

An Affiliate Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America

Save the Dates
2023—2024

<u>BOD Mtgs.</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>Chapter Mtgs.</u>
October 21		November 18
	<u>2024</u>	
January 20		February 24
April 20		June 1
July 20		August 17
October 19		November 16



The Western North Carolina Military Officers Association (WNC MOAA) is an affiliate chapter of National MOAA, is nonprofit and politically nonpartisan.

The mission of WNC MOAA is stated in the bylaws and referenced in the newsletter, and website.

Board of Directors and Chapter Meetings will be held on Saturdays.

Kenmure Country Club
100 Clubhouse Drive
Flat Rock, NC 28731

Dress Code: Country Club Casual

Registration information for the November 18th chapter meeting is included in this newsletter.

Spouses and guests are welcomed to all chapter meetings!



President's Remarks

As Veteran's Day approaches we may recall past Veteran's Day celebrations shared with friends and family. A special day when we take time off to celebrate being Americans, and honoring all who have served in the military, and serve today.

Being in the military is being in the occupation of serving. Serving in many different capacities with the mission of being ready to answer the call of duty. Our family members serve as well. Together we all provide the critical foundation our country relies on to protect and defend, to free the oppressed, and be ready for anything at anytime that threatens our freedoms, and democracy.

Whether a veteran has served a day or decades, taking that oath somehow changes our DNA. Service to our country and to our fellow Americans becomes part of who we are. It's serving something that's bigger than ourselves.

On November 18th we will be installing a new BOD for 2023 - 2025 to continue the legacy of advocating for our active duty, veterans, retirees, and Surviving Spouses. In true WNC MOAA tradition we will also continue the tradition of plenty of food, fun and fellowship.

Plan on attending and bring guests. It has truly been an honor to serve WNC MOAA as president for the last four years. I look forward to continuing to serve along side of all of you in our various community outreach organizations, and beyond in the capacity of Immediate Past President.

Thank you for your service, and NEVER STOP SERVING!



Donna Culp, Capt , USAF (Fmr)
President, WNC MOAA

Taking Full Advantage of Your National MOAA Membership?



Why Join MOAA

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the country's leading organization protecting the rights of military servicemembers and their families. Those who belong to MOAA not only lend their voices to a greater cause, but they also gain access to extensive benefits tailored to the needs and lifestyles of military officers. MOAA members proudly hail from every branch of the uniformed services. To them, we have made the same promise that they have made to their country: Never Stop Serving.

National MOAA—Levels of Membership

Best Value

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

MOAA LIFE Membership is the most elite membership category. As a MOAA LIFE Member, you'll receive all of MOAA's PREMIUM benefits - plus more - for life. Additional benefits include spouse protection and direct access to MOAA staff experts on the dedicated MOAA LIFE Member Hotline.

Membership Cost:

Varies by age

49 & Under	75-79
\$894	\$476
50-54	80-84
\$852	\$370
55-59	85-89
\$804	\$266
60-64	90-94
\$740	\$171
65-69	95-99
\$662	\$104
70-74	100 and Over
\$574	FREE

Better Value

PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP

MOAA PREMIUM Membership gives you total access to everything MOAA has to offer, including our full spectrum of career and financial resources, MOAA-exclusive publications, college scholarships for dependents, and countless discounts on products and travel.

Membership Cost:

One Year	\$59
Two Years	\$100 (SAVE 15%*)
Three Years	\$132 (SAVE 25%*)
Surviving Spouse Membership Cost:	
One Year	\$53
Two Years	\$90 (SAVE 15%*)
Three Years	\$120 (SAVE 25%*)

* Savings off full annual rate

BASIC MEMBERSHIP

As a MOAA BASIC Member, you'll have free electronic access to MOAA e-communications about news and support of critical advocacy efforts to protect your military benefits.

Membership Cost:

Free

MORE ABOUT MOAA

MOAA's greatest mission is to improve the lives of those who serve and their families, which is achieved largely through the tireless advocacy efforts taking place in our nation's capital. MOAA's experts in Washington are there to support legislation that benefits the military community and are equally vigilant when fighting to stop legislation that threatens our livelihood. The larger our numbers, the greater our voice.

Membership is open to active duty, former, retired, and National Guard and Reserve commissioned and warrant officers of the uniformed services and their surviving spouses.

TO REVIEW THE COMPLETE MOAA MEMBER BENEFIT BREAKDOWN

GO TO:

<https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa/>

For additional information and to upgrade your national MOAA membership:

Call: (800) 234-6622

The best thing about being a national MOAA Life Member is not having to remember to pay annual national dues. (still need to pay chapter dues)

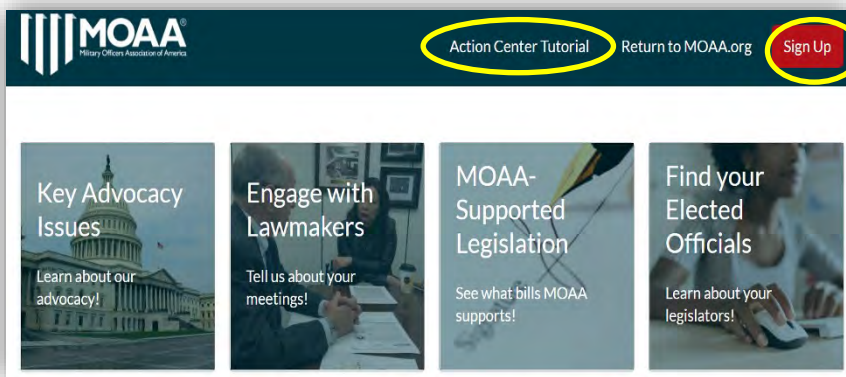
Once you become a Life Member, that's it!

