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October 2024



Huntsville Chapter  
Military Officers Association of America

# The Sentinel

Huntsvillemoaa.org



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

Greetings all!

Welcome to another great newsletter chock full of information! Also welcome to October and finally some cooler weather – my favorite time of year!

What an excellent September meeting! Brig Gen Newton presented a detailed brief on the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs, took a LOT of questions, and stayed after for over 45 minutes talking to attendees.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, at the Summit Club with Meet and Greet starting at 1030. This is a different day of the week/month from our normal meeting so that our guest speaker can address both our meeting and the RAD. Our guest speaker will be CAPT Paul Frost, USN (Ret.) – from MOAA National HQ. He will update us on the latest legislative actions from an “inside the Beltway” perspective. As those of you who have attended the RADs can attest, this should be a very interesting meeting! Details are in this newsletter. RSVPs are now open. Send them to John Vanderbleek at [jvbleek78@gmail.com](mailto:jvbleek78@gmail.com) or 256.893.1565. Remember that family and guests are always welcome.

Our annual Golf Tournament was completed successfully. We received a lot of complements from the participants and sponsors. We are still working the financial totals which will be presented to membership at the October meeting. Many thanks to all the players, volunteers, and sponsors/donors. A list of the sponsors and donors is included in this Sentinel.

Regarding the RAD, the RSA Garrison Commander has approved all preparations for the event. I will provide the RAD bulletin in a separate email. A reminder that this will impact our monthly meeting date/day of the week – see paragraph 3 above.

Have a great October and, once again, enjoy the cooler weather.

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

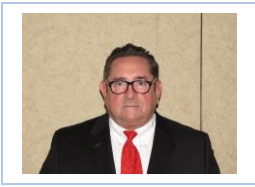
Rick

***The next member meeting will be on 24 October - the guest speaker is CAPT Paul Frost (USN-Ret) from MOAA National***

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



## Legislative Corner

### Lt Col Charles Clements, USAF-Ret

**Take  
Action**

→ <http://www.moaa.org/takeaction/>



“All politics is local.”

Let us speak about the good news first. Alabama celebrated the opening of the fifth veterans home this month. Veterans from across Alabama and the country gathered in Enterprise to commemorate the opening of the state's fifth veterans home. The 182,000 square-foot Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home in south Alabama is named after the late Adkins, a Huntsville native and U.S. Army veteran whose service in the Vietnam War saw him awarded with the Medal of Honor in 2014. Adkins' extended family was there at the unveiling, as was Adkins' son, Keith Adkins, who during an emotional speech thanked state leaders for their efforts in seeing the facility through to its completion. The facility will house 200 residents, with 20 current residents of other veterans homes scheduled to move into the new facility on 1 October and applications for residency opening later.

The chairman, Representative Ed Oliver, R-Dadeville of the House Military & Veterans Affairs Committee says he is working on legislation to expand Veterans Treatment Courts statewide. Across the state, there are currently just under 30 Veteran Treatment Court programs that offer veterans charged with a crime an alternative route through the criminal justice system that, if adhered to, allows them to avoid incarceration. Representative Oliver said he had recruited the help of Alabama Supreme Court Justice Sarah Stewart and St. Clair County Circuit Court Judge Philip Seay in his efforts to expand the program. They will help us draft legislation as we speak to offer veterans treatment courts in every circuit in the state of Alabama.

Now for the bad news. Alabama Veterans Affairs Commissioner Kent Davis will resign his post at the end of the year after a “respectful, frank, and informative” meeting with Gov. Kay Ivey.

“Our meeting with Commissioner Davis today was respectful, frank, and informative, with both sides gaining new perspective and insight about the challenges each of us face in fulfilling our respective roles,” Ivey said in a statement. “I appreciate Commissioner Davis’s record of service as Commissioner, and I appreciate him doing the right thing for our state and the future of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs. As I have said

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## 2023-2024 GOVERNING BOARD

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: CAPT Richard C. West, USN-Ret, 256-776-6901, [rickw675@att.net](mailto:rickw675@att.net)

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

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

Secretary: COL Michael C. Barron, USA-Ret, 337-422-8862, [m.barron468@gmail.com](mailto:m.barron468@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF-Ret, 256-715-1671, [ctcbama76@gmail.com](mailto:ctcbama76@gmail.com)

Army Representative: LTC Nicholas M. Mikus, USA-Ret, 256-604-7767, [nicholasmikus@comcast.net](mailto:nicholasmikus@comcast.net)

Navy Representative: COL Raymond G. Regner, USMC-Ret, 256-851-5903, [rregner58@gmail.com](mailto:rregner58@gmail.com)

Air Force Representative: Col Edward L. Uher, USAF-Ret, 256-882-6824, [biced992K@aol.com](mailto:biced992K@aol.com)

Immediate Past President: Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR, 256-606-5282, [avataxmax@gmail.com](mailto:avataxmax@gmail.com)

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

### STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, [brobinso1976@gmail.com](mailto:brobinso1976@gmail.com)

Programs: COL John Vanderbleek, USA-Ret, 256-893-1565, [jvbleek78@gmail.com](mailto:jvbleek78@gmail.com)

