

# 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**

The trillion-dollar defense budget includes \$150 billion in new spending that addresses MOAA's top legislative priorities. However, we're keeping the celebratory champagne on ice until the Budget Reconciliation process is completed so we can fully assess how military pay, benefits, and quality-of-life programs are affected. In fact, the ongoing fiscal struggles in the Defense sector means that moments of optimism are fleeting. Fortunately, we have MOAA National advocates and lobbyists continuously engaged with Capitol Hill and Pentagon officials to ensure they keep the needs and benefits of servicemembers on the table for funding while armament acquisition and current operations are being funded. And, in an apolitical context, I'll also say that we're also blessed to have North Carolinians in Congress who are strong advocates for servicemembers and their families. Let's help them keep priorities organized and in the spotlight by utilizing MOAA's Legislative Action Center to flow in the pre-staged advocacy e-mails that are so easy for us to send. In that regard, we still need a big push for the Major Richard Star Act (HR-2102) that endeavors to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retired pay for retirees who have combat-related disabilities.

It seems that, collectively, we don't see or say very much about the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) units that are associated with our chapter. According to the DoD, "The JROTC program prepares high school students for leadership roles while making them aware of their rights, responsibilities and privileges as American citizens." Although not a military "Prep" program, JROTC units spawn many active duty military servicemembers, some of whom go on to be officers. Likewise, some of America's best citizens emerge from these programs to become key figures in industry and in their communities. Currently, there's a nation-wide shortage of JROTC Senior Instructors, even in a few local units here. So, the military services are now increasing the pool of instructor candidates by eliminating the requirement to be a retiree, thus allowing former officers and currently serving members to become instructors. My view is that the service of our local JROTC Instructors constitutes a huge and noble contribution to American society, and this was confirmed by a recent RAND Study. BTW: You can view local cadets receiving MOAA Awards on the News & Events page of our chapter website.

I'd like to cover one last important item here just for everyone's situational awareness. We've been experiencing a bit of a shortfall in General Membership meeting/dinner participation. Lake Hickory Country Club sets a minimum number of twenty guests for dining events. If we don't meet that number, we have to pay the delta. In other words, if only eighteen persons attend, we still have to pay the club for twenty dinners. That's unfortunate, but there are other considerations beyond that monetary loss. First of all, chapter members are missing out on their chance to enjoy warm camaraderie with fellow military officers and their spouses. Second, it's difficult to attract powerful and/or interesting guest speakers when there's just a small audience in attendance. Third, consider the value of a moderately priced, chef prepared, and properly served dinner in an opulent setting. And yes, the club has slightly increased the dinner price. So, now we're asking \$40.00 per guest—still a really great value! Our next General Membership meeting/dinner is on the evening of September 18th, and our Guest Speaker will be an official from the amazing Veterans Smile charity. I encourage all chapter members, spouses and guests to join us at this wonderful event, and to even bring any and all potential chapter members!

Our MOAA chapter held its General Membership meeting and dinner at Lake Hickory Country Club on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The Guest Speaker was Mr. Eduardo Andrade, the Regional Director for U.S. Congressman Pat Harrigan. Mr. Andrade explained that Congressman Harrigan is a West Point graduate, former Green Beret and Special Forces member. His office is a vigorous, action-oriented advocate for Veterans, with a strong track record of success. He then presented a comprehensive rundown and update on military-related legislation in the domain of the Congressman. Two very noteworthy bills were: restoring rank, backpay and benefits to personnel who were discharged for refusing the COVID-19 vaccine. Plus, those individuals who didn't return to active duty were given Honorable Discharges. The other bill he described ensures that disabled Veterans disability pay is not included in their applications for housing vouchers. Mr. Andrade closed by saying the Congressman's District Office is in Hickory, and that their mobile office continually visits all counties in the 10<sup>th</sup> District. He also encouraged members to visit the Congressman's website for updates on his legislative activity that supports Veterans and Military Families. (<https://harrigan.house>)



*Mr. Eduardo Andrade speaks at chapter dinner*

Purple Heart Day  
August 7<sup>th</sup>



USPS Images



*Battlefields of the American Revolution*

The U.S. Postal service recently issued several new military related postage stamps. Three of them celebrate anniversaries. Issued in May are 250 Years of Service stamps for the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Army. The USPS stamp store offers a short paragraph honoring each of the services individually. Here are excerpts: Navy: "...honor, courage, and commitment." Marine Corps: "...respectful of tradition while remaining highly adaptable and ready to serve." Army: "...America's first national institution." Another group of military related stamps was issued this past April. The "forever" stamp pictured to the lower left is one of fifteen pieces in the new American Revolution stamp pane (sheet). The stamp pane pairs photographs of five battlefields and historic sites with dramatic paintings of pivotal moments in the American Revolution by artist Greg Harlin. Each of his five battlefield illustrations span two stamps. Thus, the fifteen-stamp sheet gives the appearance of being a stunning art gallery. These forever stamps will always be equal in value to the current first-class mail one-ounce rate, but they're really keepsakes.

