

Volume 63, Issue 5
May 2024



Huntsville Chapter
Military Officers Association of America

The Sentinel

Huntsvillemoaa.org



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

Greetings all!

Will this pollen ever stop? Last year I removed 20 of those NASTY Bradford Pear trees from the back 40 here and I seem to have more yellow than ever!

Our April meeting was excellent in almost all aspects. The guest speaker was very inspiring. The Gold Bar ceremony was a lot of fun and it was great to present our annual Scholarship Fund donation to the Merit Awards program. Even the German buffet was very tasty!

The only glitch was attendance. I was disappointed that we had less than 20 chapter members show and some left before the actual ceremonies! This was an important meeting and we really needed to support it better. We have almost 300 members. Some are unable to attend physically/medically, and some are unable to get off work during the day. We have several members that live out of area. Still, we have well over 200 members that are fully retired and could have made the meeting. Please take some time and attend the occasional meeting. There is great stuff going on within the chapter and several people work hard to ensure that we present some quality speakers in a quality environment.

Our next membership meeting will be May 29th at The Summit Club with Meet and Greet starting at 1030. This meeting will feature the return of a past guest speaker – **Mr. Larry Leopard from NASA MSFC**. He is basically the Chief Engineer for MSFC and is following up on his promise to come back and talk “Mars Mission”. The many of you who attended his last briefing on the moon missions know that he gives a great presentation! Now is the perfect time to **RSVP to John Vanderbleek at jvbleek78@gmail.com or 256.893.1565**. Remember that family and guests are always welcome.

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

Looking for a large crowd on the 29th!

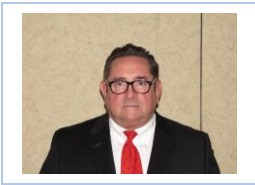
Rick

The next member meeting is on 29 May – the Guest Speaker is Mr. Larry Leopard, Technical Director, NASA Marshall Space Flight Center

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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.”

The US House has approved a \$95 billion package of foreign aid for Ukraine, Israel and other U.S. allies after months of turmoil on Capitol Hill. Congressional leaders pushed aside opposition from hard-right conservatives to complete the bill in a rare Saturday session. Alabama's House delegation was split on the vote. The whole package will go to the Senate, which could pass it as soon as Tuesday. Speaker Mike Johnson has put his job on the line and relied on Democratic support every step of the process. The four bills, to provide aid to Ukraine, Israel, Indo-Pacific allies and a measure dealing with TikTok were all overwhelmingly approved. President Joe Biden has promised to sign the package.

A credible threat to TRICARE For Life (TFL) looms on the horizon. And while the recently released FY 2025 DoD budget request makes no mention of new TFL fees, MOAA is concerned that it's only a matter of time before DoD once again looks to TFL as the answer to paying increased military health care spending.

Aside from military retired pay, TFL is the most valued part of the military retirement package. It not only ensures access to affordable preventive and routine medical care, but it protects uniformed services retirees and their dependents and survivors from financial risk associated with unexpected costs for serious and unexpected illness or injury.

Nearly a decade has passed since DoD proposed – and MOAA defeated – TFL enrollment fees in five consecutive administration budget requests (FY 2013-2017). But those victories aren't permanent. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has included TFL fees consistently in its *Options for Reducing the Deficit* report released at the beginning of each new Congress.

The regular session ends on 20 May. On 16 April the Alabama Senate agreed to send gambling legislation to a conference committee of Senate and House members to try to work out differences between the two chamber's versions of the bills. The proposed constitutional amendment and enabling legislation that would allow for a lottery have been in legislative limbo since the Senate last month drastically scaled back the House's proposal that would also allow for online and sports betting and up to 10 casinos with table games in the state. But even the votes to keep discussions going in a conference committee had lukewarm support in the Senate. The vote on the constitutional amendment was 19-14. To pass the Senate, any constitutional amendment needs support from three-fifths of the body—21 votes. It's been 25 years since Alabama voters rejected a lottery proposal.

Continued on page 9

2023-2024 GOVERNING BOARD

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

STANDING COMMITTEES

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

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

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

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

Public Affairs (Publicity): Vacant

Chapter Historian: Vacant

Surviving Spouse Liaison: Vacant

Chapter Hospitality: Mrs. Carrie Hightower, 256-882-3992

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

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

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

FAHC Liaison: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brobinso1976@gmail.com

Golf: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brobinso1976@gmail.com

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

TOPS: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brobinso1976@gmail.com

The *SENTINEL* Editor: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brobinso1976@gmail.com

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

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 2024)

Lt Col Gerald Haynes, USAFR-Ret, 256-882-7857, jerry15@hiwaay.net (July 2025)



PX / Commissary
Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR



Main Exchange

The Exchange has started the plant sale outside – hurry in for best selection - prices have increased some but not as bad as elsewhere.

