



THE DEFENDER

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

Vol. 19 No. 11 Serving All Branches of The Uniformed Services DECEMBER 2013

Breakfast Meeting & Discussion

When: Wed., 4 December 2013

Time: Open: 0700; Bkfst: 0715;
Meeting: 0800-0900

Place: Westwood Retirement
Resort, 1001 Mar Walt Dr, FWB

Program: NHS Opus One

Please:

• MAKE A RESERVATION

- Wear a name tag
- Bring proper change.
\$7.00 for everyone

Reservation deadline is Friday at noon prior to the meeting. Call Bill Van Hoesen at 225-2957 or send an email to: bvanhoesen@cox.net if you are attending.

Officers & Directors

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Jeff Watson..... 543-9224
jeffwatson2011@gmail.com

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VACANT

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Opus One's Annual Visit

By Jeff Watson

Ho! Ho! Ho! Make plans to join us for our annual visit by Opus One! I am just thrilled that they have agreed to come back this year. I hope they can visit us every year, as their talent is incredibly uplifting. As you know, Opus One is the A-team of Niceville High School's choral department. Each December they are our special guests and perform for us their version of traditional

We meet on the 4th of December at Westwood Retirement Center for breakfast and our monthly meeting. We will have nominations for next year's slate of officers and board of directors. The nominating committee chairman, Bill Van Hoesen, made the presentation of the committee's nominations last week at the October breakfast meeting. Of course, members are encouraged to come to the December meeting not only to enjoy Opus One but also to vote for their chapter leadership for 2014.

Of course, there will be the opportunity for nominations from the floor before

voting. Afterwards, and pending any other business for the group we will bring Opus One into our meeting room so that we do not disturb the Westwood residents. In case, I forget later, I want to thank Bill Van Hoesen for agreeing to take on the task of obtaining a full slate of officers. I think the nominees are super; hope you do too!



Niceville High School's Opus One

Of course, when the voting is complete, you can look forward to the installation of new officers and board members in January. We have not decided whether to have a short guest presentation but I think that is a great idea as some of you may not want to come to the January meeting just to watch the installation of officers. Stay tuned on this subject.

Continued on page 5

Attend and vote for next year's chapter officers!

President's Message

By Jeff Watson, Colonel, USAF (Ret.)

It's been an amazing year! It doesn't seem that long ago that I wrote about the cool morning air. Well, as I write this article the temperature is racing south! We are supposed to have a blast of arctic air over the next few days so we have covered the citrus tree, picked the peppers and then brought them onto the porch.



Jeff Watson

I learned the hard way how important it is to pick the vegetables that you want to save when I left ripe tomatoes on the vine in Colorado one day too long. After I had shared a basket of beautiful Roma tomatoes with neighbors in my cul-de-sac, I knew I had plenty left for me and never considered checking the weather in September. We had a hard freeze overnight and my beautiful Romas were reduced to "rubber." I threw the plants away; gardening was done for the year. Yes, I wanted the neighbors to return some tomatoes, but, no, I did not ask.

I don't expect such dire results down here but I still think fresh, crisp peppers are the way to go. They go into the best salsa; if you want to know more – ask Judy. Maybe she will give you a recipe in the newsletter!

Have you purchased your tickets for the Military Ball! I have. 5 December 2013, be there or miss out on the fun! Life is too short not to have more fun. If you have to schedule it, something is wrong with your priorities – jk (just kidding). Anyway, I got to enjoy our fun from last year as I made my reservations (courtesy of sponsor ResortQuest) to stay at the Commodore's Retreat a couple of weekends ago. It is in Seagrove Beach near Angelina's Italian Restaurant on 30A. Judy and I had so much fun just enjoying the beach like we did as teenagers.

Straddling that weekend, we spent two weekends in Auburn wearing our parent hats. It's "all good;" daughter

#3 is in her junior year and we are finally watching a winning team! Of course, we have divided loyalties as our first two daughters went to FSU and though they also suffered through lackluster football seasons between 2003 and 2011, we (fans) are excited with our 'Noles this season. Of course, fans can be brutal as my Gator fan neighbors were at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio before I moved back home in 2006. I ran into another such fan on Sunday at a wonderful pecan candy store on I-65. She was wearing a "Tide" t-shirt and working the cash register. She was polite but she looked like she was about to burst over the thought that Auburn might spoil Alabama's shot at the national title. Anyway, if you want to know where to get great pralines – ask Judy.

