



THE DEFENDER

A monthly publication of the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association
www.nwfmoe.org

Vol. 27 No. 06

Serving All Branches of The Uniformed Services

JUNE 2021

Lunch Meeting & Discussion

When: Thur, 3 June 2021

Reservation Mandatory!

Time: Gathering 1130, Lunch 1200
Program to follow

Place: Fort Walton Yacht Club
180 Ferry Road, NE, FWB

Program: Countering IEDs in Iraq
Karl Eschmann

Please:

- **RESERVATIONS ARE MANDATORY**
- Wear a name tag
- Bring proper change:
\$14.00 for everyone

Reservation deadline is Friday at noon prior to meeting. Go online at www.nwfmoe.org and select the link where it says "Click here to make reservations", or email Fred Westfall at nwfreservations@gmail.com, or call 850-609-8075 if you are attending.

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COUNTERING IEDs IN IRAQ

Please join us for our June 3rd NWFMOA meeting. Our speaker will be our own Col Karl Eschmann who will recount the fielding of two manned aircraft systems designed to observe, detect, find, and neutralize the enemy IED Cell groups operating in Iraq and later in Afghanistan. His presentation will focus on the Angelfire and the MC-12W

Liberty aircraft surveillance systems and their capabilities, and how they were used to help counter the IED threats. Please join us for what will be an interesting and informative session.

Our meeting will be our first under new CDC and Fort Walton Yacht Club COVID-19 restrictions. For those who have been fully vaccinated, wearing a mask is optional. However, if you are showing symptoms or feeling ill or feverish, PLEASE do not attend.



Karl Eschmann, Col (Ret)

Great news! We will be returning to a buffet-style dining in June, so here's to welcome back a sense of normality.

Our June 3rd lunch will start with a social gathering at 1130 with lunch to be served at 1200. Be sure to make your reservations and I hope to see everyone there!

From the President's Pen

By Mike Griffith

I recently had the honor of representing our chapter at the Florida Council of Chapters convention in Sarasota, Florida.

I will present the chapter with a detailed report on the convention at a later time, but right now I would like to briefly discuss some of the highlights.



**Mike Griffith,
NWFMoa President**

Foremost among these was that, on behalf of our chapter, I accepted awards for two of our members: Fred Westfall and Ken Zepp. These awards will be presented to them in person during our June chapter meeting, so I hope you can all be there to give them a richly deserved round of applause.

Other topics discussed during the convention included advice for surviving spouses of MOAA members, recent updates to the FCoC website, recent progress in lobbying state and federal governments on behalf of veterans, and finally, a memorial service for MOAA members who have died during the past year, including some from our local chapter.

See you all on June 3!

PUBLIC RECORD

New Members:

John Maines, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

In Memorium

Roger J. Smith, Colonel, USAF (Ret), 4/24/2021

SUPPORT MOAA

Do what you can to support our national organization. To learn what's going on and to find out what you can do go to: <http://www.moaa.org/takeaction/> We all will benefit from your efforts.



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Is Your Personal Information Up to Date?

If any of your vital information has changed, like if you've moved and have a new mailing address, or a new phone number or email address, please use the Update Your Information link on our NWFMoa website.

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We'll get an answer for you.



Community Outreach

By Dave Parisot

2021 MOAA Community Grant to help young enlisted families. In the May Defender we announced NWFMOA's receipt of two Community Grants from the MOAA Foundation, i.e., a MOAA Community Grant of \$2,500 and a MOAA COVID-19 Relief Grant of \$1,250. These grants, totaling \$3,750, will be used to purchase commissary gift cards for young airmen and soldier families at Eglin, Hurlburt, and the 7th Special Forces Group (A). In addition, attendees at the May 6th Scholarship Luncheon donated \$812 to this cause, and Chapter Treasurer George Colton has received an additional \$200 by mail designated for this program. The current combined grant fund and donations will allow us to purchase 190 commissary gift cards of \$25 each. We would like to purchase at least 250 gift cards; however, we are about \$1,500 short.