The gun shop will have all Springfield pistols and long guns along with gun cleaning kits on sale starting Friday 26 April for two weeks and 10% off with the STAR card.

Military Spouse Appreciation Day 10 May at 11:30 - get a free gift bag and treats.

Your Exchange also has Spring cleaning supplies and everything for your yard! The Main Exchange has the yard care tools, fertilizers, mulch and top soil you require. Start your yard off right by getting rid of all the weeds and feed the grass at the same time.

After the yard work, get ready for Memorial Day activities by throwing some BBQ on the smoker or grill you can buy from your Exchange. From apartment size to having the neighborhood block party – your Exchange can make you king of the grill. Plus, you can always check out <http://www.shopmyexchange.com> for even more items!

Later, relax by your super-sized TV or surf the internet on your new computer. Plus, there are several TVs on clearance near the back of the store. Either way, your Exchange has you covered!

If you know of someone wanting to start working at the Exchange – they are hiring! Positions start at \$15/hour.

Shopette

The Red Box movie rental kiosk is gone. A wide variety of local beers and spirits are at your Express store! Your Express has your favorite and new offerings of beer, liquor, and various spirits.

You still get 5 cents off your gas at the gas pumps when using your STAR card. There is usually even more off for the Memorial Day weekend. While there, check your tire pressure at the FREE tire pressure stand.

Check out the wines of the Month, Spirit of the Month, and Limited Time Specials. Still no word on when the tent sales will resume – but its possible around Memorial Day.

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

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

Air/Space Force Representative:
Col Edward L. Uher
256-882-6824
bged992K@aol.com

Personal Affairs Officer
Lt Col Gerald Haynes
256-882-7857
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CONTACT:

GERMI CLOUD,
NSSA, CRPC

VICE PRESIDENT, WEALTH ADVISOR

256-715-0094

germie@cloudfinancial.com



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



Fox Army Health Center Announces
Limited Enrollment Opportunity for Patients

Fox Army Health Center is pleased to announce the opening of limited enrollment for new patients seeking healthcare services.

To be eligible, you must 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.

"We are excited to open our doors to new patients and provide them with the exceptional care and attention they deserve," said Colonel Wendy Gray, FAHC Commander. "By offering this limited enrollment opportunity, we aim to prioritize patient satisfaction and ensure timely access to our comprehensive range of medical services. Striving to be your premiere medical facility of choice!"

This opportunity is part of our commitment to providing high-quality care and ensuring the best possible experience for all patients in our community. We look forward to welcoming new patients into the Fox Family.

About FAHC:

To make an appointment at Fox, please call 256-955-8888, extension 2.

Fox Army Health Center provides access to quality and cost-effective primary care for patients while maintaining a state of readiness for mobilization. The mission of the health center is to provide ready and sustained health service support to ensure responsible and reliable healthcare to sustain a medically ready force in support of the Army Medicine and Federal Center of Excellence global mission.

FAHC Change of Command Ceremony is 4 June 2024. The incoming commander is LTC Deepak Mathew.

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When it comes to your to-do list, put your future first.

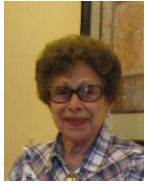
Together, let's create an investment strategy that works for you. Contact us for a complimentary portfolio review.



Dale C Kuehl, AAMS™
Financial Advisor

2045 Cecil Ashburn Drive S E
Suite 103
Huntsville, AL 35802
256-881-1583

FAP-1966G-A



Surviving Spouse's Luncheon

Mrs. Carrie Hightower
256-882-3992

Our next luncheon will be on Thursday, 16 May, at the Outback Steakhouse,
7640 Hwy 72 West in Madison.
Phone: (256) 895-0257. We meet at 11AM. Everyone will be called.

Surviving Spouse Corner: We Need Your Voice on Legislative Issues

There is a quote from Helen Keller: “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

This sums up the vital importance of each of us taking the time to contact our members of Congress to share our testimony and our personal stories on the current issues relating to surviving spouses as well as other veterans’ and military family issues.

National MOAA advocates on the Hill monthly, and once a year, council and chapter leaders come to Washington, D.C., for Advocacy in Action, focusing on several key issues.