I had the honor of attending the tribute to veterans at the Beal Memorial Cemetery yesterday. It was an opportunity to pause on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. The speakers marked the moment and the recognition of those that served was special. I remember one WWII vet stood alone in the crowd when the emcee asked if there were any POWs in the group. I sought him out afterwards to thank him. He and his wife were so humble about his service. They said he was shot down on his twelfth bombing mission so they decided 12 was his "unlucky number." I told him to take it easy today so that he can enjoy the 13th. I hope he had a good day today. His wife mentioned which stalag he was in, but I don't recall the location or number. I would love to see his story in the local paper.

I know this newsletter goes to many veterans of many conflicts and some of you are also combat veterans. No matter what you did or where, I know you did it with honor and I want to thank each and everyone of you for your service.

So, I asked Judy about the coffee cup from last month. She got it for us at Pizitz in the Brookwood Mall my first year of law school. Like it was yesterday, she had it catalogued in her mind. I asked and she answered immediately! Amazing; decided against asking the price back then though I wouldn't be surprised if she remembers that too.

Do you know an officer that ought to be in our midst? We like fun and we want members! Invite someone. We need to have another Officers Call and I think February will be perfect. If you have a location in mind, let me know. Also, I plan to represent us at the mid-Winter Florida Council of Chapters meeting around 15 January 2014. This weekend I will represent us at the annual Military

PUBLIC RECORD

IN MEMORIAM: Lt Col Walter E. Griffing, USAF (Ret), 10/14/2013.

IN MEMORIAM: Lt Col Maurice H. Van Damme, USAF (Ret), 5/4/2013.

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NWFMOA PROPOSED OFFICER SLATE 2014

Treasurer

THOMAS CHURAN No bio submitted.

Director

President

JEFF WATSON (Incumbent) Jeff is a retired Air Force judge advocate having served over 20 years on active duty in the JAG Corps. He joined in 1986 and retired back home in 2006. He still practices law and is currently a civil servant at the Eglin Law Center. He attended Cumberland School of Law and graduated in 1982 and obtained my LLM in Military Law with a specialty in Government Contract Law in 1995. He was an enlisted U.S. Soldier from '75-'79. He and his wife, Judy a true FWB native, attended FWBHS and consider this area to be their roots. He was born at Tyndall AFB and was an AF brat. He has been the first vice president of NWFMOA and just finished his first year as president.

First Vice President

PAUL SINGLETON Paul is a current Director & Chaplain (though not ordained). He grew up in a small town in North Carolina, attended East Carolina University, graduated through Air Force ROTC and married Anne George. His education also includes graduate school at East Carolina University, Troy University and Auburn University. His AF duties included flight instructor, staff officer, ROTC instructor and Air War College faculty. Much of his flying was with Special Operations. Since retiring from the Air Force in 1984, he has been active in the community and served on the board of many organizations including VP of NWFMOA in the 1980's.

Second Vice President

RICHARD COMER Rich was born and raised in NC. He went to the USAF Academy a month before turning 18 and spent 36 years in uniform, 32 of them on active duty. He was stationed at Hurlburt three times between 1987 and 2003, with over 10 ½ years at the AF Special Operations base. He retired from active duty in 2005 and has lived in Niceville Florida ever since.

Secretary

SCOTT BERRY (Incumbent) Scott started his AF career as a Minuteman combat crew member and then spent the rest of his 26 year career in the logistics area with overseas tours in Korea and Turkey. After retirement he worked as a financial advisor for several companies. He recently certified as a Master Gardener in Okaloosa County. He served for several years as the Defender editor and is running again for Secretary.

RICHARD PRATER Richard (Dick) Prater is a retired Air Force officer who began his career after graduation from West Point in 1955. Following completion of pilot training, he had various assignments, both operational and in Research and Development. These included: F-100's at Foster AFB, TX, earning a Master's Degree University of Colorado, teaching Physics and Math at the US Air Force Academy, aircraft commander in C-130s in Southeast Asia, Airlift Liaison Officer for the 196th Light Infantry Brigade in Viet Nam, Division Chief of EW development at the AF Avionics Lab, and both a student and faculty member at the Air War College. Dick retired from the Air Force in 1978. He went to work for the Georgia Tech Research Institute as a senior research scientist, where he was involved in developing radar threat simulators for the Air Force and Army. Dick now resides with his wife Nancy in Shalimar. Besides being a member of MOA, Dick is a member of the Order of Daedalians, the Air Force Association, the Air Commando Association, and the Association of the United States Army.