If you would like to contribute to the cause, come to the Chapter luncheon on June 3rd and put your donation in the envelopes on the tables, or, mail a check to the NWFMOA Chapter, P.O. Box 1213, Shalimar, FL, 32579 (mark it "for MOAA Grant"). Each donation of \$25 will buy one gift card; a donation of \$100 will buy 4 gift cards. [To get a better feel for this problem, please read the MOAA Newsletter at www.MOAA.org (May 13, 2021) article "Now Is the Time to End Hunger Among Young Military Families". An excerpt from this article: "Junior enlisted military families with two or three dependents face food insecurity, rely on food banks, and fear the stigma of seeking help. Due to the way the Department of Agriculture calculates the military's Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) as part of income, many military families do not qualify for food stamps (now known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP). This enduring problem for young military families was intensified by pandemic-driven spouse unemployment rates and reduced child care availability. Before the pandemic, over 10,000 military families needed this support."

In this same MOAA article, there are links to contact our House Representative and Senators to support legislation to alleviate these issues. I urge you to do so.

We will distribute the commissary gift cards via the First Sergeants Councils in lieu of holding a food drive.

NWFMOA Presents MOAA Medals. At our May 6th scholarship Luncheon, Chapter member Fran Hendricks, B/Gen, USAF, Ret., presented this year's MOAA Medal to seven outstanding junior year JROTC cadets enrolled at the

seven high schools in our local area with JROTC programs. The MOAA Medal was created by the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) to recognize leadership and academic achievements of ROTC and JROTC cadets in their junior year of college or high school, respectively. Selectees must be in good academic standing, be of high moral character, demonstrate a high degree of loyalty to the unit, school, and country, and demonstrate exceptional potential for military leadership. See the included photo for medal recipients and schools.



MOAA Medal Awardees and Instructors: Cadet Quin Gable (Choctawhatchee); CMSgt Jacquilin Houston (Fort Walton Beach Instructor); Cadet Gavin Corber (Fort Walton Beach); Cadet Jacob Woodall (Crestview); Lt Col Charles Farmer (Niceville Instructor) who accepted for Cadet John Harman; and, CAPT Mike Fisher (Navarre Instructor) who accepted for Cadet Donovan Ray.

NWFMOA recognizes U.S. Naval Academy Appointee. In conjunction with our annual Scholarship Luncheon, we recognize graduating high school seniors who have received an appointment to one of our U.S. military academies. This year, Miss Michaela Waddy of Choctawhatchee High School was recognized for her appointment to the United



Major Scott Bates, Choctawhatchee JROTC Instructor accepts the certificate of recognition to Choctaw senior Michaela Waddy, US Naval Academy appointee, from Captain Mike Fisher, Navarre JROTC Instructor and a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis.

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Chaplain's Corner

By: Chaplain Thomas Azar

June is rich with critical military holidays: D-Day, Women Veteran's Day, the Army's Birthday, Flag Day, plus the entire month focuses on PTSD awareness. These are more than just time off or ceremonial opportunities to eat, drink and be merry. It's an emotional time for battle-scarred friends to sincerely remember and tearfully honor the unselfish men and women who are not alive to celebrate.

Noteworthy is Father's Day centered in the middle of June. My dad didn't share much about his experiences in France and Germany during WWII. "I don't want to talk about it; war is hell!" is all he would say to his sophomore son.

His scarred memories like millions were horrific. "War changed your father and his Boston buddies" my mother said. When I entered the Air Force I thought Dad might open up more but he angrily waved his bruised hand in the air and frowned. However, he did accept and greatly appreciate a special tour of NORAD in Colorado Springs.

Deployments made an indelible mark on each survivor. As leaders and followers, whether we flew, provided medical, spiritual or financial support, I can truly say the hardest part of my AFSOC job description was calling chaplains and chaplain assistants to send overseas. That was the gritty beginning of my sleepless nights.

Remember the midnight mobility lines- chaplains gave briefings to the departing troops, talked to the anxious and prayed with the fearful. We provided cultural briefings on the religious demographics of the host nation. Then we distributed paper and envelopes to write letters to their families, which we would personally deliver.