What can you do to be a part of this excitement of advocacy? You can get involved very easily, from the comfort of your home. Often due to where we live, our physical limitations, and our work and family schedule, it’s nearly impossible to travel to Washington, D.C., to meet with lawmakers. The good news is MOAA has a valuable resource to make it easier for us to advocate throughout the year: the [Legislative Action Center](#).

In the action center, MOAA posts top issues with a description of each. You can pick and choose what affects you the most, or you can select all the issues that are listed. Once you register for the Legislative Action Center, you can send a pre-formatted letter to your representative and senators on the issue. All you need to do is either add your personal story or just add your signature. Once it’s completed, hit the send button, and the letter is automatically sent to your lawmakers.

Try it out today — it only takes five minutes. Every call, every email, and every visit to Congress helps to bring to the forefront issues affecting surviving spouses, veterans, and military families. The more our voices are heard, we CAN make a difference!



Chaplain's Corner
Col Dave McKinney, USAF-Ret

Ephesians 6.18-24

Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus will tell you everything. He is a dear brother and a faithful minister in the Lord. I am sending him to you for this very purpose, to let you know how we are, and to encourage your hearts.

Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.



The Apostle Paul spent a portion of his adult life in prison. Yet, he did not allow himself to wallow in the mud with his accusers, the ones who had him imprisoned. Instead, he focused on encouraging the Ephesians. He also asked that they pray for him so that he would think before he spoke, speaking the message that God wanted him to say. He went on to encourage the Epheseans to pray at all times, staying alert and always persevering. He told them he would send someone to let them know how he was doing, and to encourage them. And maybe more importantly to me, he offered peace to the whole community.

Get that? The **whole** community, not one segment of it, but everyone who was in Ephesus. While Ephesus was a Greek community, it had a sizable Jewish population. And this city had fallen under Roman rule. So I am sure there were lots of differing opinions among the city's residents and its leaders on how their community was being governed, especially as the Romans highly taxed them.

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: 290
Regular Members: 243
Surviving Spouses: 47

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

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.

Legislative – continued from page 2

The Alabama Senate on Thursday approved a record \$3.3 billion 2025 General Fund budget and a current year supplemental spending plan of \$214 million. The 2025 budget, a more than \$300 million increase over the current year, represents increases for almost all the non-education state agencies in it. State employees will receive a 2% raise. The bills now move to the House. Alabama has the largest budget in history, and everyone is getting at least (the same) or more than the current year.

The supplemental bill includes:

- \$150 million for new prison construction. That's \$50 million more than Gov. Kay Ivey suggested in February.
- \$20 million for a parking deck near the new State House, expected to be completed in 2027.
- \$15 for the State Industrial Development Authority for site development; less than the \$25 million Ivey proposed.
- \$5 million for the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- \$4 million to the Alabama Department of Mental Health, \$1 million to be used to keep the psychiatric beds operational at Bullock County Hospital, \$1.5 million for mental health services for the Lee County Commission and \$1.5 million to be used for the East Alabama Medical Center for psychiatric and child services.
- \$3 million for security and building upgrades at the Capitol.

The Senate Veterans and Military Affairs Committee on Thursday approved legislation to give National Guard and Reserve members the same income tax breaks given to active-duty members of the armed forces. Current law says members of active-duty military do not have to pay income taxes on income earned while they're in combat zones. SB 209 provides the same exemption to guard members and reservists when deployed. The income tax exemption would reduce revenue into the Education Trust Fund by about \$1.6 million in fiscal year 2025 and \$2.1 million each following year.

The March 2024 Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, released on 10 April, was 306.502, 1.7% above the FY 2024 baseline of 301.236. The April 2024 figures will be announced on 15 May. III

PX/Commissary – continued from page 3

For your Memorial Day BBQ - steaks and chops – check out the prices at your Commissary! Check out the Alabama made Conecuh sausage or the Texas Kielbassa sausage. Plus, a huge selection of sauces, rubs, and spices – and enough foil and storage containers to put it all in when you are done.

A few items have been impacted by supply issues - including pre-packaged salads, some frozen breakfast items and breakfast meats.

The Commissary continues its plant sale! Various ferns, mosquito plants and others on sale in front on the sidewalk and inside the commissary.

Snacks, breads, and unusual food items from around the world – all at your commissary.

Your Commissary has selected special coupons for our customers to help you make the most of your benefit. III



HCMOAA Treasurer's Report March 2024

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

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

2. Monthly Summary:

	Operating Funds	Savings
Starting Balance	\$18,151.40	\$ 1,703.57
Income	\$ 1,735.01	\$.01
Expenses	\$ 287.60	\$ 0.00
Ending Balance	\$19,598.81	\$ 1,703.58

3. Notable income: Membership meeting meals, payments for an advertisement in the Sentinel, \$300 from HQMOAA for tournament, petty cash, and dues.

