

Volume 65, Issue 8
August 2026



Huntsville Chapter
Military Officers Association of America

The Sentinel

Huntsvillemoaa.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CAPT Richard C. West, USN (Ret.)



Greetings all!

All right! We made it to August without washing away in the rain. I think this is the toughest lawn mowing season I have faced since moving to Alabama! Good news is that it is only about a month until college football starts up!

Our next meeting is August 26th. Our guest speaker will be Representative Dale Strong. We need to get an early head count to see if we need to move the meeting from the Bob Howell room to the main Ballroom. Please get those RSVPs in ASAP. Details on the luncheon are on page 13.

July was a very quiet month for chapter activities, but many of us have been very busy behind the scenes working on upcoming luncheons/events, and, of course, our annual golf tournament.

Our 2026 tournament is scheduled for September 11th at The Links at Redstone. The Golf Committee is fully engaged in seeking sponsors and donations for the tournament and the silent Auction. Our next golf committee meeting is Wednesday, August 19th at 1200 at the Weeden Grill at The Links. We welcome any and all help – come early and enjoy some lunch!

We are looking for more sponsors/donors and more players – we have just over a month left! Let's all work to make this a big success! We need volunteers for the day of the tournament. I will send out a separate email with the positions that need filling.

Please understand that we know many of you can't participate in the committee or the tournament. Keep in mind that donations are another big source of income for the Scholarship Fund. Details on how to donate were provided in an email recently and will be included with the email promulgating this edition of The Sentinel.

As always, many thanks to all of you for being members of the **biggest and BEST MOAA Chapter in Alabama!**

Watch out for this hot weather and stay safe!

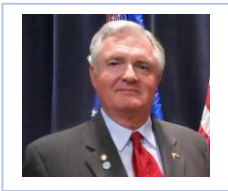
Rick

This month's membership meeting in on 26 August – the guest speaker is Our Congressman Dale Strong

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Note: National MOAA and the Huntsville Chapter are non-partisan organizations



Legislative Corner

COL John Fairlamb, USA-Ret

**Take
Action**

→ <http://www.moaa.org/takeaction/>



Federal Legislation:

COLA preview: The June Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers used to compute the COLA was 3.1% above the COLA baseline. Inflation declined mainly because energy costs briefly declined due to a pause in the Iran War. Fighting increased in July as did energy costs so the reduction may be temporary. The final COLA is determined by the average of the last 3 months of the Fiscal Year.

Internal disagreements are preventing Congress from legislating. None of the 12 budget bills are completed and planned long recesses before the end of FY-26, guarantee a Continuing Resolution will be needed by 1 October to fund the government into FY-27. The House left on a 5-week recess through end of August. The Senate has 1 week remaining before its August break and only 12 legislative days in September.

Demonstrating the House is having trouble doing its primary job which is to pass a budget, just before leaving DC for a long recess, the House [passed a stopgap measure](#) to fund the government through Dec. 4. The Senate doesn't plan to act on that until September if necessary.

The House also approved a \$95 billion framework for a third budget reconciliation package that would boost funding for the Pentagon, provide farm aid and provide money to encourage states to adopt voting restrictions the president wants. Senate Majority Leader [John Thune](#) said he doesn't have the votes to pass it and will "hold" reconciliation as a [backup](#) until the chamber works out a plan to avoid a government shutdown.

The House passed their version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) authorizing spending of \$1.15 trillion that also includes language merging the *Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) America Act* with the NDAA before sending it to the Senate in a legislative procedure known as MIRVing. How this will fare in the Senate is unclear.

The House passed another war powers resolution aimed at halting the president's military action in Iran, but the Senate did not. This vote is non-binding but meant to send a message to the president. Both chambers of Congress have passed resolutions like this before.

Continued on page 10

2025-2026 GOVERNING BOARD

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: CAPT Richard C. West, USN-Ret, 256-776-6901, rickw675@att.net

1st Vice President: CW4 Edward J. Banville, USA-Ret, 256-683-4127, ed.banville@hotmail.com

2nd Vice President: COL Gene Lesinski, USA-Ret, 845-725-3677, gene.lesinski@gmail.com

Secretary: COL Michael C. Barron, USA-Ret, 337-422-8862, m.barron468@gmail.com

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Navy Representative: COL Raymond G. Regner, USMC-Ret, 256-851-5903, rregner58@gmail.com

Air Force Representative: Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR, 256-606-5282, avatarmax@gmail.com

Immediate Past President: Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR, 256-606-5282, avatarmax@gmail.com

Second Past President: Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF-Ret, 256-715-1671, ctcbama76@gmail.com

STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brobinsol1976@gmail.com

Programs: COL John Vanderbleek, USA-Ret, 256-893-1565, jvbleek78@gmail.com

Legislative Affairs: COL John Fairlamb, USA-Ret, 256-539-0161, fairlambjrf@comcast.net

Personal Affairs: Lt Col Gerald Haynes, USAF-Ret, 256-882-7857, jerry.15@hiwaay.net

Public Affairs (Publicity): Vacant

Chapter Historian: Vacant

Surviving Spouse Liaison: Mrs. Angela Inman, 256-425-6465, inmanangela@hotmail.com

Chapter Hospitality: Vacant

Constitution and By-Laws: CAPT Richard C. West, USN-Ret, 256-776-6901, rickw675@att.net

Chapter Chaplain: Col Dave McKinney, USAF-Ret, 334-467-6860, mckinnewd@gmail.com

Commissary & Post Exchange: Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR, 256-606-5282, avatarmax@gmail.com

FAHC Liaison: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brobinsol1976@gmail.com

Golf: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brobinsol1976@gmail.com

ROTC/JROTC: COL Gene Lesinski, USA-Ret, 845-725-3677, gene.lesinski@gmail.com

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LIFE MEMBERSHIP TRUST

COL John Fairlamb, USA-Ret, 256-539-0161, fairlambjrf@comcast.net (June 2029)

MAJ Monte C. Washburn, USA-Ret, 256-301-5457, montec@washburns.org (June 2027)

Col Dave McKinney, USAF-Ret, 334-467-6860, mckinnewd@gmail.com (July 2028)



PX / Commissary
Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR



Exchange

Those entering Redstone with guests must stop by the visitor's center at Gate 9 and add them to a visitors list. You should check with the visitor's center for all the requirements. Otherwise, you will be turning around and not allowed entry.

