

Volume 65, Issue 3
March 2026



Huntsville Chapter
Military Officers Association of America

The Sentinel

Huntsvillemoaa.org



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

Greetings all!

Is it March already? Just amazing how fast time flies by!

I hope you all enjoyed February's luncheon as much as I did. I appreciate Bill Roark taking the time to give some insight as to what it takes to form a highly successful business! Thanks to Nick Mikus for arranging the guest speaker!

March's membership meeting will be on the 25th. Please put it on your calendar now! Better yet, please **RSVP now**! 😊 Our guest speaker will be Dr. Dillon Fritz - VP for Innovation and Economic Development at the Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology. If you have been following the news, there has been lots of talk about genetic modeling and modification lately – especially out of the UK – and hopefully Dr. Fritz can set the story straight for us! See page 13 for meeting details. RSVPs are open - **RSVP to John Vanderbleek at jvbleek78@gmail.com or 256.893.1565.** Remember that family and guests are always welcome.

Our kick-off **Scholarship Fund Golf Tournament** meeting will be held March 11th at the Weeden Grill at The Links golf course. The meeting starts at 1200 but some of us will be there early for lunch. Please join us – this is a wonderful cause but we really need help and would like this to be an ALL CHAPTER endeavor! Hope to see you there!

We are starting the JROTC award season! Once again, my sincere thanks to those who have helped in the past and to those who have already volunteered to help this year. I will keep you advised of dates/times for the presentations and put out calls for presenters!

We continue the planning for many events, including the April Gold Bar Ceremony and the Tut Fann annual BBQ for the Vets. Keep an eye out for updates in future emails.

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

Rick

This month's membership meeting in on 25 March – the guest speaker is Dr. Dillon Fritz, PhD, VP at Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology

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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:

Congress has passed 11 of 12 budget bills to fund FY 2026 operations through September. However, due to serious conflict over what restrictions to put on ICE operations, Congress has not passed a bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and DHS will remain shut down until Congress can reach a compromise. This leaves ICE, FEMA, TSA and the Coast Guard without budgets for 2026.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act provides Anniston Army Depot with nearly \$1 billion for five projects at the depot:

- Component Remanufacturing Facility: \$495 million
- Small Arms Warehouse: \$280.6 million
- Vehicle Paint Shop: \$69.5 million
- Replace Buildings 293, 294, and 295: \$60 million
- Guided Missile Maintenance Building: \$44 million

The reconciliation funds also include \$68 million for design of the new Space Command Headquarters in Huntsville.

Congress drafted a long-awaited farm Bill that builds on provisions in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. The [Farm, Food, and National Security Act](#) expands investments in the specialty crop industry, increases resources for young farmers and moves the Food for Peace program to the Department of Agriculture from the now-shuttered U.S. Agency for International Development. The legislation also establishes a rural childcare initiative, a three-year program to address the lack of childcare options in agricultural communities, strengthens the Rural Hospital Technical Assistance Program and improves a rural broadband program.

The House passed a sweeping elections reform bill, Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE America) Act, that mandates requirements such as presenting photo ID when voting and citizenship verification to register to vote, and places restrictions on how states administer and maintain their election systems. The bill would require mail-in ballots be received by the close of polls on election day to be counted, with an exception for military members stationed overseas. It would require states to use auditable paper ballots for a federal election and would implement stronger routine voter list maintenance requirements and ban universal vote by mail systems by requiring voters to request a ballot to vote by mail.

How the *SAVE Act* will fare in the Senate is unclear because there are provisions in the House bill that could be problematic. The [bill also says](#) that “ a form of identification issued consistent with the requirements of the REAL ID Act of 2005 that indicates the applicant is a citizen of the United States” can be used, but REAL IDs in most states don’t indicate citizenship status. This means another form of approved documentation, such as a birth certificate, would need to be provided which could be a [barrier for the 69 million married women](#) who took their spouse’s last name and whose birth certificates don’t

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2025-2026 GOVERNING BOARD

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Personal Affairs: Lt Col Gerald Haynes, USAF-Ret, 256-882-7857, jerry15@hiwaay.net

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Chapter Hospitality: Vacant

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LIFE MEMBERSHIP TRUST

COL John Fairlamb, USA-Ret, 256-539-0161, fairlambjrf@comcast.net (June 2026)

MAJ Monte C. Washburn, USA-Ret, 256-301-5457, monte@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

It's St. Patrick's Day savings at your Exchange! Save plenty of green when you shop your Exchange! Spring plants are anticipated early April. It's always a popular event so be on the look-out.

Be sure to always check the clearance section of each area in the store. Check the <https://www.shopmyexchange.com> web site every day for the super daily special. At this site, you can also see the latest specials, weekly sales, and sweepstakes.

Don't forget, if you don't have a STAR card, apply for one and ALL your first day Exchange purchases are an additional 10% off (sometimes even more)! That's on top of any sale or clearance price!

For your good grades student ask an Exchange associate for entry forms for the You Made the Grade Rewards. Enter for a chance to win several gift cards up to \$2,000.

The Gun shop has started sales again. Check at the counter for the latest sales on firearms and ammo. As always shop early for best selection.

Shopette

The construction is over for the new food section – tacos, pizza, burritos, coffee, drinks. Additional construction continues for the beer and liquor sections.

A new humidior cigar section is near the self-check-out lanes.

Check out the spirits and wines of the month selection! They have the latest Muscadine wines: lightly sweet to sweet table wines – from here in Alabama! Also, for St. Patrick's Day sample the extensive collection of Irish Whiskey and the Irish Cream Liqueur's. New is the Bailey's Strawberry and Cream, Espresso, Chocolate, and Deliciously Light.