4. Notable expenses: Liability insurance, and petty cash.

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 \$15,528.38. 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.

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 April 2024

	None	
Total received for April:		\$0.00
Total received CY24:		\$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			
_____	_____	_____			

Recruiting

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

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

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

Spread the word!

2024 Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament

It's that time again. The golf committee will have its next planning meeting on **22 May**, 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

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

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**“HONORING
our VETERANS”**

THERE COMES A POINT
A point to live well, love well, BE well.



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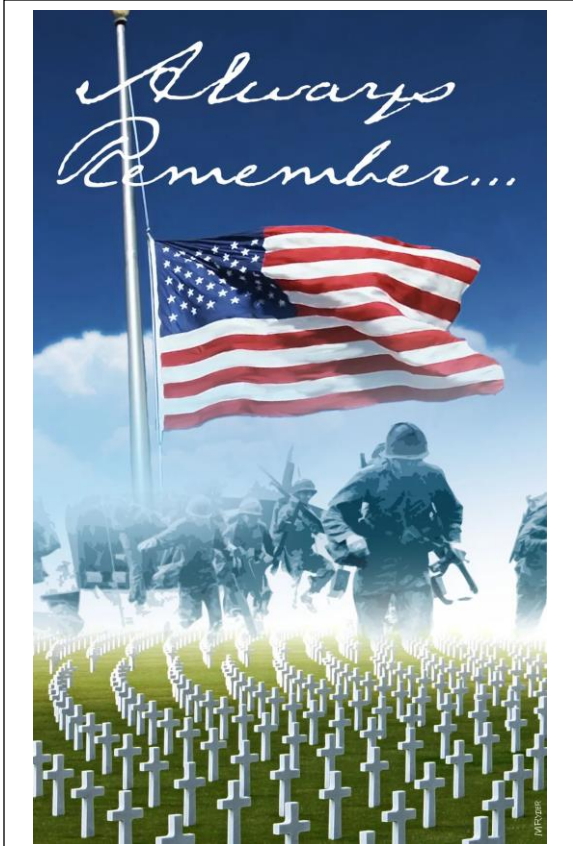
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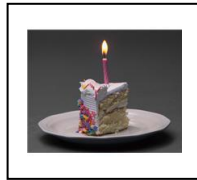
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20 Birthdays in May

Col John A Morrison, USAF
COL Harold J Hicks, USA
CPT Robert E Steward, USMC
Mrs. Jan Camp
COL Stephen H French, USA
LTC Paul A Hays, USA
CW3 Clarissa A Lewis, USA
Col James R Schumacher, USAF
COL Marvin S Smith, USA
MAJ Charles B Drake, USMC

CW4 Jeffrey A Sumners, USA
LTC Randall W Withrow, USA
Col Larry D Layne, USAF
COL Michael D Teter, USA
CW3 Kenneth J Nurmi, USN
CW4 Derrick M Holland, USA
BG Robert A Drolet, USA
LTC Russell B Brownfield Jr, USA
Mrs. Charlotte U Miller
CH (LTC) James R Johnson Sr, USA

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

Chaplain's Corner – continued from page 8

We are a **community** much like Ephesus, made of different peoples with differing ideas on what our community should look like. I pray we are like Paul, not wallowing in our current situation, where we might be suffering. I pray that we can be like Paul, encouraging and offering peace to our community, some of whom I am sure are less than excited about their current standard of living.

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

Blessings, Dave





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

TAPS

COL George Thatcher Shepard, USA-Ret - “Shep” joined his heavenly family on 1 March 2024 after a battle with a combination of health issues. He was born in New London, Connecticut on 9 November 1936, becoming an Army Brat during WWII and followed his family around the world. He graduated from Riverside Military Academy (Gainesville, GA) and then attended Texas A&M where he earned his Mechanical Engineering Degree while also serving as a Regimental Commander in the Corps of Cadets graduating in 1958. He went on to both Airborne and Ranger Schools as an infantry officer for his initial tours before being assigned to the Ordnance branch. He met his wife of 60 years, Sally A. Shepard (Gramzow), while serving in Detroit.

