service,

Medicare Plans Designed With Military Retirees and Veterans in Mind MOAA is partnering with Veterans Healthcare to help Medicare-eligible MOAA members find Medicare information and coverage options.



Photos by Malinda Gilbert



SRCMOAA SCHOLARSHIPS

Submitted by Doug Gilbert



Welcome to 2026! Happy New Year to all members!

As we start this new year, we start our scholarship campaign in earnest. Larry Ellis, our newly elected Air Force Director, has already visited two schools which stated they will soon be submitting nominations for our two \$2,000 JROTC scholarships. Elizabeth Sharpe visited the Director of Rutherford County Schools JROTC Program and discussed the scholarship program. She, Keith, and I have reached out to other county high schools and asked for nominations. Elizabeth will be assuming the role of Scholarship Board Chair as I assume the role of President. Phil Short is in the process of contacting schools in his area.

Remember, SRCMOAA will award one \$2,000 scholarship to an eligible cadet who is a senior in a JROTC or a ROTC program annually. Additionally, SRCMOAA will award a second \$2,000 scholarship to a dependent of a chapter member in good standing (i.e. child or grandchild) who is enrolled in a JROTC or ROTC program.

The following cadets are eligible for application of the SRCMOAA college/university scholarship program:

1. High School JROTC students expected to graduate in May/June of each calendar year and will enroll in a college/university ROTC or Marine Corps commissioning program at an accredited college/university in the fall. Applicants must be from a JROTC program that is within the geographic membership recruitment area for SRCMOAA as recognized by MOAA National.
2. An undergraduate student currently enrolled in an accredited college/university ROTC or Marine Corps Commissioning Program and will continue in the fall.

We look forward to presenting these scholarships to deserving cadets.



MOAA SIGNATURE GROUPS

Join MOAA Leadership and your fellow MOAA members on these hosted cruises and land tours.

AFFORDABLE TRAVEL — Every MOAA Signature Group is a negotiated special which is not available to the general public—only MOAA members and their guests can attend. You can, however, bring as many friends and family members with you as you like.

EASIER, SAFER TRAVEL — Vacations are meant to be an escape. It is your time to relax and unwind, explore, and discover. So, let us take care of the details. This is valuable time that doesn't have to be spent worrying about how you're going to get there or, what you're going to do when you get there

INCREASE THE FUN FACTOR —Being surrounded by like-minded people offers you the chance to share experiences and make new memories together. Group travel can give you the chance to meet people and make new friends. You'll meet individuals who are also passionate about travel and have experiences that are similar to your own. With shared military backgrounds and values, camaraderie forms naturally and often leads to lasting friendships.

2026 & 2027 SIGNATURE GROUPS

July 12-21, 2026 **Highlights of Eastern Europe River Cruise** 9-nights from **\$3,999**

October 1-10, 2026 **Western Europe Yacht Cruise** 9-nights from **\$4,999**

April 25-May 2, 2027 **Castles Along the Rhine River Cruise** 7-nights from **\$4,199**

July 19-27, 2027 **France & Spain Yacht Cruise** 8-nights from **\$5,799**

September 14-25, 2027 **Circle Iceland Yacht Cruise** 11-nights from **\$8,999**

Sept. 25-Oct. 4, 2027 **Battlefields of WWI & WWII Tour** 10 days from **\$6,495**



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