MOAA IN ACTION: MAJOR LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MOAA engages with Congress on all manner of issues related to the uniformed services community. These efforts can include collaboration with other like-minded organizations and with The Military Coalition. We also rely heavily on our members who make their voices heard by contacting lawmakers via [MOAA's L Legislative Action Center](#), by participating in our annual signature advocacy event, and through local efforts at the [chapter and council level](#).

For [more than 90 years](#), this work has led to real results – pay and benefits protected from budget-driven threats, continued access to quality medical care, and countless other areas of concern to our members, our military, and the wider uniformed services community.

No list could encompass everything MOAA's achieved since 1929, but below, you'll find some of the highlights, broken into six categories. Click the links for details on each of the items (or scroll below the boxes to see the full list), and reach out to MOAA's legislative team at legis@moaa.org to discuss your concerns on these or other topics. Note: Items with an asterisk (*) are regularly under attack or underresourced.



<https://www.moaa.org/content/topic-and-landing-pages/moaa-in-action/>

Get Started!

- 1) Go to <https://moaa.quorum.us/>
- 2) Click on "Action Center Tutorial." - Takes 11.25 Min
- 3) After completing the tutorial, now Click on **Sign Up**. Even if you have used the previous Take Action, that dashboard is no longer supported. **You need to Sign Up to use the new dashboard.**

Don't hesitate to ask for assistance with creating a MOAA log on account.

For help Call (800) 234-6622 and ask for the Member Service Center

To get started, go to <https://ebiz.moaa.org/personifybusiness/MOAACustomization/MOAAActivateAccount/tabid/195/Default.aspx>



MOAA
INSURANCE
PLANS

**Standing with you
at every stage.**

1-800-247-2192
www.moaainsurance.com/plans

100392

MOAA Special Interest Virtual Chapters Available At No Extra Cost

- * MOAA Uniformed Services Nurse Advocates Virtual Chapters
- * Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter
- * United States Public Health Service Virtual Chapter
- * Chaplains Virtual Chapter
- * Judge Advocate Virtual Chapter
- * Advocacy for Servicewomen and Military Families Virtual Chapter



For more information go
to:

[https://www.moaa.org/
content/chapters-and-
councils/chapters-and-
councils/](https://www.moaa.org/content/chapters-and-councils/chapters-and-councils/)

REMINDER

WNC-MOAA 2024 ANNUAL CHAPTER DUES

RENEWAL

NEED TO BE PAID!

January 1st

(see page 17)

WNC MOAA Earns MOAA 5-Star Awards for 2022

Thank you WNC MOAA for making 2022 an exciting and successful year as members of our chapter. Inviting and welcoming guests and new members, to volunteering your time and talent throughout the communities our chapter covers, only scratches the surface of what these awards represent. Take a moment to reflect, and feel proud of all you have accomplished. *Many have benefited from your generosity, and spirit of NEVER STOP SERVING!*

With heartfelt gratitude,
Donna Culp, Capt. USAF (Fmr)
President, WNC MOAA



Level of Excellence Awards

MOAA is pleased to announce the winners of the annual Council and Chapter Levels of Excellence (LOE) Awards for performance in 2022.

Out of almost 400 MOAA affiliates, 169 councils and chapters earned LOE award recognition this year. These councils and chapters excel at supporting and fostering programs that directly support the MOAA mission and their communities.

Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards

MOAA renamed the award in 2011 after Colonel Marvin J. Harris, USAF (Ret), Director of Public Relations from 1996 until 2011. Colonel Harris delivered effective communications to both military and civilian audiences. Each year, national MOAA holds a communications award contest to identify those councils and chapters that do an outstanding job communicating with their members and community.

Congratulations to the 2022 award winners! [Click here for the full list](#), including a printable PDF download. (List updated in August 2023 with upgrades to correct for calculation error.)





WNC MOAA State Legislative Affairs Update

We continue to support legislative issues for veterans and focus on the three top issues our board approved for the 2-year cycle.

Within the chapter, we did a minor shift of responsibility with Tricia taking the lead role of the state legislature team and Michael going to a supporting role. Mostly a change in name only since we both work together as a team, splitting our communication with our legislatures equally between ourselves. So, you have the same team advocating for our members and fellow veterans with plans to continue our support for the upcoming year.

We wish we had more news on veteran topics, but this year they didn't seem to be a priority with other issues taking most of the state legislature's consideration.

The State Legislature is finalizing this year's long session (the first of a two-year cycle). Back at the beginning of the session, the target is to finalize the session in July, but as disagreements on the budget hit a high note, that end date flew past and it is now thought to end either later this month or in October. Sadly, the focus has not been on any of the bills associated with veteran issues, but a disagreement associated with casinos and an expansion of Medicaid. Since opinions and disagreements abound, not a lot of information is available on the budget negotiations, either on the House or Senate side. Any bill already proposed could make it into the budget directly, but decisions are needed on the bills that made the crossover list (bills approved by one of the legislative houses). Six bills besides the appropriations bill made it on this year's crossover list: HB 178, HB296, HB427, HB463, HB487 & HB492 as well as HB 259 appropriations. The bills associated with property tax adjustments did not make the crossover list this year.

The best possibility for passage still is those with little or no budget implications: HB296 to officially adopt the Veteran history museum of the Carolinas, HB427 Honor Women's Vet DMV License Plate, and HB487 POW/MIA Flags on state owned buildings & public Schools. Some version of the HB178 should be in the budget which deals with the maintenance of state veteran cemeteries, but whether the amount remains consistent with past years or is increased to meet actual needs remains to be seen. Just as a reminder, HB 463 prohibits foreign governments or their agencies from purchases agricultural and other lands critical to the safety and security of the state and HB492 requires businesses to post a notice of veteran benefits they offer.