He was stationed in duty assignments around the world that included Germany and Turkey, two tours of duty in Vietnam, as well as many stateside. His command assignments included the Munich Equipment Maintenance Center, the 707th Maintenance Battalion, Fort Ord, California, and the Test Measurement Diagnostic Equipment Support Group (TMDE) at Redstone Arsenal. He retired after 27 years of active duty as Chief of Staff of the Redstone Arsenal Army Missile Command with many awards and decorations that included the Army Staff Identification Badge (Pentagon), multiple Meritorious Service and Bronze Star Medals as well as The Legion of Merit. During his years of service, he obtained his MBA from Babson College, Boston, Massachusetts, graduated from the Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth Kansas and the Army War College in Carlisle Pennsylvania.

He joined Teledyne Brown Engineering for 16 years as a Systems Engineer before retiring to the golf course.

Shep was an Eagle Scout, Soldier, and Family Man. He most enjoyed traveling to see family, friends, and golf courses, probably setting the record for most rounds on the Redstone Links. He was a man of faith and was always early to church sitting in the same pew every Sunday everywhere he lived. He was an American Patriot and a true lover of soldiers. He always had a flag flying at his house. His favorite holiday was the huge family gatherings with his grandkids and great grandkids that happened every Thanksgiving. He and Sally transitioned to the Redstone Village community almost three years ago where he easily became a big part of the RV family and the busy lifestyle of Redstone Village.

He was preceded in death by his father, Colonel (Ret.) Julius T. and Lucy Mae Shepard. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Sally; his sister, Susan Jane Mease (Colorado Springs, CO); brother, Colonel (Ret.) Phil Shepard (Melbourne, Florida), his two sons, Colonel (Ret.) G. Thatch Shepard, Jr. (Jennie), Ridgeland, Mississippi and Major (Ret.) John T. Shepard (Debbie), Naples Florida. He had five grandchildren, Samantha Mae Hidalgo (Joaquin) Ridgeland MS, Captain Mollie Shepard (Romania), Lieutenant J. Thatcher Shepard (Uniformed Services Medical School at Walter Reed, Bethesda, Maryland), Allie Shepard (Naples, FL) and Cason Shepard (Naples, FL); and great-grandchildren, Shep, Lucy Mae, Henry, and Helen Hidalgo (Ridgeland, MS).

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A funeral Mass was held on Monday, 18 March 2024 with a 12:30 PM visitation and 1:00 PM Mass at the Good Shepherd Catholic Parish in Huntsville, Alabama (13550 Chaney Thompson Road SE, Huntsville, AL, 35803). The Mass will be followed by a reception at the Redstone Village Club Room, 12000 Turnmeyer Drive, Huntsville, Alabama, 35803.

He will ultimately be interred at Arlington Cemetery at a later date to be determined.

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

We will miss these outstanding Leaders and Patriots.



UAH begins New Air Force ROTC Program

The University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) will begin a new Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps (AFROTC) program with the fall 2024 semester. The program will be available to freshmen and sophomores. UAH is a part of The University of Alabama System.

Air Force ROTC allows scholarship and non-scholarship cadets to live as regular college students while pursuing their degrees. Once they graduate, they will be commissioned in the U.S. Air Force or U.S. Space Force.

UAH is working with Samford University in Birmingham and Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery to develop its AFROTC. UAH's program will be an independent detachment that uses Samford's existing detachment in an administrative sense as a "parent" AFROTC for the first couple of years while UAH's AFROTC is being developed. UAH's program is the first AFROTC program of its kind in the U.S. "If this detachment is successful, it will change the way the AFROTC program is implemented throughout the nation, which would allow the Air Force to develop more Air Force and Space Force officers and address the recruitment concerns in the military," says Nicholas Anderson, associate director, [Office of Military and Veteran Programs](#) (MVP) at UAH.

Brig. Gen. Houston R. Cantwell, commander, Jeanne M. Holm Center for Officer Accessions and Citizen Development at Maxwell Air Force Base, visited UAH in January to meet with UAH President Dr. Charles L. Karr and tour the campus. Cantwell also spoke with Air Force and Space Force Junior ROTC cadets from Bob Jones and Huntsville high schools.

Maj. Matthew Spinks and Capt. Brett Collins have been selected to serve as UAH's first AFROTC cadre and will arrive on campus in May. Spinks will come to UAH from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, and Collins will transfer from Samford.

For more information on the UAH AFROTC program, visit uah.edu/mvp or email Anderson at nicholas.anderson@uah.edu.



Membership Meeting
29 May 2024
1100 – Summit Club

Guest Speaker: Mr. Larry Leopard
Technical Director
NASA Marshall Space Flight Center

Larry Leopard, Associate Director, Technical, at NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, provides expert advice in all facets of the Center's responsibilities by conducting special studies; provide authoritative advice and assistance in policy review; manage and report on Center-wide and directorate metrics, and developing benchmarking strategies. He was appointed to the position in December 2020.

