



WIREGRASS CHAPTER MOAA NEWSLETTER



February-March 2026

<http://www.moaa.org/takeaction>

**General Membership Meeting,
Saturday February 28, 2026,
St. Michael's Room, The Landing,
Fort Rucker, AL**

SCHEDULE & MENU
Social: 6:00pm..... Invocation/Pledge
of Allegiance: 6:45pm..... Dinner:
7:00pm
>Mixed green salad w/assorted
dressings
>Roast pork w/grilled scallion &
citrus sauce
>Scalloped potatoes
>Green beans almandine
>Red velvet cake
>Sweet & unsweet tea, water, &
coffee
Cost per meal: \$23.00

Please make **Reservations by
noon Monday February 23rd**
to Susanne Bailey at
(931) 237-1118.
Cancellations must be made
by **NOON Friday
February 27th.**
Cash or personal checks only!



Persons not canceling their reservation by
noon on Friday February 27th prior to the
Dinner Meeting will be responsible to our
Chapter Treasurer for full payment
of the reserved meals.

Guest Speaker—
Tammy Doerer, City of Enterprise
Tourism and Community Relations
Director. (See page 8)

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President's Message by Randy Godfrey

Greetings for 2026. We wish all have a safe and prosperous future for our brothers and sisters in arms, veterans, families, and the nation. We are continuing ongoing endeavors; some we list in the following paragraphs.

The Wiregrass chapter actively recruits the next generation of officers through our relationship with the US Army Warrant Officer Career College. Our Recruiting Ambassador briefs each Warrant Officer Candidate School Graduating Class. During each Warrant Officer Candidate School graduation, the chapter presents a MOAA certificate for the Distinguished Graduate and Leadership Awardees. The chapter strives to ensure each officer and warrant officer on the installation has situation awareness of our chapter, activities, and support that MOAA provides them, their families, and even NCOs seeking potential officer and warrant officer career opportunities.

The chapter supports the four local area high school JROTC programs and the Troy University Army and Air Force ROTC programs. Our Outreach Ambassador coordinates with all the JROTC partner schools and Troy University ROTC

programs. We present medals to the outstanding JROTC cadets and commissioning awards to the graduating ROTC cadets

On behalf of MOAA National, the chapter is the local coordinator for the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Career College's Order of the Eagle Rising Society. The chapter supports the Eagle Rising Room at the Holman House Warrant Officer Museum in conjunction with the Warrant Officer Career College and the Warrant Officer Historical Foundation. The purpose is to honor the Warrant Officer Eagle Rising Society Awardees. There will be an Eagle Rising Room opening ceremony in February.

Another initiative is the Chapter Web Site. The web site contains a calendar of chapter events, the names, pictures, telephone numbers, and email addresses of the chapter board members. It includes the chapter bylaws, board meeting minutes, recent newsletters, legislative updates, and links to National MOAA. We also include membership application forms for both MOAA and our local chapter. The chapter website <https://moaawiregrass.org>.

The chapter conducts professional development through *(continued on Page 2)*

(President's Message from Page 1) our chapter dinner programs. Dinner guest speakers in 2025 were MOAA Affiliated Councils/Chapters Chair, Fort Rucker Garrison Commander, US Army Aviation Museum Curator, and WWI Historian. Upcoming 2026 speakers include the Enterprise Director of Tourism & Community Relations, Magnolia Wealth Management, Director Bennie Adkins State Veteran's Facility, Executive Director, House of Ruth, and Creator Wiregrass Black History Channel. We invite all members and guests to join us for the MOAA Wiregrass Chapter Dinner Meeting. Join us for good friends, good food, and good fellowship.

Remember to start our day asking, "What are we doing for the Warfighter?" At the end of the day, the answer is, "We provided no fail support to the Warfighter on the ground and in the air".



Membership Report
by *Othan Gilbert*

Our chapter membership count currently is 122. Our newest member is CW5 (Ret) Jennifer Wolf who lives in Enterprise.

Remember to patronize the 12 sponsors of our newsletter. They help to support the chapter and deserve our consideration.

I have sent out letters to those of you who owe dues for 2026. I would appreciate your prompt response.

The national MOAA website is moaa.org. The phone number for MOAA National is 800-234-6622. If you would like to purchase a MOAA National life membership, it is better to do so by calling them directly and speaking with someone. If you do that (vs doing so over the web), they will give you a 10% discount, give you credit for your current premium membership (if applicable) and arrange payments over an extended period.