Next year's session is considered a short session since it is centered around elections. Although new legislation can be considered, during the short session, the norm is to continue working bills that made it to this year's crossover list, corrections and adjustments to the approved budget or appropriations.



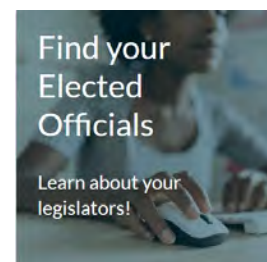
Submitted by: Michael Padgett, COL USA (Ret.), and Tricia Vinson, LTC USA (Ret.) - WNC MOAA State Legislative Affairs Team

STRONGER TOGETHER!

Once you have signed up, you can start taking action and contacting your elected officials.

Not sure who your legislators are? Go to moaa.org—> Log on -> Advocacy -> Legislative Action Center -> Find your Elected Officials

Logging on matches you with who your legislators are based on your mailing address.



Federal Legislative Corner



Legislation: MOAA's PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret) MOAA President and CEO, "Summer Recess is the Perfect Time to Join our Legislative Action Center." MOAA Newsletter August 2, 2023

Many legislative bills about surviving spouses impact the quality of life of a military surviving spouse and their family. You can become a MOAA Advocate by contacting your Representative or your Senator. Your representative serves a **district** corresponding with your zip code. Each state has two Senators. You are the "constituents" of these elected officials. Today, connect with your elected officials directly or through MOAA's Legislative Action Center.

Higher TRICARE Fees Part of Testimony From Congressional Budget Office-

By: Karen Ruedisueli August 9, 2023

"Written testimony submitted by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to a recent Senate subcommittee hearing on DoD personnel includes several proposals threatening service-earned benefits, such as the introduction of TRICARE For Life fees and minimum out-of-pocket requirements." (MOAA.org)

Read the full article [HERE](#).

[RELATED: [Watch the Hearing](#)]

TAKE ACTION: [Tell Congress You Oppose TRICARE/TRICARE for Life Fee Increases](#)

Please join us once again in providing a counterpoint to CBO's written testimony by reminding Congress that our nation has an obligation to provide the health care benefit servicemembers and retirees have earned. You can read more about the proposals [at this link](#), but the bottom line remains stark:

- Proposed TRICARE For Life enrollment fees would cost Medicare-age beneficiaries \$575 a year for individual coverage or \$1,150 for family coverage.
- Proposed cost-sharing measures would include an \$850 deductible, meaning TRICARE For Life would not cover any of the first \$850 of a beneficiary's Medicare cost-sharing.

After the deductible, the proposed cost-sharing plan allows TRICARE For Life to cover only 50% of the next \$7,650 in Medicare cost-sharing, meaning beneficiaries would pay up to \$4,675 in cost-sharing per year.

Registering with [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#) now and [sending a message today](#) will not only help prevent TRICARE fee increase concepts from moving ahead, it will ensure you are poised to fight TRICARE fee increases if CBO concepts evolve into legislative proposals.

TAKE ACTION:

Taken from MOAA.org: "The changeover to the new system online, Take Action, will require all users to enter their details, but they can create an account with those details the first time they visit the site. First-time users can sign in at this link; you must provide your information again if you sign in from another browser or device."

(Federal cont. next page)

(Federal Cont.)

[Go online: MOAA | Legislative Action Center \(quorum.us\)](#)

Here is the new [TAKE ACTION](#) tutorial (click Take Action). MOAA's Take Action is a simple tool that allows members to write their elected officials regarding MOAA's Legislative priorities. Easy to navigate. You can add your story or submit the preformed letter. Reminder as a SS, you are a "MEMBER" of MOAA.

How do I find what bills MOAA supports in the current session of Congress?

Click the "[MOAA-Supported Legislation](#)" button on the homepage of the Legislative Action Center to see what bills MOAA has publicly supported for the current session of Congress. The organization's endorsement process is deliberative; MOAA will not keep or oppose any legislation without a thorough review of its potential effects, positive or negative (MOAA.org).

What are the legislative bills regarding military Surviving Spouses? Call or write your elected officials and ask them to cosponsor these bills. Click on the hyperlink below to become familiar with the legislation. Review the previously mentioned "Find Your Elected Official" and connect with your member of Congress (House of Representative (Congress person) or Senator.

Senate Bill 414 Click Here [Caring for Survivors Act of 2023](#) - Senator Jon Tester- (D- MT)

House Bill: H.R. 1083: Click Here: [Caring for Survivors Act of 2023](#) HR Rep. Jahana Hayes-(D-CT)

Senate Bill 1266 Love Lives On [Click here: Love Lives On Act of 2023](#) Jerry Moran, (R-KS)

House Bill: H.R. 3651 Rep Dean Phillips (D-MN): [Click here: Love Lives On Act of 2023](#)

Contact your Representative to support a House Bill; ask your Senators to help Senate Bills.

Compiled and Submitted by: Dr. Vivianne Cisneros Wersel
WNC MOAA Federal Legislative Affairs
National MOAA Surviving Spouses Advisory Board



Act Fast to Meet a New Deadline for Survivor Benefit Plan Enrollment

While the deadline for a rare Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) open season remains Jan. 1, 2024, the practical deadline for beneficiaries who want an estimate of what the coverage would cost has moved up a month.

Initial messaging from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) said normal processing time for a Letter of Intent – a document DFAS uses to make a cost estimate – would be 30 days, meaning interested enrollees would have until about Dec. 1 to send in the paperwork. But an update to the [DFAS open season website](#) now lists Nov. 1 as the Letter of Intent deadline. Those who don't send a Letter of Intent by that date may not receive a premium estimate before the Jan 1 enrollment deadline.

