

THE CATAWBA VALLEY OFFICERS DISPATCH



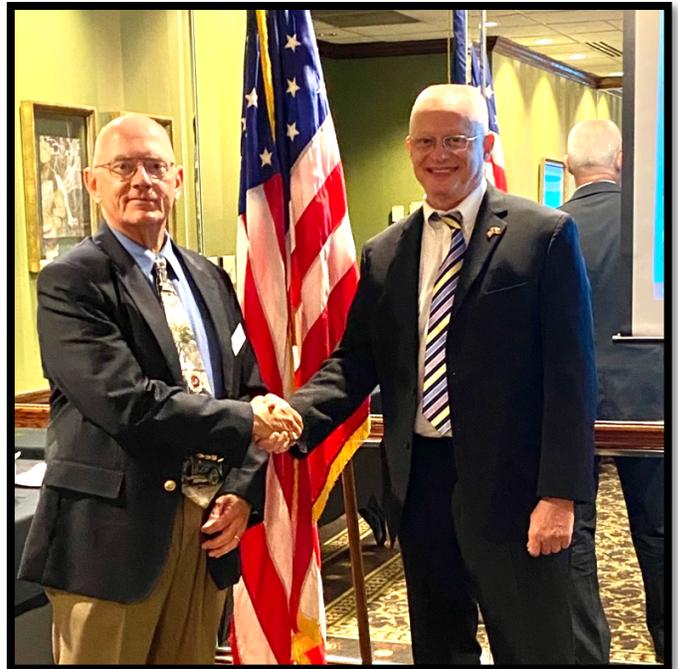
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, CATAWBA VALLEY CHAPTER
117 Wildwood Loop, Statesville, NC 28625-8903 / E-mail: moaanc11@outlook.com / Phone: 828-495-1259

President's Comments: LTC "Davy" Davenport

War has moved to the forefront of peoples' minds these days. Everyone is aware of our potential adversaries, and there are ongoing wars and hints of potential global wars. Our country has an honorable history of coming to the aid of democracies under threat throughout the world, and protecting America's freedom is the principle element of our nation's culture. Doing so requires a well-trained and well-equipped military force that deters and, if necessary, defeats aggressors. That's the duty of our men and women in uniform, and they become Veterans after their first day of voluntary service. However, a very recent DoD study revealed that seventy-seven percent of young adults are NOT eligible to join the military, and this fact is becoming common knowledge. So, Veterans are now held in even higher esteem, not only for their service but also because they're identified as being a cut or two above most civilians—in terms of being responsible, talented, productive, and law-abiding citizens. That's why commercial firms and high-tech industries are eager to hire Veterans. Their sense of duty and service-before-self ethos will be praised and honored at Veterans Day events in hometowns throughout the country. In fact, the annual parades and ceremonies that honor Veterans are each communities' biggest opportunity to publicly thank their special citizens who mustered up and measured up to standards, and then donned a uniform to take on a role in supporting or manning a weapon system, whether it be on the so-called "pointed end of the spear" or in an associated role—oftentimes very much in harm's way! So, I encourage everyone to be present at local Veterans Day events, either in uniform or wearing some insignia or logo that denotes your branch of service.

No doubt we're all alarmed about the recently intensified scammer, hacker, and fraudster attacks on the military community. So, please allow me to offer a few security tips relevant to bank accounts. If you only use your ATM card once or twice a month, you may be able to easily turn it off via your bank's website or App, and then only activate the card on the day you use it. When using an ATM machine, check it for strange devices or tampering. Using the ATM at a local bank may be safer than using an ATM in a supermarket or gas station. Also, if you only flow money into a savings account, you might be able to set the account so that only deposits can flow in, thereby blocking hackers from accessing funds. Most banks have a security alert service, but it isn't active until the account subscriber turns on the alert features. If you receive an unexpected phone call from your bank, hang up and then call the bank to be sure it's really them and not a scammer. Remember, your bank, the IRS, and the sheriff WILL NOT call you and ask for money or your PIN over the phone. Create an unusual user ID and change your password and PIN often. Also, use your bank's layered log-on procedures. Don't click on links contained in e-mails from fake banks and credit card companies. If you become a victim of identity theft, you may even have your local bank temporarily shut down remote on-line access to shield your accounts from fraudsters seeking to steal funds; then, reestablish remote access once it's safe to do so. Consider using a credit monitoring service, to include monitoring activity that involves use of your Social Security Number. Shred unneeded financial statements. Finally, keeping your computer software updated improves security, and don't download pop-up games that may contain malware and spyware! I hope these few tips will help you defend against fraudsters. Also, the VA suggests we capitalize on lots more security info at website: <https://fightcybercrime.org/scams>