***** Remember *****
to support our sponsors!



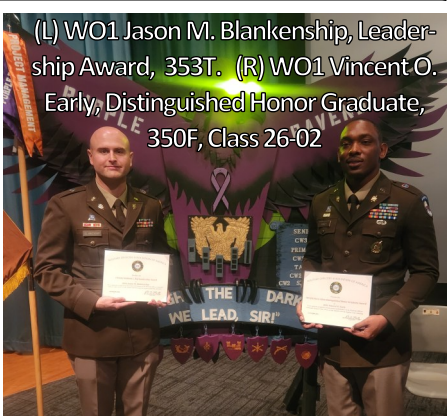
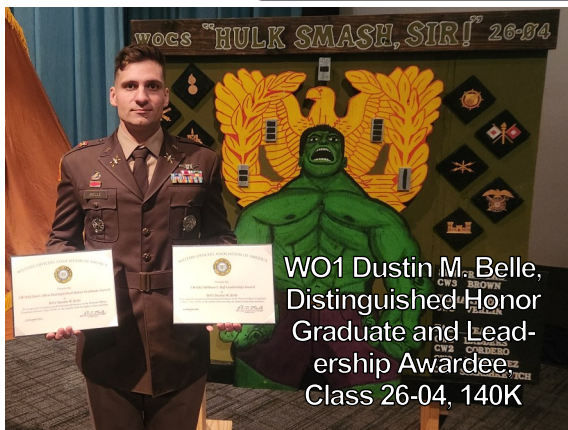
Legislative Report by *Ray Collins*

Shutdown is coming, shutdown is coming. January 30, 2026 is drawing closer. All of us know a sure fired fix for failure to approve a budget primarily due to disagreement about the National Defense Authorization Act. We all know equally well that the solution I speak of is never going to happen. So what is this magical "genie in the bottle?" Make the paycheck of members of the Legislative branch, from top to bottom dependent on passing the budget to include NDAA. I have beaten this "dead horse " long enough.

The Major Richard Starr Act appears to have enough votes to get through congress, just can't get through the House Rules

Committee, who found it "not in order." Neither party can point fingers across the aisle on this topic, they both need to answer for this travesty, and they will if we all rally round the ballot box. We all need to use all resources available to us to let our elected members of congress know this is important to their keeping their seats in congress. One good way is through MOAA's Legislative Action Center, www.moaa.org/takeaction and ask our Senators and Representatives to push for a vote on the Starr Act (S.1032) (H.R. 2102). MOAA suggests having them co-sponsor the legislation, which is important, but saying they are a co-sponsor and it's ending there isn't going to get it done. They need to support it to the finish line with their personal efforts to get it passed.

Warrant Officer & JROTC Awards



The **Warrant Officer Eagle Rising Society Room** is opening as part of the **Warrant Officer Museum at the Holman House**. The purpose is to honor the Warrant Officer Eagle Rising Society Awardees. This is a joint project with the Warrant Officer Career College, MOAA, and the Warrant Officer Historical Foundation.

The Warrant Officer Museum officially opened on 23 February 2024, inside the Holman House. The Holman House is a neoclassical residence built 1912-1913 in Ozark, Alabama, and purchased in 2013 by the City of Ozark. The home consists of two main floors of approximately 10,000 square feet.

There will be an opening ceremony in February, date TBD. (See pictures below.)



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TREASURER'S REPORT by LTC (Retired) Loel Ewart

Net Worth of the Wiregrass Chapter of MOAA as of 01/12/26 is **\$27,819.92**. These funds are in one checking account, one savings account, and one Money Market Account in the AI-In FCU.

Activities Since Last Report	12/08/25 (Starting Balance of)	\$27,803.91
DEPOSITS	ACTIONS	
12/09/25	Ron Kaita Donation	\$100.00
12/09/25	Dues K. Shawbeer dues	12.00
12/22/25	MOAA Dinner Deposit	827.00
12/26/25	Ron Kaita Donation	65.00
12/31/25	Gen. Hennies MOAA Dinner	50.00
12/31/25	MM Interest	8.84
12/31/25	Savings Interest	0.01
	Deposits Total	#1,062.85
CHECKS	EXPENDITURES	
2091	VOID	
2092	12/08/25 Othan Gilbert, Mailing	\$36.77
2093	12/22/25 MOAA dinner payment	825.00
----	01/10/26 Checkbook Adjustment	<u>194.07</u>
	Total	\$1,055.84
	Net Increase	\$7.01
	01/12/26 Current Total Balance of:	\$27,810.92
	All In checking	\$8,882.00
	All In Savings	\$5.54
	All In Money Market	\$18,923.38
	Life Membership	\$7,090.00
	MOAA reserve	\$11,833.38
	Minus Savings	-\$5.54
	Usable Funds as of December 8, 2025 (Minus reserve/savings)	\$8,882.00
	No outstanding bills. Scholarship Fund = \$64.00	