The timeline does not alter the four-step enrollment process and links to the information provided are available in the full article:

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/finance/act-fast-to-meet-a-new-deadline-for-survivor-benefit-plan-enrollment/>

By: Lila Quintiliani - MOAA Newsletter



THE PACT ACT

The VA requested that Veteran Service Organizations help spread to word to all Veterans and survivors. Please share this information if you know any military surviving spouse not receiving VA benefits, e.g., DIC.



To file an intent or a claim [PACT ACT](#). August 10, 2023 marks the first anniversary of the passing of the Pact Act. This new legislation is essential because it provides VA benefits to a surviving spouse who was not previously eligible. Since enacting this law, the VA has been working on identifying those surviving spouses who might be eligible. However, they have asked for Veteran Service Organizations to help reach out. MOAA Surviving Spouse Advisory Council is doing much to help with this effort.

The Pact Act recognizes recent presumptive illness that if a service member dies due to this service-connected disability, their beneficiary may be qualified for Veteran Affairs (VA) benefits. These benefits include Dependency Indemnity Compensation (\$1,562.00/month), a home Loan program, education, a Fiduciary program, aid and attendance, and more (VA.gov). If you know a surviving spouse who does not receive DIC, please share the Pact Act information with them. This benefit can change the quality of life of a surviving spouse.

[Learn about VA DIC and how to apply](#). Note: If the VA denied your claim in the past and they think you may be eligible now, they will try to contact you. However, do not wait for the VA to contact you; reapply.

[Learn more about family member benefits](#). You can learn more by visiting VA.gov/PACT or calling 1-800-MY-VA-411 (1-800-698-2411). Contact the VA Office of Survivors Assistance to answer your eligibility questions at 202-461-9383 or e-mail OfficeOfSurvivors@VA.Gov.

Dr. Vivianne Cisneros Wersel
WNC MOAA Federal Legislative Affairs
National MOAA Surviving Spouses Advisory Board



Henderson County Has A New Veteran Service Officer

Brent Embry, a 22-year veteran of the U.S. Air Force and Navy who retired as a Navy Commander, has been named Henderson County's new Veterans Service Officer.

Commander Embry has big shoes to fill upon the retirement June 30 of Mike Murdock, the county's longtime Veterans Service Officer.

"Caring for the veterans in our community is one of our highest priorities," County Manager John Mitchell said. "I thank Mike Murdock for the incredible job he's done for Henderson County over the years, and I am confident Brent Embry will carry on the tradition of high-quality veteran services in this county. There are a lot of exciting new opportunities for veterans in our community that will be coming online in the next year, and I know that Brent is the leader who will take us there."

Brent's military career spans nearly 22 years and includes time in the two branches serving as an Aircraft Maintenance and Munitions Officer, a Navy Surface Warfare Officer, Operations Officer, Chief Staff Officer, and Officer in Charge. The positions took him to posts in Arizona, Utah, the Persian Gulf, Florida, Italy, Africa, Lebanon, Rhode Island and Guam.

Since retiring from the Navy five years ago, Brent has lived and worked in Western North Carolina. Before accepting the Henderson County post, he served as the lead Veterans Service Officer for the 12-county western district of the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

Submitted by: Allan Perkal

Chair, Buncombe County Veterans Council

Vice President, Vietnam Veterans of America, North Carolina State Council <https://www.hendersoncountync.gov/county/page/veterans-services>





A Hero Comes Home To The Mountains

The unfortunate outcome of war is that it reduces people to numbers. War casualties generate reports and sometimes people need to be reminded that each number is a person with a history and a family. In 1969, Air Force Captain Frederick (Freddie) Mervyn Hall had a life, a family, and a new bride when he was declared missing in action serving his country in Vietnam.

February 9, 1978, Captain Frederick Mervyn Hall was declared dead and ceremonially buried with his military uniform in lieu of a body at the Green Hill Cemetery in Waynesville.

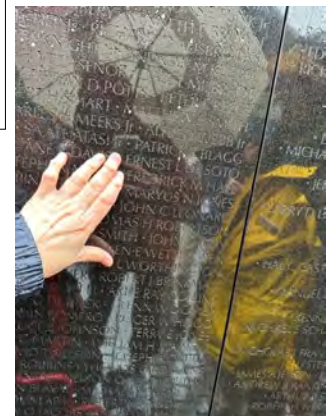
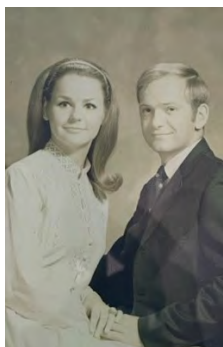
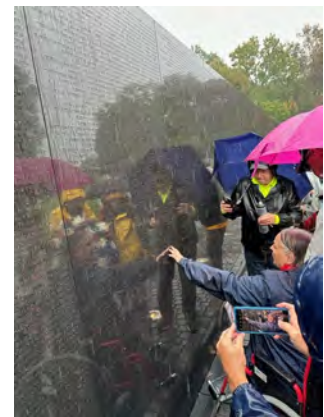
After 54 years, on October 10, 2023, the earthly remains of Captain Frederick Mervyn Hall came home to Waynesville, NC, where his memory and spirit have always lived.

Family, friends, Vietnam veterans, and veterans across all services and of all ages gathered at the Waynesville First Presbyterian Church just before 11 AM for memorial services. The service remembered the man and his impact on people throughout his much too short life. His wife, Julia Jean Keith, a native of Houston at the time of his death, attended the ceremony, traveling from Texas.

While stationed at Tucson, he met a University of Arizona art student named Julia Jean Keith, a Texan crowned Miss Houston, in 1965. They were married in Tucson on Dec. 18, 1968, while Hall was still stationed at Davis-Monthan AFB. Two months later, Captain Hall left for overseas duty. At the airport, the last thing he said to her was, "I love you."