For tequila lovers there is Tres Generaciones and Delon. For spicy try Ole Smoky Mango Habanero.

Commissary

Check out the coupons on the right side of the entrance and the organic section on your right as you enter the commissary. Plus, the meat mark

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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

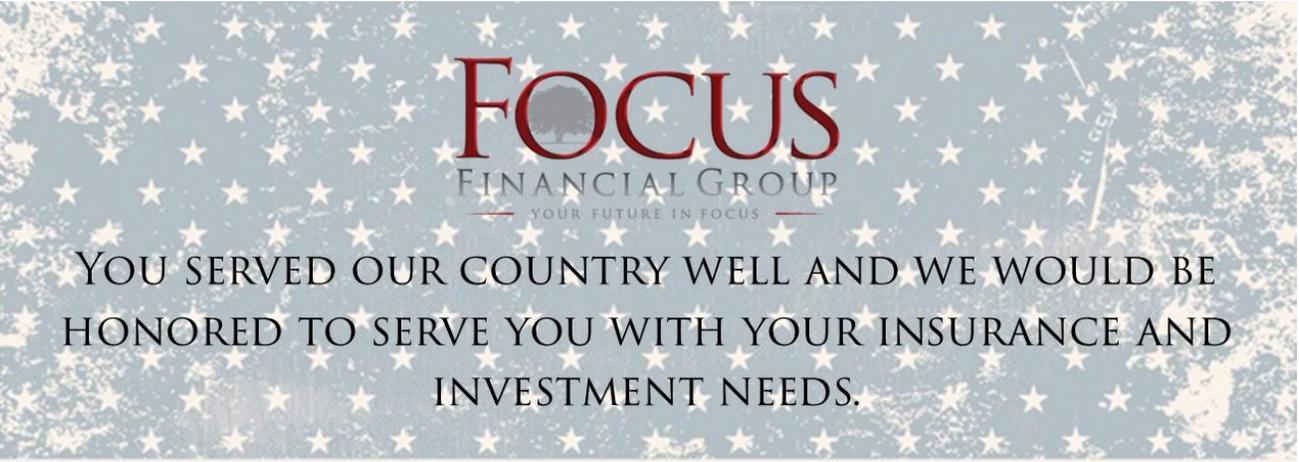
Persons to contact are:

Army Representative:
LTC Nicholas M. Mikus
256-604-7767
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Navy/USMC Representative:
COL Raymond G. Regner
256-851-5903
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Air/Space Force Representative:
Col Gerald C. Maxwell
256-606-5282,
avatarmax@gmail.com

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



FAHC Happenings

Flu Shot update:

- All TRICARE beneficiaries, to include retirees, may walk in to the Fox Immunization Clinic M-F from 0900 - 1400, except 1230 - 1300, for their flu shots.
- Also available FREE of charge through any TRICARE Retail Pharmacy

If you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment at Fox, please call 256-955-8888 option 2.

Please continue to check our Facebook and Instagram pages for any unexpected closure information. Advice nurses remain available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 256-955-8888, option 3, 1-800-874-2273, option 1, or web/video chat at <https://mhsnurseadvice.com/>

Managing Diabetes Class

Please join us on the first Tuesday of each month in The Fox Den from 10-11:30 a.m. This class is for those who have been diagnosed (newly diagnosed or living with diabetes for years) or are supporting someone with Diabetes.

- February 3, 2026
- March 3, 2026
- April 7, 2026
- May 5, 2026
- June 2, 2026

- Education
- Helpful Tips
- Self-Management
- Peer to Peer Support

FOX ARMY HEALTH CENTER

Where: The Burrow
When: First Tuesday
Time: 10-11:30 a.m.

4100 Goss Road
Redstone Arsenal, AL 35809

RSVP:
Heather Hough
256-955-8888
EXT: 1294

Hypertension and Beyond

Please join us on the fourth Thursday of each month in The Burrow from 12:30-2:00 p.m. This class will provide participants with actionable steps to improve their health and take charge of their blood pressure.

- February 26, 2026
- March 26, 2026
- April 23, 2026
- May 28, 2026
- June 25, 2026

Fox Army Health Center
4100 Goss Road
Redstone Arsenal, AL 35809

Where: The Burrow
When: 4th Thursday
Time: 12:30-2:00 p.m.

RSVP:
Heather Hough
256-955-8888
EXT: 1294

THE MIND AND BODY DETOX

PERI -/ MENOPAUSE EDITION

A 6- WEEK EMPOWERMENT SERIES FOR WOMEN

Wednesdays, April 1—May 6
10:00—11:15 AM

The Burrow, Fox Army Health Center
LIMITED TO 10 PARTICIPANTS

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To register, call the Dietician's office:
256-955-8888 extension 1294
Register by June 9, 2025

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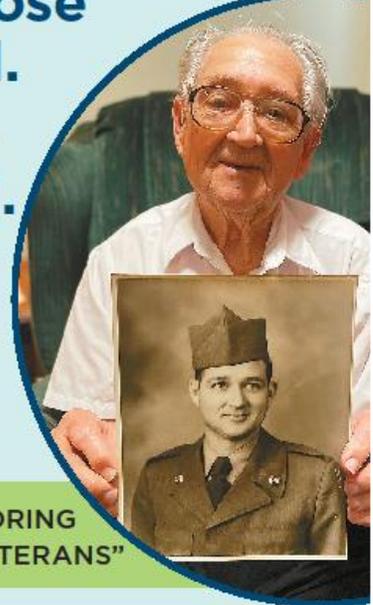
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Financial Advisor

