

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

Memorial Day is observed on May 26th this year. It's a time when all Americans eagerly pay their respects to the dedicated heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country. The number of U.S. Servicemembers who died in combat is absolutely staggering: American Revolutionary War 6,800, War of 1812 2,260, WWI 53,402, WWII 291,557, Korean War 33,686, Vietnam War 47,434, War in Afghanistan 1,910, the Gulf War 288, and the Iraq War 4,424. Those numbers don't include combat losses during the continuous series of smaller scale military campaigns and operations over the past two centuries, nor does it include wartime deaths of individuals not directly in combat. So, please join local Memorial Day ceremonies and parades that honor the memory of those heroes who died while serving in the military—in combat or otherwise. There'll also be official ceremonies at 26 American cemeteries overseas where over 200,00 fallen servicemembers are laid to rest. Visit those hallowed sites in 17 countries via the American Battle Monuments Commission website: www.abmc.gov

Congratulations to us all! Our chapter was just awarded a MOAA 5-Star Level of Excellence Award for 2024, and 5-Star awards for our newsletter and website! We've been winning these annual awards for several consecutive years now; as baseball's Yogi Berra said: 'It's like *deja-vu*, all over again.' And that's in a good way, thanks to the collective efforts of our board members and other chapter members whose altruistic contributions have made our chapter one of the very best in the nation. I'm really proud of our small MOAA affiliated chapter and its notable successes. The only thing that could make it even better would be increasing our membership population. So, please don't hesitate to mention our chapter and website whenever you interact with fellow officers in our area; many of them are flowing into the Piedmont area via the ongoing migration from other states!

As I'm sure you're all aware, MOAA conducted its Advocacy in Action campaign on Capitol Hill this past April. Our Colonel Dana Tucker was a member of the North Carolina Council of Chapters Legislative Liaison delegation that engaged with many members of Congress—thank you Dana! For this event, MOAA tailored its engagement strategy specifically to each Senator and Representative. Thus, our liaisons and lobbyists only addressed issues that were germane and important to the specific politician. Needless to say, this certainly amplified the impact of MOAA's "boots-on-the-ground" Advocacy in Action campaign. Even though that highly effective campaign has been concluded, we as chapter members need to continue our advocacy efforts in order to support every state and federal bill relevant to quality of life and earned benefits for our military community.

In that vein, consider the ongoing dilemma in the Department of Defense. There's to be a \$100 billion increase in defense spending, but there's a simultaneous mandate for a \$580 million offset in the DoD's current spending. Sad to say, there are quality of life programs and benefits that took decades to establish and will now be viewed as "low hanging fruit" in the eyes of some officials who seek to achieve that \$580 million offset. Two specific areas of great concern are substandard unaccompanied quarters (aka barracks) and the military spouse unemployment rate. Those two issues are having a negative impact on the quality of military life and on retention of servicemembers. So, please continue to advocate the two issues via MOAA's on-line Legislative Action Center.

Our chapter’s last General Membership meeting/dinner featured Guest Speaker LTC (Ret.) Tim Mangum, the Chief Administrator of the Purple Heart Homes (PHH) organization—he’s a twice-deployed Combat Veteran. Tim provided great insights into the origins of the PHH, and how it has grown to become a charity serving disabled Veterans throughout the nation. The creed of PHH is to help those who can’t help themselves, by providing home modifications and tiny homes that are configured so as to accommodate Veterans who have suffered significant injuries. This is done under PHH’s Veterans Aging in Place program and Veterans Home Opportunity Program. PHH’s astounding track record is completion of 1,533 projects that have provided life-changing enhancements and modifications to Veterans homes. The tiny homes PHH provides are built in their Statesville facility. PHH now has a backlog of 1,500 applications for such support to Wounded Warriors, and Tim pointed out that WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans are given top priority. PHH is one of our chapter’s Benevolent Fund designated charities and has a Platinum Charity Navigator rating! Perhaps that’s because—in Colonel Mangum’s own words—“God runs the Purple Heart Homes organization.” www.phhusa.org

MOAA CVC photo



LTC Tim Mangum briefs on Purple Heart Homes

Military Spouse
Appreciation Day!
May 9th



Alamy.com Photo



Above: Infantry Squad Vehicle / Below: STEED Cart



Image Courtesy of Hendrick Motor Sports Technical Solutions

The Hendrick Motorsports Technical Solutions facility in nearby Concord has been greatly expanded. That’s where, in association with GM Defense, Hendrick Motorsports T-S builds the complex chromoly tube frames for Army Infantry Squad Vehicles—an all-terrain troop carrier shown on the left. The recent Hendrick facility expansion now includes an area where STEED self-propelled electric carts are produced for the Army. These two-wheel carts (photo to the left) are used in rough terrain conditions, including urban rubble piles. The single-operator carts have a payload of 500 pounds, a range of 14-30 miles, and a variable speed of up to 6.5 mph. The cart’s curb weight is 190 pounds, and the collapsed transport case is only 30” x 39” x 25”. The carts can be air-dropped and are fully submersible. Charging time is 2 to 4 hours via any Squad Power Manager unit. The cart has multiple uses in tactical settings; most importantly, to carry heavy armaments and for casualty evacuations. The STEED cart facilitates less calorie burn and fewer injuries for soldiers, and it allows for a 400 percent payload increase for soldiers on the battlefield—Hooah!