Legislative Affairs: Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF-Ret, 256-715-1671, [ctcbama76@gmail.com](mailto:ctcbama76@gmail.com)

Personal Affairs: Lt Col Gerald Haynes, USAF-Ret, 256-882-7857, [jerry15@hiwaay.net](mailto:jerry15@hiwaay.net)

Public Affairs (Publicity): Vacant

Chapter Historian: Vacant

Surviving Spouse Liaison: Vacant

Chapter Hospitality: Vacant

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

Chapter Chaplain: Col Dave McKinney, USAF-Ret, 334-467-6860, [mckinnewd@gmail.com](mailto:mckinnewd@gmail.com)

Commissary & Post Exchange: Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR, 256-606-5282, [avataxmax@gmail.com](mailto:avataxmax@gmail.com)

FAHC Liaison: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, [brobinso1976@gmail.com](mailto:brobinso1976@gmail.com)

Golf: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, [brobinso1976@gmail.com](mailto:brobinso1976@gmail.com)

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

TOPS: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, [brobinso1976@gmail.com](mailto:brobinso1976@gmail.com)

The SENTINEL Editor: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, [brobinso1976@gmail.com](mailto:brobinso1976@gmail.com)

Webmaster: CAPT Richard C. West, USN-Ret, 256-776-6901, [rickw675@att.net](mailto:rickw675@att.net)

### LIFE MEMBERSHIP TRUST

COL John Fairlamb, USA-Ret, 256-539-0161, [fairlambjrt@comcast.net](mailto:fairlambjrt@comcast.net) (June 2026)

MAJ Monte C. Washburn, USA-Ret, 256-301-5457, [monte@washburns.org](mailto:monte@washburns.org) (June 2027)

Lt Col Gerald Haynes, USAF-Ret, 256-882-7857, [jerry15@hiwaay.net](mailto:jerry15@hiwaay.net) (July 2025)



**PX / Commissary**  
**Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR**



**Main Exchange**

Bass Pro Shop and Cabela's are coming soon to your Exchange! Soon to be available at the Exchange on-line.

Columbus Day Specials are on their way, and we are stocking up for Halloween! Stop by your Exchange or online and get your Halloween costumes. Visit the Redstone Exchange for all of your Halloween costume, décor and entertaining needs. Shop early for best selection. A huge furniture savings event for Columbus Day! Bassett, Ashley for all rooms in your house. Save 20% through mid-October. Also, 18 months special financing when you use your STAR card!

Trunk or Treat at the Exchange Friday 25 Oct. starting at 1700. Three winners of the best trunk will receive an Exchange gift card up to \$100 for 1<sup>st</sup> place, \$50 2<sup>nd</sup> place, and \$25 for 3<sup>rd</sup> place. You must sign up for Trunk or Treat at your Exchange by 18 Oct. Facebook community will vote on the best trunk. Use your Military Star card and enjoy 10% off in the Redstone Exchange Food Court. Download the food apps (Burger King, Subway, and Popeye's) for even more savings at Redstone – and on the go anywhere!

Join us in October for our annual Exchange celebration honoring our Military retiree family. The new AAFES Toy Book should be available in late October—offering toys on sale through December! Be sure to get your copy or check on-line!

If you haven't gotten your STAR card yet, make a list of items you've always wanted. Keep it handy and apply for the STAR card- because ALL your first day military exchange purchases are at least 10% off! If you wait, you can sometimes get 15% off! Also, Black Friday is coming up so you could use the discount then for even more savings-and stop in at any of the food areas-they ALL offer at least 10% off your bill when you use the STAR card-ALL the time-even with the coupons from the app download I mentioned earlier! Also, guns and ammo area usually have a special sale for Black Friday. The first day purchases discount also applies to guns and ammo! Plus, the new STAR card will soon have tap to pay security.

Your Exchange price matches! Not applicable to warehouse stores (like Amazon), and competitors ad required for items over \$10. Must be the identical item/model number.

Every month, check out the online sweepstakes! Also, check out your Exchange on Facebook!

*Continued on page 9*

**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](mailto:nicholasmikus@comcast.net)

Navy/USMC Representative:  
**COL Raymond G. Regner**  
256-851-5903  
[rgregner58@gmail.com](mailto:rgregner58@gmail.com)

Air/Space Force Representative:  
**Col Edward L. Uher**  
256-882-6824  
[biged992K@aol.com](mailto:biged992K@aol.com)

Personal Affairs Officer  
**Lt Col Gerald Haynes**  
256-882-7857  
[jerry15@hiwaay.net](mailto:jerry15@hiwaay.net)



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**GERMI CLOUD,**  
NSSA, CRPC  
VICE PRESIDENT, WEALTH ADVISOR  
**256-715-0094**  
germi@cloudfinancial.com



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



**TRICARE Open Season** - The TRICARE Open Season is an annual period when you can enroll in, change, or disenroll from a TRICARE health plan. In 2024, Open Season runs from **November 11 to December 10**. Changes you make during the Open Season go into effect January 1, 2025. If you don't want to make a change, you don't have to do anything. However, Open Season is the perfect time for TRICARE Select members to change to TRICARE Prime and return to Fox for their primary care.

