



THE DEFENDER

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

Vol. 24 No. 02 Serving All Branches of The Uniformed Services FEBRUARY 2018

Lunch Meeting & Discussion

When: Thur, 1 February 2018
Time: Gathering 1130, Lunch 1200
 Program to follow
Place: Ft. Walton Bch. Yacht Club
 180 Ferry Road, NE, FWB
Program: Dr. Devin Stephenson
 President, NWF State College

Please:

- **MAKE A RESERVATION**
- Wear a name tag
- Bring proper change:
\$13.00 for everyone

Reservation deadline is Friday at noon prior to meeting. Go online at www.nwfmoa.org and select the link where it says "Click here to make reservations", or email Dick Prater at nwfreservations@gmail.com, or call 850-613-6080 if you are attending.

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Class is in Session

By Scott Berry

I thank Eileen Arpke for working the details to get Dr Devin Stephenson, the president of Northwest Florida State College, to our monthly meeting. By chance I happened to meet him with Eileen several weeks ago. In addition to his many professional qualifications, he's a really nice guy! In no way does he exhibit the counterproductive belief in "positional leadership" mentioned by an educator who previously spoke to us.

He's an Alabama native and has extensive experience in community college executive administration which makes him superbly qualified for his current position. He served as President/CEO of Big Sandy Community/Technical College in Kentucky and Three Rivers College in Missouri prior to coming to NWFSC. He's held a number of leadership positions within the Alabama Community College System, including Vice President of External Affairs and Dean of Students at Beville State Community College, CEO of Snead State Community College, and Dean of Students at Walker State Technical College. Dr. Stephenson served as the Kentucky Community and Technical College System Liaison to SOAR (Shaping Our Appalachian Region), working with Congressman Hal Rogers and Governor Matt Bevin to transform the economy of the region. He is a Commissioner on the American Association of Community Colleges' Commission on Professional



Dr. Devin Stephenson

Development and Leadership and an experienced peer evaluator with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and the Higher Learning Commission. In December 2016, Dr. Stephenson was elected to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Most recently, he was selected to the Board of Directors for the Florida Association of Colleges and Universities and the Steering Committee for the Florida College System Council of Presidents.

He earned an associate degree in science from Walker Junior College, followed by a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration from Birmingham-

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From the President's Pen

By Scott Berry

Greetings (and Brrrr)!

As I write this, it's eight degrees colder where I'm at in the "Sunshine State" than Minot, North Dakota, where I started my AF career. Is this climate change in reverse? Will our oldest son, who was born in Minot, now resent our moving him from tropical Minot to frigid Florida? I'll tell him to wait a few days and reconsider.....



Scott Berry

Recently returned from Orlando while attending the Florida Council's Winter Leadership Forum. In addition to staying warm, I, as always, learned a lot. It'd take several pages to relate all the important points so I'll have to hit the highlights, perhaps in more than one column, as I did in a lengthy email to my fellow NW Florida chapter presidents who didn't attend.

There was the usual foot-stomping about administrative trivia. Thank God we (or more selfishly, I) have George Colton and Fred Westfall, our treasurer and secretary, to ensure these seemingly minor but in fact really important details are completed. No one is more grateful for their contributions than I am!

The (relatively) new MOAA president, Lt Gen Dana Atkins, spoke on several occasions and communicated tons of good information.

1. MOAA convention will be 1-2 November in Phoenix.
2. MOAA will soon offer pet insurance through its insurance affiliate, Mercer. (Don't laugh. They've determined there's a viable/profitable need).
3. Talked at length about his success in recruiting. He's got a number of sound bites about how MOAA has protected benefits or added to some for all military members. For example, MOAA's success in lobbying against the COLA cut means an extra \$100K to a

retired Lt Col over their life time. ISN'T THAT WORTH \$43 YEAR IN MOAA DUES? (Duh). I asked him for a succinct "cheat sheet" on these kinds of MOAA successes and he promised he'd provide that. You'll see more of that from me later. To a lesser degree, the same applies at the chapter level. While our recruiting has increased significantly over the past several years, we still don't have a focused and organized effort. Nick Marotta has taken the stick to change that.