Moldova and Ukraine Insights: Captain (USNR, Ret.) Ray West was Guest Speaker at our chapter's recent meeting/dinner. His moving presentation, titled "A Report to Friends," provided information on the Moldova World Children's Fund (MWCF) that he founded. He gave insights into the desperate plight of Ukrainian families and children who have been relocated to safe sanctuary in Moldova. He explained that Moldova is the poorest country in Europe; yet, they've willingly accepted a massive flood of war refugees. Actually, Ray's non-profit has been in operation since 1998, and it complements the North Carolina National Guard's partnership with Moldova that was established in 1996. The MWCF is a conduit for resources from multiple sources of charity and other Non-Profits. MWCF provides support such as: hygiene facilities, classrooms for on-line studies, and distribution of goods and food to those impacted and/or suffering from the Ukraine War. Ray provided first-hand accounts and photos of the war that he and his "All-Star Team" of volunteers accumulated during their boots-on-the-ground activity in both Moldova and Ukraine. He noted that, sadly, most targets in this war of aggression are civilian. Our chapter gave a \$200 donation to MWCF. Learn more about their incredible work at website: <https://moldovawcf.org>



Chapter President (l) thanks Guest Speaker Ray West

amazon Shop via "smile.amazon.com" to support the MOAA Foundation!

MOAA CVC Photo



The great American Military Museum in Gastonia

NEW VETERAN'S CRISIS LINE!
Dial 988, then press 1
(or text 838255)

American Military Museum: This military museum was mentioned in our newsletter well over a decade ago; so, here's the info again for both new and old members. The museum is down in Gastonia, housed in a charming 1930 vintage building that the city of Gastonia built specifically to be a military museum and Veterans gathering place. It holds a wide range of military uniforms, weapons and artifacts from past wars and all branches of military service. This includes a large display of German, Japanese and Russian weapons. This truly fascinating collection of artifacts hinges largely on Gastonia's Veterans, but the museum is still highly relevant to all Veterans, and it covers all past wars, starting with the Indian War. The Museum Director, Mr. James Mayo, pointed out that the museum is normally open on Sundays from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM, or by appointment on weekday evenings and on Saturdays (Phone: 704-866-6068, Cell: 704-860-0129). The address is 109 W. Second Ave., Gastonia. Entering the city from the north via Hwy 321 (aka Chester St. in Gastonia) takes you within a few blocks of this world-class museum.

Military Solution to Teacher Shortage: This past July, Florida instituted its Military Veterans Certification Pathway program. It encourages four-year Veterans with an Honorable Discharge to become school teachers, even without a teaching degree! Candidates must already have 60 college credits with a 2.5 GPA; pass a subject area exam at the bachelor's level, and receive a cleared background screening. The temporary teaching certificate is issued with the expectation that the Veteran will earn a full four-year credential before five years has passed. Perhaps this exciting and sensible program will eventually migrate to North Carolina...

Yet Another Chapter Laurel: At the chapter's September membership meeting, Colonel Tim Herndon presented Chapter President LTC "Davy" Davenport with a Certificate of Appreciation for the Catawba Valley Chapter being a major sponsor of the most recent Foothills Veterans Stand Down event that provided a spectrum of support and services to 225 homeless and needy Veterans. Tim mentioned that he's looking forward to the next Stand Down, and he hopes chapter members will again volunteer to serve on staff at the next Stand Down.

