CHARLOTTE-METROLINA

The Military Officers Association of America

February 2015

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Once again, Happy New Year for 2015. Last month, I proudly touted the accomplishments and successes of the chapter in 2014 and thanked Harley Ellinger, and Martha, for their leadership over the past 4 years that largely led to our recognition as a MOAA 5 Star Chapter for 2014, a first time accomplishment. In 2015, we will "continue the march" in support of strong a legislative affairs program answering the call from the NC State Council of Chapters and national MOAA, continuing to present informative and entertaining chapter meeting programs, supporting our JROTC Scholarship funding raising efforts, participating in the total chapter membership effort to get new members and then retain them, encouraging maximum chapter meeting attendance, and utilizing our chapter web site and e-newsletter to best spread the word.

In 2015, in addition to encouraging strong membership support for all the above initiatives and programs, it is my intent to focus on two (2) important initiatives. Number 1 is in identifying and participating, as a chapter and/or as individuals, in opportunities for enhancing the support of active duty military, veterans, their families, and veteran support organization/agencies in the greater Charlotte-Mecklenburg area and surrounding counties. The chapter, through participation and support of a new Veteran Service Network, will ensure that all members are aware of opportunities, either as a chapter or as an individual, to participate in community programs and services where we can be directly involved by utilizing our talents, skills, experience and resources. More later.

The number 2 focus will be in maximizing chapter participation and involvement in fund raising efforts for the JROTC Scholarship Fund campaign. Yes, we will continue to want your dollars, but more importantly, we need total chapter involvement in identifying potential donors outside the chapter, and in helping to get these donations. Also, we need member support in hosting a 2015 JROTC Scholarship Fund Golf Tournament. A successful tournament in terms of event/hole

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NEXT MEETING

Sunday, February 15, 2015

Red Rocks Cafe

4223 Providence Rd

Social Time	**1500**
Meeting with Meal	**1530**

sponsorships, prize support, and maximizing the number of participating golfers will be the major source of scholarship funds for our first scholarship awards in 2016. How will you help?

Hope to see you on February 15th for a great program by a true patriot, Pat Biddy, who is involved in locating our military MIA's, even from WW II.

Ron Morgan, Colonel, USMC (Ret)
President

PROGRAMS – JAY GARBUS -- 1st Vice President

Chapter meetings are held at the Red Rocks Café, 4223-8 Providence Rd., Strawberry Hill area where Fairview/Sardis Rds. cross Providence, behind Fresh Market. Social starts at 3:00 PM, followed by a short business meeting, then dinner (order from the menu) and speaker presentation.

February 15, 2015 – Patrick Biddy was a medic with the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment in former West Germany from 1986-88. The primary mission was to patrol the West Germany border with East Germany and Czechoslovakia and at Winn Army Community Hospital at Fort Stewart, Georgia from 1988-89. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain, Patrick's has worked with Czech nationals and villages in the Czech Republic with research to assist with memorials and celebrations honoring WWII 2nd Cavalry troops who liberated that area. During a search for information on a group of soldiers for future memorials, it was learned that one soldier, PFC Fred Warren Ashley of the 2nd Cavalry Group, is still listed as missing in action. Patrick and others began the search for the recovery of PFC Ashley. This presentation is about these events and the potential recovery of the remains of PFC Ashley.

March 15, 2015 – Congressman Robert Pittenger, Ninth District North Carolina – Very pleased to announce that the Congressman has accepted our invitation to join us, socialize, speak and answer questions at our meeting. His District Director, Bob Becker, a friend of our chapter, will accompany the Congressman. Would really like to maximize attendance for this meeting.

April 12, 2015 – George Custodi, Captain, USN (Ret) and author of "Three Witnesses/Tre Testimoni: A Painter, A Prisoner, A Peasant" WW II Italian War dairies and memoirs.