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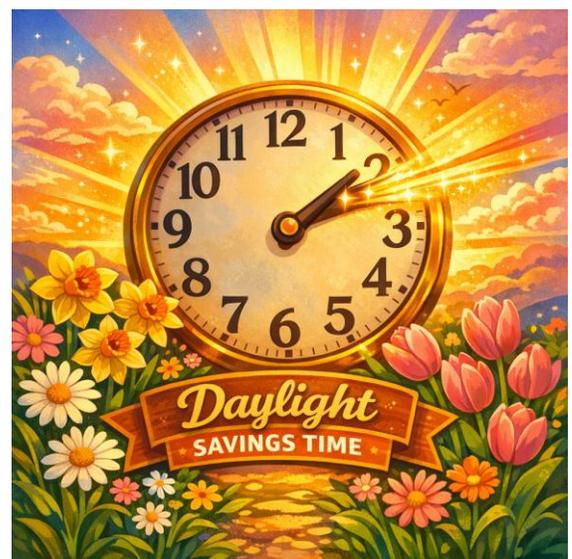


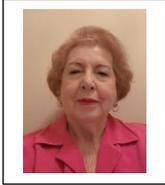
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5PM- 11PM TUESDAY - SATURDAY
HAPPY HOUR DAILY 5PM- 6:30PM





Redstone Arsenal Widow's Luncheon

Mrs. Bonnie Treadway
256-859-1484

Our next luncheon will be held on Thursday, 19 March
at the Parkway Hibachi Buffet, Parkway Place Mall, 2801 Memorial Parkway
We gather at 11 AM - Everyone will be called

Surviving Spouse Corner: Getting to Know TAPS

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) founder Bonnie Carroll accepts MOAA's Distinguished Service Award on behalf of her organization during a 2023 ceremony in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Sean Shanahan/for MOAA)

The [Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors \(TAPS\)](#) directly supports all grieving the death of an active duty servicemember or veteran, regardless of the survivor's phase in their grief journey.

TAPS' team of experts, staff, compassionate volunteers, and peer-support network stand ready 24/7 to embrace bereaved families, friends, and battle buddies and connect them with immediate and lifelong tangible resources and emotional care. This includes casework and education assistance, community-based connections, in-person events, a thriving online community, and the [National Military Survivor Helpline](#), (800) 959-TAPS (8277), which is answered by a knowledgeable, caring survivor care team member anytime, day or night.

TAPS was founded in the wake of a military tragedy following a 1992 C-12 crash in Alaska that took the lives of eight soldiers. Among the grieving family members was Bonnie Carroll, the widow of Brig. Gen. Tom Carroll, USA. After realizing that no support network was in place for the families of the fallen, Bonnie spent two years researching best practices while navigating her own grief alongside fellow survivors.

In 1994, TAPS officially opened its doors to military and veteran survivors. Today, Bonnie and the TAPS team have supported over 100,000 military and veteran survivors as they grieve, heal, and honor the life of their loved one.

Each day, an average of 26 new survivors connect with TAPS in search of support, resources, and community, such as:

- **Programs.** TAPS offers a wide variety of programming, seminars, online groups, and workshops. Learn more at [TAPS.org/programs](https://www.taps.org/programs).
- **Advocacy.** Efforts are dedicated to empowering survivors to use their voices to spark change while working closely with government leaders and lawmakers to advance policy and legislation that impacts life after unspeakable tragedy. Visit [TAPS.org/advocacy](https://www.taps.org/advocacy).
- **TAPS Magazine:** This quarterly publication, mailed to members/survivors, is a comprehensive resources for grieving families. Visit [TAPS.org/magazine](https://www.taps.org/magazine).
- **Facebook group.** In this group, a survivor can share and receive support from other survivors, staff, and professionals. Learn more at [Facebook.com/tapsorg](https://www.facebook.com/tapsorg).



Chaplain's Corner
Col Dave McKinney, USAF-Ret

Exodus 17:1-7
Water from the rock

17:1 From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. 17:2 The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?"

17:3 But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" 17:4 So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me."

17:5 The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. 17:6

I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. 17:7 He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"



We've all shared a common trait - we journeyed a lot while in the military. And I bet we could all list the stages, maybe in terms of assignment locations, specific assignments, or in the stage of life we found ourselves in.

There were a few assignments that were pretty tough, practicing launching nuclear missiles was a tough assignment. But one particular assignment I had was as a base contracting officer at Laughlin AFB in Del Rio TX. The assignment was great, and we learned to love the hot desert life we experienced. Yet, I had an O-6 boss who resented the authority that was given me by our HQ. As a warranted contracting officer, I controlled all the contracts on the base. I found my boss going behind me to my senior NCOs, which was pretty tough. It got so bad, I

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: 253
Regular Members: 215
Surviving Spouses: 38

New this month: 0
Deaths this month: 1
Renewals: 6

Welcome New Members to Huntsville Chapter MOAA

None this month

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

down section next to the salads and the clearance section next to the deli section. You can help out those less fortunate by buying a bag of groceries at the end of the check-out lanes.

New low carb pasta section near the deli. Be sure to check out the Amish section near the deli. I haven't found anything that isn't better than the commercial variety. Check out the International Isle for foods from all over the world. The manager will try to carry your favorites – especially if you have a UPC for your items you want.

Your commissary not only saves you an average of 30% or more, but also has links to healthy living and recipes at: <http://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living/index.cfm>. Your commissary has exclusive savings for you that varies each month. Check out the complete list every month at: [Shop Click2Go - Defense Commissary Agency](#). 

Upcoming Chapter (and other) Events

Huntsville Havoc Military Appreciation Night on 28 March. Tickets available at VBC Ticket Office and Still Serving Veterans.

April 22th – Gold Bar Ceremony. GO Guest Speaker TBD. Date could change based on ROTC schedule.