Reunited at the Atlanta airport October 8th, 2023, and 54 years of separation now behind them, Capt. Hall was officially welcomed home and laid to rest by family, friends, and the community. Only one thing remained on Julia's wish list, and **Blue Ridge Honor Flight** made that happen. On Saturday, October 14th, 2023, Julia was able to touch the names of , Capt. Frederick M. Hall, and Col. Ernest DeSoto, (Navigator and Pilot, respectively) on the wall of the Vietnam War Memorial.

Article by: Rick and Michele Bretz , and Donna Culp
Photos by: Michele Bretz and Donna Culp



MOAA Honors Capt. Frederick Hall

Among the forty dignitaries attending Capt. Hall's funeral, representatives from national MOAA, NC Council of Chapters (NCCOC), and WNC MOAA paid their respects and honored his widow, Julia Hall Coffey with special presentations at the reception.

Representing national MOAA, CAPT Bud Schneeweis, USCG (Ret.), MOAA Board of Directors, presented a MOAA coin along with condolences befitting a war hero.

Dr. Vivianne Wersel represented NCCOC and Surviving Spouses, and presented a MOAA Award on behalf of WNC MOAA for Outstanding Service to Capt. Hall.

Capt. Donna Culp provided support to Wells Funeral home organizing dignitaries for the funeral.

CDR John O'Donnell and wife Stephanie represented the WNC MOAA Smoky Mountain Satellite.

Special thank you to Steve Watkins and Dr. Wersel for making the award come together.



(Bottom Right) WNC MOAA Award for Outstanding Service



(L-R) Donna Culp, Bud Schneeweis, Dr. Wersel.

Brothers & Sisters Like These Join Forces With Black Box Theatre

Diana Wortham Theatre came to life August 18th when readings from members of *Brothers and Sisters Like These* writing group were acted out through interpretative dance by the *Black Box Theater* dancers. Prior to the main performance, authors read while dancers performed next to them. On the main stage, the authors of the stories read, and performed along with the dancers. Following the performance a Q&A between the audience, and performers highlighted the impact each story had on everyone there.



WNC MOAA Supports the Annual 2023 Franklin Stand Down

ECU dental clinic and WNC MOAA members teamed up to screen veterans attending the stand down who are in need of improving dental health and their smiles. This year a newcomer to the team brought smiles to everyone he encountered. Meet WNC MOAA board member, Jim Steinbaugh, and his certified therapy dog, Baxter.



Welcome to the team Baxter!

To learn more about Brothers & Sisters Like These
Call Stephen Henderson
President, NC Writing Alliance Foundation, Inc
(828) 606-5988
srhcamaro60@gmail.com

Charles George VA Medical Center

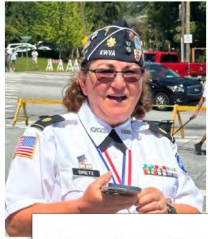
*Thank you for a
combined 1026.25
volunteer hours at
CGVAMC*

Felipe Casso
Edward Couser Dr.
Vivianne Wersel
Robert Morrison

From 10/3/2022
to
8/8/2023

Hendersonville Apple Festival 2023

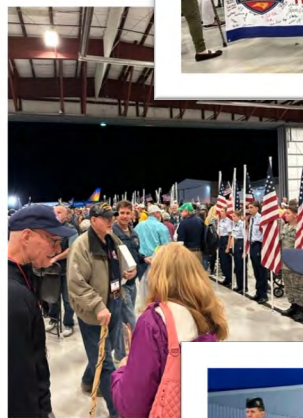
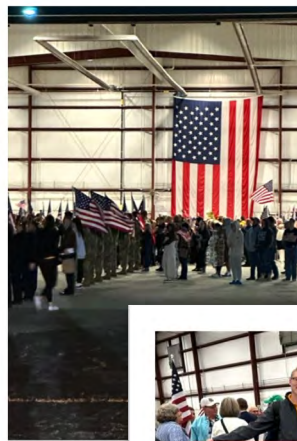
The Korean War Veterans Association (KWVA) and WNC MOAA combined efforts and shared a booth at the Hendersonville Apple Festival, and participated in the parade. On Saturday of the festival cadets from East Hendersonville High School joined in to help with fundraising efforts to complete the Korean War memorial at the Hendersonville Court House. Petty Officer First Class, Charles Holden (Korean War and Vietnam War veteran), donned his uniform and greeted festival goers visiting the booth,



Blue Ridge Honor Flight—October 14th, 2023

Blue Ridge Honor Flight is dedicated to making it possible for veterans from WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War to receive the recognition and homecoming that has been long overdue, and much deserved. Guardians, volunteers and donations make it all happen as it did for the final 2023 BRHF.

A simple “Thank you for your service, and Welcome Home!” is the wind beneath the wings of the aircraft that carries our honorees to Washington D.C. and back to Asheville. More importantly, it’s the demonstration of these meaningful words that lifts their hearts, and makes their spirits soar. For many it’s the beginning of a journey of healing.



THANK YOU

Buncombe County Veteran Treatment Court – “No Veteran left behind.”

Buncombe County, N.C. – On 20 August 2023 Buncombe County demonstrated its commitment to leaving no veteran behind. Three veterans graduated from the county’s 18-month Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) Program. The 18-month program challenges veterans to an intense stay clean, work-hard, opportunity-based alternative to a felony stint in a correction facility.



The Veterans Treatment Court utilizes a non-adversarial, team approach to providing services and supports to veterans facing felony charges. This treatment modality strives to prevent recidivism and promote accountability and recovery by diverting participants through a multi-phase recovery/treatment program. Completion of the program awards participants a dismissal of their charges (1 year after graduation), pending continued recovery and probationary compliance.