The Exchange has upcoming specials on mattresses, TV's, exercise equipment, appliances, home, kitchen and maintenance items. With football season next month, a large screen TV will make the viewing even better. Be sure to check out the no tax appliances available with Exchange partner Home Depot. Also check out the Home Depot daily and weekly specials. I have ordered several items through Home Depot via shopmyexchange.com and often received the additional 10% off military discount on top of the sale price!

You can save even more by signing up for the Exchange STAR card! You can apply for the STAR card and wait to use it after it arrives. The first day you use it – ALL your purchases are at least (sometime more during a promotion) 10% off on your bill! Plus, every time you use the STAR card for gas at the PX, save five cents per gallon and you always get 10% off at the food court! Plus, there are specials throughout the year when you use your STAR card. Check out the clearance items in each depart of your Exchange and the table by Customer Service.

Former serving military can shop online (although not in store) at the Exchange! All veterans are being encouraged to confirm veteran eligibility status at <https://www.vetverify.org>. Civilians at Redstone with a CAC card can also shop in the store.

Every month, check out the online Exchange sweepstakes! The Exchange values your opinion!

Please take a moment to tell them how they are doing. Please take our survey at www.ExchangeCustomerSurvey.com. Take the survey and log in to register for a chance to win Sweepstakes Prizes.

Shopette

As always save 10% on wine with your STAR card (wine case lots; however, but not for spirits/liquor). The first day savings when you use your STAR card is also good at your Shopette. Whenever you use your STAR card, you always get 5 cents off per gallon (more during promotions like holidays and service birthdays). Stop in to see the wine/spirit of the month!

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Need Addresses

We have lost track of the below members. If you know their whereabouts, please have them contact Bruce Robinson at 256-426-0525 to update their personal information.

None this month

Concerns

This month the following people were reported as being ill or recuperating and need our support and prayers:

None this month

Persons to contact are:

Army Representative:
LTC Nicholas M. Mikus
256-604-7767
nicholasmikus@comcast.net

Navy/USMC Representative:
COL Raymond G. Regner
256-851-5903
rgregner58@gmail.com

Air/Space Force Representative:
Col Gerald C. Maxwell
256-606-5282,
avatarmax@gmail.com

Personal Affairs Officer
Lt Col Gerald Haynes
256-882-7857
jerry15@hiwaay.net



YOU SERVED OUR COUNTRY WELL AND WE WOULD BE
HONORED TO SERVE YOU WITH YOUR INSURANCE AND
INVESTMENT NEEDS.

Please call our office to set a time for a complimentary one on one meeting with
John D. Stover, LUTCF, Certified Financial Planner™, Certified Kingdom Advisor®

8 ARCH STREET
HUNTSVILLE, AL 35806
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

PHONE: 615.591.3937
TOLL-FREE: 888.468.9672
FAX: 615.591.3932

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CONTACT:

GERMI CLOUD,
NSSA, CRPC
VICE PRESIDENT, WEALTH ADVISOR
256-715-0094
germiecloudfinancial.com



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200 Clinton Avenue, Suite 1020
Huntsville, AL 35801
www.CloudFinancial.com

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Fox Army Health Center MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret



The Healthy Relationship Skills Group is an open group from the FAHC Family Advocacy Team. It will begin 5 Aug 2026 at 1000 and will be held weekly. Participants can join at any time. The only requirement is that they have Tricare and are able to receive services at the MTF.

Redstone Arsenal Veterinary Services calendar is attached. Current hours 8:00-4:00pm. Appointments are M-W, and the 2nd and 3rd Friday of the month. Clinic is closed on Thursdays and the Last day of the month. Pets are seen by appointment only and SAME Day appointment can be made. Please call or email for an appointment.

Reconnect, Recap & Reignite: The Menopause Reunion

...Because the conversation doesn't end at week six...

You're invited — and so is your plus-one! Join Heather Hough, Brittany Huey, and their special guest Laura Kutys, MS, LPC-S, CST-S, for a special 2-hour reunion workshop for past participants of our Menopause Series and their spouses/partners. If you haven't been able to join in for the 6-week series, this is your chance to attend a condensed version with an added bonus!

Thursday, October 23, 2026

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Fox Army Health Center: The Fox Den; 4100 Goss Road Redstone Arsenal, AL 35809 (check in at PCC, take the elevator to B, turn right, and you will see "The Fox Den" on the right)

Contact Heather Hough: 256-955-8888, ext. 1294

HEALTHY *Relationships*

Family Advocacy Program Healthy Relationship Skills Group

Participants learn healthy communication skills and effective ways to resolve conflict.

- Every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m.
- No registration necessary.
- Held in the Mental Health conference room.
- Open to TRICARE enrolled beneficiaries.



It's okay to ask for help or reach out!