May 27th – MAJ Rogers GITMO Presentation rescheduled

June 13th – BBQ with the Vets at Tut Fann

June/July – No meeting

August/September/October – We are/will be working with the offices of several politicians, SPACECOM, and MOAA National to schedule these meetings.

September 11th – HCMOAA Scholarship Fund Golf Tournament

November – No Meeting

December 11th – HCMOAA Holiday Party at the Overlook at the Summit Club

match their current legal name.

The House passed a three-year extension of the *Affordable Care Act* enhanced subsidies that probably won't fly in the Senate where bipartisan lawmakers are working on a deal to address the expired enhanced ACA tax credits. Senators are looking at a 2-year extension with some amendments to the subsidies.

Alabama Legislation:

Governor Ivey signed SB 71 prohibiting Alabama from having stricter environmental regulations than the federal government. Per the bill, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) can only adopt new rules or change existing ones if it can prove immediate danger to public health, safety or welfare. It would require ADEM to use "best available science" and the "weight of scientific evidence" in those cases and requires ADEM to establish a "direct causal link" between harmful chemicals or pollutants and bodily harm to humans. Critics say this type of science doesn't exist and the requirement would delay help to those exposed to the pollutants.

A bill to limit screen time for children was sent to Gov Ivey on 26 February. [HB 78](#) would require licensed child-care facilities, public kindergarten classrooms and certain Pre-K classrooms to implement guidelines and training on screen time created by the Department of Early Childhood Education (ADECE) Research and Evaluation team.

Two legislators plan to file lottery bills to put a constitutional amendment before voters allowing a lottery and expanded gambling in the state. The proposed bills would put a yes or no question on the ballot, allowing state leaders to work out the details later.

The Alabama Senate gave final approval to a bill allowing prosecutors to seek the death penalty for those convicted of sexual assault of a child under the age of 12, setting up a possible court battle over its constitutionality. [HB 41](#), already passed by the House, passed the Senate 33-1 with no changes and Gov. Ivey signed the bill.

The Legislature is focusing on health issues. Both the House and Senate passed a bill that would require all health benefit plans to cover breast cancer screenings for women over 40 years old. [SB 177](#) requires all health benefit plans to align with all other Alabama health insurance plans and the federal Affordable Care Act coverage for mammograms and diagnostic imaging of abnormalities. Both Chambers have approved a bill that would require health insurance companies to cover prostate cancer screenings for all high-risk patients. [SB 19](#) would allow all men over 50 and high risk men over 40 to be [screened for prostate cancer](#) without any copays.

The heated debate over Alabama's system for taxing online sales has calmed down since the cities of Tuscaloosa and Mountain Brook dropped their suit against the Alabama Department of Revenue that argued the internet sales tax, known as the Simplified Sellers Use Tax (SSUT), is unconstitutional because cities are being short-changed by a tax that is lower than traditional sales taxes applied in brick-and-mortar stores. Several key legislators played hardball with those contesting the current process and Tuscaloosa and other municipalities now intend to work with the legislature to resolve their concerns.

The House unanimously passed the Sarah Marsh Heaven's 27 Camp Safety Act, named after 8-year-old Sarah Marsh from Birmingham and 26 other campers and counselors who were killed in a [flood](#) on July 4, 2025, at Camp Mystic in Texas. [The bill](#) requires overnight camps in Alabama to meet higher safety standards, including creating plans for emergencies and evacuations and procuring emergency preparedness licenses from the Alabama Emergency Management Agency and prohibits camps from building cabins in floodplains.

The House passed [House Bill 363](#) which creates a new crime by making [disrupting a worship service](#) a Class C felony. The bill lists unlawful protest, riot, disorderly conduct, harassment or obstruction of people entering or exiting church property as disruptive activities. If convicted, a person could be sentenced to up to 10 years in jail and could potentially be charged a fine of \$15,000. HB 363 moves to the Senate.

A tax Holiday for guns. [HB 360](#) would create the Second Amendment Sales Tax Holiday during the last week in August. Under the bill, cartridge cases, bullets, primer, gunpowder, shotguns, rifles, pistols, revolvers, silencers, holsters, belts, hearing protection and cases would be eligible to be tax exempt. 



HCMOAA Treasurer's Report January 2026

Submitted by Col Dave McKinney, USAF (Ret)

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

2. Monthly Summary:

	Operating Funds	Savings
Starting Balance	\$11,661.58	\$1,703.88
Income	\$1,191.00	\$0.01
Expenses	\$300.00	\$0.00
Ending Balance	\$12,557.58	\$1,703.89

3. Notable income: Individual dues, social fees.

4. Notable expenses: Entertainment for Christmas Party.

5. Chapter Saving account activity is limited to interest.

6. The Chapter holds a Certificate of Deposit (CD) in the amount of \$20,558.07. This CD will reach maturity on March 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. Due to cancellation of this year's RAD, these funds will be held for support of future RADs.

Scholarship Fund Donations

The Chapter has an active scholarship program. In conjunction with the RSA Military & Civilians' Club, we issue 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 go 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 February 2026

None

Total received for February:	\$0.00
Total received CY26:	\$0.00



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!

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

<input type="checkbox"/> Active	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> NG	<input type="checkbox"/> Former Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> Reserve	<input type="checkbox"/> Surviving Spouse
_____ Mailing Address	_____ City	_____ State	_____ Zip		
_____ Phone Number	_____ E-mail Address	_____ Signature			

Attention Annual Members

It is past the time to renew your membership for next year – don't risk being dropped from the rolls
 The Chapter has one of, if not the, lowest membership rates in the country at \$10

Those members needing to renew are PAST DUE and listed on page 19

You can also renew for multiple years and lock in that low rate
 Don't know when your membership expires? Contact MAJ Bruce Robinson at
 256-426-0525 or brobinso1976@gmail.com.