Briefings were additionally shared: "You all raised your right hand and made yourself a willing sacrifice for the principles and values of freedom-that makes each of you noble citizens; that you would be working with and hopefully would unite with others to engage in critical missions using your special education, training, gifts and talents to pursue peace- and yes, peace is not the absence of war but the absence of evil; and that sacrifice is inevitable, but we pray God's angel armies will watch over you every single day." Then all bowed their heads and prayed.

The second hardest role for chaplains is driving with a notification team in the middle of the night to tell anxious

parents or spouse that their partner or child has been killed in an off-duty accident or in the line of duty. Walking into an unknown home was challenging but DOD team members strongly supported each other as we bore the worst news to the best American families.

The third hardest was visiting the troops when they returned home. Many wanted someone to reach out and show concern. Not just shake their hand and say "thank you" but sit and ask them some deeper questions- "how are you really feeling, what do you or your family need, how can we help?" Learning to listen and be there is key.

There were times I shook the left hand of a warrior because s/he did not have a right arm. They wanted to keep the conversation short and focus on rehab and getting back to the job.

There were times I knelt to touch the flaccid shoulder of a warrior because s/he had no legs. They had few positive thoughts about their future; they wanted assurance and support for their loved ones.

There were times when chaplains had to tell a warrior they was standing beside him, who they were and that they were going to offer a prayer for him, his wife and family; his burns or an IED destroyed his hearing. They only wanted to see, hear and hug their closed-lipped children.

We all have had similar experiences. However, un-erasable are the funerals and gravesides. Tears flowed endlessly during the songs, sharing memories, Scriptures, prayers and sermons. The final benediction signaled the honor guard's 21 gun salute, penetrating taps and the folding of our nation's flag; and you, my fellow brothers and sisters, presented it to the spouse, parent and even to the child. You are the agents of compassion. No organization comes close to this most honorable and sacred service in the midst of a world of pain.

These anguished memories stand out in bas-relief as painful reminders of the greatest patriots that ever walked and fought on this earth, and yes we served with them. It is hard for me to write this article but after years of praying to God with my face in the pillow, I now rise and reflect on the privilege to live, eat, and deploy with them. Standing next to presidents, actors, musicians, and writers pale in comparison.

MOAA members claim these mental monuments and give thanks to God because they were willing "to lay down their life for another."

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Happy Birthday Army!

June 21

March along, sing our song, with the Army of the free.
Count the brave, count the true, who have fought to victory.
We're the Army and proud of our name!
We're the Army and proudly proclaim

First to fight for the right,
And to build the Nation's might,
And The Army Goes Rolling Along.
Proud of all we have done,
Fighting till the battle's won,
And the Army Goes Rolling Along.

Then it's hi! hi! hey!
The Army's on its way
Count off the cadence loud and strong
For where'er we go
You will always know
That The Army Goes Rolling Along



EDITORIAL POLICY

The Defender is a monthly publication of the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association. The purpose of this publication is to communicate with, inform, and educate chapter members. The national MOAA, this local chapter, and this publication are totally nonpartisan.

Community Outreach (cont.)

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States Naval Academy at Annapolis, MD. Michaela was unable to be present due to IB testing; thus, we called on a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, CAPT Mike Fisher of the Navarre JROTC to present our NWFMOA Certificate of Recognition to Major Scott Bates of the Choctawhatchee JROTC on her behalf (see photo). We wish Michaela all the best for her future military career.

Chaplain's Corner (cont.)

Continued from page 4

So next time I hear a pundit criticize our troops, I want to look them in the eye and ask them: "What did you contribute to the freedom, values and principles of the United States of America. Do you find it hard to throw away your muddy, worn and frayed combat boots? What mindful reasons do you possess to best celebrate D-Day, the Army's birthday and Flag Day and the sacrifices we are honoring?"

MOAA meetings meaningfully bring us together. We are standing next to valiant soldiers who have earned the nation's supreme respect. They don't brag, seek entitlement or put down others. (Those who do are usually the empty barrel making the biggest noise). We know that 'we know' from our lived experiences that the greatest warriors are buried beneath the brown earth and they alone are resting in their eternal peace. Thank you MOAA for uniting and representing our quiet offerings on the altar of this great nation. I am grateful to God to walk beside all of you. Have a meaningful and blessed June.