Disabled Veterans Homestead Property Tax Relief: Honorably Discharged disabled NC Veterans are eligible to receive a \$45 thousand property tax relief, and this applies to never-remarried surviving spouses of a veteran! The Veteran property owner must either (1) have a permanent and total service-connected disability of 100% or (2) receive benefits for specially adapted housing under 38 U.S.C. 2101 (Acquisition and Adaptation of Housing). To get the benefit, the Veteran takes a completed NCDVA Form 9 to the local Veterans Service Officer for certification. That certified form and an AV-9 Property Tax Relief application form then go to the local county tax office for final approval. The annual submission cut-off date to county tax offices is always June 1st.

VA PTSD Support: The VA has established a comprehensive collection of resources available to those suffering from PTSD. The beauty is that the VA offers Veterans secure virtual tools for mental health care outside the traditional office visit. You can easily conduct mental health visits from your home or other preferred location. And you can access other VA Mobile apps to supplement treatment and support your self-care. Just a few examples of available support are: *Virtual visits through VA Video Connect; Annie App for Veterans; PTSD Coach, and Mindfulness Coach.* A full index of the VA's PTSD support programs is on the left side of webpage: www.ptsd.va.gov

Second Chance for Some: The President recently pardoned thousands of persons convicted and imprisoned solely for marijuana possession. But the pardon does not apply to military service members convicted under the UCMJ. Obviously, the Army still outlaws the use marijuana. Yet, they are now granting some waivers to allow persons with low-level use history to join if they have stopped using and can pass screening for drugs. A recent Rand Study indicates that most soldiers who were "waivered-in" perform duties well and have a good outcome.

Worth Pondering: The Selective Service System has announced that US citizens or immigrants who are born male and changed their gender to female are still required to register. Individuals who are born female and changed their gender to male are not required to register. According to the OPM, the term "transgender woman" is typically used to refer to someone who was assigned the male sex at birth but who identifies as a female.

National Wreaths Day: December 17th is National Wreaths Across America Day, and there'll be wreath ceremonies throughout the U.S, at sea and overseas. Sponsoring a wreath will ensure that a wreath is hand-crafted of all-American balsam and hand-tied with a red velvet bow in Columbia Falls, Maine. It will then be sent to one of the participating locations, where a volunteer will place it on the marker of a fallen hero. That volunteer will then "say their name" to ensure that the legacy of duty, service and sacrifice of that veteran is never forgotten. You can sponsor wreaths via the national website: www.wreathscrossamerica.org

Taps: It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of chapter member Captain (Dr.) Arvo Ederma, USPHS. Captain Ederma passed away on September 23rd. Arvo came to the U.S. as a refugee after exiting Estonia when it was absorbed into the Soviet Union. He enjoyed a highly successful and rewarding thirty-year career in the USPHS. Captain Ederma was a highly decorated and deeply admired senior officer. Services for him were held in New York, his final resting place. Captain Ederma's obituary can be read at website: www.mcleanfuneral.com

- NEWS FROM THE FIVE MILITARY BRANCHES –

ARMY: Army is adding a computerized fire control and optic system on standard-issue rifles. This provides a guaranteed one-shot kill of drone aircraft up to 200 meters away—kills fast moving targets and saves ammo!

NAVY: Navy is issuing a new uniform to replace coveralls. The new two-piece uniform is flame retardant, and sailors are allowed to wear it on or off base. Junior enlisted will wear blue; chiefs and officers will wear khaki.

MARINES: The Corps is testing prototype PT uniforms made of light fabric. The green-on-green uniform comes in gender-specific sizes and has reflective striping on the back—plus a big Marine Corps logo on the left sleeve!

AIR FORCE: Made-in-USA Rolls-Royce engines are now being installed in B-52-H bombers because legacy engines are too costly to maintain. Eight new engines on each B-52 will allow the bomber to reach Mach 0.92.

SPACE FORCE: In early October, the White House made Space Force members eligible for various medals and citations, including the Bronze Star medal, which is awarded for meritorious achievement on the battlefield.