Prior to his appointment, Leopard served as director of the Engineering Directorate from 2018 to 2020. From 2014 to 2016, Leopard was director of the Engineering Directorate’s Space Systems Department, and was its deputy director from 2011 to 2014. From 2008 to 2011, he was deputy manager of Engineering’s Propulsion Systems Department.

In 2008, Leopard was appointed to the Senior Executive Service, the personnel system covering top managerial positions in federal agencies.

Following his selection to NASA’s Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program in 2006, he completed developmental assignments at NASA Headquarters in Washington, in Marshall’s Space Shuttle Propulsion Office, and at United Launch Alliance’s Delta II and IV Manufacturing and Assembly Plant in Decatur, Alabama.

Leopard joined NASA and Marshall in 1990, supporting a variety of NASA programs and projects, including space shuttle propulsion elements; the Space Shuttle Main Engine Technology Test Bed; Rocket-Based Combined Cycle propulsion technology; Fastrac 60K engine; International Space Station payloads, International Space Station Environmental Control and Life Support Systems and research facilities; Small Satellite technology demonstrations; and multiple science instruments.

His aerospace engineering career began as a propulsion engineer at Martin Marietta in Huntsville, supporting Marshall’s Propulsion Systems Laboratory from 1988 to 1990.

A native of Athens, Alabama, Leopard graduated from the University of Alabama in Huntsville in 1987 with a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering.

Leopard and his wife Shane live in Athens and have two children.

Menu: Country Fried Steak; Baked Chicken; Green Beans Almondine; Macaroni and Cheese; Apple Cobbler; Rolls with Butter, Assorted Drinks

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 24 May 2024.

Chapter Happenings – April



MAJ Jean Downs, USA-Ret, presents a JROTC medal to Cadet Matthew Lipski of James Clemons HS



Col Dave Dunlap, USAF-Ret, presents a JROTC medal to Cadet Austin Embry of Arab HS



Chapter President Rick West presents a \$16,000 check to Melinda Dellert & Erica Lewis of the Military & Civilians Club for Merit Awards at the April meeting.



COL (P) Shane Upton addresses the membership at the April meeting.

Chapter Happenings (cont)



COL(P) Upton & Chapter President Rick West
present MOAA certificates & gold bars to graduating
ROTC cadets at the April meeting.

Utility Scams

Overview

A utility rep threatening to shut off service unless you pay a “past-due bill” by wire transfer, gift card, or crypto? Or offering discounts or freebies if you pay early? These are classic signs of a utility scam. If you suspect a utility scam, call your utility company directly using the contact information on an official billing statement or your online portal.

Light, water, and electricity are necessities for everyday life that we can access with the flick of a switch or the twist of a tap.

Unfortunately, it's just as easy for shady characters to exploit these conveniences by pretending to be legitimate utility service representatives.

These so-called utility scams have been around for years; in fact, the [Federal Trade Commission](#) (FTC) issued a warning in 2021. However, in the past six months, states like [Florida](#), [Texas](#), and [Ohio](#) have noted a rise for this scam type.

Whether you live in a sunny city or snowy suburb, if you pay a utility bill, you might be targeted.

How utility scams happen

Picture this: you're going about your day when suddenly the phone rings. On the other end, a voice claiming to be a utility representative informs you that there's a problem with your account or service.

The only solution they offer - send them money by wire transfer right away or your service will be disconnected.

If this sounds familiar, you might have encountered a utility scam. These schemes creep into the systems that we rely on for comfort and security, such as water, electricity, internet and cable, and more.

Like many fraud schemes, utility scams are perpetrated through phone calls, texts, door-to-door visits, or even fake mail. But no matter what form of communication is used, the play-by-play usually goes like this:

- **Someone reaches out unexpectedly**, claiming to be a rep from your gas, water, or power company — or worse: they pretend to be from a collection agency or other "law enforcement" agency to intimidate you. They threaten to shut down your services unless you pay a “past-due bill” immediately and request payment via wire transfer, gift card, or [cryptocurrency](#) because they know that these funds are more difficult to recover. Alternatively, a utility scammer might offer to lower the amount due if payment is made today or help sign up for (nonexistent) government programs that reduce your bills.
- **Your money or personal information is then stolen.** The imposter will either convince you to make a payment to them and steal your money outright, or they'll claim to have tried

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running your debit or credit card, but it failed. After that, they ask for the routing and account number for your checking or savings bank account.