Retired Officer Wives Association (ROWA)
by Mary Jane Collins

Happy New Year everyone and I truly hope you all had a Merry Christmas. Isn't it wonderful that each year "goes out" with a major portion of us focusing on our greatest hope in life, the birth of salvation.

The camellias are beginning to make their annual appearance which gives rise to the hope of the spring to come. Although we are not held hostage by the harsh winters many citizens of this great nation must endure we still feel the rising hopes of the spring to come.

I think the most glorious part of spring to me is the unfolding of nature's bounty, the profuse blossoms, trees regaining their leaves, the chirping of new life in the nests of trees above, and a vision of the Easter Tide to come.

As always, I encourage you to include this Retired Officers Wives Association monthly meeting in your busy schedule. The ROWA meeting continues to meet every second Tuesday of the month at Divots on the Silver Wings Golf Course at 11:00 am. All wives of retired military officers are welcome and encouraged to come and fellowship with us.

SOLDIER HUMOR

The captain said,
"Remember—always follow orders." The soldier nodded and asked, "Sir, is that an order?"

During inspection, the sergeant barked, "Why is your uniform wrinkled?" The soldier replied, "Sir, the enemy attacked while I was ironing."

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS (ADVA) Services and Benefits:

Pertinent information can be found in recently published ADVA monthly newsletters and can be accessed via the following Link: [ALABAMA VETERAN NEWSLETTER – Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Update synopsis (Reportable):

1. ADVA will now have 4 Veteran Service Office districts.
2. The department will no longer have Assistant Veteran Service Officers. Replacing them will be the designations of Veteran Service Officers (VSO) I, II and III. This will allow for promotional upward mobility. A test is being designed for each of the newly created VSO designations. VSOs are required to do outreach to the community they serve.
3. The SBVA Services and Benefits committee will continue to work to identify gaps in veteran benefits.
4. Tunnels to Towers is renovating a hotel in Birmingham to house homeless veterans. ADVA has launched a new public service announcement encouraging veterans and their families to take advantage of the services and benefits available through ADVA. See the following link for more detail: [New ADVA PSA Highlights Community Support for Alabama Veterans – Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

ADVA Legislation: The Alabama Legislature convened on 13 January 2026. The advanced start to the next session is due to the upcoming election cycle and a desire to finish earlier in the year. To date, 278 proposed bills have been pre-filed according to the Alabama Legislative website and 26 currently deal with veterans/military benefits (see link for more detail; use search word Military: [House Session Reports | Alabama Legislature](#))

Update synopsis (Reportable): The Legislative Committee discussed ADVA's legislative priorities to include possible changes to the Alabama GI Dependent Scholarship program and support for the second state cemetery. (See link for details: [ADVA Commissioner Finalizes Land Contract for New State Veterans Cemetery in North Alabama – Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs](#))

1. The Legislative Committee discussed ADVA's legislative priorities to include possible changes to the Alabama GI Dependent Scholarship program and support for the second state cemetery. (See link for details: [ADVA Commissioner Finalizes Land Contract for New State Veterans Cemetery in North Alabama – Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs](#))
2. Election Year Do's and Don'ts guidance was provided for board members.
3. The Alabama Laws Affecting Veterans pamphlet is available via the ADVA website (see link for details: [ALABAMA LAWS AFFECTING VETERANS – Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs](#))
4. Several national initiatives endorsed by Veteran Service Organizations were discussed to include community care reform, alternative PTSD treatments, changes to the TAPS program and unaddressed toxic exposure.

Note: Relevant updates to both ADVA Services and Benefits, as well as Legislation, will be available upon SBVA approval of the minutes from the January 2026 meeting minutes. Additionally, ADVA public news and information releases will be distributed as they are made available via this collective address for the MOAA Council of Chapters.