2021 Calendar: *Board Meetings*: 15 December

General Membership Meetings/Dinners: Christmas Charity Dinner on December 1st

Benevolent Fund: Our designated charities are: MOAA American Patriot Scholarship Program (**MOAA-APS**), Purple Heart Homes (**PHH**) and Welcome Home Veterans (**WHV**). Donate by sending a charity-specific (any or all three) annotated check to Treasurer: CDR Dave Olson, 485 26th Ave NE (Unit A), Hickory, NC 28601.

————— CHAPTER PRINCIPALS, DIRECTORS AND STAFF —————

Chapter President: LTC “Davy” Davenport
1st Vice President: *Vacant*
2nd Vice President: LTC James Cole
Treasurer: Commander Dave Olson
Secretary: Major Dennis McClish
Chaplain: Reverend (WO3) Robert Herron
Programs Chairman: *Vacant!*
Director: Colonel (Dr.) Don Gemeinhardt

Director: Colonel Joe Cansler
Director: *Vacant!*
Legislative Liaison: Colonel (Dr.) Dana Tucker
Surviving Spouses Liaison: Colonel (Dr.) Tucker
Membership Chair: *Vacant!*
JROTC Coordinator: Lt Col G. Jane Harmon
Personal Affairs & TOPS: *Vacant!*
Newsletter/Website: Colonel John Liburdi

Join National MOAA and this Chapter: MOAA is the country’s leading organization protecting the rights of military servicemembers and their families. Those who belong to MOAA not only lend their voices to a greater cause, but they also gain access to extensive benefits tailored to the needs and lifestyles of military officers. MOAA members proudly hail from every branch of the uniformed services. To them, MOAA has made the same promise that they have made to their country: Never Stop Serving! Membership is open to those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any component of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, U.S. Public Health Service or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The MOAA Catawba Valley Chapter covers six counties: Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Iredell and Lincoln. Our chapter is active in the community through its Benevolent Fund (explained above) and JROTC support. The chapter also engages in ad hoc charitable support and activity, with emphasis on homeless Veterans. Please note that National MOAA and its affiliated chapters are nonpartisan, without any political party affiliation, bias, or designation. A one-page chapter membership mail-in application form is available via the “Join Chapter” button on our chapter website homepage at: www.moaacvc.org. Also, you can learn more about MOAA National and join at either Basic, Premium or Life level by visiting website: <https://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa>

The MOAA "Take Action" website is now at: <https://moaa.quorum.us>



RESERVATION FOR MOAA CATAWBA VALLEY CHRISTMAS CHARITY DINNER



This is my reservation for MOAA CVC's General Membership Christmas Charity Dinner on December 1st, (a Thursday) at Lake Hickory Country Club. Cocktails/social time begins at 6:00 p.m. and dinner will be served in the Elijah Brown room at 6:30 p.m. A wonderful holiday themed prize will be raffled off, with all proceeds going to our chapter's Benevolent Fund. Attire: coat & tie or military service dress uniform, or even mess dress! Guest Speaker will be USAF Captain (Fmr.) Donna Culp who will recount her recent exploits in Poland and Ukraine, including her husband's (LTC John Culp, U.S. Army, Ret.) ongoing work as Program Coordinator and member of "Bomb Techs Without Borders" in Ukraine.

Name of attendee(s): _____ & _____ & _____

Indicate number of entrée selections: Cordon Bleu _____ Baked Salmon _____ Veggi Platter _____

Please send this slip and your check (**\$30.00 per attendee**) to arrive no later than November 28th, a Monday, to:



Commander Dave Olson, 485 26th Ave NE (Unit A), Hickory, NC 28601

Tell prospective members about our website: www.moaacvc.org



*Military retiree and disabled Veteran
pay COLA increase for 2023 = 8.7%*

Veterans Day: **Free Meals, Discounts, Deals, etc.**
Link to list on our website "News & Events" page:
www.moaacvc.org



TRICARE & Federal Benefits Open Season
TRICARE Nov 14 – Dec 13
Fed Benefits Nov 14 – Dec 12