- **More damage is done.** Once a fraudster has access to personal information, such as your banking details, they may be able to hack in and make changes to your accounts. This includes adding additional account holders or changing your login credentials to lock you out of the account altogether, so they can further exploit your finances.

Three steps to combat utility scams

The best way to avoid utility scams is to ignore any unsolicited outreach.


According to the [FTC](#), legitimate utility companies do not demand personal information via email or phone. What's more, most [states require utility companies to give advance notice](#) before disconnecting services, and they must make multiple attempts to contact you.

It can be difficult, however, to unravel a scammer's manipulation techniques head-on. When faced with a potential utility scam, remember this:

- **Stay calm and cautious.** Any time you receive an unsolicited request, our advice is to exercise extreme caution. Do not click on links in random emails or text messages (they could lead to [fake websites](#) designed to capture your information), especially those that contain grammatical or spelling errors. Even if someone shows up in person, shut the door if they do not have identification, are trying to collect payment, or are aggressively selling anything.
- **Don't share your personal information.** “At the end of the day, the best practice is to never, under any circumstances, provide your financial account information to anyone other than known places of business,” says Fisher.
- **Verify their identity.** Ask for their name, department, and a callback number. Then, independently verify their identity by calling the utility company directly using a number from their official website, online portal, or past billing statement. If the information they provided doesn't match the company's records, report the potential scam.

Reporting utility scams

If you've been impacted by a utility scam, the first thing you should do is contact your utility provider to report the incident. If you see any suspicious transactions, contact your bank or credit card company as well to limit the damage.

If caught quick enough, there's a possibility that the funds can be recalled and returned by the bank. But typically, fraudsters will wire the money out immediately, which makes it nearly impossible to recall. Banks are usually not obligated to pay that money back per their terms and conditions. 

History of Mother's Day

Quiz: Mother's Day began

- In 1858, when Ann Jarvis, a young Appalachian homemaker, organized "Mother's Work Days" to improve the sanitation and avert deaths from disease-bearing insects and seepage of polluted water.
- In 1872, when Boston poet, pacifist and women's suffragist Julia Ward Howe established a special day for mothers –and for peace– not long after the bloody Franco-Prussian War.
- In 1905, when Ann Jarvis died. Her daughter, Anna, decided to memorialize her mother's lifelong activism, and began a campaign that culminated in 1914 when Congress passed a Mother's Day resolution.

The correct answer: *All of the above.*

Each woman and all of these events have contributed to the present occasion now celebrated on the second Sunday in May.

The cause of world peace was the impetus for Julia Ward Howe's establishment, over a century ago, of a special day for mothers. Following unsuccessful efforts to pull together an international pacifist conference after the Franco-Prussian War, Howe began to think of a global appeal to women.

"While the war was still in progress," she wrote, she keenly felt the "cruel and unnecessary character of the contest." She believed, as any woman might, that it could have been settled without bloodshed. And, she wondered, "Why do not the mothers of mankind interfere in these matters to prevent the waste of that human life of which they alone bear and know the cost?"

Howe's version of Mother's Day, which served as an occasion for advocating peace, was held successfully in Boston and elsewhere for several years, but eventually lost popularity and disappeared from public notice in the years preceding World War I.

For Ann Jarvis, also known as "Mother Jarvis," community improvement by mothers was only a beginning. Throughout the Civil War she organized women's brigades, asking her workers to do all they could without regard for which side their men had chosen. And, in 1868, she took the initiative to heal the bitter rifts between her Confederate and Union neighbors.

The younger Anna Jarvis was only twelve years old in 1878 when she listened to her mother teach a Sunday school lesson on mothers in the Bible. "I hope and pray that someone, sometime, will found a memorial mother's day," the senior Jarvis said. "There are many days for men, but none for mothers."

Following her mother's death, Anna Jarvis embarked on a remarkable campaign. She poured out a constant stream of letters to men of prominence — President William Taft and former President Theodore Roosevelt among them — and enlisted considerable help from Philadelphia merchant John Wannamaker.

By May of 1907, a Mother's Day service had been arranged on the second Sunday in May at the Methodist Church in Grafton, West Virginia, where Mother Jarvis had taught. That same day a special service was held at the Wannamaker Auditorium in Philadelphia, which could seat no more than a third of the 15,000 people who showed up.

The custom spread to churches in 45 states and in Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Mexico and Canada. The Governor of West Virginia proclaimed Mother's Day in 1912; Pennsylvania's governor in 1913 did the same. The following year saw the Congressional Resolution, which was promptly signed by President Woodrow Wilson.