**Fox Open Enrollment** - Fox Army Health Center is pleased to announce the opening of limited enrollment for new patients seeking healthcare services. To be eligible, you must already be a TRICARE Prime beneficiary. Enrolling at Fox is easy! Just call Humana at 800-444-5445 and ask to enroll at Fox Army Health Center. You will be assigned a Fox care provider and be able to call to make an appointment immediately. Please be aware: if you are aged 62-64, we encourage you to remain with your current healthcare provider, as you will have to transition out of FAHC again at age 65.

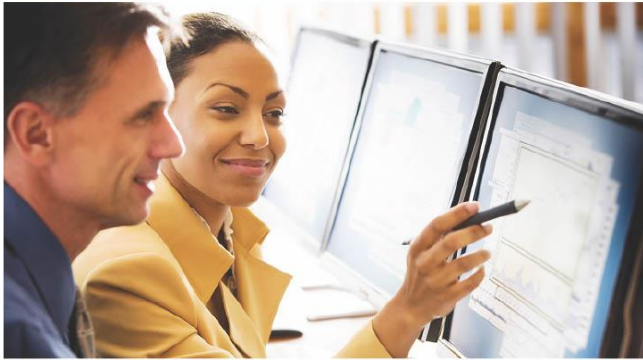
**Heroes Café** – Open for Breakfast and Lunch – see Menus on page 20

**VA Clinic** – The Birmingham VA Health Care System and Fox Army Health Center are pleased to announce a strategic sharing agreement aimed at enhancing health care services for Veterans and military personnel in the Huntsville region. This partnership underscores our shared commitment to providing high-quality medical care to those who have served our country. Under this agreement, Fox Army Health Center will have access to the Huntsville Veterans Clinic's advanced MRI / CT imaging, and Ultrasound / Screening Mammography procedures. The Huntsville Clinic will utilize space at Fox Army Health Center to establish a full Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT), offering comprehensive primary care services for Veterans. This collaboration is expected to expand VA's capacity to serve nearly 600 additional patients at the Fox Army location.

**Community Care Connect-a Patient Town Hall** – LTC Mathew is very engaged with our beneficiaries! Anyone with base access who is interested is invited to participate. The commander and subject matter experts from Fox present on various topics, and then open the discussion up to the attendees. The events are held on 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays at 1100 in the Fox Den (basement classroom here at FAHC). The next CCC is on October 16.

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## Proposed Chapter Trip – April / May 2025

To all those who like to travel. I open the floor for nominations, ideas and recommendations for our MOAA Chapter to take a day trip sometime in the April-May 2025 timeframe.

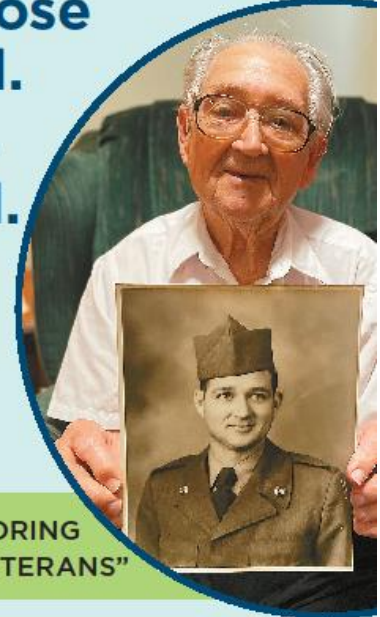
Destinations should be within an hour or two +/- . Activity could be a tour, a show, or some other event that would be of interest to our membership.

We have had trips in the past. They included the Jack Daniel distillery, General Wheeler homestead, and viewing a solar eclipse.

I will take recommendations until October's Luncheon on the 24th of Oct and then move forward based on the interest. This could be a local meet-up or call for contracted bus transportation depending on the destination.

Please forward your recommendations to me at [jvbleek78@gmail.com](mailto:jvbleek78@gmail.com) and be as specific as you can with your recommendation. After October's meeting I will publish results and then determine if sufficient interest exists to plan a trip.

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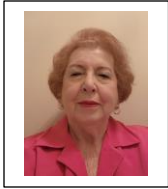


## Chapter Elections

Chapter elections for the 2025-2026 period are fast approaching. The Chapter President and the Air Force Representative positions will be open.

All of the other positions can be run for as well for by interested chapter members.

If you are interested in getting involved with Chapter leadership, contact any board member.



## **Surviving Spouse's Luncheon**

**Mrs. Bonnie Treadway**  
**256-859-1484**

Our next luncheon will be held on Thursday, 17 October at  
Walton's Southern Table, 4901 Whitesburg Drive, in Huntsville.  
Phone: 256-203-2979. We gather at 11:00 AM. All will be notified.

## **Surviving Spouse Corner: Join Our Virtual Chapter**

The [Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter](#) needs you, and you need the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter if you are a surviving spouse or a surviving spouse liaison. The only requirements are to be a surviving spouse or a surviving spouse liaison, and a member of MOAA. There are no dues.

MOAA now has [six virtual chapters](#) -- affinity groups offering opportunities for camaraderie, solving problems, and sharing information.

