

THE CATAWBA VALLEY OFFICERS DISPATCH



MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, CATAWBA VALLEY CHAPTER
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President's Comments: LTC "Davy" Davenport

I'd like to highlight some of our chapter's recent activity so that non-member officers will realize the benefit of joining us. On the legislative front, our chapter was deeply involved in the recent push to enact military retiree tax exemption for North Carolina. The vigorous advocacy by our MOAA chapter and other NC chapters resulted in the recent passage of the bill that exempted tax on retirement pay for all military retirees. Plus, we engaged in the subsequent effort to tax exempt USPHS and NOAA retiree pay, and this was passed into law in July! We stayed involved in actions that recently resulted in establishment of a Basic Needs Allowance program to eliminate food insecurity among young military families. Meanwhile, we procured and presented nineteen JROTC units with MOAA Award Medals and ribbons for their respective top JROTC cadets: 8 Army, 7 Navy, 3 USAF, and 1 Marine. We also donated funds to support three charities: Purple Heart Homes, Welcome Home Veterans, and the MOAA Patriot Scholarship Program for children of servicemembers who died on active duty. In addition, we donated funds to support the Veterans Motocross Foundation that provides "dirt bike" sport activity as therapy for Veterans suffering the physical and mental scars of war. We were also a major sponsor of last November's Foothills Veterans Stand Down event that helps homeless and disadvantaged Veterans rebuild their lives. Finally, we held a wonderful Christmas Charity Dinner at Lake Hickory Country Club that helped raise funds for our benevolent activity. Actually, we should all be proud of our chapter's altruistic activities. Clearly, our collective actions have been quite significant, seeing as MOAA National just awarded our Catawba Valley Chapter a 2021 **MOAA Five-Star Level of Excellence Award!** The Award logo is shown on the upper right corner of this page.

Say, who would have predicted that recruiting people into the military would become such a desperate situation? This occurred because a large percentage of young adults are manifesting rampant obesity, drug usage, academic shortfalls, and even criminal histories. Besides those disqualifying factors, a red-hot job market is luring away potential recruits, thus making things extremely challenging for hometown USA recruiters. Plus, a recent survey has revealed a significant reduction in the percentage of military parents encouraging their sons and daughters to serve in uniform. So, now "Bootcamp" instructors have partially filled barracks and the services are tailoring plans and operations in reaction to the unforeseen reduction in force strength. In fact, this crisis has reached the point where the services now offer massive bonuses to qualified individuals who sign up to serve in uniform. Imagine, recruits now get so much bonus money that they can drive up to the bootcamp main gate in a newly purchased vehicle! Without a draft, it's apparent that far fewer Americans will be donning a uniform to serve their country and eventually become Veterans. Thus, Veterans will soon become an increasingly smaller segment of society. With that in mind, I sense that we Veterans now have a duty to help bolster the military's presence and image in our local communities. Thus, we should all muster up to participate in Veterans Day events on November 11th, either in uniform or wearing an article of clothing that displays our individual branch of service. That will generate increased interest in military service and provide eager citizens their opportunity to publicly honor their town's heroes. By the way, in the eyes of the civilians, the hero label applies to everyone who served their country in uniform, no matter what or where their military duties were. Have a great Veteran's Day!

Remembering *The Forgotten War*: The Korean War Veterans Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. was rededicated on July 27th. South Korea helped fund the \$22 million rededication construction project. A new feature of the memorial site was the addition of a “Wall of Remembrance” that displays the names of the 43,808 military personnel—including the Korean U.S. Army augmentees—who were killed during the war. Appropriately, the names of U.S. service members and the Korean augmentees to the U.S. Army are mingled together. The U.S. Army soldiers and Koreans soldiers wore the exact same uniforms and they fought side-by-side during the 1950 to 1953 war. Memorial rededication work included the refinishing of nineteen eight-foot tall stainless-steel statues that represent ground troops on patrol during the war. A similar tribute to the Korean War’s fallen heroes that’s closer to home is the North Carolina Korean War Memorial, in Mint Hill. It has a central fountain surrounded by four granite pillars on which are inscribed the names of 788 North Carolinians who were either killed or missing in action during the Korean war. The site is right off the lower part of Charlotte’s I-485 “Outer Loop” (Exit 44), at 8850 Fairview Road, Mint Hill, NC.