AVAILABLE RESOURCES:

- Chaplain
- Military OneSource
- Military and Family Life Counselor (MFLC)
- Mental Health Department, FAHC

FOX ARMY HEALTH CLINIC
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAM
256-955-8888 x1937

August 2026

HOURS:

Mon, Tue, Wed + Fri: 0800-1200, 1300-1800

Hours are same for Fridays during open dates

CLOSED Thurs. for training and Weekends

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2
					CLOSED	CLOSED
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	CLOSED	Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	CLOSED	CLOSED
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	Appointments Wellness/Sick Call	CLOSED	CLOSED at 1200 (EOM Inventory)	CLOSED	CLOSED
31						

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You've served our country. Let us serve you.
Call to schedule a one-on-one.

Dale C Kuehl, CFP®, AAMS™

Financial Advisor

2045 Cecil Ashburn Drive SE

Suite 103

Huntsville, AL 35802

256-881-1583

MKT-58940-A-A1 AECSPAD 25217572

2026 Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament

It's that time again. The golf committee will have its next meeting on 19 August, 12 noon, at the Links. Come early for lunch.

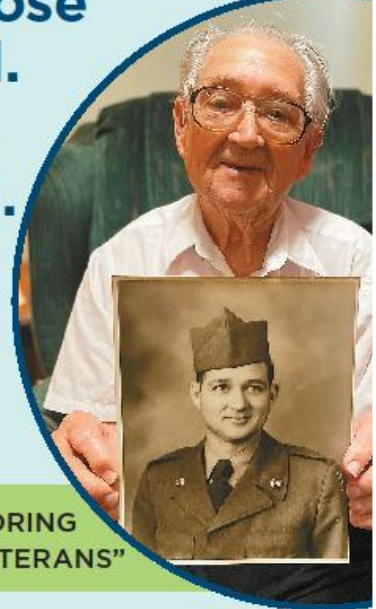
As always, we need volunteers to make the tournament successful.

You don't need to know anything about golf to help.

Some areas where we need volunteers include:

- Contacting local golf courses for donations of free rounds of golf
- Contacting local businesses to be hole sponsors or to donate goods & services
- If you are still working, getting your company to be a sponsor
- Filling one of the numerous staff positions on tournament day
- If a golfer, playing in the tournament & advertising it to others

**Choose Well.
Live Well.**



**"HONORING
our VETERANS"**

THERE COMES A POINT

A point to live well, love well, BE well.



**RESIDENCES
at WELLPOINT**

• INDEPENDENT LIVING • ASSISTED LIVING • MEMORY CARE

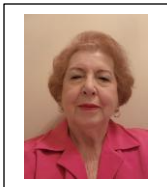
256-701-8300

2940 MILL RUN ROAD SE

HUNTSVILLE, AL 35763

RESIDENCESATWELLPOINT.COM





Redstone Arsenal Widow's Luncheon

Mrs. Bonnie Treadway
256-859-1484

Our next WOW Luncheon will be held at City Café Diner, 2003 Drake Avenue, Huntsville on Thursday, 20 August, 2026. We will gather at 12:00 noon. Please note the time change. Everyone will be called. Point of contact is Bonnie Treadway, 256-859-1484.

Surviving Spouse Corner: Honoring Vietnam War Veterans

The [Vietnam Veterans Memorial](#) in Washington, D.C., is a tribute to all who served during one of the longest wars in American history. Since the nonprofit [Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund \(VVMF\)](#) built the memorial in the early 1980s, it has pursued a mission of preserving the memorial, promoting healing and educating about the impact of the Vietnam War, and honoring and preserving the legacy of service. Today, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is among the most visited memorials in the nation's capital.

The memorial site includes the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, with the names of the more than 58,000 men and women who died in combat or are listed as missing in action, as well as the adjacent [Three Servicemen Statue](#), standing vigil over the Wall. As part of the VVMF [In Memory program](#), a special plaque on-site reads: "In memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service. We honor and remember their sacrifice."

The nearby Vietnam Women's Memorial depicts three uniformed women caring for a wounded servicemember and serves as a poignant reminder of the contributions of women in times of war.

In addition to the memorial, two initiatives of the VVMF are [The Wall That Heals](#) and [In Memory Weekend](#). The Wall That Heals is a replica of the Wall in Washington, D.C., designed to travel to communities throughout the U.S. In Memory Weekend is conducted Father's Day weekend every year. I attended this event in 2019 with my son to read the name of my husband and his father during the ceremony. It will always be an important memory for us that we were honored to attend.

Finally, the virtual [Wall of Faces](#) is an online page dedicated to honoring and remembering every person whose name is inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.



Chaplain's Corner

Col Dave McKinney, USAF-Ret

Psalm 17: 1-7

- 1 O Lord, hear my plea for justice.
Listen to my cry for help.
Pay attention to my prayer,
for it comes from honest lips.
- 2 Declare me innocent,
for you see those who do right.
- 3 You have tested my thoughts and examined my heart in the night.
You have scrutinized me and found nothing wrong.
I am determined not to sin in what I say.
- 4 I have followed your commands,
which keep me from following cruel and evil people.
- 5 My steps have stayed on your path;
I have not wavered from following you.
- 6 I am praying to you because I know you will answer, O God.
Bend down and listen as I pray.
- 7 Show me your unfailing love in wonderful ways.
By your mighty power you rescue
those who seek refuge from their enemies

This Psalm is known as the Psalm of David. You can see that David is crying out for help. David tells God to listen to him and asks God to declare his innocence. David seems to think that innocence is key to God's answering of prayer. David goes on to say that you, God, you know me. You know I have been faithful and have followed your commands. By the time we get to verse 7 we find David saying that he knows God will answer his prayers. But he goes on to say, show it to me!