Our virtual chapter provides a place for surviving spouses and surviving spouse liaisons to learn important information, share ideas, and form new relationships with friends who share a common bond. A member recently commented that she got the most useful and important information from this group that she could not find other places.

We meet once a month on the third Tuesday of each month; however, we do not meet in November or December due to busy holiday schedules.

Once you join, you will receive a notice each month with a link for joining the meeting. In odd-numbered months, beginning with January, meetings are more formal, with an agenda and a guest speaker. Some of the topics covered this past year were working with the VA, downsizing, [Everplans](#), and [MOAA Vacations](#).

In even-numbered months, meetings are more informal and are primarily for information sharing. In both meetings, there is always the latest information provided about important advocacy issues that affect spouses, surviving spouses, and families.

In addition, there is a book club that meets once a month on the third Monday of the month. Books are chosen by the participants and include both fiction and nonfiction.

The Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter, chartered in 2018, began with 10 members and has grown to 250 members from almost every state — but not all 50 yet. Florida and Texas lead the way with the most members, but we have some states with no members, such as Rhode Island, West Virginia, Louisiana, Nebraska, Iowa, and Wyoming. I challenge anyone from a state not represented today to join the chapter by our next meeting in September.

*Continued on page 20*



**Chaplain's Corner**  
**Col Dave McKinney, USAF-Ret**

**Genesis 21.17:**

And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, 'What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is.

**Isaiah 12.2:**

Surely God is my salvation;  
I will trust, and will not be afraid,  
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might;  
he has become my salvation.

**Luke 1.30:**

The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.



Election season is here among us. This season has brought out a lot of extreme language. This extreme language may cause some to become very afraid, not only for their personal safety, but for the future of our country.

My wife's cousin's daughter is very scared of storms. This little girl's fear is so bad that it debilitates her so much that her mom is forced to decide on what action she needs to take when a known storm is headed their way. Do I send my daughter to school knowing she will be totally absent because she is so focused on being scared, or do I take her with me so she can feel the safety of her mom's presence?

What are you afraid of? This year's election? Storms? Major Illness? Cancer? Being alone? Death? There is a lot to be scared of. Yet, we are reminded throughout the Bible over 200 times to not be scared. But I'll touch on only a few. Our first lesson comes from Genesis, when the Angel of the Lord asked Hagar what troubled her. And the Angel went on to tell her to not be afraid because the Lord God heard her. Our second lesson comes from Isaiah where he writes that God is his salvation, stating he will trust and not be afraid. Our final lesson comes when the Angel of the Lord comes to Mary and tells her she is pregnant with the Savior. And then, the Angel tells her not to be afraid as she has found favor with the Lord.

*Continued on page 13*

**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: 291  
Regular Members: 244  
Surviving Spouses: 47

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

**Welcome New Members to Huntsville Chapter MOAA**

**COL John Williams, 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.



*Legislative – continued from page 2*

before, we have important work to continue doing, and I want to see nothing get in the way of us remaining focused on the thing that truly matters here – improving veterans’ care.”

I for one would like to know why Commissioner Davis was asked to resign. In a letter to Commissioner Davis, Governor Ivey had alleged a mishandling of ARPA grant program funds, some \$7M or so. But that was the basis of the ethics complaint made and deemed “frivolous”. Perhaps our next luncheon speaker Brigadier General Jeffrey L. Newton can enlighten us.

The August 2024 Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, released 11 September, was 308.640, 2.5% above the FY 2024 baseline of 301.236. September 2024 figures will be announced on 10 October. The CPI-W figures from the end of this fiscal year (July, August, and September 2024) will be compared to the FY 2024 COLA baseline to calculate the 2025 COLA. IIII

*PX/Commissary – continued from page 3*

### **Shopette**

Huge savings on individual and case lot sales. Also stop by to rent a carpet cleaner. Glühwein is now at your shopette! Eggnog has also arrived! Christmas gift sets are also starting to arrive. Also check out the wine of the month and check out the “What’s New?” with newly offered wines and spirits.

### **Commissary**

Football season continues! Your Commissary has you covered for all the chips, dips, sauces, marinades, steaks, chops, chicken wings and whatever else you might need to make your tail gating party one of the best! Also, mixed nuts, cashews and pistachios! Don’t forget, while entering the Commissary, check out the table of coupons and sales flyers – you will find several coupons covering those football party necessities!

Your Commissary also has a huge selection of candies for Halloween - (M&M’s, snickers, lollipops, and more!) right in the center of the store in the Club Pack Savings Isle! We also have fruit cake and all the materials if you want to make your own! Red and green cherries, ginger/lemon peel, citron – everything you need!

Keep in mind for your holiday planning -your bakery and deli can create meat and cheese trays or/and sandwich trays. Please call 256.876.3517 and provide a two-hour notice. Also your commissary takes the STAR card.

Don’t forget, you can connect with your commissary via, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube. IIII



## HCMOAA Treasurer's Report August 2024

Submitted by Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF (Ret.)