**VA & ABMC Collaborate on Legacies:** The Department of Veterans Affairs recently expanded its Veterans Legacy Memorial (VLM) website to add 210,000 additional pages for American Veterans interred and honored in cemeteries and memorials managed by the American Battle Monuments Commission overseas. Collaboration between the VA's National Cemetery Administration and ABMC brings the total number of VLM pages to more than 10 million, now including servicemembers who never came home from past wars. ([www.vlm.cem.va.gov](http://www.vlm.cem.va.gov))

**Private Health Care for Veterans:** The VA recently announced that it is enacting a provision of the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act that will help ease veterans' access to medical services from private providers. This law prohibits VA administrators from overriding a VA doctor's referral for a patient to get outside care. The removal of the extra review requirement means Veterans can get their health care when and where it's most convenient for them.

**Women Warriors Luncheon:** On Saturday, September 6, 2025, the Veterans Healing Farm (located in Mills River, NC) will host a Women Warriors' Keynote Luncheon at the Blue Ridge Conference Center, Flat Rock, NC 28731. This will be a major event recognizing the service, strength, and sacrifices of women veterans, while honoring *all* veterans throughout North Carolina and the surrounding region. The Western NC MOAA chapter will be present, and all MOAA chapters are welcome to attend. Here's a link to the event page for more details: [www.veteranshealingfarm.org/2025-women-warriors-luncheon](http://www.veteranshealingfarm.org/2025-women-warriors-luncheon)

**Mortgage Fix for Veterans:** Veterans struggling to pay their mortgages could get help under a plan approved by the House. It's a bill that would create a partial claims program for the VA. The program would allow veterans with VA home loans who need to skip mortgage payments to move those missing payments to the end of their loan term. The bill, if approved by the Senate and signed into law, would provide a lifeline to veterans who are at risk of foreclosure following the recent termination of the Veterans Affairs Servicing Purchase program.

**NOAA's Space-Based Fire Alarm:** NOAA has just established and implemented a satellite system that detects fires on the surface of the earth to warn firefighter organizations. Two NOAA satellites monitor the earth and then feed data to AI-powered computers that discover and analyze new fires, and then this alarm system instantly reports fires as small as one-quarter of an acre! The reports are fed to weather forecasters, firefighters, and first responders who now widely subscribe to NOAA's Next-Generation Fire Service.

**High Flying Veterans:** Vets to Drones is a program that trains Veterans to be commercial drone operators. The program provides Veterans with comprehensive, tailored support designed to ensure success, including: FAA Part 107 certification training and credential, hands-on drone training, career transition support, and drone flying community engagement. This training occurs in hurricane-stricken Western North Carolina, preceded by a webinar session. Veterans are keen on this program; so, space is limited. To apply, visit: [www.dronestovets.org](http://www.dronestovets.org)

**Find Your Adventure:** The U.S. Vet Connect, National Veterans Outdoor Resource HUB helps Veterans find outdoor adventure throughout the U.S. Their website has a matrix of twenty different sport and hobby activities. Just click on any one of them to view organizations and programs relevant to the specific area chosen, much of it listed by state. Then, clicking on a specific organization provides full information, including contact info. The easy to navigate National Veterans Outdoor Resource HUB website is located at: [www.usvetconnect.com](http://www.usvetconnect.com)

**Officer to Professor:** Higher education institutions and Blue Star Families have teamed to establish the Chamberlain Program that helps military officers transition from the military to academia. Once accepted into the program, a one-time \$5,000 grant is awarded to fund the search for a fellowship position in a university. Once the position is firmed up, the institution receives a one-time grant of \$40,000 as partial funding of the new "visiting professor's" salary. More info and application procedures are at: <https://bluestarfam.org/chamberlain-project>

**New Chapter Member:** A hearty welcome to our newest chapter member LTC Doug DeMoss (U.S. Army, Ret.). Doug was commissioned at West Point and served in the Army Corps of Engineers. He later became a Military Lawyer, working in several law domains and then serving as a General Counsel in the Pentagon. After the Army, he continued practicing law in the Defense Industry. Doug and his wife Barbara reside in Mooresville.