May 17, 2015 – To be announced

North Carolina Council of Chapters Biennial Statewide Convention, 11 – 14 June 2015 at High Hampton Inn and Country Club – Cashiers, NC - For all MOAA members in this most welcoming and luxurious mountain locale, with great dining, amenities, and outdoor activities, including a historic golf course. See: www.highhamptoninn.com Lots of camaraderie, fun and just a small amount of business meeting time. Prices: Couple or 2 sharing a room $ 979. Price includes: room (3 nights), all meals, cocktail hours, taxes, fees and gratuities. $ 100 deposit now due by January 25. Registration form is attached to this newsletter and will be available at chapter meetings. Also see: www.moaa-nc.org

Beach House Raffle (To Support a NC National Guard Family at State Convention) - $ 10 raffle tickets are available to win a "Perfect Beach Week" during August at Carolina Beach. Support a great cause and win a "$1,000 value" prize. Last tickets available need to be sold at February chapter meeting. You can buy all 12 for $ 100. This NCCOC President Jeri Graham's beach house.

JROTC Scholarship Fund Donations – Thank you for the generosity of 15 members, so far, in response to the early December request. We will continue to seek tax deductable donations, both from chapter members and outside friends to support scholarships for worthy Charlotte area JROTC students. We would like to maximize chapter member participation regardless of the amount you can give.

MEMBERSHIP – TIM DREMANN -- 2nd Vice President

Kicking off our 2015 new membership campaign, the very best way to recruit new members is through personal contact and interaction with current, former and retired military service officers. We need everyone to do so and help others like us, enjoy our "common camaraderie".

Emails and/or letters have been sent to all chapter members that have not paid chapter dues for 2014. Simply paying dues for the new year starting in January 2015 ($ 25.00 for regular membership and $ 10.00 for surviving spouses) will eliminate any past due amount. We want to retain as many current members as possible to strive to get them as active participants in meetings and programs. Based on no response to chapter dues renewal requests, we have dropped 24 former members that had not paid chapter dues since 2012 and have not attended Chapter meetings.

MOAA Chapter Committee Assignments for 2015 – We are actively seeking "volunteers" to serve as a part of various committees for 2015. The more members involved leads to more and better ideas and fewer tasks for all. Committee opportunities will include: Membership and Retention, Programs, JROTC Scholarship Fund and awards programs, publicity/community outreach, auxiliary liaison, personal affairs, and others.

Dues Reminder for 2015 – Chapter dues are due by January 1st, 2015. See renewal application included in the newsletter.

Ill/Sick Members – We urge all chapter members to let the chapter know of any chapter members and/or spouses that are ill or home-bound for any reason. Simply call or email any chapter officer or board member.

Important Web Sites – The following web sites can be accessed to get timely information on upcoming events, legislative updates and provide local, state and national contacts.

Local military/veteran events (all services): https://carolinamarines.org/event_calendar.php

Statewide military veteran issues and benefits: www.NC4vets.com

NC Dept of Administration and access to all state departments, including Dept. of Veteran Affairs: www.doa.nc.gov

MOAA North Carolina Council of Chapters: www.moaa-nc.org

MOAA Charlotte-Metrolina Chapter: http://charlottemoaa.org

LEGISLATIVE -- GLORIA SCIENSKI – 3rd Vice President

Military families have a strong presence in North Carolina. There are over 104,000 active duty military members, 90,000+ military retirees, with 14,000 individuals holding MOAA National memberships.
We have work to do. Chapter memberships are significantly lower that MOAA National numbers. While much is accomplished with the committed members of our chapter just think what we could achieve with even more committed members.

2015 promises to be a difficult one for the military community. Congress will face proposals to overhaul military pay and compensation while sequestration threatens to cut billions out of the FY 2016 defense budget.

It is estimated that the following major events will take place in the next few months:

***February 1*:** The congressionally mandated Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) will release its report detailing proposals to overhaul military pay, retirement, and other forms of compensation.

***February 2*:** The president announced he will submit his budget proposal on time to Congress. The proposal is likely to at least include a third consecutive year of military pay raise caps, dramatic TRICARE fee increases, and other controversial measures.

***Mid-March*:** Six weeks after the president delivers his budget to Congress, congressional committees are required to submit their "views and estimates" of spending and revenues within their respective jurisdictions to the House and Senate Budget Committees.

***May-June*:** The House and Senate Armed Services Committees will begin work on the FY 2016 defense bill. The committees will need to consider recommendations from the MCRMC and how to deal with the specter of sequestration returning in FY 2016.

MOAA's biggest concern is that the new Congress will look at the Pentagon and the MCRMC proposals with the purpose of saving money or cutting the budget and will make decisions based on arbitrary budget caps, without considering how compensation and benefits are necessary to recruit and retain a high-quality all-volunteer force.