1. The August 2024 Treasurer's Report is presented herein.

2. Monthly Summary:

|                  | Operating Funds | Saving      |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Starting Balance | \$18,464.86     | \$ 1,703.64 |
| Income           | \$ 2,140.00     | \$ .01      |
| Expenses         | \$ 2,225.48     | \$ 0.00     |
| Ending Balance   | \$19,379.38     | \$ 1,703.65 |

3. Notable income: Membership meeting meals, payments for advertisements in the Sentinel, dues and petty cash.

4. Notable expenses: Payments for the May and August membership luncheons, petty cash, Bankcard fees, and frames.

5. Chapter Saving account activity is limited to interest.

6. Certificate of Deposit (CD) was purchased in the amount of \$15,279.00 from Wells Fargo on 8 November 2023. The term of the CD is 11 months at an interest rate of 4.88%. The current value is \$15,849.27. The CD matures on 8 October 2024.

7. The Chapter Operating Funds contains \$2,179.71 in reserved funds donated by various VSOs in support of the RAD Luncheon for the Retirees. This is money unused from previous donations and will be applied to a future RAD luncheon or similar event.

The scholarship fund report is currently  
unavailable due to a computer crash.





Huntsville Chapter  
 Military Officers Association of America  
 P.O. Box 1301 - Huntsville, AL 35807  
[www.huntsvillemoaa.org](http://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?<br><input type="checkbox"/> MOAA National<br><input type="checkbox"/> Local event<br><input type="checkbox"/> Letter / e-mail from HCMOAA<br><input type="checkbox"/> HCMOAA website<br><input type="checkbox"/> Friend / acquaintance<br><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 1<sup>st</sup> 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)

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

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 |
| _____                           | _____                            | _____                       | _____                                   | _____                            | _____                                     |
| <b>Mailing Address</b>          | <b>City</b>                      | <b>State</b>                | <b>Zip</b>                              |                                  |   |
| _____                           | _____                            | _____                       | _____                                   |                                  |   |
| <b>Phone Number</b>             | <b>E-mail Address</b>            | <b>Signature</b>            |   |                                  |   |
| _____                           | _____                            | _____                       |   |                                  |   |

**Attention Annual Members**

It is not too early to renew your membership for next year  
 The Chapter has one of, if not the, lowest membership rates in the country at \$10

***You can't get a decent lunch for \$10 these days!***

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](mailto: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](mailto:fairlambjrf@comcast.net) for the details



**Membership Meeting**  
**24 October 2024**  
**1100 – Summit Club**

**Guest Speaker: CAPT Paul Frost (USN-Ret)**  
**Program Director, Financial and Benefits Education/  
Counseling/Veterans Services**  
**Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)**

Paul Frost, a retired Navy Captain, was appointed as the Program Director, Financial and Benefits Education/Counseling/Veteran Services in March 2015. Paul is co-lead on MOAA's Financial and Benefits Education program and is also an accredited Veteran Service Officer (VSO), providing VA disability compensation claim and appeal information and advice to the currently serving, retiree, veteran and military family community. In Nov 2016, he completed a rigorous training track and certification as an Accredited Financial Counselor (AFC®).

Prior to his appointment as Program Director, Paul was one of our pioneer VSO Volunteers, filing over 100 VA disability compensation claims & appeals.

Paul retired in 2012 after more than 29 years of naval/joint service. His final billet, from 2010 to 2012, was as Deputy Commander, Navy Region Southwest Asia. His responsibilities included providing naval installation management and support for the Navy's FIFTH Fleet in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. From 2007 until 2010, Paul was the Chief of Staff, Joint Interagency Task Force West, U.S. Pacific Command's Executive Agent for DOD's counter-narcotics program in the Asia-Pacific theater. From 2001 until 2002, Paul commanded a Maritime Patrol Aviation squadron (VP-5) based out of Jacksonville, Florida. His squadron was deployed to the Mediterranean during the September 11th attacks and his aircrews participated in Operation Enduring Freedom operations.

Paul holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration/Finance from the University of Southern California and a Master of Science degree in National Resource Strategy from National Defense University.

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**Menu:** Chicken Schnitzel (with Jaeger sauce), Bratwurst, Red Cabbage, German Potato Salad, German Chocolate Layer Cake, Cucumber Salad, Broetchen with Butter, Iced Tea, Iced Water, Coffee

**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](mailto:jvbleek78@gmail.com) NLT 19 October 2024.



**18 Birthdays in October**

Col Donald R Brewer, USAF  
Col Edward L Uher, USAF  
CW4 Edward J Banville, USA  
LTC Russell L Dunford, USA  
MAJ Lance C Granger, USA  
BG Daniel L Montgomery, USA  
LTC Robert W Hearon, USA  
Lt Col Brian J Smith, USAF  
LTC James A Cox, USA

Mrs. Bonnie Treadway  
CPT Sean R Sterling, USA  
MAJ Curtis Smith, USA  
CPT Gary M Rose, USA  
Capt Howard Sanderford, USMC  
Col Adrian A Ritchie Jr, USAF  
CAPT Richard C West, USN  
LTC Harold E Walden, USA  
MAJ Marcus H Sachs, 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](mailto:brobinso1976@gmail.com) so it can be included in future newsletters. Thank you.