EILEEN ARPKE (Incumbent) No bio submitted

BILL VAN HOESEN (Incumbent) Bill grew up in upstate New York along the Hudson River. He was drafted into the Army in 1966, attended Corps of Engineer Officer Candidate School after a year as an enlisted man. He never worked in his basic branch because of his civilian acquired skill as a computer operator/programmer/systems analyst. After a branch transfer to the Adjutant General Corps, he was assigned to various spots such as Viet Nam, Korea, the Pentagon and Fort Sam Houston in Texas. From there he PCS'd to Germany where he was to spend the next 20 years (1980—1999), six years as Chief of a Data Processing Installation and as Director of Logistics System for the 200th Theater Army Material Management Center. After retiring in 1986, he took a position as a Senior Systems Analyst/Project Manager with TechDyn Systems Corp for 10 years and then as a Logistics Management Analyst with HQ, US Army, Europe in Heidelberg for five years. Returning to the States, he and his wife, Linda, settled in Mary Esther. He keeps busy with NWFMOA, NWFMOA Scholarship Fund, Emerald Coast chapter of the Association of the United States Army, Homeless Veterans' Stand Down, Hurlburt Field Pharmacy Volunteer, and Fort Rucker Retiree Council.

GINNY MILLS No bio submitted

GUY DUNN No bio submitted

Winter Gifts

By Sarah A. Shirley, Ch, Lt
Col, FLANG



Chaplain Shirley

The emails and Facebook postings and kitchen magnets imploring “don’t take the Christ out of Christmas” and declaring “it’s Merry Christmas, not Happy Holidays” are going to start soon. It’s one thing I really really don’t like about this time of year.

One of the things I really really do like about December and January is just about every religion/culture celebrates sacred days. December is home to the Winter Solstice, and since most religious holidays have their roots in the agricultural rhythm, it is predictable that many holidays would be proximal to change from one season to the next.

As an Episcopal priest, the ones I celebrate are the Sundays of Advent, a time of preparation for the coming of the Christ child; Christmas itself, the day we remember the incarnation of God in man, often referred to as “Jesus’ birthday;” and the Feast of the Epiphany (more on that next month). Given that the Christian holidays are the ones I personally observe, why does criticism of secular Christmas and acknowledgement of other-than-Christian holidays in greeting cards bug me so much?

Yes, it’s a rhetorical question. Yes, I know the source of my annoyance. It’s about the universality of human need, human love, and human hurt. At Christmas time more than any other time during the year I want everyone I know to actually care about everyone else in real and meaningful ways. Feed hungry people. Provide shelter to people without shelter. Give comfort and healing to anyone who suffers, especially people whose suffering I cannot personally grasp and who may even frighten me. Love all people, especially people different from me, the way that Jesus loves them. That’s what I want for Christmas this year.

I spent Christmas, 2010 in Afghanistan. One of the religious education classes I offered was South Park Sunday School. My co-teacher was SPC (now SGT!) Dan Christiansen. He knew everything there was to know about every single religious reference in South Park, and

Continued on page 5

Auxiliary Members and Chapter Involvement

By Janet Snyder, member,
Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee (AMAC),
and Patricia Bergquist, chair, AMAC

When Janet Snyder was asked to serve as auxiliary liaison for the Southern Nevada Chapter of MOAA, she thought about our MOAA initiative to have an active auxiliary liaison in each council and chapter. Today, there are 185 auxiliary liaisons in our council and chapter system, and 12 of those perform dual roles at both the council and chapter levels. We’d like to have 20 council auxiliary liaisons. Currently, we have 16, or 80 percent, of that goal. The targeted goal for chapter auxiliary liaisons is 250. Currently, we have 171, or 68 percent, of that goal.

MOAA defines auxiliary members as the survivors of former national MOAA members who are deceased or survivors of deceased individuals who would, if living, be eligible for membership. Auxiliary members can be active chapter members. Understanding both the challenges and sacrifices of military life for service members and their families gives auxiliary members skills and talents that make them valuable assets to councils and chapters. Auxiliary members who serve as council or chapter auxiliary liaisons can serve in leadership positions on boards of directors or committees, plan and manage projects and programs, assist in recruitment and retention initiatives, and participate in grassroots advocacy.

The Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee (AMAC)-led Storming the Hill event in July introduced many of our younger surviving spouses to MOAA. As we grow our chapter and council system by welcoming these surviving spouses into the MOAA family, please encourage their participation in auxiliary liaison leadership roles. It is imperative our younger members be asked to become chapter leaders. This gives them a sense of purpose as well as a reason to attend meetings and be more involved in our organization. The reality is younger officers and auxiliary members are the future of MOAA.

The AMAC encourages you to build strong, vibrant councils and chapters that include auxiliary members in auxiliary liaison leadership roles. Your councils and chapters need them, and so do we.

If you are on Facebook, please join our Surviving Spouses of MOAA group. This group is for anyone interested in issues related to surviving military spouses and veterans.

Greetings!

The dues renewal season is fast approaching which will keep me busy along with the treasurer (smile). Please note the renewal notice printed elsewhere in this issue. Secretarially speaking, it's great when members fill out all the information on the application so I can cross-check it against the master database and ensure everything is current. Several members have recently provided updated email addresses. Thank you! Such action ensures you keep informed of all that is going on and periodic mailings such as the chapter membership directory sent out last July. If you have an email address and didn't receive it, drop me a line and I'll respond. Hard copies are available at the monthly meeting for others.



Scott Berry

Enjoy the beautiful autumn weather!

Berry "OUT"

Continued from page 4

there are many. Before developing that class with Dan, all I knew about South Park was the original video, "The Spirit of Christmas," that made the rounds in 1992. In it, Jesus and Santa Claus got into a fist fight about Christmas. The kids broke it up, reminding the Son of God and Saint Nicholas that the spirit of Christmas was about love.

Dan is back in Afghanistan. He's a medic. He recently saved the life of an Afghan soldier who was shot during a firefight. Dan placed an IV with the earth shaking and smoke billowing and mortar rounds flying over his head. Dan will be in Afghanistan during Advent, Ramadan, Hannukah, Christmas, Diwali, New Year's, Winter Solstice, Epiphany, Pancha Ganapati and Kwanzaa. I invite you to join me in praying for SGT Dan Christiansen during whichever of the holidays you celebrate this December. Think of him giving love and healing and comfort to Afghan and U.S. citizens alike, friend and foe. Happy Holidays (and Merry Christmas), SGT Christiansen!

If you have a prayer request or a suggested topic for this column, or you'd like me to speak or offer a workshop for your company, faith community or other non-profit organization, please email chaplain@chaplainshirley.com.

Opus One's Annual Visit (cont.)

Continued from page 1

So how many of you enjoyed the presentation by Major Zachary Bartoe? Were you impressed that he simplified the slide briefing to help me put in perspective what the 53rd Wing did in comparison to the 96 TW? He also deftly addressed the questions by the wizened attendees that have been previously involved in armament development. Not once did he say, "I'll have to get back to you." Very impressive. In fact, one of his comments was that the unit is full of "fast burners."

Now that you are excited about our visit by Opus One on the 4th of December, guess what happens the very next day? We have our annual Military Ball! I anticipate a good turn out for this gala event as we have fairly priced the tickets and obtained a premium location with great food, live music by Retroactive and a dance floor to boot. Our chairperson, Gayle Norgaard, has worked tirelessly for the past eleven months on this so please show her you appreciate her hard work and join us!

We will once again have the silent auction and the raffle tickets for the sponsors' prizes. This has been a big hit every year with the proceeds going to our NWFMOA Scholarship Fund. What we enjoy in December leads to cadet enjoyment throughout the rest of the year so make plans and buy your tickets today!

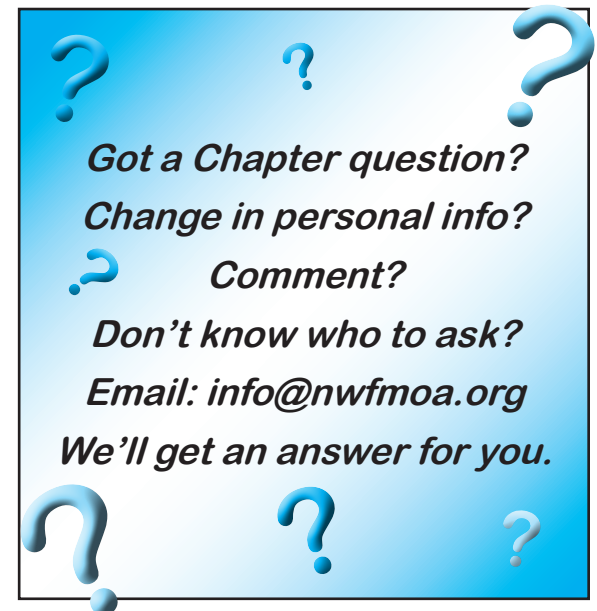
With Veteran's Day behind us and Thanksgiving ahead, please take time to count your blessings!