Old Type DoD ID Cards: If you and family members hold an “old style” ID card (DD Form 2, DD Form 1173, DD Form 1173-1 or DD Form 2765 (blue, pink or tan ID)) you’re still be able to access a military base for now. But, at some time in the future, these old forms of ID will not be valid to access a military installation, and you will need issuance of the “NextGen ID card.” This will be true even if your old ID card has an INDEF expiration date on it - the ID will still be invalid. DoD hasn’t specified a date when this will happen; however, speculation has it that the deadline MIGHT be on 1 Jan 2026. Even though the DoD will eventually make a formal announcement regarding expiration of old type ID cards, holders are encouraged to get a “NextGen” ID card now. There are several ways to make an appointment to get a new ID card. **(1).** You can visit the RAPIDS ID Card Office Locator website to find the closest office and call them to make an appointment. **(2).** schedule your own appointment using the website. <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/> To make an appointment using this site select the “ID Card Office Locator & Appointments” block. **(3).** You may be able to renew your ID card online and have it mailed to you. Just select the “Family ID Cards” block on the website at the link above. You’ll need to establish a “DS Logon” account to access the on-line ID card issuing system; the website provides a method to do that so you can view the requirements to get a new ID-card via the on-line ID card renewal service. Also, to see what types of ID now accepted by airport TSA, visit: www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/identification

Surviving Spouse Support: Mrs. Mary McClish is our chapter’s Surviving Spouse Liaison. She has offered her kind services to any chapter member who is unexpectedly in a Surviving Spouse situation. This is an invaluable service due to the extremely complicated nature of reorganizing every aspect of one’s life after the loss of a spouse. Mary is willing to help any chapter member navigate thru the myriad of available info and resources to get through the initial transition and get personal affairs in order. Mary points out that a good starting point is to start a folder containing essential documents like: a will, Powers of Attorney, financial statements, DD-214, etc. BTW: The current edition of the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter newsletter is near the top of the “Useful Links” page of our chapter website. Contact Mrs. McClish via e-mail at: demcclish1@bellsouth.net

Gold Mines versus Land Mines: Lots of prior service and retired military folks are unexpectedly exiting Government Service, as well as Veterans separating or retiring from military service. A franchise is a viable option for a follow-on career. But, jumping into the franchise world needs to be an eyes-wide-open experience because one could potentially buy into a franchise that’s a wrong fit, or even one that’s a quasi-scam! So, it would be wise to capitalize on the Vetpreneur’s Franchise Academy. It’s a ten-week on-line program to determine if franchising is right for the individual Veteran and to help the Veteran find and vet the right franchise. Courses start every two weeks. Full info at Vetpreneur Franchise Academy website: <http://vetpreneur.com/academy/va>

Historic 1780 Fight for Freedom: The Battle of Ramsour’s Mill Living History Weekend will be held in Lincolnton on the weekend of June 21st and 22nd. It’s at the historic site of the battle between General Cornwallis and Major General Nathaniel Green. The two-day event will include a wreath laying ceremony at the resting place of 70 unknown soldiers; then a militia camp, reenactments, and heritage demonstrations. Ramsour’s Mill is on Jeb Seagle Drive, near Battleground Elementary School. For full details visit: <https://lincolncountyhistory.com>

Foothills Veterans Stand Down: Funds from our Benevolent Fund and a USAA cash supplement allowed us to again be major sponsors of the Foothills Veterans Stand-Down that was held in Hickory last month. It was a stellar event where a spectrum of services and support were provided to Veterans, with emphasis on the homeless.

MOAA JROTC Awards: For a decade now, Marine Lt Col Jane Harmon has been procuring, preparing, and distributing MOAA JROTC Award medals and certificates to the 19 JROTC units in our chapter’s six-county domain, and she recently completed those actions for 2025. Thanks so very much Jane, and thanks to our chapter members who visited local high schools to present the MOAA medals and awards to outstanding JROTC cadets!

TAPS: It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of chapter member Colonel David E. Eidson on March 30, 2025. He joined the U.S. Army in 1953 as a private and rose to the rank of Full Colonel in the Army Reserves. He was a Battalion Commander and an Inspector General during his military career. He was also in Civil Service and was a business owner, plus he was a volunteer with the Family Care Center of Catawba Valley.

- NEWS FROM THE FIVE MILITARY BRANCHES -

ARMY: New apartment style barracks just opened at Fort Belvoir, VA. The building has three floors; a suite on each floor that has a full kitchen/dining area, living room, laundry, and four bedrooms with private bathrooms.

NAVY: Navy awarded Mooresville-based Corvid Technologies a \$268M contract for its Short/Medium Range Sub-Orbital Vehicle program, including: program management, design & engineering, and support services.

MARINES: A new Marine Corps Attack Drone Team (MCDAT) was recently established to integrate armed drone capabilities that will enhance lethality and operational effectiveness across the Fleet Marine Force.

AIR FORCE: The contract for Engineering and Manufacturing Development of the Next Generation Air Dominance Platform (F-47 fighter aircraft) was recently awarded to Boeing, including production of test aircraft.

SPACE FORCE: USSF just established its first forward-operating Combined Joint Space Operations Center to support exercises in South Korea. This unit provides real-time space domain awareness and operational support.

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. Chapter Treasurer: **Commander Dave Olson: 485 26th Ave NE (Unit A), Hickory, NC 28601**

2025 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
1st Vice President: Captain George Taylor
2nd 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.*** 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**

FYI: Receive this newsletter via e-mail by requesting to: moaacvcnews@hotmail.com

Directly access the MOAA “Legislative Action Center” at: 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 **May 15th** (a Thursday) at Lake Hickory Country Club. Cocktails/social time begins at 6:00 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Prescribed attire is coat & tie. The Guest Speaker will be announced at a later date.

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

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

Please send this slip and your check (**\$35.00 per attendee**) to arrive no later than May 12th, a Monday, to:



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

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

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

*VA's Fraud & Scam Protection reporting desk: VSAFE.gov and
1-833-388-7233*

*Surviving Spouse virtual chapter join e-mail: mssvc02@gmail.com
(Link to SSVC newsletter on "Useful Links" page of our chapter 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