How often do you find yourself in this situation? You know you're a believer and have been faithful and followed God's commands, yet you find yourself calling out to God to answer your prayers. How about a cancer diagnosis? Or a major stroke that leaves you unable to care for yourself. Why me? I don't smoke, don't have many vices, and have stayed clear of hazardous materials.

Continued on page 14

Memorials

If you would like to send a memorial contribution to the Huntsville Chapter MOAA, please send the following information along with your check to: Memorials, HCMOAA, P.O. Box 1301, Huntsville, AL 35807

In memory of:

By:

Membership Statistics

Total Members: 256
Regular Members: 219
Surviving Spouses: 37

New this month: 3
Deaths this month: 0
Renewals: 0

Welcome New Members to Huntsville Chapter MOAA

LCDR James Upshaw, USN
LTC Johnny Workman, USA
COL David Cole, USA

Recruiting

You are our best recruiter. If you have a friend, colleague or co-worker who is eligible to join MOAA, or who already belongs to MOAA National – bring him/her to a Chapter meeting. You would be doing both them and the Chapter a favor.

PX/Commissary – continued from page 3

Commissary

August has kids and college students back in school. Stop by your commissary for school snacks and to fill the home or dorm refrigerator. Also, while entering the Commissary check out the table of coupons and sales flyers – you will find several coupons covering those school necessities!

Ask for your commissary Rewards Card at one of the registers – you can use it to pre-load digital coupons for use at your commissary grocer. Customers must visit the Commissary website beforehand to download, or "clip", their desired promotions. Follow the commissary on Facebook or on X @YourCommissary.

Feds Feeds Families continues – next to the checkout lines you will find an opportunity to give back to your community. Pre-packaged bags for the Feds Feeds Families food drive. A wide variety of items bagged and convenient. Also, check out the International Aisle with foods and treats from all over the world.

Check out the discount meat freezer next to the beef section – usually items are hard frozen and put on discount the next day after sell by date. Also, produce and everything else you would need for your summer grilling needs.

Commissary CLICK2GO is one tap away for savings and convenient online shopping. Download the mobile app and start shopping for the items you love! Schedule free curbside pickup from your desktop or mobile devices while shopping online. Visit the [How Commissary CLICK2GO Works](#) page for additional information such as payment details and accepted coupons. ||||

Opening Day Football – 5 September



Alabama vs. East Carolina – 11:00 AM



Auburn vs. Baylor – 2:30 PM



Army vs. Bryant – 12:00 noon



Navy vs. Towson – TBD



Air Force vs. Duquesne – 12:00 noon

The House also passed a bill that bars members of Congress and their immediate families from buying new stocks, but they can hold onto stocks they already own. The bill also requires lawmakers to file a public notice at least seven days before selling an existing stock. Some members are critical this bill doesn't include the executive branch. [Read more](#)

The Save America Act that would make major changes to voting procedures will not pass the Senate without amendments because there are provisions many senators don't like. For one, the bill would take some of the decisions on voting procedures away from the states making them subject to Federal voting rules and procedures. [What's in the SAVE Act](#)

The FISA foreign security act has expired until Congress can figure out amendments to protect the privacy of American citizens.

President Trump declined to sign *The 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act* letting the bill become law without his signature, as a protest for the Senate not passing the *Save America Act*. The bill will make housing less expensive and passed the House and Senate by large margins. See what's in the act here. <https://tinyurl.com/38x3j2ph>

The *Take Care of America's Veterans Act* (H.R. 9237/S. 4744), a legislative package of 60 veteran's bills that would advance more than 20 standalone MOAA-supported bills containing reforms the association has championed for some time, stalled in mid-July just before a final vote. Speaker Johnson pulled the bill claiming there is disinformation that needs to be clarified. The pause may last several weeks while issues involving funding are resolved. More information here. <https://tinyurl.com/ymcffsac>

The Sunshine Protection Act, an effort supported by President Trump, passed the House on 14 July. The bill would make daylight saving time permanent nationwide eliminating the twice-yearly clock changes. The bill goes to the Senate that unanimously approved a similar measure in 2022 that stalled in the House. Alabama is ready to execute having [passed a trigger law in 2021](#) to participate if a federal law is passed.

Congress wants to regulate the NCAA. The SEC and Big Ten conferences are negotiating with lawmakers for changes in the *Protect College Sports Act*, which has bipartisan support in the Senate. But a bill almost certainly will not pass without changes supported by two conferences whose footprint covers 26 states (52 senators) and no fewer than 220 House districts. Changes are wanted for Title I of the bill which have to do with details of what gets regulated and how, and changes for Title II mostly dealing with leagues pooling broadcasting rights and preventing the **creation of a super league that would largely blow up the NCAA**. Details here: <https://tinyurl.com/bdw9cjsx>

Alabama Legislation:

Five new Alabama Laws went into effect 1 July 2026:

School Safety: HB7 Increases penalties for making terrorist threats to a Class B felony for first-degree offenses involving schools. It requires schools to immediately report threats to law enforcement,

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HCMOAA Treasurer's Report June 2026

Submitted by Col Dave McKinney, USAF (Ret)

1. The June 2026 Treasurer's Report is presented herein. Details are attached.

2. Monthly Summary:

	Operating Funds	Savings
Starting Balance	\$10,216.25	\$1,703.95
Income	\$ 00.00	\$ 0.01
Expenses	\$ 1,038.12	\$ 0.00
Ending Balance	\$ 9,178.13	\$1,703.96

3. Notable income: None.

4. Notable expenses: May Luncheon, Tut Fan BBQ.

5. Chapter Saving account activity is limited to interest.

6. The Chapter holds a Certificate of Deposit (CD) in the amount of \$21,013.57. This CD will reach maturity on July 8, 2026. It will be renewed then at the best rate available.