*Chaplain's Corner – continued from page 8*

As we travel this journey, there will be things which cause us to be afraid, whether we want to admit it or not. Listen to what God has told us throughout the Bible, trust in the Lord and be not afraid. The peace and the freedom you will receive from not focusing on fear will be life changing!

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

Blessings, Dave





*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.*



### Chapter Happenings – September Member Meeting



Brig Gen Jeffrey Newton (USAF-Ret), Assistant Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Veteran Affairs, addresses the membership



Brig Gen Newton receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Chapter President Rick West

The following Sponsors / Donors were very generous in supporting our Tournament. Please support them with your patronage!

\*\*\*Premier Sponsor - COLSA\*\*\*

Platinum Sponsors

State Farm—Lara Bryant

Jesse Stutts, Inc.

Poarch Band of  
Creek Indians

Gold Sponsors

Redstone Federal CU

CTG

Torch Technologies

Silver Sponsors

Cloud Financial

USAA

Lunch Sponsor - North AL Veterans & Fraternal Organizations Coalition

Breakfast Sponsor – SMX

Beverage Cart Sponsor - Nick's Ristorante

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Mandeville Physical Therapy

Focus Financial Group  
Rick & Felicia West  
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Larry's Pistol & Pawn  
Sunset Landing GC  
Point Mallard GC  
Connors Steak  
El Monte Restaurant  
Walton's Southern Table

Twin Peaks  
Phoenix  
Pints & Pixels  
Lee's Magic Tunnel  
COSTCO  
Trash Pandas  
Nick's Ristorante  
Chuy's  
Surin of Thailand  
The Casual Pint  
Dunkin' Donuts

Full Moon BBQ  
Tennessee Aquarium  
Gunter's Landing GC  
First Command  
Valley Hill CC  
Straight to Ale  
Trader Joe's  
Steak-Out  
Outback Restaurants  
TX Roadhouse  
Hampton Cove RTJ GC

\*\*\*All the generous "booze" donors at our August luncheon!\*\*\*

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Your 2024 Golf Committee

Bruce Robinson - Chair

Melinda Dellert  
Laurie Kubik  
Don Kimminau  
John Vanderbleek

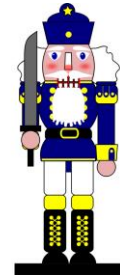
Charles Clements  
Marty Clark  
Marty Ohme  
Gary Young

Rick West  
Lara Sterling  
Tim Howell  
Missy Schulz

# Huntsville Chapter MOAA Christmas Party

## Holiday Dinner

Sliced honey glazed pitted ham  
Tender oven roasted turkey breast with giblet gravy  
Country Style corn bread dressing with giblet gravy  
Mashed potatoes  
Whole green beans  
Yeast Rolls & Butter  
Ice Water – Coffee  
Sweet or Unsweetened Iced Tea  
Pecan pie



## HUNTSVILLE CHAPTER MOAA CHRISTMAS PARTY

THE OVERLOOK at THE SUMMIT CLUB  
SATURDAY EVENING, 7 DECEMBER 2024

COCKTAILS - No Host/Cash bar - 5:00 pm

President's Remarks and Dinner - 6:00 pm

DOOR PRIZES

DRESS: Business Casual – khakis/slacks and collared shirts/polo shirts for the men – slacks/skirts and blouses/collared shirts for the ladies – of course you can always dress more formally

\$25.00 PER PERSON (Members & Family) - \$30.00 PER PERSON (Guests)

RSVP by 25 November 2024 (with check made out to HCMOAA) to:

MAJ Bruce Robinson  
809 Farley Drive SE  
Huntsville, AL 35802  
256-426-0525





## History of Halloween

### **Ancient Origins of Halloween**

Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of [Samhain](#) (pronounced sow-in). The [Celts](#), who lived 2,000 years ago, mostly in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom and northern France, celebrated their new year on November 1.

This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death. Celts believed that on the night before the new year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred. On the night of October 31 they celebrated Samhain, when it was believed that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth.

In addition to causing trouble and damaging crops, Celts thought that the presence of the otherworldly spirits made it easier for the Druids, or Celtic priests, to make predictions about the future. For a people entirely dependent on the volatile natural world, these prophecies were an important source of comfort during the long, dark winter.

To commemorate the event, Druids built huge sacred bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes.

When the celebration was over, they re-lit their hearth fires, which they had extinguished earlier that evening, from the sacred bonfire to help protect them during the coming winter.

By A.D. 43, the [Roman Empire](#) had conquered the majority of Celtic territory. In the course of the 400 years that they ruled the Celtic lands, two festivals of Roman origin were combined with the traditional Celtic celebration of Samhain.

The first was Feralia, a day in late October when the Romans traditionally commemorated the passing of the dead. The second was a day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple, and the incorporation of this celebration into Samhain probably explains the tradition of bobbing for apples that is practiced today on Halloween.

### **All Saints' Day**

On May 13, A.D. 609, Pope Boniface IV dedicated the [Pantheon](#) in Rome in honor of all Christian martyrs, and the Catholic feast of All Martyrs Day was established in the Western church. Pope Gregory III later expanded the festival to include all saints as well as all martyrs, and moved the observance from May 13 to November 1.