## **- NEWS FROM THE FIVE MILITARY BRANCHES -**

**ARMY:** A new Space Operations “40D” MOS is being established for enlisted soldiers. They will leverage space-based capabilities to support ground operations, even in settings where space-based GPS has been lost.

**NAVY:** Defense Logistics Agency recently awarded a four-year \$50 million contract to a firm for the production of cold weather parkas. These parkas for Navy and Coast Guard are being manufactured in tropical Puerto Rico.

**MARINES:** The Corps has fully implemented “QSRMax.” Marines use the system to submit and track barracks maintenance requests in real time; it also facilitates top-level analysis of barracks conditions service-wide.

**AIR FORCE:** A new USAF program is providing small drone operational training to every airman. The course includes: payload delivery, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, as well as tactical decision-making.

**SPACE FORCE:** Five experimental payloads were sent to the International Space Station by hitching a ride on a Space X Commercial resupply rocket. The payloads allow the DoD to conduct six scientific experiments in space.

**Benevolent Fund:** Our four designated charities are: Foothills Veterans Helping Veterans (FVHV), Purple Heart Homes (PHH), Piedmont Veterans Assistance Council (PVAC), and Welcome Home Veterans (WHV). Make Benevolent Fund donations by sending a check to our chapter Treasurer. You may annotate the check to specify any of the above charities, or leave it to our Board of Directors that apportions out funds to the various charities. Colonel Dana Tucker won the last charity raffle, and he generously donated his winnings to our Benevolent Fund.

**Treasurer:** CDR Dave Olson, 485 26<sup>th</sup> Ave NE (Unit A), Hickory, NC 28601

**2024 Calendar:** *General Membership Meetings/Dinners:* Jan 16, Mar 20, May 15, Sep 18, Dec 11

*Board Meetings:* Feb 27, Apr 24, Jun 26, Aug 28, Oct 23, Dec 4

## **CHAPTER PRINCIPALS, DIRECTORS AND STAFF**

Chapter President: LTC “Davy” Davenport  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Captain George Taylor  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Major Jim McCauley  
Treasurer: Commander Dave Olson  
Secretary: Major Dennis McClish  
Chaplain: Reverend (CW3) Robert Herron  
Programs Chairman: Vacant  
Director: Vacant

Director: Colonel Joe Cansler  
Director: Vacant  
Legislative Liaison: Colonel (Dr.) Dana Tucker  
Surviving Spouses Liaison: Mrs. Mary McClish  
Membership Chair: Vacant  
JROTC Coordinator: Lt Col G. Jane Harmon  
Personal Affairs & TOPS: Colonel John Liburdi  
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](http://www.moaacvc.org).*** Also, you can learn more about MOAA National and join at either Basic, Premium or Life level by visiting their website: [www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa](http://www.moaa.org/content/join-moaa/why-join-moaa)

***FYI:** - Receive this newsletter via e-mail by requesting to: [moaacvcnews@hotmail.com](mailto:moaacvcnews@hotmail.com)*

*- Directly access the MOAA “Legislative Action Center” at: [www.moaa.quorum.us](http://www.moaa.quorum.us)*



## Reservation for MOAA Catawba Valley General Membership Meeting/Dinner

This is my reservation for MOAA Catawba Valley's General Membership meeting/dinner on **September 18th**, (a Thursday) at Lake Hickory Country Club. Cocktails/social time begins in the lounge at 6:00 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Attire is coat and tie. The Guest Speaker will be an official from the Veterans Smile dental care charity.

Name of attendee(s): \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please send this slip and your check **(\$40.00 per attendee)** to arrive no later than September 15<sup>th</sup>, a Monday, to:



**Commander Dave Olson, 485 26<sup>th</sup> Ave NE (Unit A), Hickory, NC 28601**

*(Please be aware that participants attending this event may be photographed or recorded for MOAA media products.)*

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*VA's 24/7 Crisis Line: Dial 988 and press 1, or text 838255, or chat  
online at website: [VeteransCrisisLine.net/chat](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net/chat)*

*VA's Fraud & Scam Protection reporting desk: [VSAFE.gov](http://VSAFE.gov) and  
1-833—388-7233*

*Surviving Spouse virtual chapter join e-mail: [mssvc02@gmail.com](mailto:mssvc02@gmail.com)  
(June S-S newsletter posted on "Useful links" page of our website)*

*DoD ID Card Office Online at: <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/>*

*Ideas for Guest Speakers always welcome—no sales pitches please!*

*Tell prospective members about our website: [www.moaacvc.org](http://www.moaacvc.org)*