

NORTHWEST FLORIDA MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
LUNCH MEETING
12/7/2023

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The December 7th meeting of the NWFMOA was called to order by President Fran Hendricks at the Fort Walton Yacht Club at 1200. Fran read a prayer sent from Chaplain Tom Azar. He then asked Ron “Westy” Westenbarger to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. After opening remarks, Fran relayed several important national events that happened in December including the birthday of the US Space Force, and on other events that happened on December 7th, including the attack on Pearl Harbor. Fran then read the names of the three members who have birthdays in December and reminded the group that as a member benefit, a free meal awaits those who have a birthday during the month of our meeting. Fran then recognized the four Past Presidents at today’s meeting. He then introduced our visitors and guests. Fran then thanked the group for their generous contributions which made it possible to give out 300 Commissary gift cards to families of junior enlisted military members in our area, Wreaths Across America, and the Veterans Stand Down. He then introduced Sergeant First Class David McMillan, US Army Retired, from the American Legion Post 235 who made a donation to NWFMOA for \$500 in support of the Junior Enlisted Commissary Gift Card program. SFC McMillan also advised us of various programs the American Legion Post conducts and asked for volunteers to assist in helping judge their Orator contest. Karl Eshcman then announced that today was the cutoff for next week’s Military Ball tickets and anyone interested in attending should see him after the meeting.

Fran introduced our featured entertainment for the day, OPUS ONE, the Niceville High School Choral group who have entertained us for the past 13 years. This year’s performance was once again outstanding and helped get our members in the Christmas spirit. During their performance they also sang the US Space Force song, which was the first time most of us had heard it. The members present donated \$402 which was presented to the Choral Group’s director. Pictures from the event will be posted in the January Defender.

Fran then announced that Karl Eschmann has been nominated as the Outstanding Veteran Volunteer of the Year by the Daughters of the American Revolution. He thanked Dick Solt for helping arrange the Officers Call at Doc’s Oyster Bar last Thursday and announced that our next one will be on February 29. For planning purposes, each month in 2024 that has a fifth Thursday we will host an Officer Call. Please plan to come out and have fun.

Fran then presented a short slide show on our 65th celebration noting that donors to that event will be placed on our website’s banner for the remainder of 2024 and that each would receive a 65th Anniversary Commemorative Coin noting that all Chapter Members who attend any NWFMOA event will also receive their coin. The website will be available to all on December 17.

Fran then announced that there were 4 eligible members for the December Defender Quiz drawing. The winning ticket selected by Ron Gerdes was Board member, Bob Gramm. The answer to the question: “Which US president did not serve in the US Navy Reserve?” was Ronald Reagan. As there was no other business to conduct, Fran adjourned the meeting at 1320.

Attendance for the meeting was 51.

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FRED WESTFALL, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)
Secretary
NWFMOA Chapter FL 19

Distribution: Email to NWFMOA Chapter Member