U.S. Army Photo



Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

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

U.S. DoD Photo



Army’s new Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle

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Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle: After years of development, prototyping, and testing, the Army’s new Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle (AMPV) program is approaching its initial operational capability, now scheduled for February 2023. The AMPV is the replacement for the M113 family of vehicles at the brigade level and below, and it’s based largely on the Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle platform, with an open top turret that has 360-degree bullet proof windows. There are five AMPV versions relative to its various mission roles: general purpose, medical evacuation, medical treatment, mortar carrier, and mission command. The tracked AMPV offers better mobility, survivability, and force protection, and it has space, weight, power, and cooling capacities that will allow incorporation of future technologies on the AMPV “platform.” It has explosive reactive armor to shield against anti-tank guided missiles and modern RPGs. The AMPV also has an NBC protection system, air conditioning, night vision, and a fire suppression system. The AMPV’s cruising range at 30 mph is 225 miles. If full-rate production moves forward, the Army will ultimately have 2,936 of these incredible vehicles that have a price tag of about two-million dollars each.

Taps: We regretfully announce the passing of Colonel William H. Creed, USA, (Ret.). Colonel “Bill” Creed resided in Black Mountain but was a Past President of our Catawba Valley Chapter, and he founded MOAA’s Black Mountain Satellite chapter. The highly decorated Colonel served in WWII, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Iraq War. He will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery. There will be a September 3rd memorial service in Black Mountain; his obituary and event details are on website: www.harwoodhomeforfunerals.com.

Next Generation ID Card: Retirees and their family members who carry military ID cards without expiration dates may now upgrade to the next generation Uniform Services ID card at anytime convenient to them. However, the upgrade must be done within the next four years because the DoD expects to phase out the old ID cards by 2026. That said, ID cards that have expiration dates must be replaced within ninety days of expiring. The new ID cards are more rugged and have extra security features. Plus, the new ID cards now work on TSA security checkpoint scanners at U.S. airports! Our chapter website’s “Useful Links” page has a link to the DoD RAPIDS Site Locator for finding nearby ID card issue offices and learning the procedures to follow.

USPHS & NOAA State Tax Exemption: The NC Governor recently signed HB-103 (2022 Appropriations Bill) that now expands the military retiree state tax exemption to also cover U.S. Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency retiree pay. This was done by changing/correcting the current "military service" tax exemption for retirees to read "uniformed service." This USPHS and NOAA retirement pay tax exemption takes effect starting tax year January 1, 2022! This success story is the result of NC CoC and chapter members lobbying/advocating to expand the military no-tax benefit to also cover USPHS and NOAA retirees. The relevant HB103 text extract is on page five below. Congrats to our chapter's USPHS members!

Pension Poachers: Scammers try to earn your trust by claiming to be advocates who can help you gain increased or additional VA benefits. By doing so, they collect money through fees or by siphoning off your benefit payments. Never pay for assistance when applying for VA benefits. Accredited Veteran Service Organization (VSO) Representatives provide free advice and help complete and file applications. While some attorneys may charge you a fee for representation in appealing or requesting an additional review of a VA decision, they cannot charge you for services provided on initially applying for benefits. Please report scammers to the VA Office of Inspector General by calling 800-488-8244 or to the Federal Trade Commission at <http://ReportFraud.ftc.gov>.

Travel discounts for veterans: AmericanForcesTravel.com is a Department of Defense on-line leisure travel website managed by Morale, Welfare, and Recreation and supported by Priceline. Veterans can access exclusive deals on hotels, flights, rental cars, cruises, travel packages, and even event tickets. Best price guaranteed!

NC CoC Convention at Sea: The MOAA North Carolina Council of Chapters will hold it’s 2023 convention aboard Carnival’s “Sunshine of the Seas” ship. The Nov 11-16, 2023 five-night cruise departs from Charleston, SC. Various prices are based on the passenger’s cabin selection, and includes taxes, fees, port charges, gratuities, and dining in main dining areas. Secure parking is available at the port for a fee. The updated registration form is on the “News & Events” page of our chapter website (www.moaacvc.org). Registration form and deposit must be submitted by January 13th to the address that’s on the form. POC e-mail: jimjackson22245@gmail.com.