7. The Chapter's Operating Fund contains \$1,188.30 in reserved funds in support of the RAD Luncheon for the Retirees.

Scholarship Fund Donations

The Chapter has an active scholarship program - we issue several scholarships each year to deserving area students. **Please consider donating.** Contact Rick West, at rickw675@att.net or 256.776.6901 for details.

The Scholarship Fund operates on a calendar year basis. Remember that the fund is fully tax deductible - 501(c)(3). **100% of all donations goes toward scholarships.**

Note: The below amounts reflect only donations directly to the fund. Golf Tournament monies are tracked separately and presented to the membership following the tournament.

Scholarship Fund Donations Received During July 2026

None

Total received for July:	\$0.00
Total received CY26:	\$250.00



Huntsville Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
P.O. Box 1301 - Huntsville, AL 35807
www.huntsvillemoaa.org



Membership Application or Renewal

Yes - I'd like to add my voice to the Huntsville Chapter!

☐ New	☐ One Year \$10*	If New, how did you hear about us? ☐ MOAA National ☐ Local event ☐ Letter / e-mail from HCMOAA ☐ HCMOAA website ☐ Friend / acquaintance ☐ Other (Please explain _____)
☐ Renewal**	☐ Two Years \$20	
☐ Life Membership***	☐ Three Years \$30	

*New members joining after September 1st will have their membership paid through following calendar year

**If renewing just update any address or phone changes, verify e-mail address, and sign the form

***Interested in a Chapter Life Membership? Contact us for pricing (age-based)

_____ First Name	_____ MI	_____ Last Name
_____ Preferred Name	_____ Birth Date	_____ Spouse's Name
_____ Grade	_____ Branch of Service	_____ Period(s) of Active Duty (i.e. 1965-1990)

Membership in our MOAA Chapter is not the same as MOAA National membership. At a minimum, FREE "Basic" MOAA National membership is required. If you are not already a National member, we will add you as a Basic member. Again, it's FREE and provides several valuable benefits. Please contact us for more information.

MOAA National Membership Number

☐ Active	☐ Retired	☐ NG	☐ Former Officer	☐ Reserve	☐ Surviving Spouse
_____ Mailing Address		_____ City		_____ State	_____ Zip
_____ Phone Number		_____ E-mail Address		_____ Signature	

Recruiting

You are the best recruiting tool the Chapter has. Tell your eligible friends & associates about our Chapter – the best in Alabama. We have the lowest membership rate in the country at \$10. One can also sign up for multiple years.

Direct questions to MAJ Bruce Robinson at 256-426-0525 or brobinso1976@gmail.com.

We also offer a Chapter Life Membership – COL John Fairlamb - 256-539-0161 or fairlambjrf@comcast.net - has the details.

Spread the word!



Membership Meeting
26 August 2026
The Summit Club on Redstone Arsenal
1030 – Meet & Greet
1100 - Lunch

Guest Speaker: Honorable Dale Strong
Member of Congress

Representative Dale W. Strong was sworn in to serve Alabama's Fifth Congressional District in January 2023.

Representative Strong serves on the House Appropriations Committee, where he is on three key Subcommittees: Commerce, Justice, and Science, as Vice Chair; Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development; and Legislative Branch. Strong also serves as the Chairman of the Homeland Security Emergency Management and Technology Subcommittee.

Before going to Washington, DC, Strong served as the Chairman of the Madison County Commission, the second-largest county in the state. He served in local government for 26 years, starting as the youngest Republican elected official in Alabama and eventually earning the title of the Madison County Commission's first-ever Republican chairman.

Strong took a business-minded approach to local government. He reduced the county workforce, improved department efficiency, and implemented sound financial management—without raising taxes. Strong brings the same common-sense approach he used in local government to Washington, D.C.

A true public servant, Strong has spent his entire adult life as a committed first responder. Starting as a junior volunteer firefighter and 911 dispatcher, Strong has 35 years of service as an EMT and 41 years as a volunteer firefighter, and he still answers calls to this day.

He has been married to Laura Toney Strong for 25 years and has two children: Whitney and Harrison.

Menu: Country Fried Steak with White Pepper Gravy; Baked Chicken – Bone-In; House Tossed Salad with Ranch Dressing; Wild and Long Grain Garden Rice; Apple Cobbler; Rolls with Butter; Iced Tea, Water and Coffee

Cost: \$20 for Chapter members and families; \$25 for non-members / guests – pay at the door – cash, check, credit/debit card. **Exact change is appreciated.**

RSVP: COL John Vanderbleek, 256-893-1565, jvbleek78@gmail.com NLT 22 August 2026.



25 Birthdays in August

COL John D Rivenburgh, USA
Mrs. Judith McKinley Jr
Col Frederick J Driesbach, USAF
COL William A Holbrook, USA
COL Michael C Barron, USA
Col William D McKinney, USAF
COL William J Roberts, USA
LTC David A Diehl, USA
COL Ronald C Crowley, USA
LTC Richard A Carter, USA
MAJ Albert G Lang, USA
COL Ronald N Funderburk, USA
MAJ Raymond L Springsteen, USA

COL James Bacon, USA
Lt Col Ronald G Harvey, USAF
CW5 Paul M Steele, USA
LTC Frank J Caravella, USA
Lt Col Garry M Moore, USAF
Mrs. Carol H Freyder
COL Gene Lesinski, USA
CDR David B Campbell, USN
LTC Norman P Hopkins, USA
CPT Camden J Kent Jr, USA
Capt William L Jackson, US
COL Arthur S Irish, USA

If we missed your birthday, it's because we don't have it on file. Please e-mail your birth date to MAJ Bruce Robinson at brobinso1976@gmail.com so it can be included in future newsletters. Thank you.