Don't want to worry about renewing ever again - consider becoming a Chapter Life Member – contact
 COL John Fairlamb at 256-539-0161 or fairlambjrf@comcast.net for the details



Membership Meeting
25 March 2026
1100 – Summit Club

Guest Speaker: Dillon Fritz, PhD
Vice President
Innovation & Economic Development
Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology

Dillon Fritz, PhD, is Vice President for Innovation and Economic Development at the Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology, where he leads the Institute’s strategy for innovation, entrepreneurship, and life-science–driven economic development. In this role, he oversees Hudson-Alpha’s commercialization programs, startup incubation and venture creation activities, and the growth of its research park and regional innovation centers, including efforts spanning Huntsville and the Wiregrass region of Alabama.

Fritz brings nearly two decades of experience advancing translational research and building innovation ecosystems across academia, healthcare, industry, and international sectors. Prior to joining Hudson-Alpha, he served as Director and Entrepreneur-in-Residence of the NIH-funded Commercialization Hub at the Texas Medical Center, where he guided academic and clinical innovators in translating early-stage biomedical technologies into startups and commercial products. His career also includes leadership roles as co-founder and CEO of a clinical genomics company, Head of Bio Innovation and Translational Research at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), and senior innovation positions with Saudi Aramco.

Fritz earned his Ph.D. in Biomedical Science from Florida State University College of Medicine and completed postdoctoral training as a National Cancer Institute Fellow at the Moffitt Cancer Center.

Menu: Southern Fried Chicken; Beef Lasagna; Green Beans; Garlic Mashed Potatoes; Peach Cobbler; Rolls w/ Butter; Iced Tea; Coffee; Water

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

RSVP: COL John Vanderbleek, 256-893-1565, jvbleek78@gmail.com NLT 20 March 2026.



16 Birthdays in March

LTC Raymond L Livingston Jr, USA
LTC James A Roy, USA
Lt Col Charles T Clements, USAF
COL John R Fairlamb, USA
Lt Col Brenda Armstrong, USAF
Col Scott G Patton, USAF
CAPT Steven M Guiliani, USN
Capt Richard A McKinley, USAF

Mrs. Margaret R Feist
LTC Nicholas M Mikus, USA
LTC Harry W Durgin, USA
COL Donald B Harmon, ARNG
CW4 Robert C Savage, USA
LTC Clarence R Longcor, USA
COL Roger S Matzkind, USA
LT James L Pointer, USN

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

quarreled with God and was ready to quit. I really wondered why my wife and I had come to this desert assignment to be constantly pummeled by my boss. I was encouraged to share my feelings with my superiors at our HQ. You might say I struck the rock. Once I shared my feelings, I was given top cover for the tough decisions I was having to make.

When you are facing a tough time on a stage in your journey, it's okay to quarrel with God. Just be sure to be honest with Him. Moses was asked by God why he quarreled with Him. When Moses was honest with God, God guided him and had him strike a rock producing water that the Israelites needed. When you're honest with God He will provide, maybe not in the ways that we are desiring, but in ways that He sees that we need.

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



Blessings, Dave



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

TAPS

BG William Fiorentino, USA-Ret of Madison, AL was called Home on February 10, 2026. He is predeceased by his parents, William 'Bill' and Carmela 'Millie' Fiorentino; his wife, Judith; and his brother, Robert, and survived by his sister, Laurette Dolan and several nieces and nephews as well as many close in-law relatives.

Some of the General's most demanding assignments included Program Executive Officer for the Forward Area Air Defense System (FAADS), Air Defense Systems Manager, Deputy Program Manager of the Ballistic Missile Defense Program Office, Director of the Army Space Study, Project Manager of the Joint Tactical Missile System during the Concept Development phase, Inspector General, Army Missile Command, Congressional Affairs Officer for the Army Chief of Research and Development, Instructor at the DoD Defense Weapons Systems Management Center, Logistics Advisor to the Viet Nam Army Training Command, Advisor to the Royal Thai Ministry of Research and Development (Bangkok) and Project Officer for MUD FLAP, the NIKE ZEUS satellite interceptor.

For his leadership and contributions, Bill earned numerous military awards and decorations, headed by the Distinguished Service Medal (two awards, the first as a Colonel), the Bronze Star, the Joint Service Commendation Medal (three awards), Meritorious Service Medal (two awards), Army Commendation Medal (two awards) and the Army and Office of the Secretary of Defense Identification Badges. In 1988, Bill was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Southeastern Institute of Technology and was inducted into the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Hall of Fame in 1990. He was recognized as a Distinguished Engineering Fellow, University of Alabama, College of Engineering in 1993, the New York City ROTC Hall of Fame in 2003, and most recently, the prestigious Major General J. Bruce Medaris Award was bestowed upon him in 2021.

It was however, in his role from 1979 to 1984 as Project Manager of the Pershing II weapon system during its development, operational testing, and initial deployment that General Fiorentino made his greatest contribution by nature of its impact upon international affairs. The Pershing Project Office under his direction was awarded the Army Superior Unit Award, the first time an Army Materiel Command unit ever received the honor.

Beyond his uniform and the Pentagon halls, Bill fueled the passion and dream of his soulmate and wife of 54 years, Judith, (born Judith Terissa Clippard) by helping her build and successfully operate Steel Prize Stables, a full-service equestrian training and boarding facility encompassing 32 acres with capacity for 25 horses. In 2023 Bill was approached by one of his instructors asking to buy the stables with the understanding that the Steel Prize name would be retained. He agreed.