Adjacent counties are in the initial phases of standing up similar versions of the VTC. Buncombe County VTC is scheduled to graduate two veterans at a 20 October 2023 Ceremony. The graduations are held at the Buncombe County Court House at 10 O’clock. For more information visit <https://www.buncombeveteranscourt.com/>

Special Events: October - November 2023

**BILTMORE ESTATE
VETERAN'S CAREER FAIR &
RESOURCE EXPO**

Become Part of our Legacy

START FROM: Friday
October 27
0900 - 1200
1300 - 1500

Join Us at the Biltmore Career Center
2 Hendersonville Rd, Suite C Asheville, NC 28803

- Competitive wages starting at \$16/hr
- Free health clinic
- Complimentary tickets
- Part-time & full-time availability
- 40% discount at estate restaurants & retail locations
- Southern Highlands Attractions card & ticket exchange program

www.biltmore.com/careers

THE VIETNAM TRAVELING MEMORIAL WALL

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall

November 9, 5:00 p.m. - through
November 12, 2:00 p.m.

The Wall will be open 24 hours a day while at the Veterans Healing Farm.

Located at: The Veterans Healing Farm
38 Yale Road, Hendersonville, NC 28739

For more information, please contact:
veteranshealingfarm@gmail.com
www.veteranshealingfarm.org

Follow us on Facebook! /VeteransHealingFarm

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall is a 3/5 scale of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington DC, it stands six feet tall at the center and covers almost 300 feet from end to end.

Register to attend the opening ceremony 11/10/2023:
https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Opening-Ceremony-Invitation.html?soid=1139174151403&aid=Uu_rqjC5vtk

Purpose of the Western North Carolina Chapter, Military Officers Association of America, Inc.

The purposes of the Chapter shall be to promote the purposes of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA); foster fraternal relations among retired, active duty, and former officers of the uniformed services and their reserve components; protect the rights and interests of active duty, retired, and reserve component personnel of the uniformed services and their dependents and survivors; provide useful services for members and their dependents and survivors; and serve the community and the nation.

Ref: WNC MOAA bylaws updated, amended, and approved

November 20th, 2021 can be found on our website at

<https://wnc-moaa.org/chapterbylaws/>



Hails and Farewells

Hails

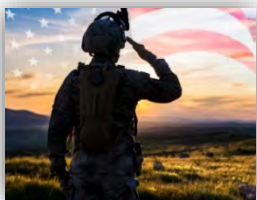
- CDR Thomas Hickey, USN (Ret)
- LTJG Michael Hebert, USN
- COL William T. McCauley, USA (Ret) - Spouse, Cindy
- CDR, Paul Thorne, USCG - Spouse, Janet
- LCDR Ron Urrutia, USN (Ret) Spouse, Lee
- COL Robert Curris, USA (Ret), Spouse Bobbi

Farewells

- CDR Gerald Beschta, USN (Ret) - Moved
- Capt. Robert Rebscher, USMC, (Ret) - Moved

TAPS

CW4 Jay Davies, USA (Ret)
Capt. Fredrick M. Hall, USAF
Accounted for from
Vietnam War March 23, 2023



Treasurer’s Report submitted by Mike Pomponio:

WNC MOAA— Cash Flow September 2023

SEPTEMBER		
INCOME		
Membership Dues	\$	100
Miscellaneous Income & Donations	\$	15
Feb 18, Chapter Meeting		
May 13, Chapter meeting		
Aug. 18, Chapter Meeting		360
Badges	\$	45
Total Income		\$ 520
EXPENSES		
NCCOC		
NCCOC MOAA Dues		
BCVC		
Chapter President Travel		
Haywood Veterans Council		
Recruiting & Retention		
Administration		
Bank Fees		
Liability Insurance		
Postage & Printing		
Post Office Box		
Web Hosting		
Virtual Meetings - ZOOM		
ROTC Awards		
Legislative Affairs Travel Exp		
WNC Meeting Flag Portability		
Speaker Gift 11/19/2023		
Aprons		
ZOOM		
IRS Form 990		
Badges		
VA Snacks		
Refund		
Donations		
Recruiting		
Chapter Meeting		
18-Aug-23		0
Total Expenses		0
Total Income (Loss)	\$	520
September 31, 2023 Bank Balance	\$	11,741



Mike Pomponio
WNC MOAA Treasurer

Mike - Over the last four years you have served as assistant treasurer for NCCOC and WNC MOAA (2 years), and treasurer for WNC MOAA for the last 2 years.

Thank you!

NEVER STOP SERVING ... CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



We Honor Veterans - Since November 2014, WNC MOAA, in partnership with Four Seasons Hospice, has honored **over 964** veterans with special pinning ceremonies to salute veterans in hospice care and thank them for their service.



To learn more and get involved, contact **John Knapp, 828-702-3317 j.knapp4@att.net**



**Veterans
Restoration
Quarters
(VRQ)**

VRQ - The chapter continues to serve our area's homeless veterans by providing a lunch prep/serve crew on the 4th Wednesday of every month at the Veterans Restoration Quarters (VRQ). We also provide the 5th Wednesday lunch crew in applicable months. The VRQ is a converted motel that provides shelter, counseling, and vocational training for the area's homeless veterans. Chapter members arrive at 9:30 to prepare for the lunch meal then, at 12:00, serve the meal to the residents of the Veteran's Restoration Quarters. The VRQ staff has been very diligent in implementing COVID safety protocols to ensure all volunteers work in a safe environment. The chapter is very proud to have been serving our area's veterans with this effort since 2015. If you would be interested in joining our crew, please contact the chapter's VRQ volunteer coordinator, **Jeff Snyder, at jsnyder243@aol.com**.



Blue Ridge Honor Flight transports American veterans to Washington, DC 2-3 times each year to "visit memorials dedicated honor their service and sacrifices of themselves and their friends." There are opportunities to donate, as well as learn more about applying as an honoree, guardian, or volunteer.