Toxic Burn Pit Maladies Acknowledged: The “PACT” Act was recently signed into law. This covers post-9/11 Veterans who suffered from the effects of toxic exposure, without the benefit of medical care or compensation. Now, 23 diseases are presumed to be linked to military service near burn pits, thereby allowing health services and disability compensation with no need to prove the claimant’s illness was service-related. The bill also reaches back to previous conflicts to include hypertension as being associated with Agent Orange exposure, and it provides rights and coverage to ailing Camp Lejeune NC contamination victims. This huge victory resulted from a decade of vigorous advocacy and lobbying by Veterans groups, especially by MOAA’s leaders and members. Full details and procedures are available at website: www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/

New MOAA CVC Chapter Members: A big welcome to our chapter’s three newest members: Marine Captain (Ret.) “Jud” Taylor, Army Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Luther Ray, and Navy Commander (Ret.) Arthur Prack!

- NEWS FROM THE FIVE MILITARY BRANCHES -

ARMY: A Future Soldier Preparatory Course pilot program just began at Fort Jackson, SC. The program helps youth overcome academic and physical fitness barriers to service, thereby earning the chance to join the Army.

NAVY: The Navy is offering a \$25,000 signing bonus to recruits for any rate (specialty) if they agree to enlist and report for bootcamp at an early date. The signing bonus is in addition to other bonuses for hard to fill rates!

MARINES: The Corp's newly deployed Joint Light Tactical Vehicle Trailer is a multipurpose platform with an independent suspension system that enables it to carry heavier payloads and offers improved off-road mobility

AIR FORCE: To counter a severe pilot shortage, USAF is testing autonomous control systems on C-130J cargo planes to replace human co-pilots. The contractor says this might even lead to uncrewed flights of cargo planes!

SPACE FORCE: Space Development Agency recently awarded about 1.3 billion in agreements to establish a 28 satellite "Tranche 1 Tracking Layer" that will constitute a new initial missile-warning/missile-tracking capability.

2021 Calendar: Board Meetings: 27 October, 15 December

General Membership Meetings/Dinners: 22 September, 1 December

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 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING/DINNER AT LHCC -----

This is my reservation for MOAA Catawba Valley Chapter's General Membership meeting/dinner being held on **September 22nd** at Lake Hickory Country Club. The social hour in the club's lounge will start at 6:00 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Guest Speaker for the evening will be Mr. Ray West, speaking about the Moldova World Children Fund that he founded and providing some insights about Moldova's precarious situation.

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

Menu Selection(s): Cordon Bleu _____ / Baked Salmon _____ / Veggie Plate _____

Please send this slip and your check (**\$30.00 per attendee**) to arrive no later than Monday, September 19th to:

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

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

20. GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
21. SESSION 2021
22. HOUSE BILL 103 RATIFIED BILL

- 23.
- 24. PART XLII. FINANCE EXPAND INCOME TAX EXCLUSION OF **MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY TO NOAA AND U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE RETIREES**
- 25. **SECTION 42.1.(a) G.S. 105-153.5(b)(5a)** reads as rewritten: "(5a) The amount received during the taxable year from the United States government for the payments listed in this subdivision. Amounts deducted under this subdivision may not also be deducted under subdivision (5) of this subsection. The payments are:
- 26. a. Retirement pay for service in the ~~Armed Forces~~ uniformed services of the United States to a retired member that meets either of the ~~following~~: criteria listed in this sub-subdivision. For purposes of this sub-subdivision, the term "uniformed services" has the same meaning as in 10 U.S.C. § 101(a)(5). The criteria are:
- 27. 1. Served at least ~~20 years~~ years in the uniformed services.
- 28. 2. Medically retired under 10 U.S.C. Chapter 61. This deduction does not apply to severance pay received by a ~~member person~~ due to separation from the member's armed forces under 10 U.S.C. Chapter 61.
- 29. b. Payments of a Plan defined in 10 U.S.C. § 1447 to a beneficiary of a retired member eligible to deduct retirement pay under sub-subdivision a. of this subdivision."
- 30. SECTION 42.1.(b) This section is effective for taxable years beginning on or after **January 1, 2022.**

The online MOAA Store has reopened: <https://moaaestore.shop>