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Retiring in 1988, General Fiorentino continued to work through various professional organizations to further the interests of the Ordnance Corps, the Army, the Community and the nation by serving on numerous Boards within corporations, non-profits, and faith-based service organizations. As Vice President of the Bicentennial Chapel Historical Society, he helped oversee the design and installation of large stained-glass windows in the Redstone Arsenal Chapel. These windows intricately depicted and honored our country's original 13 colonies.

Bill took tremendous pride when as President, Board of Directors (2003 – 2013) of Redstone Village, he led the planning of multimillion dollar expansion projects for the acclaimed continuing-care retirement community that opened in Huntsville in 2003.

Born in The Bronx, New York, Bill attended Fordham University where he not only earned a Bachelor of Science in Physics, but also won a spot on the All-American Collegiate Rifle Team in 1956. He was a member of the military Society of the Pershing Rifles and was an ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate. He also holds a Master of Science in Engineering from the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, and is a graduate of the Army Command and Staff College, and the Air Force War College.

Aside from traveling, Bill immensely enjoyed trying to solve the New York Times Crossword puzzles. Photography, reading, and woodworking were favorite hobbies throughout his life along with scuba diving on Kwajalein. While stationed there, he was detailed to Joint Task Force 8 on Christmas Island, where he witnessed a high-altitude nuclear air burst.

Visitation was held on Thursday, February 19, 2026, at Laughlin Service Funeral Home. A funeral Mass Service was held on Friday, February 20, 2026, at Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church. Burial for Judith and Bill will be at Arlington National Cemetery.

Gone but not forgotten for their dedicated support and service to our Country.

We will miss these outstanding Leaders and Patriots.



VA to invest all-time high of nearly \$5B to improve health care infrastructure

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced it will spend \$4.8 billion in fiscal year 2026 to modernize, repair and improve health care facilities as part of the Veterans Health Administration's Non-Recurring Maintenance program, which makes infrastructure improvements to health care facilities to ensure safe and effective patient care.

This is the largest single-year NRM investment in VA's history.

The NRM program funds one-time maintenance projects for facilities, equipment or infrastructure that are not part of routine, recurring maintenance. These projects include significant maintenance, replacements or upgrades needed to maintain operational capability and advance health care delivery.

“Under President Trump, VA is putting Veterans first, and this historic investment underscores that fact,” **said VA Secretary Doug Collins**. “Improved facilities, equipment and infrastructure mean better care for Veterans, and these funds will enable VA to achieve that goal.”

The funding will cover projects at VA facilities across the nation and includes:

- **\$2.8 billion** to repair and upgrade outdated infrastructure systems in medical facilities.
- **\$1 billion** for maintenance and modernization of electronic health record systems, including facility preparation for future EHRM updates.
- **\$500 million** for major building upgrades like elevators, electrical systems, and boiler plants.
- **\$500 million** to modernize medical centers for current and future care.

VA will determine specific projects on a quarterly basis. The full list of the projects for the [first quarter](#) of FY26 totals \$468 million.

2026 Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament

It's that time again. The golf committee will have its kick-off meeting on **11 March**, 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

Dietary Guidelines

There are now **new updates to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans** that can help you feel your best! These new recommendations focus on getting back to basics with nutrient rich, whole foods that fuel your body naturally.

Here's what the USDA recommends:

- **Boost Your Protein and Healthy Fats.** Think eggs, seafood, red meat, dairy, beans, nuts, and seeds. Aim for 6-7 servings per day (based on a 2,000-2,200 daily calorie level). And remember to keep saturated fats under 10% of your daily calories.
- **Load Up on Veggies and Fruits.** Fresh is fantastic, but frozen, canned, or dried work, too (just check for minimal added sugars). Shoot for 3 servings of colorful vegetables and 2 servings of fruit each day.
- **Choose Whole Grains.** Fiber-rich options like whole wheat, oats, and brown rice are your friends. Aim for 2-4 servings daily and cut back on refined carbs like white bread.

Whether you're managing a chronic condition or want to stay healthy as you age, these updated guidelines can help you feel strong and energized for years to come.

Heart Health

Is your heart healthy? Talk with your doctor to see if you need [cardiovascular disease screenings](#). Medicare Part B covers these tests if your doctor or other healthcare provider orders them.

Living a heart healthy lifestyle can help keep your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels normal — and lower your risk for heart disease and heart attack. If you're not sure you're at risk, now's a good time to talk with your doctor.

Tips to show your heart some love:

- **Stay active.** If possible, aim for 150 minutes of movement each week. Walking is a great start! Check with your doctor about which activities are right for you.
- **[Get enough sleep](#).** Aim for 7–9 hours a night. A good night's rest can help reduce the risk of heart disease.
- **Eat a heart-healthy diet.** Choose lots of vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, and whole grains — and try to limit salt.
- **Don't smoke.** If you smoke, it's never too late to quit.

The following annual members need to renew their memberships:

LTC Robert Archer, USA
CW2 Ann D Bruno, USN
CW4 Christopher R Chance, USA
MAJ Lewis M Davidson, USA
Mrs. Susan Della-Corte
COL Ryan J Fayrweather, USA
LTC Robert W Hearon, USA
COL Jason E Kerr, USA
Col Larry D Layne, USAF
LTC Johanna L Mora, USA
MAJ Richard J Quinones, USA
CPT Sean R Sterling, USA

COL Perry C Butler, USA
Lt Col Charles T Clements, USAF
COL Steven S Debusk, USA
LTC Gregg M Dellert, USA
CAPT Steven M Guiliani, USN
LTC Edwin L Kennedy, USA
COL Thomas J Kunhart, USA
COL Matthew C Mingus, USA
LTC Mark L O'Brien, USA
LTC Ruth J Sonak, USA
CAPT Ronald L Stowe, USN

Folks will be dropped from the rolls at the end of March

Chapter Happenings – February Member Meeting



Mr. Bill Roark address the members & receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Chapter President Rick West



Daylight Savings Time in the USA

Benjamin Franklin is often credited with the idea for Daylight Savings. But it's not *really true*. While living in France, Franklin merely wrote a satirical essay suggesting that it would make more sense for the locals to get up earlier and do more during daylight hours. In fact, the article was mainly an excuse for him to accuse the French of not getting out of bed before noon.