For more information, contact **Rick Devereaux, 828-772-6023 rickdevereaux1@gmail.com or www.blueridgehonorflight.com** **Next flight: Stand by for 2024 flights.**



JROTC - Active in 18 high schools throughout WNC, JROTC is supported by WNC MOAA with annual MOAA Leadership awards for rising Seniors. As group gatherings have resumed, volunteers are needed to present the awards. For more information about supporting the award presentations, and other information about supporting JROTC contact **Jeff Snyder at 828-684-2359 jsnyder243@aol.com**

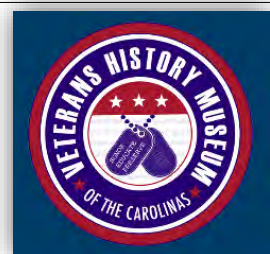


Veteran Smiles Foundation (VSF) is dedicated to helping veterans find their dental home all across North Carolina. Continuing the relationship with ECU Dental School of Medicine as established with the Sylva Community Service Learning Center (CSLC), the plan is to systematically establish Vet Smiles programs with the other CSLCs in Brunswick County, Robeson County, Lillington, Ahoskie, Elizabeth City, Davidson County, and Spruce Pine.

WNC MOAA will continue its partnership with the Sylva clinic and coordinate efforts with VSF and NC Serves to continue to help identify veterans in need of dental care and a dental home for continuity of care. For more information, contact, **David McCracken, 984-233-3350, <https://vetsmiles.org/>**



Helping with State Level Legislative Affairs is an opportunity to reconnect with your civic side and connect with North Carolina lawmakers on issues that are key talking points by MOAA, and NC Council of Chapters. If you already have a relationship established with individual legislators or the 4 Senators and 10 Representatives, please contact WNC MOAA State Legislative Affairs Chair, **Michael Padgett at sopadgett@aol.com**



The mission of the **Veterans History Museum of the Carolinas** is to honor our nation's veterans, to educate the public about our country's military history and the contribution of our servicemen and women, and to preserve important and unique historic artifacts. The Museum reflects a love of country and gratitude to those who serve it by remembering and celebrating their service. A world-class museum and great destination for visitors. For more information: **WNC MOAA Museum POC: Duke Woodhull dukewoodhull@gmail.com** Or go to: **<https://theveteransmuseum.org/>**



CAMARADERIE WITH A PURPOSE



Join/Renew Your Local Chapter

Thank you for visiting MOAA's online chapter membership dues site. Whether you are considering chapter membership or renewing, now is the time to add your voice to the thousands of other MOAA members making a difference on the legislative front and in their communities.

MOAA's chapters are critical in helping us do this by building grass roots support for MOAA's legislative goals in their congressional districts. Chapter members let their legislators know what's on their minds and open doors for MOAA's legislative team here in Washington.

Learn more about reasons to join a chapter.

NOTE: National MOAA and local affiliate membership are two distinct memberships. Submitting your dues payment through this online application is for chapter dues (joins/renewals) only. If you are attempting to join/renew for National MOAA, please go to www.moaa.org/join.

Please use the Chapter Locator to verify your chapter name.

Getting Started

Do you want to join, renew, or make a donation? *	Donate Only	▼
State: *	North Carolina	▼
Chapter: *	Western North Carolina Chapter, MOAA	▼

NEXT

MOAA Website Offers

Way to Join A Chapter - Pay Chapter Dues Make Donations

If you like paying for things electronically and don't like writing checks, you can now pay for your WNC-MOAA Chapter items online.

You can do the following all online: make a DONATION to the Chapter's Operating Expenses; you can PAY your Annual Membership Dues; and you can even PAY for Chapter Activities (i.e. Quarterly General Membership Meetings).

Go to <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx>

Select "**Renew**" if you are renewing your dues or "**Donate**" if you would like to pay for Chapter Activities, such as our Quarterly Membership Meeting, or if you would like to donate to the Chapter's Operating Expenses.

For the State select "**North Carolina**".

For the Chapter select "**Western North Carolina Chapter, MOAA**".

Click "**Next**".

On the next page complete all of your information and then Click "**Next**".

If you are paying for Chapter Activities enter the cost of the activity in Donation Amount field.

Enter your Payment Information and Billing Information.

Click "**Finish**".

Submitted by Steve Watkins
WNC MOAA Chair of Programs



WNC MOAA Board of Directors and Officers

President Donna Culp, Capt. USAF (Fmr)

Immediate Past President Deceased

1st Vice President Steve Watkins, COL, USA (Ret)

2nd Vice President Kevin Ritter, CDR, USN (Ret)

Secretary Robert "Bob" Rebscher, Capt. USMC (Ret)

Treasurer Michael "Mike" Pomponio, LTC, USAR (Ret)

US Army Rep. Rodney "Rod" Honeycutt, COL USA (Ret)

US Navy Rep. George "Herb" Mensch, CAPT USN (Ret)

USMC Rep. Robert "Bob" Rebscher, Capt. USMC (Ret)

USAF Rep. Jeffrey "Jeff" Snyder, Col. USAF (Ret)

At Large Rep. Jim Steinbaugh, CAPT, USN (Ret)

2021—2023

Membership Chair Kevin Ritter, CDR, USN (Ret)

Programs Chair Steve Watkins, COL, USA (Ret)

Chaplain Jerry Beschta, CDR, USN (Ret)

Senior Advisor Rick Deveraux, Maj Gen, USAF, (Ret.)

Newsletter Editor Donna Culp, Capt. USAF (Fmr)

JROTC Liaison Jeffrey "Jeff" Snyder, Col. USAF (Ret)

Legislative Affairs - Federal Dr. Vivianne Wersel, Au.D.