4. Gave figures about MOAA financial reserves and how we've greatly improved in 3 years. Discussed revenue streams. Slightly scratched my bean-counter itch.....
5. Despite an approved NDAA, we're still \$55B short due to sequestration. He isn't optimistic that it'll be repealed due to polarization in Congress. He briefly detailed MOAA's revenue streams and reserve balances. Some staffers have even voiced that the elimination of "earmarks" has taken away their ability to get things done—an interesting perspective and comment on the lack of congressional movement on virtually anything.

The state convention will be at Sanibel Harbor this year. The dates are Jun 1-3 2018. The flyer and application form are both available on the council's website, moaaf.org, under the Events tab. Now I realize this event hasn't generated a lot of participation in the past probably because there's "nothing in it for me." This year promises to change that. Here's why:

The room rate is only \$139 and is tax free with no parking/resort fees. That's a HUGE discount. For this location, nightly rates normally start at \$250. Our rate is guaranteed for 3 days prior and after the convention. Many registrants are taking advantage of that for an extended stay. There is a great harbor cruise with seating limited to 120 and 40 have already signed up. A council officer has "ops checked" it and raves about it so get your reservation in early to guarantee a cruise seat. Janet and I have always limited our stays to the days of the conventions but in this case we going to take advantage of the great rates. And after all, we're retired. Why not take time to stop and smell the roses (orchids)?

The chapter Levels of Excellence Award submissions are coming up quickly. MOAA has upgraded its on-line tool to check membership status. The bad news is that they now have great visibility of which chapter members are NOT national members. That creates the very real possibility of killing our chances for another five star award because so many points are awarded for the percentage of chapter members who also belong to MOAA. IF YOU'RE NOT A NATIONAL MEMBER, PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING: Reread

PUBLIC RECORD

In Memoriam

Mrs. Beryl Brenner, Surviving Spouse 12/27/2017

New Members

Kathy Bush, Lt Col, USAF (RET)

Thomas Woolpert, Maj, USAF (RET)

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Ticket Order Form (see below)

Northwest Florida Military Officers Association Scholarship Fund, Inc.

Along with *The Twisted Grape* is holding a
Fundraiser for scholarships for Junior ROTC Cadets
of Okaloosa County High Schools

WHAT: Wine Tasting (5 wines) & Buffet (Meat, Cheese, Veggies),
Raffles (valued at over \$1,500), and **Door Prizes**

WHEN: Saturday, Feb. 10, 2018, 3:00 – 5:00PM

WHERE: *The Twisted Grape*, 1193 N. Eglin Pkwy, Shalimar, FL

Donation/Tickets: \$25 per Person (Must be 21 years old to drink wine);
see www.NWFMOA.org; **Scholarship Committee**; or
The Twisted Grape

Join us for a pre-Valentine's Day afternoon of friendship and fund-
raising with wine tasting by Debbie Thomas of *The Twisted Grape*.

The NWFMOA Scholarship Fund provides 5 scholarships
annually to graduating senior JROTC cadets. ALL of the
proceeds of this event go to scholarships.

NAME: _____

Number of tickets @ \$25.00 _____

ADDRESS: _____

Delivery Preference:

_____ Mail to the above address.

_____ Hold at Door to Twisted Grape (will call) at event.

Please mail ticket requests with check payable to:
**NWFMOA Scholarship Fund (c/o Dave Parisot), 56 11th St,
Shalimar, FL 32579.**

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By Chaplain Tom Azar, USAF Retired

February shows up on everyone's radar. As kids we gave our mother's a gift; in our teens and early adolescent there was a new object of our affections. In our married years we found creative ways to make our spouse feel superbly loved. These 'horizontal' relationships are born out of our inner spiritual makeup that feels and responds to the 'vertical' love of God. Remember 'God made us in His image male and female' and hence ordained marriage as an expression of His love to be shared and multiplied.

In the early church there was the quest to codify Christian theology, often amidst persecution. Saul was a fanatical Jewish persecutor of the early Christian church who had a dramatic rebirth experience. He became Paul after experiencing a life of love with God. These well known verses provide meaningful guidance for us still today. May your 2018 valentine hear these words together with you as a defined opportunity to express love and bring about change within and without.