What Military Officer & Warrant Officer Retirees Should Be Watching Now

Retirement from uniform does not mean retirement from responsibility. While the salutes may have stopped, the policies, benefits, and obligations that affect military retirees continue to evolve. Staying informed is the best way to protect what you earned—and to help fellow veterans navigate an increasingly complex landscape.

1. Retired Pay, COLA, and Inflation Awareness: Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) remain a critical issue for retirees living on fixed incomes. Even modest inflation can erode purchasing power over time. Retirees should periodically review DFAS statements to ensure retired pay reflects current COLA adjustments and to verify deductions for taxes, Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), and allotments. Errors are rare but do occur—and are easier to correct when caught early. **Action Tip:** Keep DFAS contact information current and review pay statements at least quarterly.

2. Health Care: TRICARE Changes and Medicare Coordination: TRICARE continues to adjust policies, fees, and coverage rules, particularly for retirees under age 65 and those transitioning to TRICARE For Life (TFL). Medicare Part B enrollment remains essential for TFL eligibility. Missed enrollment windows can result in permanent penalties. Prescription drug formularies also change, and retirees should confirm that long-term medications remain covered or explore lower-cost options through military pharmacies or mail-order services. **Action Tip:** Review TRICARE and Medicare coverage annually—especially after any life change (move, marriage, widowhood).

3. Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Considerations: SBP remains one of the most misunderstood retirement benefits. While premiums reduce retired pay, SBP provides inflation-protected income for surviving spouses. Periodic SBP “open seasons” allow retirees to enroll, disenroll, or change coverage—but these windows are infrequent and often come with buy-in costs. Widowed retirees should ensure DFAS records are updated promptly to avoid overpayments or benefit interruptions. **Action Tip:** Revisit SBP decisions every few years and discuss them openly with spouse or beneficiaries.

4. VA Benefits and Claims: Don’t Leave Them on the Table: Many retirees still assume VA disability benefits are only for those with severe combat injuries. In reality, service-connected conditions often emerge or worsen with age. Hearing loss, joint degeneration, sleep apnea, and hypertension are among the most common late-life claims. Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) allows many retirees to receive full retired pay and VA compensation simultaneously, but eligibility depends on ratings and service history. **Action Tip:** If you have never filed a VA claim—or haven’t reviewed one in years—consider a reassessment with a Veterans Service Organization (VSO).

5. Legal, Financial, and Estate Planning Updates: Retirement is not a “set it and forget it” phase of life. Changes in tax law, state benefits for military retirees, and estate planning rules can significantly affect families. Moves across state lines may impact taxation of retired pay, property tax exemptions, or veterans’ benefits. **Action Tip:** Review wills, powers of attorney, and beneficiary designations every 3–5 years—or after major life events.

6. Continued Service: Mentorship and Advocacy: Officer and warrant officer retirees bring decades of leadership experience that remains desperately needed. Whether mentoring junior service members, supporting ROTC programs, assisting veterans’ organizations, or advocating responsibly on policy issues, retirees continue to serve—just without a rank on their chest. **Action Tip:** Consider how your experience might help the next generation of leaders—or fellow retirees navigating transition.

Bottom Line: Staying informed is not about worry—it is about stewardship. You earned these benefits through years of faithful service. Protecting them, understanding them, and helping others do the same remains a mission worthy of your time. *Once a leader—always a leader.*

From AI based on specific inquiry in article’s title.

Photos from December 20, 2025 Dinner



Randy Godfrey & Dennis Newton



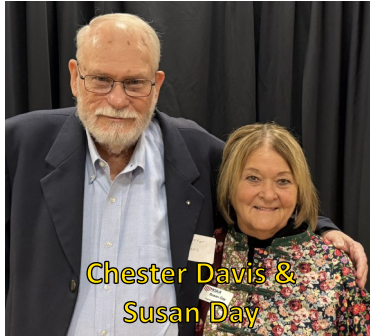
Bob Bunting & Randy Godfrey



Carolyn Wooley & Faye Swinehart



Charlie & Claudia Wigglesworth



Chester Davis & Susan Day



Bob Cooper & Karen Boniface



Barbara Ewart, Dee Gilbert, & Martha McKee



Ann & Frank Estes



Debbie & Randy Godfrey



Dee & Othan Gilbert



Gloria Loser & Claudia Wigglesworth



Great turnout- - - lots of great Christmas singing!



Stuart Lawrence & Jean Mason



The rest of the crowd!



