

Western NC Chapter MOAA
Quarterly Chapter Meeting Minutes
Saturday – 24 February 2024
Meeting: 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Kenmure Country Club

Elected:

Steve Watkins	President
Stacie Litsenberger	1 st VP/Programs Chair
Kevin Ritter	2 nd VP/Membership Chair
Doug Abbotts	Treasurer
Joe Neubert – Absent	Secretary

Directors:

Rod Honeycutt	US Army Rep
Herb Mensch	US Navy Rep
Vacant	USMC Rep
Jeff Snyder – Absent	USAF Rep
Jim Steinbaugh	At Large Rep
Kevin Ritter	Black Mountain Satellite Chair
Rod Honeycutt	Woodfin Satellite Chair
John O'Donnell – Absent	Smokey Mountain Satellite Chair
Donna Culp – Absent	Immediate Past President

Appointed Positions:

Vacant	Chaplain
Rick Deveraux – Absent	Senior Advisor
Donna Culp – Absent	Newsletter Editor
Steve Watkins	Newsletter Editor
Dr. Vivian Wersel	Legislative Affairs, Federal
Tricia Vinson	Legislative Affairs, State
Jeff Snyder – Absent	JROTC Liaison
Dr. Vivian Wersel	VA Liaison
Vacant	Spouses Activity Group
Sharon Woodcock	Surviving Spouse Liaison
Donna Culp – Absent	Surviving Spouse Liaison

Steve Watkins called to order the quarterly chapter meeting of the WNC-MOAA at 12:00 PM. Then the Presentation of the Colors by the West Henderson High School JROTC Unit Color Guard, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Rod Honeycutt led the Invocation.

Steve Watkins then introduced the new members and the guests in attendance. We had John Shawkins, Joan Covell, Legaré Head, Melissa (a parent of one of the JROTC Color Guard Cadets & an employee of the ASHVAMC); the AARP guests were given a short introduction knowing they would be brought up later as the main speakers. Steve Watkins then introduced Stephanie Young, the Director of the Asheville VA Medical Center.

Chapter Business

1. A quorum was declared by Steve Watkins in accordance with the chapter bylaws
2. Catching up on some previous business that should have been completed, the Chapter members in attendance voted for Stacie Litsenberger to fill the 1st Vice President position. All were in favor / no one opposed.
3. Chapter members in attendance voted for Joe Neubert to fill the Secretary position. All were in favor / no one opposed.
4. Steve Watkins swore in Stacie Litsenberger into the 1st Vice President position.
5. Steve Watkins reviewed the 2024 Chapter dues with the members. The 2024 renewal dues will be \$30.00 for members & \$10.00 for Surviving Spouses. The 2024 dues (includes one name badge) will be \$45.00 for new members & \$25.00 for new Surviving Spouses.
6. Reviewed highlights from the January 20, 2024, Board of Directors meeting – minutes are posted on wnc-moaa.org website.
7. 2024 Dues are past due – see Doug Abbotts to pay your 2024 dues. A demo of new secure website to pay dues Cheddarup was completed. Members and surviving spouses can now pay their dues at <https://wnc-moaa-annual-dues.cheddarup.com/> or *see attached dues renewal form to pay your dues.*

12:30 – 1:35 Buffet Lunch & presentation by Guest Speaker: Jeanine McLaughlin – AARP North Carolina - *Fighting Fraud with Operation Protect Veterans*

Officer Reports:

Treasurer: *see latest chapter cashflow report attachment*

Service Representatives & Satellite Reports:

Army & Woodfin Rep/Satellite: Next Woodfin Satellite meeting is March 16, 2024 at 202 Old Home Rd, Asheville, NC 28804. 11:00 AM – all chapter members & guests are welcome.

Navy Rep: nothing to report

Marine Corps Rep: position is vacant, the Board is actively seeking a member to fill this position. If you have questions about filling this position, please contact Steve Watkins

Air Force Rep: nothing to report

At Large Rep: nothing to report

Smoky Mountain Satellite: Next meeting is March 21, 2024 at Bearwater Brewing, 4352 Soco Rd, Maggie Valley, NC 28751. 12:30 PM – all chapter members & guests are welcome.

Black Mountain Satellite: nothing scheduled at this time – *if you are interested in being active in the Black Mountain satellite contact Kevin Ritter*

Announcements and updates:

Federal Legislative Affairs: Vivianne Wersel provided a handout to all that attended that discussed the three April 17, 2024, “Advocacy in Action” topics.

MOAA’s April 17, 2024, AIA topics are:

- Major Richard Star Act (H.R. 1282/S.344)
- Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) Restoration Act (H.R.2537/S.1823 Protect
- TRICARE for Life

The ****Major Richard Star Act**** is a significant piece of legislation that aims to improve the benefits for disabled veterans. Named after Major Richard Star, an Iraq and Afghanistan veteran who tragically passed away in 2021 due to cancer developed after exposure to burn pits, this act addresses a critical issue.