In reality, the person who got the ball rolling was a late 19th century New Zealand postal worker named George Hudson - who wanted more daylight hours for his after-work hobby ... of bug collecting.

A few years later, the idea was taken up by William Willett, an English homebuilder who was disappointed in his countryman for not getting up earlier.

While some members of the British Parliament, including Churchill, **supported** the idea of Daylight Savings, nothing came of it until World War I — when the Kaiser's Germany implemented it as a wartime measure to conserve energy.

Daylight Saving Time (DST) in the USA was first adopted in 1918 as a WWI-era energy-saving measure, later standardized by the Uniform Time Act of 1966. Following inconsistent local adoption and a failed 1974-1975 year-round trial, the current schedule—running from the second Sunday in March to the first Sunday in November—was established by the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Key Historical Developments

1918 (WWI): Congress passed the Standard Time Act, establishing time zones and instituting DST to conserve fuel for the war effort. It was repealed in 1919 due to unpopularity, becoming a local option.

1942–1945 (WWII): President Roosevelt instituted year-round DST, known as "War Time".

1945–1966: No federal regulation existed; states and localities decided if and when to observe DST, causing confusion.

1966 (Uniform Time Act): Congress mandated that if a state observed DST, it had to follow a uniform nationwide schedule (last Sunday in April to last Sunday in October).

1974–1975: During an oil embargo, Congress mandated a year-round DST trial. It was unpopular due to dark winter mornings, leading to a return to seasonal changes.

2005 (Energy Policy Act): Extended DST to its current duration, beginning the second Sunday in March and ending the first Sunday in November.

Exceptions

Hawaii and most of Arizona (except the Navajo Nation) do not observe daylight saving time.

Current Status

While there are ongoing efforts in Congress to make DST permanent, current policy requires clocks to "spring forward" and "fall back".

Scammers Present ‘Persistent Threat’ to Servicemembers and Veterans

When it comes to financial matters, retired Navy Rear Admiral Brian E. Luther is savvier than many people.

But even Luther — the president and CEO of Navy Mutual — nearly got scammed, exemplifying just how sophisticated financial scammers have become. Since he took the leadership role at Navy Mutual in 2020, his family has been targeted by scammers about every other year.

Navy Mutual, a congressionally chartered nonprofit veterans service organization formed in 1879, sells life insurance and annuities options, provides financial education and assists with veteran’s benefits. They regularly warn their military community members about the latest scams as part of their efforts to help military families safeguard their financial futures.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, military consumers reported losing \$584 million to [fraud](#) in 2024.

“We’re trusting people,” Luther said. “The scammers are trying to find people who are trusting and vulnerable, and they take advantage of them.”

He posted the story about his personal experience with scammers on LinkedIn last year.

“One reason I posted it was so that everybody could learn, ‘Hey, if it could happen to him, it could happen to me,’” Luther said.

Luther said the scam that nearly snared him started with a phone call purporting to be from his financial institution. The call was very targeted, with information specific to him and his family, he said.

The scammers claimed to be the fraud prevention office from his credit union, concerning a fraudulent charge on a credit card he shares with his wife. They escalated his “situation” three times in their chain, each time increasing their sense of urgency. But it became more and more obvious to Luther that the “fraud manager” was not a legitimate credit union employee.

“I let them walk me all the way to, ‘We need to log into your account and change the password. We think you’re in the middle of a hacking evolution,’” Luther said.

At that point, he told them that no financial institution should ask for someone’s password, and he asked for the person’s name.

“Then of course they hung up,” he said. “I called the financial institution to report the behavior of those individuals, and they said, ‘Admiral Luther, we have no record of anyone calling you about your account today.’”

The credit union’s fraud department immediately changed all of his account numbers out of an abundance of caution to make sure the scammers couldn’t get access to his money.

The scammers had spoofed the phone number of his credit union. It’s a common practice for scammers to spoof telephone numbers, email addresses, sender names and web addresses to try to get their victims to believe they’re a trusted source.

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Luther advises service members who get a call, text, email or other communication claiming a problem with an account to remember they don't have to talk to the people asking for information. Instead, they should break the communication and call their financial institution right away, using a number they know is legitimate.

If they did give away some information, then troops should secure all their accounts. Once the scammers get a little information, they can replicate more, Luther said.

Luther said Navy Mutual sees scams in different ways. Generally, scammers are trying to shift communications to a different phone number, address or email in order to take over an account. That sets off a fraud alert, Luther said, setting in motion a process to contact the member to validate they want these changes. If not, they are asked to contact Navy Mutual.

With enough personal information, a fraudster can try to create credit accounts in a victim's name and start spending money.

There are many types of scams in which fraudsters try to hook people through a seemingly innocent text, phone call, email or social media site.

There are online job scams, higher education scams, "you've got a package waiting" scams, [romance scams](#), "you owe a fine for a toll" scams — and they're evolving every day. Scammers are even impersonating local law enforcement.