Barbara & Loel Ewart & Susanne Bailey

Photos from December 20, 2025 Dinner (continued)



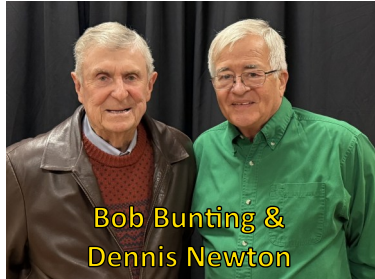
Ray & Mary Jane
Collins



Tom & Susan Day



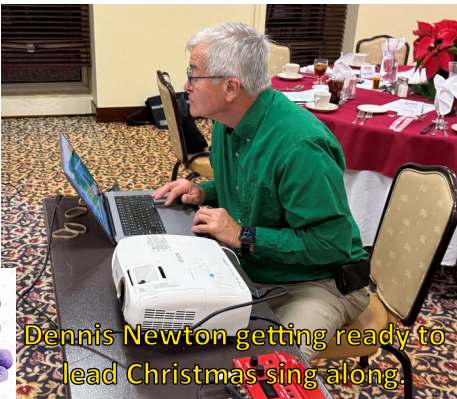
Lark & Ron Kaita



Bob Bunting &
Dennis Newton



Debbie Godfrey &
Jennifer Wolf



Dennis Newton getting ready to
lead Christmas sing-along.



**Important 2026 Dates for MOAA
Wiregrass Chapter**

Board of Directors' Meeting	Newsletter Input Suspense	Bi-Monthly Meeting
2/9/2026		2/28/2026
3/9/2026	3/18/2026	
4/13/2026		4/18/2026
5/11/2026	5/20/2026	
6/8/2026		6/20/2026
7/13/2026	7/15/2026	
8/10/2026		8/15/2026
9/14/2026	9/16/2026	
10/12/2026		10/17/2026
11/9/2026	11/18/2026	
12/14/2026		12/19/2026

Dinners will be on Saturdays at 1800.

GUEST SPEAKER

Tammy Doerer, City of Enterprise Tourism and Community Relations Director, will be the Guest Speaker for our February 28, 2026, Wiregrass Chapter MOAA monthly dinner meeting. While she resides locally now, her hometown was Jacksonville, Florida, and she graduated from Florida State University in 1987.

Ms. Doerer was honored last year with the Meritorious Service to Veterans Award for her outstanding commitment to Alabama's veterans, service members, and their families. She stated that she is "simply grateful for the opportunity to work alongside them and help ensure they have the resources and partnerships to carry out their missions."

Among her many affiliations and achievements, Tammy has built partnerships with the local Veteran Service Organizations, such as Fort Rucker and AVCOE, and Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA). She was present at the groundbreaking of the Command SGT MAJ Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home. She supports the Veterans Appreciation Community Luncheon, which is a partnership among the City of Enterprise, the Enterprise Chamber of Commerce's Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, local Veteran Service Organization, and community volunteers. At this Luncheon the Service Member and Veteran of the Year are recognized.

We are excited to hear what Ms. Doerer has to say.

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 EVERY SECOND THURSDAY

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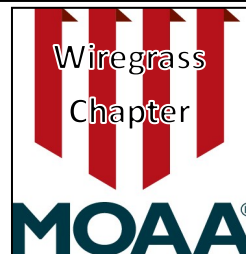
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**MOAA, Wiregrass Chapter
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Fort Rucker, AL 36362-0075**

Return Service Requested

**MOAA Membership Application
Wiregrass Chapter**



**Wiregrass Chapter
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
PO Box 620075
Fort Rucker, AL 36362-0075**

Enclosed is my check, in accordance with the schedule below, for membership in the Wiregrass Chapter of the *Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)*.

Individual joining: 1 Dec – 28 Feb \$12.00; 1 Mar – 31 May \$9.00; 1 Jun – 31 August \$6.00;
Membership 1 Sep – 30 Nov \$3.00.

NAME: _____ RANK: _____
BRANCH OF SERVICE: _____ ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
DATE OF BIRTH: _____ PHONE: _____
SPOUSE'S NAME: _____
E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

NATIONAL MOAA MEMBERSHIP # _____ National Life Member? _____

Membership in the National MOAA is required for membership in our local Chapter. If you are a member of National and do not know your membership number so indicate and we will obtain it from National.

**Make checks payable to Wiregrass Chapter MOAA. Thank you for your support!
Webaddress: www.MOAAWIREGRASS.org.**