3-7 If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love. Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self.

Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head,

Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always "me first," Doesn't fly off the handle,

Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel when others grovel,

Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always,

Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end.

8-10 Love never dies. Inspired speech will be over some day; praying in tongues will end; understanding will reach its limit. We know only a portion of the truth, and what we say about God is always incomplete. But when the Complete arrives, our incomplete will be canceled.

Continued on page 4

Surviving Spouse Corner

A Year in Review

The Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee (SSAC) began 2017 with the exciting opportunity to develop the second MOAA Virtual Chapter — following in the successful footsteps of the Uniformed Services Nurse Advocates Virtual Chapter. We completed the necessary paperwork in August and forwarded it to MOAA to be submitted to the board of directors for their approval at their February meeting.

In April, SSAC members participated in MOAA's annual Storming the Hill event in Washington, D.C., during which we asked legislators to prevent disproportional TRICARE fee hikes, end harmful sequestration cuts, and eliminate the Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation offset affecting 63,000 surviving military spouses or extend and increase the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) if the offset cannot be eliminated. We received positive feedback, and Congress included a provision in the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act that provides a permanent extension to the SSIA. We will continue to push Congress to eliminate the offset in its entirety.

We continued efforts to increase our visibility within the MOAA membership, including presentations about the SSAC at the Regional Leaders Workshop in Memphis in September and in Oklahoma City in November and

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PLEASE REMIT DUES FOR 2018

Since we have entered 2018 dues payments have slowed down. As I write this it is mid January and we still have over 60 members who have not paid their dues for 2017. I have received only a few checks since 1 January.

PLEASE, PLEASE check to see if you are one of those who has not yet paid. The address label on this Defender tells you when your dues expire.

Remember, you save money if you opt to pay for 2 years (\$48.00) or 3 years (\$65.00). Even more is potentially saved if you become a life member. Just mail your check to NWF MOA, P.O. Box 1213, Shalimar, FL 32579.



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11 When I was an infant at my mother's breast, I gurgled and cooed like any infant. When I grew up, I left those infant ways for good.

12 We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us!

13 But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love. Corinthians 13.

Class is in Session (cont.)

Continued from the front page

Southern College and both master's and doctoral degrees in the Administration of Higher Education from the University of Alabama.

Dr. Stephenson and his wife, Judy, have two adult children, Jon and JuliAnne.

Quite a long list of qualification, isn't it? I encourage you to make a reservation and join us to hear what he has to say. I met him prior to the BCS title game so can now state that Bulldog jokes are acceptable!

Now and Always We'll be There.



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WANTED

Fun Volunteer Opportunity

By Larry Williamson, CAPT, USN (RET)

For the past 27 months or so it has been a fun opportunity for me to serve our chapter as “Editor” of the Defender. A number of life changing circumstances are converging for me and my wife in such a way that I must (reluctantly) relinquish this fun assignment. Nothing ominous or serious for us, just changes that will prevent me from continuing in this role.

I will continue as Editor through the month of March where the April edition is created. After that, we’re going to need a new Editor. So, the May edition, created during the month of April will require fresh talent, new blood, and a commitment to this excellent tool of information for our members.

If you’re interested, don’t let the “Editor” title scare you away. This function requires very little actual writing. It’s mostly an aggregation function from officers, individuals, and sources that get collected, double checked for format, forward to our graphic designer who does the actual layout, proofed, and approved for printing and distribution. It really only takes a few hours a month (5 to 6) in the middle of the month but in time for the Defender to reach our distribution list before the next meeting.

For the lucky member who steps forward to assume this fun job I will prepare a detailed guide with a step by step list of what to do and when to do it. If you’re interested, send me an email to “defender@nwfmoa.org.”. We can talk and I can answer your questions. It’s fun, it’s a valuable service to our chapter, and it’s a great way to stay on top of things.

President’s Pen (cont.)

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subparagraph 3 above. If you still don’t think the \$43 is worth it, THEN SIGN UP FOR A BASIC MEMBERSHIP, WHICH IS FREE, and immediately forward your MOAA membership to Fred Westfall. HELP US OUT on this. If you ARE a national member, ignore my diatribe.

That’s all for this month but more to follow.