Mother's Day has endured. It serves now, as it originally did, to recognize the contributions of women. Mother's Day, like the job of "mothering," is varied and diverse. Perhaps that's only appropriate for a day honoring the multiple ways women find to nurture their families, and the ways in which so many have nurtured their communities, their countries, and the larger world.

The Power of Prevention: Get Cancer Screenings With TRICARE

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), catching cancer early is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your loved ones from cancer. That's where routine [cancer screenings](#) come in. Screening tests can find many common cancers before they cause symptoms.

Finding cancer early can make a big difference in your treatment options. If you've been putting off a screening that's recommended for you, it's time to make it a priority.

By screening for cancer, you can take control of your health and potentially catch cancers before they progress.

Getting screenings

TRICARE covers a wide range of cancer screenings at no cost to you when you follow [your plan's rules](#) for getting preventive care. Check out the [TRICARE Costs and Fees Fact Sheet](#) to learn more about preventive care costs. You can get many cancer screenings during your annual [Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Examination](#).

The recommended cancer screenings depend on your age, sex, and risk factors.

For women, TRICARE covers:

- [Mammograms](#) to check for breast cancer every year, usually starting at age 40
- [Pap tests](#) starting at age 21 to look for cervical cancer

For men, TRICARE covers:

- [Prostate cancer exams](#) every year, usually starting at age 50
- [Testicular exams](#) for men ages 13-39 with certain risk factors

For both men and women, TRICARE covers:

- [Colorectal cancer tests](#) starting at age 45
- [Lung cancer screening](#) for certain smokers ages 50-80
- [Oral cancer exams](#) for adults at increased risk due to tobacco or alcohol use
- [Skin cancer exams](#) for people with certain risk factors, including family history and frequent sun exposure
- [Thyroid cancer exams](#) for adults exposed to radiation

Recognizing cancer symptoms

It's important to remember that preventive screenings are meant to find cancer before you have symptoms.

If you show signs or symptoms that could mean cancer, see your doctor as soon as possible. Common warning signs include:

- Lumps or thickening in the breasts, testicles, or other body parts
- Sores that don't heal
- Unusual bleeding or discharge
- Chronic cough or hoarseness
- Changes in bowel or bladder habits
- Obvious changes in a wart or mole

No one wants to get a cancer diagnosis, but preventive screenings can help find cancer early, when it's most treatable. You should take advantage of these covered screenings. They could save your life. Questions about cancer screenings? Ask your doctor at your next visit or learn more about how [TRICARE covers cancer screenings](#).

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 or 256-426-0525.

Important Dates in May

- 1 May – May Day
- 1 May – Great Britain was formed (1707)
- 1 May – Francis Gary Powers’ U-2 plane shot down over Russia (1960)
- 2 May – Osama Bin Laden killed by US Special Forces (2011)
- 4 May – Four students killed at Kent State University by National Guardsmen (1970)
- 5 May – Cinco de Mayo
- 5 May – Alan Shepard became the first American in space (1961)
- 6 May – German airship Hindenburg explodes at Lakehurst, NJ (1937)
- 7 May - The *Lusitania* was torpedoed by a German submarine, killing 1198 (1915)
- 8 May – Battle of Coral Sea (1942)
- 9 May – Monthly Board Meeting – 1100 – Java Café**
- 11 May – Battle of Hamburger Hill (1969)
- 12 May – Mother’s Day
- 12 May – Berlin Blockade lifted (1949)
- 13 May – Pope John Paul II shot in St. Peter’s Square (1981)
- 14 May – Smallpox vaccine developed (1796)
- 15 May – George Wallace shot while campaigning for President (1972)
- 17 May – New York Stock Exchange established (1792)
- 17 May – First running of the Kentucky Derby (1875)
- 18 May – Mt. St. Helens erupted (1980)
- 20 May – Charles Lindbergh took off on his historic flight (1927)
- 20 May – Amelia Earhart became first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic (1932)
- 21 May – The American Red Cross was founded (1881)
- 22 May – Golf Meeting – 1200 – The Links**
- 24 May – First telegraph message sent (1844)
- 26 May – Evacuation of Dunkirk began (1940)
- 27 May – Golden Gate bridge opened (1937)
- 27 May – Memorial Day
- 28 May – Amnesty International founded (1961)
- 29 May – Monthly Member Meeting – 1100 – Summit Club**
- 30 May – Lincoln Memorial was dedicated (1922)
- 31 May – Johnstown flood killed over 2300 (1889)