Jeff Watson, Chapter President

DUES WILL BE DUE \$OON

By Scott Berry, Treasurer

Annual membership dues are due by the end of December. To confirm your membership expiration date look at the mailing label on this copy of *The Defender* or you may have received an email. Annual dues are \$25.00 for regular members or \$12.50 for auxiliary members. If your information is **changed**, or you are interested in discounts, please refer to the membership renewal form found in this issue. Providing us with updated information ensures you will keep updated on chapter events and national events which may affect you. Prompt payment will save the club money by not requiring us to send out invoices. Thank you in advance for your renewal!



***Got a Chapter question?
Change in personal info?
Comment?
Don't know who to ask?
Email: info@nwfmoe.org
We'll get an answer for you.***

Ticket Order Form for the NWFMOA

Annual Military Ball to benefit the Scholarship Fund

5 December, 2013, at the Emerald Grande at Harbor Walk Village

Dress: Gowns or cocktail dress, formal or business suits.

Social hour 1800; Pay as you go bars will be open.

Dinner 1900; Dancing 2000 until 2200 with Retroactive.

Dinner will include:

First Course – Classic Caesar Salad

Choice of Entrée:

(1) Herb Crusted Roast Beef with Mushroom, wine Sauce

(2) Stuffed Chicken Breast, Basil, Prosciutto, Mozzarella, Wine Sauce

Sides: Green Beans with Cranberries & Walnuts; Mashed Potatoes.

Dessert: NY Cheese Cake with Raspberry Sauce

Dinners served with rolls, butter, iced tea and coffee

Ticket Purchaser's name: _____

CHOICE OF ENTRÉE: _____

Number of tickets: _____ times \$**50.00** = \$_____ check enclosed.

(Price includes Meal & Gratuity)

Spouse/Guest's name: _____

CHOICE OF ENTRÉE _____

When paying with cash, please provide full mailing address.

When ordering by mail include a stamped self-addressed envelope,
a check payable to NWFMOA, and this form to:

NWFMOA, PO Box 310, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549-0310.

Allow sufficient time to get your tickets returned by mail.

Ticket Order Form must be received by **November 25, 2013.**

Table reservations may be made for groups of eight by contacting

Gayle Norgaard at (850) 259-1155 or email: gayleret@cox.net.

List names of people at your table. If you are to be seated at
someone's reserved table please coordinate with the reservation holder.

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You are encouraged to make a charitable contribution to the
Scholarship Fund by supplying an additional check made
payable to: NWFMOA Scholarship Fund.

Raffle tickets & Silent Auction are CASH or CHECKS only, please.

President's Message (cont.)

Continued from page 2

Officers Association of America meeting in Colorado Springs, CO. I will pick up the 4-star banner that Ken Wright and our chapter members earned last year.

Our Military Ball Chairperson, Gayle Norgaard, has done an amazing job with our Military Ball! The ticket request form is available as are tickets! There will be a request form in this newsletter. Use it! Don't wait until the last minute: put NWFMOA Military Ball on your calendar for 5 December at the Emerald Grande, get out your SASE and put a check for \$50 per person in the mail to us now, so that we can all have fun together. Until we meet again, fare well and be safe!

NEW GO-to PLACE FOR VETERANS BENEFITS

Military veterans and their families have a new on line source of help for getting the benefits they've earned.

On the website Explore VA, produced by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, you can learn about many kinds of benefits: health care, education, job services, home loans, housing, life insurance, pensions, disability compensation and much more.

You can also apply for those benefits through the site and track the status of your claim. And if you want to reach out for more information or to friends or fellow veterans, you'll find social net working tools to help with that. Log on to va.gov/explore.