The FTC lists four general signs of a scam: Scammers pretend to be from an organization you know; they say there's a problem or a prize; they pressure you to act immediately; or they insist you pay in a specific way, such as cryptocurrency, wiring money through a company, using a payment app or putting money on a gift card.

The FTC also provides detailed information about how to avoid a scam, such as blocking unwanted calls and text messages and refusing to give your information in response to a request you weren't expecting.

Those in the military community should remind older veterans to slow down before responding to unexpected phone calls and emails. People who are lonely might be more vulnerable to scams in which someone is trying to build a relationship that drains the victim's bank account.

And troops should warn their loved ones — especially before deployments — about scammers that use social media to send urgent messages about fake problems or supposed "once-in-a-lifetime investment opportunities."

When you're living paycheck to paycheck and all of the sudden you lose \$1,000 on a "get-rich-quick" scam, that creates financial stress.

This financial situation could jeopardize a service member's security clearance, and thus their career. And if you've been the victim of identity theft and someone is destroying your credit, it can take a long time to repair your credit score. You could also be vulnerable to extortion or more scams.

Sometimes people don't even know they've been scammed until checking their bank accounts. Scammers send unexpected messages to try to steal your personal information, and then steal your money.

If you do get scammed? Take action to protect yourself from further harm, and report it.

This is a persistent threat. It's a clear and present danger to your financial health, and you need to prepare yourself. 

St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick's Day, celebrated annually on March 17th, honors the patron saint of Ireland who brought Christianity to the country in the fifth century. Originally a modest religious feast day, it has evolved into a global celebration of Irish culture, featuring parades, wearing green, and festive meals, with significant, secularized traditions heavily influenced by Irish-American immigration.

Who was Saint Patrick? Born in Roman Britain in the 4th century, Patrick was kidnapped at 16 by Irish raiders and enslaved for six years. He escaped but later returned to Ireland as a Christian missionary in 432 AD. He died on March 17, 461, and is credited with establishing churches, schools, and monasteries, while legends often attribute his success to using the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity.

Origins as a Holiday: The day was made an official Christian feast day in the early 17th century. For centuries, it was a quiet religious holiday in Ireland, with church in the morning and a feast in the afternoon, often lifting Lenten restrictions on eating meat.

Evolution to Modern Celebration: The tradition of massive parades began in the United States, not Ireland, with Irish soldiers in the British army holding a parade in New York City in 1762. Today, the New York City parade is the world's oldest civilian parade and the largest in the United States, with over 150,000 participants. Each year, nearly 3 million people line the 1.75-mile parade route to watch the procession, which takes more than five hours. The holiday morphed into a celebration of Irish pride and, in the 20th century, became more commercialized with symbols like leprechauns, corned beef and cabbage, and green attire.

How St. Patrick's Day Is Celebrated Around the World: Today, people of all backgrounds celebrate St. Patrick's Day, especially throughout the United States, Canada and Australia. Although North America is home to the largest productions, [St. Patrick's Day is celebrated around the world](#) in locations far from Ireland, including Japan, Singapore and Russia. Popular St. Patrick's Day recipes include Irish soda bread, corned beef and cabbage and champ (mashed potatoes with green onions, butter and milk). In the United States, people often wear green on St. Patrick's Day.

Key Traditions & Myths:

- The Shamrock: Used by Patrick to teach the Trinity.
- Driving Snakes Away: A legend representing his work to rid Ireland of paganism, though Ireland never had snakes.
- Wearing Green: Symbolizes Irish nationalism and, by legend, Patrick's association with the shamrock.
- "Drowning the Shamrock": A tradition of putting a shamrock in the last drink of the night, rooted in a legend of Patrick rewarding a stingy innkeeper for becoming generous.

Global Impact: Today, it is celebrated worldwide, with notable, extreme traditions like the annual dyeing of the Chicago River green, a practice that began in 1962.

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 March

- 1 March – Lindbergh baby kidnapped (1932)
- 1 March – Peace Corps established (1961)
- 5 March – President Roosevelt proclaimed a four-day "Bank Holiday" to stop panic withdrawals (1933)
- 5 March - The "Iron Curtain" speech was delivered by Winston Churchill (1946)
- 6 March – Battle of the Alamo (1836)
- 8 March – Daylight Savings Time begins
- 9 March - Ulysses S. Grant became commander of the Union armies. (1864)
- 10 March – Salvation Army founded (1880)
- 11 March – Spanish flu reaches US soil, eventually killing over 500,000 (1918)
- 12 March – Monthly Board Meeting – 1100 – Java Café**
- 12 March – Bermuda colonized by the British (1609)
- 12 March – 40 inches of snow fell in New York City (1888)
- 12 March – Nazi Germany invaded Austria (1938)
- 14 March – Albert Einstein was born (1879)
- 15 March – Julius Caesar assassinated (44 B.C.)
- 16 March – My Lai massacre in Vietnam (1968)
- 17 March – St. Patrick’s Day
- 19 March – US invades Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein (2003)
- 20 March – Nerve gas attack in Tokyo subway killed 12 (1995)
- 20 March – First day of Spring
- 23 March - Patrick Henry gave his “Give me liberty or give me death" speech (1775)
- 24 March - The Philippine Islands were granted independence (1943)
- 24 March - *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in Alaska (1989)
- 25 March - Monthly Member Meeting – 1100 – Summit Club**
- 25 March - Fire in New York City garment district killed 146 (1911)
- 26 March – Camp David Accord signed (1979)
- 25 March - Two Boeing 747 jets collide in the Canary Islands, resulting in 570 deaths (1977)
- 28 March – Three Mile Island nuclear accident (1979)
- 30 March – President Reagan shot while walking in Washington, DC (1981)
- 31 March – President Johnson announced he would not seek re-election (1968)