Legislative Affairs - State Michael Padgett, COL, USA (Ret)
Patricia Vinson, LTC, USA (Ret)

VA Liaisons Ed Couser, LTCol, USAFR (Ret)
Dr. Vivianne Wersel, Au.D.

Surviving Spouse Liaison Ramona Ritter

Webmasters John Culp, LTC, USA (Ret)
Steve Watkins, COL, USA (Ret)

Spouses Activity Group (SAG) Ginny Cisneros



New number. Same support. **Dial 988 then Press 1**

Please Share The New Phone Option For The
Veterans Crisis Line: Dial 988 & Press 1

<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS



<https://www.taps.org/mission>

[TAPS 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline](https://www.taps.org/mission) is always available toll-free with loving support and resources at 800-959-TAPS (8277)

Moved?

New Email address?

New phone number?

Need to upgrade membership?

MOAA:

Call the **Member Service Center** at:
(800) 234-6622 or (703) 549-2311
e-mail msc@moaa.org

WNC MOAA:

Use the Join Form included in this newsletter to change address, update contact information, join, or renew.

Mail checks to
PO Box 1984, Hendersonville, NC 28793

OR

<https://www.wnc-moaa.org/>



The Latest on COVID in WNC

Stay up to date regarding COVID, vaccines, boosters, and how we're doing in WNC .

Dr. Mark Jaben, Medical Director for Haywood County provides weekly updates, which are found on the WNC MOAA website.

<https://www.wnc-moaa.org/covid-19information/>

Thank you Dr. Jaben!



THE LARGER OUR NUMBERS, THE GREATER YOUR VOICE.

Why WNC-MOAA chapter membership matters.



WNC-MOAA CHAPTER & MOAA MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Name _____

Rank _____ Branch of Service _____

Active Retired Former Reserve National Guard Surviving Spouse

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Date of birth _____ Email _____ Phone _____

(To ensure deliverability of MOAA communications, please provide a personal email address.)

Are you a MOAA member? Yes No Unknown

MOAA Member Number (if known) _____

Spouse's information

Spouse's name _____

Spouse's email _____ Spouse's phone _____

Is your spouse a MOAA member or eligible to be a MOAA member? Yes No

Your Chapter interest: Attending Social Events Board of Directors Member Recruiting

Legislative Affairs Newsletter Editing Public Affairs Spouse's Programs

Not a MOAA national member yet? Check here to receive a BASIC Membership at no cost to you.

And, for only \$4 a month, you can upgrade to **PREMIUM** membership, giving you immediate access to a full spectrum of career and financial resources, exclusive publications, college scholarships for dependents, and countless discounts on products and travel. **Visit moaa.org/join** to learn more.

How did you hear about MOAA Chapter involvement? _____

Are you a member of any other MOAA Chapter(s)? Yes No

If yes, which one(s)? _____

To complete enrollment:

- Fill in this form on your computer, save it, and e-mail it to vp1@wnc-moaa.org as an attachment **or**
- Print it and fill it and mail it to:
WNC-MOAA, P.O. Box 1984, Hendersonville, NC 28793 **or**
Scan it and e-mail it to vp1@wnc-moaa.org
- Go to wnc-moaa.org for more information about our Chapter.

You will be opted in to receive e-communications from MOAA and your local chapter. You will be able to opt out of any further e-communications at any time. MOAA will not sell or share personal information.

Western North Carolina Chapter membership of MOAA

Chapter Dues are due
January 1
(No Later Than March 1)

Member

\$45 - New Member
(includes Spouse)

\$30 - Renew

Surviving Spouse

\$25 - New

\$10 - Renew

Name Badges

(Badges are Magnet type only)

One name badge (for member)
is included with new
memberships

5XX]h]cbU`#FYd`UW`a Ybh
Badges!`%` each

Badge Bameftk

If you have any questions,
please contact Steve Watkins
at: vp1@wnc-moaa.org or call
or text 608-225-0594

Join us for a Luncheon!



Saturday, November 18, 2023

**Location: Kenmure Country Club
100 Clubhouse Dr.
Flat Rock, NC 28731**

**Meeting / Lunch Registration: 11:15 AM Check-in / Social - 12:00 PM Lunch / Program
RSVP DEADLINE: to Steve Watkins, vp1@wnc-moaa.org NLT Monday, November 13, 2023**

Payment must be received NLT Monday, November 13, 2023

**Pay Online using Donation to the North Carolina - Western North Carolina Chapter at
<https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx>**

or

**Mail Checks and registration to:
WNC MOAA
P.O. Box 1984
Hendersonville, NC 28793**

Make checks payable to: WNC MOAA; Enclosed is my check for ____ meal (s) at \$30 per person.

I / we plan on attending the WNC MOAA General Chapter Meeting on Saturday, November 18th, 2023

Name: _____ Guest: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____

Dress code: Country Club Casual – *Relaxed attire. Collared shirts required for gentlemen but not jackets. Men in collared shirts, polo tops, and slacks and women in simple blouses, fitted trousers, skirts, and dresses.*

PARKING INSTRUCTIONS: Once through the gate, follow signs to Clubhouse, turn right at the Welcome sign to park in either of the parking lots, a shuttle will take you to the Clubhouse. **If passenger drop off is required, DO NOT turn at the Welcome sign, proceed to the next right to cross the bridge, and proceed to the front of the Clubhouse. You may drop passenger at the ramp or proceed to the portico and drop them at the main entrance.**



Department of
Veterans Affairs

Guest Speaker: Dr. Molly McGaughey

Dr. McGaughey, is a board certified Geriatric and Hospice & Palliative Care Physician at the Charles George VAMC since 2010.



Topics
Understanding the Health Effects of Military Toxic Exposure