The bill allows veterans with combat-related disabilities and fewer than 20 years of creditable service to receive ****retirement pay**** concurrently with ****disability compensation****. This change ensures that veterans who have sacrificed their health in service to our country receive the support they deserve. The act recognizes the unique challenges disabled veterans face and seeks to alleviate financial burdens by providing both retirement benefits and disability compensation simultaneously.

BAH

Problems: The Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) is designed to cover 95% of housing costs, a steady drop from 100% between 2015 and 2019. This left military families to cover anywhere from \$100 to \$184 out of pocket each month. With rising housing costs – both for rental properties and home sales – an estimated 75% of military families are paying over \$200 out of pocket each month, according to a Blue Star Families survey. BAH should be restored to 100%, the BAH calculation methods should be revised to keep pace with rapid changes in the market, and the housing profiles used in the calculation should be reviewed to reflect current military demographics.

Tricare for Life

Problems: The military health care benefit is at risk. TRICARE beneficiaries are paying more for prescription drugs while the value of the TRICARE Pharmacy Program has been slashed via a growing list of non-covered drugs, more restrictive prior-authorization policies that are out of step with best practices, and a 25% reduction to the retail pharmacy network. These cuts disproportionately impact the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions, making it more difficult and costly to adhere to medication regimens.

Military health system (MHS) reforms directed by Congress have resulted in higher fees and copays, particularly for working-age retirees. Yet, TRICARE coverage policies have failed to keep up with evolving policies, technologies, and treatment protocols. Beneficiaries are paying more for TRICARE coverage years behind commercial plan benchmarks. The direct care system of military hospitals and clinics has undergone a massive reorganization accompanied by changing policies at the military treatment facility (MTF) level and capacity reductions due to the MHS Genesis electronic health record implementation – yet there is minimal visibility on impacts on patient access, quality of care, and the patient experience. Access to care metrics has disappeared from MTF websites, and patients lack a consistent and effective problem-reporting mechanism that would allow their challenges to be tracked and addressed.

State Legislative Affairs: Within the state, one of the five state veteran homes (the largest, 150-bed) located in Fayetteville was closed on 1 February 2024. Because of the efforts of the NC MOAA chapters and other veteran service organizations, a joint state legislative oversight committee team went to the home prior to closure. They reported back to the Joint Oversight Committee on General Government, which has held two meetings on the subject so far: first on 30 January, the second on 27 February. A third meeting is scheduled on 26 March. Resolution on the home (permanent closure or renovations) has not been made at this time. We are still actively working this issue since the resolution will have impacts to all the veteran homes across the state.

Prior to the state home closing we were able to coordinate with the Quilt of Valor Foundation to have the final five veterans still in the home awarded a Quilt of Valor quilt to help comfort them during this time of stress.

VA Liaisons: position is vacant, the Board is actively seeking a member to fill this position.
Post meeting update – John Shawkins has stepped up to fill the VA Liaison position

JROTC: From Jeff Snyder - The chapter continues to support the 18 JROTC units in western NC by annually presenting the MOAA leadership award to a rising senior cadet in each unit. We then endeavor to have a chapter representative at each units' spring award ceremony to present the award (certificate, medal, ribbon). Information will be distributed on when the award ceremonies will be conducted, Steve Watkins encourages chapter members to take some time to attend and present the chapter award to the senior cadet.

Surviving Spouse Liaison:

1. Sharon provided assistance to a surviving spouse who was having difficulties accessing the services she was entitled to.
2. 2024 goal is to attend some satellite meetings to introduce herself and Donna and what they can assist with.
3. As time and events permit Sharon and Donna hope to visit many of the retirement communities in the region. They will introduce themselves and meet with surviving

spouses and spouses of military members. These meetings will be informative regarding possible assistance and encourage participation in WNC-MOAA.

Senior Advisor: unable to attend the meeting

Past President/Newsletter Editor: will send out the spring newsletter article suspense timeline soon. Please, if you have articles, photos, or ideas for the spring newsletter please send them in sooner rather than later.

Chapter involvement partnership updates:

We Honor Veterans (WHV): Steve Watkins spoke about the partnership between WNC-MOAA and Four Seasons Hospice and how since November 2014 members of WNC-MOAA have honored and saluted veterans in hospice care with a special pinning ceremony. On February 9th John Knapp (WNC-MOAA WHV Coordinator) arranged for Spencer Campbell (WNC-MOAA Past President), Donna Culp (WNC-MOAA Past President), and Steve Watkins (WNC-MOAA President) to participate in the 1000th WHV Pinning Ceremony for Bill Troutman a Hendersonville veteran. If any chapter member is interested in participating in recognizing veterans by participating in these short special pinning ceremonies contact Steve Watkins at president@wnc-moaa.org

Veterans Restoration Quarters (VRQ): Contact Jeff Snyder March 27; April 24 & 30; May 22, 28, & 29

Steve Watkins adjourned the meeting at 2:05 pm.