By the 9th century, the influence of [Christianity](#) had spread into Celtic lands, where it gradually blended with and supplanted older [Celtic](#) rites. In A.D. 1000, the church made November 2 All Souls' Day, a day to honor the dead. It's widely believed today that the church was attempting to replace the Celtic festival of the dead with a related, church-sanctioned holiday.

All Souls' Day was celebrated similarly to Samhain, with big bonfires, parades and dressing up in costumes as saints, angels and [devils](#). The All Saints' Day celebration was also called All-hallows or All-hallowmas (from Middle English *Alholowmesse* meaning All Saints' Day) and the night before it, the traditional night of Samhain in the Celtic religion, began to be called All-Hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween.

*Continued on next page*

*Continued from previous page*

## **Halloween Comes to America**

The celebration of Halloween was extremely limited in [colonial New England](#) because of the rigid Protestant belief systems there. Halloween was much more common in [Maryland](#) and the southern colonies.

As the beliefs and customs of different European ethnic groups and the American Indians meshed, a distinctly American version of Halloween began to emerge. The first celebrations included “play parties,” which were public events held to celebrate the harvest. Neighbors would share stories of the dead, tell each other’s fortunes, dance and sing.

Colonial Halloween festivities also featured the telling of ghost stories and mischief-making of all kinds. By the middle of the 19th century, annual autumn festivities were common, but Halloween was not yet celebrated everywhere in the country.

In the second half of the 19th century, America was [flooded with new immigrants](#). These new immigrants, especially the millions of Irish fleeing the [Irish Potato Famine](#), helped to popularize the celebration of Halloween nationally.

## **History of Trick-or-Treating**

Borrowing from European traditions, Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today’s “trick-or-treat” tradition. Young women believed that on Halloween they could divine the name or appearance of their future husband by doing tricks with yarn, apple parings or mirrors.

In the late 1800s, there was a move in America to mold Halloween into a holiday more about community and neighborly get-togethers than about ghosts, pranks and [witchcraft](#). At the turn of the century, Halloween parties for both children and adults became the most common way to celebrate the day. Parties focused on games, foods of the season and festive costumes.

Parents were encouraged by newspapers and community leaders to take anything “frightening” or “grotesque” out of Halloween celebrations. Because of these efforts, Halloween lost most of its superstitious and religious overtones by the beginning of the twentieth century.

## **Halloween Parties**

By the 1920s and 1930s, Halloween had become a secular but community-centered holiday, with parades and town-wide Halloween parties as the featured entertainment. Despite the best efforts of many schools and communities, [vandalism began to plague](#) some celebrations in many communities during this time.

By the 1950s, town leaders had successfully limited vandalism and Halloween had evolved into a holiday directed mainly at the young. Due to the high numbers of young children during the fifties baby boom, parties moved from town civic centers into the classroom or home, where they could be more easily accommodated.

Between 1920 and 1950, the centuries-old practice of trick-or-treating was also revived. Trick-or-treating was a relatively inexpensive way for an entire community to share the Halloween celebration. In theory, families could also prevent tricks being played on them by providing the neighborhood children with small treats.

Thus, a new American tradition was born, and it has continued to grow. Today, Americans spend an estimated \$6 billion annually on Halloween, making it the country’s second largest commercial holiday after [Christmas](#).



## **How To Access Your MHS GENESIS Patient Portal**

Looking to access your health information? It's never been easier, thanks to the [MHS GENESIS Patient Portal](#). This secure, online tool allows you to manage your health care at military hospitals and clinics from the comfort of your home or on the go.

Here are the ways you can access MHS GENESIS.

### **Direct access via web browser**

The most straightforward way to access the MHS GENESIS Patient Portal is through a web browser.

1. Open your preferred browser and navigate to the [MHS GENESIS Patient Portal](#).
2. Log in using your DS Logon credentials.
3. If you don't have a DS Logon, you can create one on the site. This method gives you full access to your medical records and appointments. You can use messaging services with your health care providers as well.

### **Using a Common Access Card**

If you're a service member, you might prefer to use your Common Access Card to access the MHS GENESIS Patient Portal. This method provides secure, direct access without needing to enter a username and password each time:

1. Insert your CAC into the card reader.
2. Navigate to the portal.
3. Select your certificate.
4. Enter your pin.

Remember, this option is available if you're accessing the portal from a DOD network or computer that has a CAC reader.

### **Patient kiosks at military hospitals and clinics**

Some military hospitals and clinics have patient kiosks where you can access the MHS GENESIS Patient Portal. The kiosks provide quick and easy access to your health information while you're on site. Simply log in using your DS Logon credentials to check your records or confirm upcoming appointments.

### **Assistance through the MHS GENESIS Help Desk**

If you have any issues with the MHS GENESIS Patient Portal, you can get support from the MHS GENESIS Help Desk at 800-600-9332. Help Desk representatives can guide you through logging in and navigating the portal. They're available to help you gain seamless access to your health information whenever you need it.