The next few months will be very busy, and we will need all hands on deck to make sure your voice on the pay and benefits needed to sustain the all-volunteer force is heard by legislators. We ask that you pay close attention to the report in early February and participate in MOAA's grassroots efforts to ensure shortsighted budget savings don't come at the expense of the health of the all-volunteer force.

Balancing the budget, while keeping our forces readiness strong, is a challenge. Please follow MOAA's updates and continue to send your comments to our representatives. The best way to be heard is to call the congressional switchboard at 202-224-3121. When calling this number you will reach a person that will forward you to the office of your Senator or Representative. Most effective are telephone calls made on Monday and Tuesday due to the voting schedule. Sign up to receive the Legislative Update by visiting www.moaa.org/email.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." ~Margaret Mead

CHAPTER SECRETARY – RON WILSBACH

Minutes of the Charlotte-Metrolina Chapter (NC-04) Of the Military Officers Association of America January 18, 2015

President Harley Ellinger called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. at the Red Rocks Café. The Invocation was given by Darrell Long and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Harley reminded all that tomorrow, January 19th , is Martin Luther King Holiday and we should be mindful and thankful for Dr. King's achievements. Harley introduced COL Jeri Graham, USA, (Ret) President of the North Carolina Council of Chapters President, and her husband COL Ed Baisden, USA (Ret). The 50/50 raffle of $32.00 was won by Greg Ainslie.

Installation of New Officers: Harley introduced the installing officer, COL Jeri Graham USA (Ret) . COL Graham requested that Secretary Ron Wilsbach read the names of those members who were to be installed. The slate of officers is: President Ron Morgan, 1st VP, Jay Garbus, 2nd VP, Tim Dremann, 3rd VP, Gloria Scienski, Secretary/Treasurer Ron Wilsbach, Directors; Harley Ellinger, Carol Aljets, Larry Stawicki and Scott Morris. COL Graham presided over the installation procedures and invited the outgoing president, Harley Ellinger and the incoming president to exchange presidential pins and offered President Morgan the opportunity for comments. President Morgan outlined his objectives over the next year – membership committee assignments, JROTC Scholarship donation committee, JROTC instructor and officer award committee, and golf tournament committee.

Officer Reports:

1st VP –(Jay Garbus): Jay announced that our speaker for February will be Pat Biddy who will present current day efforts to locate MIAs. He requested members to advise him of individuals that may be of interest as speakers for the Chapter. Jay recently saw the movie "The American Sniper" and gave it a thumbs up. He also mentioned that the History Channel will be showing a mini- series called, "Sons of Liberty", a retelling of the American Revolution.

2nd VP - Ron Morgan advised that, with the board's approval, 24 former members who had been in arrears with their chapter dues for at least two years have been dropped from membership. Those 24 were given the opportunity via letter or email to bring their accounts up to date. Offsetting those dropped Ron reported that during 2014 we brought in 28 new members. Ron thanked Carol Aljets for her efforts with this endeavor.

3rd VP – (Gloria Scienski): Gloria reported that there are a significant number of retired and active duty military members residing in North Carolina. There are over 90,000 retired service members and 103,000 active duty members in the state. MOAA members in North Carolina total 14,000. With these large numbers we need to make sure that issues of interest are addressed and our positions made clear by subscribing to MOAA's weekly Legislative Updates published each Friday.

Secretary Report – (Ron Wilsbach): The minutes for the December Chapter Meeting, December 7, 2014 were approved with no changes.

Treasurer's Report – (Ron Wilsbach): Ron reported that the General Fund has a balance of $3953.21. This figure includes $764.89 from the AutoBell Car Wash fund raiser. The Scholarship Fund has a balance of $4564.06. Ron advised that the meeting cover charge was being suspended in the hope that raffle ticket sales would increase.

Newsletter – (Carol Morgan) - Inputs for the February issue are due to Carol by January 28th. She also reminded members that bios are needed. Carol Aljets suggested that spouses be included in member highlights. COL Graham agreed.

Old Business:

Fund Raising – Ron Morgan reported that the letters to Chapter members requesting donations to the Scholarship Program resulted in a significant response and that individual donations will remain confidential. Additional letters will be sent to local businesses supportive of military issues. Ron reported that another attempt will be made to establish a Chapter Golf Tournament to support the Scholarship Fund. Beach House Raffle tickets are still available to sponsor a North Carolina National Guard member/family to attend the NC State MOAA convention in Cashiers, NC June 11-14, 2015.