Attachments:

1. Treasure Cash Flow
2. Meeting Agenda

Minutes submitted by: Joe Neubert – Secretary

Minutes approved by: Steve Watkins – President



WNC-MOAA CHAPTER & MOAA RENEWAL FORM

Name _____ Rank _____

Member \$30 - Renew **Surviving Spouse** \$10 - Renew

*Has any of your (or your spouse's) contact information changed?
If so, please complete the below fields.*

Address _____

City _____ State ____ ZIP _____

Email _____

Phone _____

If you have any questions,
please contact Steve Watkins
at: membership@wnc-moaa.org

Spouse's information

Spouse's name _____

Spouse's email _____

Spouse's phone _____

Mail your renewal to: WNC-MOAA, P.O. Box 1984, Hendersonville, NC 28793

or
<https://wnc-moaa-annual-dues.cheddarup.com>



WNC-MOAA Chapter Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2024

FY 24 WNC MOAA CASH FLOW REPORT						
3/18/24						
	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	YTD	Budget
Membership Dues	1,420.00				1,420.00	4,200.00
Miscellaneous Income	16.32				16.32	0.00
Donations	211.00				211.00	0.00
VA Donations					0.00	0.00
Chapter Meetings	1,320.00				1,320.00	0.00
Badges	75.00				75.00	0.00
Surviving Spouse Dues	90.00				90.00	200.00
NCCOC					0.00	0.00
MOAA HQ	60.00				60.00	0.00
Meeting Raffles	65.00				65.00	0.00
Total Income	3,257.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,257.32	4,400.00
EXPENSES						
NCCOC Dues	193.50				193.50	228.00
BCVC	50.00				50.00	50.00
Recruiting & Retention					0.00	1,000.00
Web/Digital Services	160.00				160.00	350.00
Liability Insurance						350.00
IRS tax filing	50.00				50.00	50.00
USPS/Shipping	224.20				224.20	350.00
Administrative Supplies	63.35				63.35	300.00
ROTC Awards	131.27				131.27	150.00
Speaker Gifts	78.01				78.01	200.00
Badges	140.32				140.32	250.00
Donations					0.00	1,306.00
Chapter Meetings Expenses	1,869.93	100.00			1,969.93	
Smoky Mtn Satellite Support					0.00	
Woodfin Satellite Support					0.00	
President's Travel	30.00				30.00	500.00
Total Expenses	2,990.58	100.00	0.00	0.00	3,090.58	5,084.00
NET INCOME (Loss)						
					166.74	
(RESERVE) BANK BALANCE						
				3/15/2024	11,655.13	



WNC-MOAA Chapter Meeting Agenda

24 February 2024
Kenmure Country Club

- 11:15 – 12:00 Registration - Social – **Purchase Raffle Tickets**
- 12:00 – 12:30 Chapter Business & Announcement
Post Colors & Pledge of Allegiance
Invocation
President's Welcome
Introduce new members & guests in attendance
Introduce Stephanie Young – Director, Asheville VA Medical Center
Chapter Business:
- **Swear in** – VP1 – Stacie Litsenberger
 - **2024 Dues** – \$30/members & \$10/Surviving Spouses
 - **January Board meeting review**
 - **Open Chapter Business issues**
- Announcements:**
- **3x5 Cards & Pens** – on the tables for notes, comments, & suggestions
 - **2024 Chapter Membership Dues** – **ARE PAST DUE** – forms are on the tables – see Doug Abbotts today
- 12:30 – 1:00 **Buffet Lunch and visit:**
- 1:00 – 1:30 **Guest Speaker: Jeanine McLaughlin – AARP North Carolina -**
Fighting Fraud with Operation Protect Veterans
- 1:30 – 1:50 **Announcements and updates:**
- **Satellite updates** –
 - Woodfin – meeting March 16 – *details on back*
 - Smoky Mtn – meeting March 21 – *details on back*
 - Black Mtn – nothing scheduled at this time – *if you are interested contact Kevin Ritter*
 - **Treasurer's Report** – Doug Abbotts
 - **Surviving Spouses** – Sharon Woodcock
 - **Legislative Affairs** – Vivianne Wersal / Tricia Vinson
 - **VRQ Support** – Contact Jeff Snyder Mar 27; Apr 24 & 30; May 22, 28, & 29
- 1:50 – 1:55 **50/50 Raffle & prizes**
- 1:55 – 2:00 **Closing Comments / Formal meeting adjournment**
- 2:00 – 2:15 **Informal mingle / Questions with guests**