Chaplain's Corner – continued from page 8

Yet when that diagnosis comes, you say why me? You recount all the ways that you've been faithful, recounting the many ways that you have been faithful to God. And now, like David, you find yourself imploring God to answer your prayer, to show his unfailing love by using His power to heal you.

This same scenario can be felt with any major life event, where you find yourself in a tight spot and even though you've been faithful and followed everything, yet you can find no way out except by the loving grace of God.

Take time in your busy schedule to thank God for His faithfulness, knowing that He will provide refuge when you need it, knowing that we just might not understand His mysterious ways. God is faithful, all the time.

If you would like to share prayer requests or contact me. I can be reached at MOAChaplain@gmail.com or call/text (334)467-6860.





*Our deepest sympathy and prayers are
extended to the families and friends of:*

TAPS

None this month

*Gone but not forgotten for their dedicated support and service to our Country.
We will miss these outstanding Leaders and Patriots.*



5 Ways to Avoid Debt Relief Scams Targeting Servicemembers and Veterans

Nearly 13,000 “military consumers” – servicemembers, veterans, and their family members – reported debt collection scams to the Federal Trade Commission in 2025, behind only bank- and lender-related fraud [within the military community](#). Debt management scams, including mortgage-related fraud, cost military consumers nearly \$9 million last year.

These scams take advantage of the financially vulnerable, offering promises of debt relief that instead can lead to identity theft and more money trouble. And many are created with military-connected targets in mind.

Here’s some advice to help steer clear of these scams, courtesy of [MilitaryConsumer.gov](#), [the VA](#), and other sources. Keep up to date on the latest scam news, and review best practices to stay safe, at [MOAA’s Scam and Fraud Prevention Resources page](#).

1. Confusing Contact

Scammers may reach out via email, text, or social media and portray themselves as a reputable financial company, often one that’s service-connected. Even if the name sounds familiar and the offer sounds

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legitimate, receiving an unsolicited offer out of the blue is an early red flag. If you decide to learn more, go to the official website of the financial firm (not through a link in the message) and reach out through legitimate channels.

Never heard of the company before and unsure where to start your research? Find your state's [consumer protection office](#).

2. Advance Payment

Debt relief companies cannot charge a fee before they remove or reduce your debt. Any offers that involve upfront payment should be ignored.

Some scammers may not be as direct with their request, offering instead to enroll you in a debt-relief service (possibly “exclusive” to military members or veterans). Others may insist any debt payments be made to them directly instead of to your creditors. These are clear signs of fraud.

3. Aggressive Claims

Legitimate debt relief agencies *will not*:

- Threaten you with criminal charges or jail time over unpaid debts.
- Offer to simply “erase” debts or negative credit information.
- Refuse to provide details on the debt in question, or to provide a contact number or address to verify their services.

4. False Confidence

A [Naval Criminal Investigative Service \(NCIS\) warning](#) outlines a particularly insidious scam type, where a debt relief scammer will offer to forward money to help the victim begin paying off debts. After the victim accepts the money, the scammer asks the victim to wire a portion of it to a third party ... only to use the bank account information to set up loans in the victim's name.

These [confidence-building scams](#) take [many forms](#), but all are designed to separate the victim from their money or personal data, or both.

5. Real Solutions

Many of those facing mounting debts may fall victim to fraud because they are not aware of legitimate relief programs. Some examples:

- The [VA offers support](#) for those facing debts related to benefit overpayment and copay charges.
- The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau offers do-it-yourself advice for [addressing credit report problems](#), which could help correct credit scores and open up more financial alternatives.
- Servicemembers and retirees may qualify for [military-connected financial relief programs](#). 

VA Benefit Claims Backlog drops below 70K for First Time since 2020

The Department of Veterans Affairs today announced the backlog of Veterans waiting for VA disability compensation and pension benefit claims fell below 70,000 for the first time since February 2020, during the first Trump Administration.

Hitting this milestone means the department has now cut the backlog of Veterans waiting for VA benefits by over 74% since Jan. 20, 2025, after it increased 24% under the Biden Administration.

A VA claim for compensation or pension is considered backlogged once it has been pending in the claims inventory for more than 125 days. In 2013, 70% of claims were older than 125 days — the most ever — compared to just 11.6% today.

VA has also reduced the average time it takes to process a claim to a record low. Today, claims take an average of 77.7 days to process – the fastest ever. Since the second Trump Administration took office, VA has decided more than one million claims in less than 30 days.

“This is what putting Veterans first looks like,” said VA Secretary Doug Collins. “We are incredibly proud of these historic numbers, which mean faster decisions, better service and more benefits for the men and women who have worn the uniform.”

This milestone is one of many landmark VA achievements during the second Trump Administration, including:

- Opening 38 new VA healthcare facilities, expanding health care access for Veterans around the country.
- Processing more than 3 million disability compensation and pension claims in FY 2025, an all-time high that shattered the previous record set in FY 2024.
- Offering Veterans more than 3 million appointments outside of normal operating hours, which gives Veterans more timely and convenient options for care.
- Permanently housing 51,936 homeless Veterans across the country in FY 2025, the highest total in seven years.