Scholarship Fund

by Dave Parisot

On May 6th we held our annual Scholarship Luncheon with the theme of “Helping to Build Future Military Officers and Leaders”. We awarded eight scholarships to local JROTC cadets from local high schools. It was my extreme pleasure to present scholarships totaling \$21,500 to eight local JROTC cadets who will be enrolling in ROTC programs at their selected colleges. (For more information on this event, please see the lead article in the May 2021 Defender).



2021 NWFMOA Scholarship Winners (\$2,500 each): Kathryn Dunn (Crestview), winner of the “Chong Parisot Memorial Scholarship”, Isabella Barrette (Fort Walton Beach), Logan Herron (Navarre), Ethan Gifford (Navarre), Christian Padron (Fort Walton Beach), Connor Dagel (Niceville), and Ryan Herron (Niceville). Not pictured is Cadet Jeffrey Tavarez (Choctawhatchee); who won this year’s “Lt Col James and Mrs. Una Heavener Memorial Scholarship” of \$4,000.

In addition to presenting this year’s scholarships, we also recognized members of the Gold Century Club (see complete list below). Members from previous years were recognized at their tables, and scholarship Fund President, Dave Parisot, presented Gold Club recognition certificates to new members of 2020 and 2021 (see photo). Membership in the Gold Club is achieved when accumulated donations since 2015 total to \$500 or more. Since 2015 our Gold Club members have donated over \$35,000 for scholarships.

Member donations to the Scholarship Fund Century Club since my last article are Patrick Boab, Al Bills, Larry Bush, Scott & Janet Berry, and Dick Solt. The donation by Scott & Janet Berry puts them in the Gold Century Club. Merrill Lynch (Chris Beam and Tess Bass) has renewed



New Gold Club Members who received their certificates of recognition are Jake and Kathleen Bush, Nick Marotta, Pete Peterzen, Kevin Kirby, and Scott and Janet Berry. Scholarship Fund President Dave Parisot is on the right. Absent were B/Gen Patt Maney and Mrs. Caroline Maney.

its Business Gold membership and EYE MD of Niceville has renewed its membership as a Business Bronze Donor. My gracious ‘Thank You’ to our most recent donors. Of course, we are very much open to donations from those not currently in the Century Club. If you have some “spare change” left over from your federal COVID payments and would like to share it with a local non-profit organization, I encourage you to consider the NWFMOA Scholarship Fund. A donation form is included in the Defender. Will you be the next Century Club donor?

At the May 6th Scholarship Luncheon we did not hold our normal 50/50 raffle. Instead, we had envelopes on the tables for members and guests to make donations to our MOAA COVID-19 Relief grant and project to purchase commissary gift cards for enlisted airmen and soldier families in ranks E-4 and below. The donations received totaled \$812. Thank you to all who donated. We will do this again at our luncheon on June 3rd.

Here is the complete list of Gold Century Club members (\$500 cumulative minimum donation since 2015) and BG Frank Glunn Century Club members (\$100 minimum donation) for the most previous 12 months of 2019 and 2020 along with our Business Donors. Your support is greatly appreciated. Remember, all of these donations are used to fund our scholarships to JROTC cadets. [Note: (R) means Renewal of membership.] NOTE: COVID-19 has had significant impacts on the local businesses who contribute regularly to the Scholarship Fund, particularly the restaurants. If you are going to eat out or get carry-out, I encourage you to support the restaurants listed below.

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Scholarship Fund (cont.)