New Business:

President Morgan advised that the Chapter would be applying to USAA for a $300 grant to sponsor a military event with Charlotte Bridge Home during the spring of 2015. He will be asking members to volunteer to serve on committees to assist in the work of the Chapter such as programs, membership and scholarship fund raising, just to name a few. Ron announced that the Chapter would be participating in a new initiative to honor one JROTC NCO instructor and one JROTC officer from one of the 33 JROTC units within the Mecklenburg County School System. Our winners would then go on to compete with instructors and officers throughout the State. Ron remarked that UNCC will be sponsoring a day conference on February 24th to address the availability of holistic medical services for military personnel. More information to follow.

NCCOC President Jeri Graham presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Carol Aljets for her work as Secretary for the state MOAA Council over the last year.

Program:

Ron Morgan introduced our guest speaker, COL Jeri Graham, USA, (Ret), President of the North Carolina Council of Chapters. COL Graham took the reins of NCCOC on October 26, 2013 and is active in several other veterans' organizations in North Carolina, as well as at the national level, specifically as Past President and Convention Chair of the Army Nurse Corps Association. Prior to her service with the NCCOC she was President of the Southeastern North Carolina MOAA Chapter (Wilmington) for seven years.

COL Graham opened her presentation expressing her appreciation for the support of the VPs and staff of the NC Council. She is especially thankful for the efforts of our Past President, Harley Ellinger, in his capacity as the Legislative Chair, (3rd VP) for the Council. Harley has dedicated many hours to pursuing the legislative goals of MOAA with members of the North Carolina Legislature. COL Graham also

provided feedback to the Chapter as to how we are perceived by other MOAA members throughout the state.

COL Graham suggested that one of the primary reasons for any chapter's success is for that chapter to have good programs, a comfortable location for meetings and great communications.

COL Graham outlined the functions of the NC Council. When someone does a good job, the Council insures that that item is put on the "Best Practices" section of the website so that all members have the information. She has also instituted conference calling within the Council which has improved the flow of communications between the quarterly meetings. She pointed out that getting former officers who have served but not retired is one area that needs to be tapped. Demonstrating to them the benefits of membership is a tough sell, however, access to the MOAA Scholarship fund for their children could be a powerful draw.

Col Graham spoke to MOAA's Strategic Plan going forward to 2018. (For a complete reading of this initiative go to MOAA.org and select MOAA StratPlan 2014-2018.pdf.) Being engaged is the secret to being an effective member and an effective chapter. Knowing the MOAA issues is the basis of our organizations strength. The Legislative Alerts bring those issues to your attention **but you need to take action by responding with emails and letters to your U.S. representatives!** Don't expect the other 400,000 MOAA members to carry the load.

COL Graham concluded her remarks by advising the chapter that the 4th Branch initiative has recently initiated action to purchase and install the same email operating system used so effectively by MOAA with the federal government. That same system will soon be available for us to contact our State Legislators. Look for instructions for sign-up very soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ron Wilsbach, Secretary

NC-04 CHARLOTTE-METROLINA CHAPTER
Of the Military Officers Association of America
ENROLLMENT/RENEWAL FORM

New Member? _____ Renewal? _____

First Name _____ Middle Initial ____ Last Name _____

Rank _____ Branch _____ Spouse's Name _____

Address: _____
Street

_____
City State Zip code

E-Mail Address _____ Phone No. _____

I would like to receive my newsletter by: _____ US mail _____ E-mail

National MOAA Member? Yes ___ No ___
Membership No. _____
(Found above your first name on magazine mailing label)

*Enclosed is my check for $25.00
$10.00 for Surviving Spouses
Mail to: Charlotte-Metrolina Chapter, MOAA
P.O. Box 31394
Charlotte, NC 28231-1394

Scholarship Donation: _____ Receipt: Yes ___ No ___

Membership Requirements: Commissioned and Warrant Officers of the seven uniformed services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and U.S. Public Health Service) and the reserve and other components of these services may become regular members. Widows and widowers of any deceased individual, who would, if living, are eligible for membership as auxiliary members. Regular members must hold and maintain membership in both the national organization as well as the local chapter. Auxiliary members are encouraged but not required to hold both memberships.