VA encourages all Veterans to visit [Choose.VA.gov](https://www.choose.va.gov) to learn more and apply for the care and benefits they have earned.



These Alarms Signal a Cryptocurrency or Gift Card Scam

Overview

While legislators debate consumer protections for cryptocurrency and gift cards, scammers continue to exploit these hard-to-trace currencies. Whenever someone instructs you to pay with either, disengage. Err on the side of caution and don't give anyone who asks for either form of currency the benefit of the doubt.

Wouldn't it be great if there were a surefire way to tell if a scam was afoot? Believe it or not, there is. If any person, business, or government entity requires you to pay them cryptocurrency or via a gift card, it's a scam.

But if that's all it takes to spot a scam, how did fraudsters rake in \$1.78 billion in crypto payments and \$233 million in gift card payments in 2025, according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)?

It's simple: Scammers are motivated by the prospect of a good haul, and they'll jump through any hoop for the chance to score big. Rest easy, though, we're on top of their latest tricks. In this article, we'll share three sets of alarm bells that can signal a scam is afoot: common storylines, tactics, and payment requests.

Why scammers prefer crypto and gift cards

Scammers like dollars that come their way via cryptocurrency or gift cards because such money moves quickly and is less traceable than, for example, money they could get through credit card payments, cashed checks, or bank account transfers.

Plus, fraudsters like how easy it is for their "marks" to access cryptocurrency and gift cards. After all, crypto kiosks at grocery stores now offer cash-for-crypto options, and everywhere from pharmacies to gas stations sell gift cards.

Legislators are trying to catch up to the criminals with industry regulations and consumer protections that address the currencies.

In the meantime, Stefan Muehlbauer—head of U.S. government affairs at digital asset auditing firm CertiK—says education is one of the best ways to stay protected. As he told Decrypt, "By the time a victim is at a kiosk, they are already deep in the scammer's trance." That means the goal is to spot the scam much earlier.

Alarm bell #1: You encounter one of these common storylines

Scammers rely on a handful of common storylines to reel in victims. Since these narratives have been around for years, fraudsters have fine-tuned who they target, the tools they use (texts, phone calls, websites, apps, QR codes, etc.), and how they deliver the pitch.

Some of these may sound ridiculous, but a smooth-talking scammer can sell sand in the desert.

- **Blackmail scams:** The scammer says they have compromising images, videos, or information about you or a loved one and demands payment in exchange for keeping it out of the public.
- **Impersonator scams:** The scammer impersonates someone they aren't to get their victims to pay them. That might be an authority (such as the local police or IRS) or a representative from a well-known company (such as Amazon or Apple). These fakers might tell you that you owe money or that they owe you a refund.

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- **Job scams:** The scammer advertises or otherwise offers a job with great benefits and pay. The hitch? You must “pay to play.” These payments might be pitched as training, equipment, or enrollment fees.
- **Prize scams:** The scammer congratulates you for being a lucky winner. Before you can get your prize, however, they inform you that you have to pay related fees, taxes, delivery costs, etc.
- **Romance scams:** The scammer “meets” you over the phone or email, or via a dating site or app. They flirt with you, and, over time, they confide in you, sharing an investment opportunity or an economic hardship they or a family member is experiencing.
- **Reimbursement scam:** The scammer “mistakenly” sends you a check. They tell you to go ahead and deposit the check, then reimburse them. You can even pocket some of the money, they say, as thanks for your honesty and trouble. (Spoiler alert: Their check to you bounces, but not before you’ve paid them.)
- **Tech support scams:** The scammer sends word that your device needs updating, upgrading, or protecting. If you fork over funds, they promise to make your hardware safe and operational.

Alarm bell #2: You run into these typical tactics

Beyond classic plotlines, scammers often use these common tactics to pressure you into acting.

- They rush and isolate you. You’re told to act fast or face consequences. The situation feels urgent or like it’s getting worse by the minute. You may also be told not to tell anyone or not to look things up—cutting off outside input right when you need it.
- They sound convincing and come prepared. The scammer has an answer for everything and brushes off your doubts. They may know details about you—your name, location, or habits—which makes it feel legit. Their messages, websites, and documents often look polished and professional.
- They keep you off balance. Plans to verify or meet fall through—there’s always an excuse. At the same time, they might switch from friendly to forceful, helpful to impatient, making it harder to think clearly.

Alarm bell #3: You’re told to pay via cryptocurrency or gift card

As noted earlier, if anyone or any entity asks you to pay via crypto or gift card, rest assured, it’s a scam. Be forewarned, though, that the scammer might spend hours, days, or even months wearing down your defenses before they sound this would-be alarm bell.

Stop in your tracks if you’re directed to:

- Convert cash into cryptocurrency and transfer it to a phone number or QR code they supply.
- Buy a specific type of gift card (anything from eBay to Google Play) and share the card’s number and PIN with them.
- Pay for the gift card or cryptocurrency they want you to buy with a digital card or app, like Cash App or Venmo.
- Purchase an item or service using cryptocurrency. 

Legislative – continued from page 10

suspend accused students and mandate psychological evaluations before a return hearing. Students found to have violated the law could be expelled. The law also applies to threats made to hospitals, nursing homes and other facilities for housing disabled or immobile people.

School chaplains: HB8 allows local school boards to adopt policies that allow for volunteer chaplains at K-12 public schools. The chaplains could be available to provide support, services and programs at the request of teachers. Chaplains would be required to undergo a criminal background check and must have completed a recognized chaplain training program.