For more valuable information look up the 2013 Edition of Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and survivors. (1-202-512-1800) The cost of this valuable edition of \$5.00 will easily be recouped in no time.

Chair Personal Affairs Committee

Gayle Norgaard, LTC, Ret. USAF



Gayle Norgaard

Phone Numbers

Bereavement Counseling.....	1-202-461-6530
Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA).....	1-800-733-8387
Caregiver Support	1-855-260-3274
Debt Management Center.....	1-800-827-0648
Education.....	1-888-442-4551
Federal Recovery Coordination Program	1-877-732-4456
Foreign Medical Program.....	1-888-820-1756
Headstones and Markers.....	1-800-697-6947
Health Care.....	1-877-222-8387
Homeless Veterans.....	1-877-424-3838
Home Loans.....	1-888-827-3702
Life Insurance.....	1-800-669-8477
National Cemetery Scheduling Office.....	1-800-535-1117
Pension Management Center.....	1-877-294-6380
Presidential Memorial Certificate Program.....	1-202-565-4964
Special Health Issues.....	1-800-749-8387
Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD).....	1-800-829-4833
VA Benefits.....	1-800-827-1000
VA Combat Call Center	1-877-927-8387
Veterans Crisis Line.....	1-800-273-8255
Women Veterans.....	1-877-222-8387

Web Sites

Burial and Memorial Benefits	www.cem.va.gov
Caregiver Support	www.caregiver.va.gov
CHAMPVA.....	www.va.gov/hac/forbeneficiaries/forbeneficiaries.asp
eBenefits.....	www.ebenefits.va.gov
Education Benefits.....	www.gibill.va.gov
Environmental Exposures.....	www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures
Health Care Eligibility.....	www.va.gov/healthbenefits
Homeless Veterans.....	www.va.gov/homeless
Home Loan Guaranty.....	www.homeloans.va.gov
Life Insurance.....	www.insurance.va.gov
Memorial Certificate .Program.....	www.cem.va.gov/pmc.asp
Mental Health.....	www.mentalhealth.va.gov
My HealtheVet.....	www.myhealth.va.gov
National Resource Directory	www.nrd.gov
Prosthetics.....	www.prosthetics.va.gov
Records.....	www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel
Returning Servicemembers.....	www.oefoif.va.gov
State Departments of Veterans Affairs.....	www.va.gov/statedva.htm
Women Veterans.....	www.womenshealth.va.gov
VA Vet Centers.....	www.vetcenter.va.gov
VA Home Page.....	www.va.gov
VA Benefit Payment Rates.....	www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/rates
VA Forms.....	www.va.gov/vaform
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment.....	www.vetsuccess.gov

WE SALUTE YOUR SERVICE.

Now it's our turn to serve you! Come Live With Us!

Those of us at Westwood Retirement Resort would like to say to all our veterans, "Thank you for your service. Thank you for protecting our freedom."

And should the time come that you wish to make the move to a retirement community, it would be our honor to serve you. At Westwood Retirement Resort you can enjoy the best years of your life and have access to our on-campus Healthcare Center for short-term rehab or long-term care.



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Last Name	First Name	Initial	Spouse
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Address	City	State & Zip	Phone
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Rank	Service	MOAA mbr. no.	Email address
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> Reserve	<input type="checkbox"/> National Guard	<input type="checkbox"/> Active Duty <input type="checkbox"/> Retired

Make checks payable to NWFMOA or to Northwest Florida Military Officers Assn., Inc. Check here if you do not want your ☐ name, ☐ phone number or ☐ email address listed in printed chapter directories. **Membership includes a subscription to The Defender for the dues period.** We are a charter member of MOAA and recommend that our members belong to the national organization. Our association is also a member of the Florida Council of Chapters, itself an affiliate of MOAA.

****The spouse of a deceased life member automatically becomes an auxiliary life member.**

Membership Application/Renewal

New Members joining in 2014
receive membership through December
31st of next year for \$25.00.

Membership Renewal
1 yr - \$25.00, 2 yr - \$48.00, 3 yr - \$65.00
Life Membership Dues**

Age	Dues	Age	Dues
101+	Free	71-75	240.00
96-100	50.00	66-70	275.00
91 - 95	75.00	61-65	295.00
86 - 90	110.00	56-60	335.00
81 - 85	150.00	51-55	360.00
76 - 80	195.00	-50	395.00

Auxiliary Members

Pay one half of the above rates