By using the [MHS GENESIS Patient Portal](#), you have the power to manage your health care in a way that fits your lifestyle. Whether you prefer using a desktop computer, mobile device, or on-site kiosks, the portal is flexible and user friendly.

Take control of your health information today! Experience the convenience of the MHS GENESIS Patient Portal.

*Surviving Spouse Corner – continued from page 7*

For additional information or to join, contact [mssvc02@gmail.com](mailto:mssvc02@gmail.com) or find us on [MOAA.org](http://MOAA.org). Here, you can also find links to critical advocacy issues and helpful resources and benefits.

As many members have noted, one of the biggest benefits of joining this virtual chapter is the camaraderie and friendships with so many others who share their problems and concerns. So, don't delay — join today! I promise you will be glad you did. IIII

## Governing Board Vacancies

The Chapter has several vacancies on the Governing Board that we are looking to fill with volunteers from the membership. They include:

**Surviving Spouse Liaison** – responsible for keeping the surviving spouses of the Chapter informed & look out for their welfare – you do not have to be a surviving spouse to serve

**Membership Chair** – responsible for recruiting and retention of Chapter members – this is a key position

**Webmaster** – responsible for all aspects of the Chapter website – ideally this would be a member's child or grandchild who is website savvy – this is a key position

**Publicity** – responsible for advertising Chapter events – primarily the golf tournament



### *Breakfast Menu*

Breakfast Sandwiches

Breakfast Platter \$7.99

\*\*Eggs, Bacon or Sausage, Grits, Hash Browns, Biscuit or Croissant\*\*

Bacon, Egg, Cheese Biscuit \$3.89

Bacon, Egg, Cheese Croissant \$3.99

Biscuit & Gravy \$3.89

Single Items

Biscuit \$1.59

Croissant \$1.89

Gravy \$1.59

Grits \$1.19

Sausage or Bacon \$ .89

Drinks

Water \$2.49

Soda \$2.50

Coffee \$1.25

Miscellaneous Items

Candy \$2.79

Chips \$2.99

Cheese Cracker \$1.39

Peanut Butter Crackers \$1.39

Yogurt \$1.99

\*\*Credit & Debit Card Only\*\*



### *Lunch Menu*

Sandwiches & Wraps \$6.99

Ham

Turkey

Roast Beef

Chicken Salad

\*\*Combo \$11.99 – Sandwich or Wrap, Chips & Drink\*\*

Grilled Cheese \$4.99

\*\*Combo \$9.99 – Sandwich, Chips & Drink\*\*

Salads \$6.99

Chicken Salad, Turkey, Ham

Drinks

Water \$2.49

Soda \$2.50

Coffee \$1.25

Miscellaneous Items

Candy \$2.79

Chips \$2.99

Cheese Cracker \$1.39

Peanut Butter Crackers \$1.39

Yogurt \$1.99

Cheesecake & Chocolate Cake \$5.99

\*\*Credit and Debit Card Only\*\*

## **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 300 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 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](mailto:brobinso1976@gmail.com) or 256-426-0525.

## Important Dates in October

- 1 October – Henry Ford’s Model T went on sale for the first time (1908)
- 1 October – Peoples Republic of China founded (1949)
- 1 October – Panama Cana Zone returned to Panama (1979)
- 2 October – Thurgood Marshall sworn in as first African American justice of the Su
- 3 October – East & West Germany reunited (1990)
- 3 October – President Lincoln established Thanksgiving Day as the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in November (1863)
- 4 October – Russians launched the first satellite – Sputnik I - into orbit (1957)
- 4 October – Pope Paul VI became the first Pope to visit the US (1965)
- 6 October – The first "talkie" opened in New York - *The Jazz Singer* starring Al Jolson (1927)
- 6 October – Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated in Cairo (1981)
- 8 October – Great Chicago Fire (1871)
- 8 October – Sergeant Alvin York single-handedly took out a German machine-gun battalion (1918)
- 10 October – Spiro Agnew resigned as Vice President (1973)
- 10 October – Monthly Board Meeting – Java Café - 1100**
- 12 October - Brazil became independent of Portugal (1822)
- 13 October – US Navy established (1775)
- 13 October - The cornerstone of the White House was laid by George Washington (1792)
- 14 October - Chuck Yeager became the first man to break the sound barrier (1947)
- 14 October – Columbus Day
- 15 October – Napoleon Bonaparte exiled on the Island of St. Helena (1815)
- 15 October – US Senate confirmed Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court (1991)
- 18 October – The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial began (1945)
- 19 October - "Black Monday" occurred on Wall Street as stocks plunged 22.6% (1987)
- 20 October - General Douglas MacArthur “returned” to the Philippines (1944)
- 20 October - Jacqueline Kennedy married Greek businessman Aristotle Onassis (1968)
- 21 October - Thomas Edison successfully tested an electric incandescent lamp (1879)
- 22 October – Cuban Missile Crisis began (1962)
- 24 October – United Nations founded (1945)
- 24 October – Monthly Member Meeting – Summit Club – 1100**
- 25 October – Redstone Arsenal Retiree Appreciation Day**
- 26 October - The shoot-out at the O.K. Corral (1881)
- 31 October - Halloween