Religious time for public school students: SB248 requires public school boards to let students leave campus with parental permission during the day for off-campus religious instruction programs run by outside organizations.

Senate Bill 211 (SB 211): Allows public education employees to directly donate their unused sick leave days to other school employees, even across different school districts.

Senate Bill 197 (SB 197): Streamlines food truck rules by replacing local city-by-city checks with a single annual state-recognized health inspection and fire inspection valid across Alabama.

For more information, find links to all 5 bills here. [[2](#)]

Finally, the [Cryptocurrency Kiosk Fraud Prevention Act \(HB303\)](#), signed into law on April 8, 2026, to stop crypto ATM scams. Some have lost thousands using these machines. The law sets transaction caps, mandates fraud warnings, and prohibits kiosks inside banks. This law Imposes strict civil and criminal penalties for operators who break the rules, and establishes mechanisms for handling confirmed fraud refund requests that become effective on October 1, 2026.



Huntsville Chapter Objectives

- Promote the aims of the national MOAA organization
- Further the legislative and other objectives of MOAA through grassroots activity
- Foster fraternal relationships among retired, active and former officers of the uniformed services
- Maintain liaison and a positive relationship with the Redstone Arsenal Garrison and other military commands in the Northern Alabama area
- Provide a social venue for members to meet periodically and enjoy fellowship with people of similar interests and backgrounds
- Promote and assist worthy community activities
- Provide useful services and information for members and their dependents and survivors
- Provide representation to the Alabama Council of Chapters of MOAA
- Provide representation to the Northern Alabama Veterans and Fraternal Organizations Coalition
- Protect the rights and interests of service retirees and active-duty military members in matters of state legislation through the Alabama Council of Chapters

Benefits of Membership

We are the largest of the 13 chapters in Alabama and have over 250 members. We have been recognized by National MOAA for the last four years with Level of Excellence awards. We provide grassroots support for issues that affect us and are active in both the Redstone Arsenal and Madison County communities. Why should you join our chapter? This is what we do, and what's in it for you:

- Partnership with Redstone Arsenal agencies – Fox Army Health Clinic, Army Community Service, MWR, PX/Commissary, Military Retiree Council
- Membership in the North Alabama Veterans and Fraternal Organizations Coalition (NAVFOC) – plugged in to the larger Veterans associations “big picture”
- Recognizing leadership – JROTC/ROTC awards and “gold bar” ceremonies
- Recognizing potential – Scholarship Awards program with the Redstone Arsenal Military and Civilians Club
- Community service/relations – annual Tut Fann Veterans Home BBQ, Memorial Day wreath laying ceremony, Veterans Day parade and events, Retiree Appreciation Day
- Camaraderie – Monthly meetings & breakfasts, parties, golf tournament
- Information – Monthly newsletter, web site, Personal Affairs, guest speakers
- Legislative action – grassroots activities, support for National MOAA agenda
- Venue for getting involved

Please visit our award-winning chapter website at <http://huntsvillemoaa.org> where you can find out more about chapter activities.

Attention Members

One of the best sources of income for the Chapter comes from advertisements like the ones in this newsletter. You are the best resource for identifying potential advertisers. The next time you go out to dinner, or to shop, or to get a haircut, or to get your car fixed – ask the business manager if they would consider advertising. Let them know that the newsletter reaches our nearly 300 members each month. All they can say is “no”.

If they are interested or desire more information, please let Bruce Robinson know, and he will follow up with them. His contact information is brobinso1976@gmail.com or 256-426-0525.

Important Dates in August

- 1 August - Anne Frank penned her last entry into her diary (1944)
- 2 August - President Warren G. Harding died suddenly while in office (1923)
- 2 August- Albert Einstein wrote a letter to President Roosevelt concerning atomic weapons (1939)
- 2 August - The Iraqi army invaded Kuwait (1990)
- 3 August - Christopher Columbus set sail from Palos, Spain (1492)
- 5 August - Film star Marilyn Monroe died at age 36 (1962)
- 6 August - The first atomic bomb was dropped over Hiroshima (1945)
- 6 August – The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was signed into law (1965)
- 7 August – The US Congress approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (1964)
- 8 August - Soviet Russia declared war on Japan (1945)
- 9 August - The second atomic bombing of Japan occurred over Nagasaki (1945)
- 9 August - Richard M. Nixon resigned the presidency (1974)
- 11-16 August - Six days of riots began in the Watts area of Los Angeles (1965)
- 13 August - The Berlin Wall came into existence (1961)
- 13 August – Monthly Board Meeting – 1100 – Java Café**
- 14 August - President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act (1935)
- 14 August – Japan surrenders, ending World War II (1945)
- 15 August - Woodstock began in a field near Bethel, New York (1969)
- 16 August - Gold was discovered in the Klondike River in Alaska (1896)
- 16 August – Elvis Presley died (1977)
- 17 August - The first transatlantic balloon trip was completed by three Americans (1978)
- 18 August - The 19th Amendment was ratified, granting women the right to vote (1920)
- 19 August – Golf Meeting – 1200 - Links**
- 21 August – Hawaii became the 50th state (1959)
- 22 August - A volcanic eruption under Lake Nios in Cameroon killed more than 1,500 persons (1986)
- 24-25 August - British forces burned the Capitol, the White House and other public buildings (1814)
- 26 August - Monthly Member Meeting – 1030 Meet & Greet – Summit Club**
- 26 August – A volcano erupted on the island of Krakatoa, killing over 36,000 people (1883)
- 28 August – The march on Washington, DC, attended by over 250,000 people (1963)
- 31 August - Britain's Princess Diana died at age 36 (1997)