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Gold Century Club: Bill Ryan (Feb 2016); Ruth Cullen (Oct 2016); Dave Parisot (Feb 2017); Janet Taylor (Mar 2017); Chris Beam (Mar 2017); Bob Garcia (July 2017); Rod Gerdes (Nov 2017); Larry Bush (Nov 2017); Dr. Howard & Irene Fisher (Nov 2017); Eileen Arpke (Feb 2018); Fred Westfall (Apr 2018); Clyde Locke (Apr 2018); WWII, Korea, and Vietnam Veteran Sam Lombardo (July 2018); Dennis Phillips (Aug 2018); Karl & Charlotte Eschmann (Oct 2018); Carol Baker (Jan 2019); Ann Adelsperger (Feb 2019); Don Litke (August 2019); Fred Boyer (August, 2019). Dr. Keith Kulow (Nov 2019); Al Bills (Nov. 2019); Kay Dent (Nov. 2019); Dr. Roger Riggensbach (Dec. 2019); Robert "Pete" Peterzen (Dec. 2019); Nick Marotta (Oct 2020); Kathy & Jesse Bush (Dec. 2020); Patt & Caroline Maney (Dec. 2020); and Kevin Kirby (April 2021); Scott & Janet Berry (May 2021). [Note: 28 total members]

BG Frank Glunn Century Club (past 12 months)

(R=Renewal): June 2020: Dr. Keith Kulow (R); Dave Parisot (R) (In memory of Mike Mitchell); Michael Ramirez; August 2020: Janet (Ryan) Taylor (R) (In honor of Major Bill Ryan); Donald Litke (R) (In memory of Kay Litke); and Eileen Arpke (R). September 2020: Doug Hardin (R) (In memory of Gen. Bill Kirk); October 2020: WWII Vet Sam Lombardo (R) (In memory of Jean Lombardo); Nick Marotta (R); George Colton (R); November 2020: Bob Gramm (R); Larry Tashlik (R); Howard Fisher (R); and Janet (Ryan) Taylor (R); December 2020: Robert "Pete" Peterzen (R); Dennis Phillips (R); Craig Miller; Jesse & Kathy Bush (R); Larry Bush (R); Scott & Janet Berry (R); Patrick Boab (R); and, Jeffrey Watson; Kay Dent (R) (In memory of Troy Dent and Larry Ketter); Bob Garcia (R); Karl & Charlotte Eschmann (R) (In memory of B/Gen Bud Day and Mrs. Kay Litke); Chris Beam (R); Les Matheson (R); Dave Parisot (R) (In memory of Mrs. Chong Parisot); and, Patt & Caroline Maney. January 2021: Fred Westfall (R); Janet (Ryan) Taylor (R) (In honor of Maj. Bill Ryan); February 2021: Rod Gerdes (R); and Chris Beam (R); March 2021: Dave Davis (R) (In memory of B/Gen Bud Day); Fred Boyer (R) (In honor of Marlene Bosak); Joy Houck (R) (In memory of Maj. Stanley Houck); April 2021: Dr. Keith Kulow (R); Kevin Kirby; May 2021: Larry Bush (R); Patrick Boab (R); Al Bills (R); Scott & Janet Berry (R); Dick Solt (R);

2019/2020 Business Platinum Donor (\$750 minimum donation): October 2019: Shalimar Cheers Pub (\$1,000) (R).

2019/2020 Business Gold Donor (\$500 - \$749): December 2019: Eglin Federal Credit Union (R); Merrill Lynch (Chris Beam & Tess Bass, Senior Financial Advisors) (R); Silver Slipper Casino Hotel (Bay St. Louis, MS) (In-Kind); May 2021: Merrill Lynch (Chris Beam & Tess Bass).

2020/2021 Business Silver Donors (\$250 - \$499): November 2019: Indian Bayou Golf & Country Club (In-kind, R); December 2019: Rocky Bayou Golf Course (In-kind, R).

2021 Business Bronze Donors (\$100 - \$249): R); May 2021: Eye MD of Niceville (R)

Please support our local businesses that have contributed to our scholarship program.

NWFMOA Scholarship Fund: "HELPING TO BUILD FUTURE MILITARY OFFICERS AND LEADERS."

SCHOLARSHIP DONATION FORM

Please accept this gift of \$_____ to support the NWFMOA Scholarship Fund (Donations of \$100 or more will be recognized in the B/Gen Frank Glunn Century Club. Donor Information (if not printed on check):

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****The spouse of a deceased life member is automatically an auxiliary life member**

Membership Application/ Renewal

**New Members joining this year
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