Berry “OUT”

Legislative Issues

By Dave Parisot

MOAA’S 2018 Goals and Florida Legislative Session

We have started a new year, and with it comes a new set of goals and priorities from MOAA’s Government Relations team. I call your attention to the January 2018 issue of the Military Officer magazine from MOAA and the article on pages 36 thru 40 in the article titled “Top 10 Goals for 2018”. This year’s priorities include TRICARE, military pay and quality of life benefits, military retirement and COLAs, wounded warrior programs, benefits for survivors and disabled, Guard and Reserve requirements, family support programs, and access to VA health care. This article is worth your time to read if you have not already done so.

The Florida Legislature began its 60-day session for 2018 on January 9th. My quick review of Bills filed in the House and Senate on January 9th showed several that can have positive impacts on military and veterans. Some of these are: SB (Senate Bill) 328 and HB (House Bill) 107 which will require the Dept of Safety & Motor Vehicles to create a veterans’ ID card for honorably discharged veterans; SB460 and HB75 would waive certain student activity and service fees for active duty military attending college courses using military tuition assistance; SB816 and HB69 create a sales tax holiday for veterans of US Armed Forces on certain items from Nov. 1 thru Dec. 31 annually; and, SB910 and HB603 would create exemptions for business taxes for veterans and surviving spouses. In addition, Senate Resolution 550 and House Resolution 319 support a moratorium on drilling in the Gulf of Mexico east of the Military Mission Line.

Filing a Bill is one thing; to get it passed requires approval by three separate committees in each of the Senate and House followed by approval by the Senate and House as a whole. A lot can happen during the legislative process to amend or derail proposed bills. I will follow-up on the above proposed legislative bills with impact on our military and veteran citizens in future issues of the Defender.

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.

Scholarship Fund

by Dave Parisot

Scholarship Fund Board Increases JROTC Scholarships

On January 11th, the Board of Directors of your Scholarship Fund held its annual meeting which resulted in many changes to our Scholarship Programs for 2018. Firstly, we have increased the number of scholarships for JROTC cadets from five to seven by adding one scholarship each for JROTC cadets at Navarre High School and Walton High School in addition to the five high schools in Okaloosa County. Secondly, we increased the value of the scholarships from \$1,500 to **\$2,000 each**. These values are more comparable to what other non-profit organizations are awarding for their scholarships. One of these new \$2,000 scholarships will be the “**Chong Cha (Kim) Parisot Memorial Scholarship**” and will be fully funded by **Dave Parisot** in memory of his wife of 35 years. Thirdly, the Scholarship Fund Board assigned the amount of **\$4,000** to the “**Lt Col James (Jim) Heavener Memorial Scholarship**” (see Jan. 2018 Defender) which will be competed for by the winners of the seven individual high school scholarships and will replace the previous \$3,000 scholarship. Thus, in 2018, we plan to award a total of **\$16,000** in college scholarships to local JROTC cadets. All of the above changes were adopted unanimously by your seven Directors.

These increases in our scholarship amounts would not have been possible without the generous donations to the **BG Frank Glunn Century Club** and the **Gold Century Club** by our NWFMOA Chapter members, by our business donors and sponsors, and the various fundraisers we hold. Your Scholarship Fund Board thanks each of you who have helped to improve our financial standing. Since 2015, our Century Club memberships have increased from 18 members to 34 members. Are you ready to add your name to the donor list?

At the Scholarship Board meeting, the Directors also approved a “**Certificate of Membership in the Gold Century Club**” to be given to each person who has donated \$500 (or more) to the Scholarship Fund (cumulative since 2015). We will start distributing these certificates at the February 1st Chapter luncheon.

NEW EVENT: On Saturday, February 10th, from 3:00 to 5:00PM, the Scholarship Committee will host a **Wine Tasting and Buffet** at *The Twisted Grape* in Shalimar.

Please see ‘Ticket Order Form’ in this issue of the Defender or at www.NWFMOA.org. We are projected to have raffles valued at over \$1,800. This should be a great pre-Valentine’s Day social and fun event. The **Wine Tasting and Buffet** will be held instead of having an Officers Call this first quarter of 2018. **GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!**

I want to thank **Eileen Arpke** and **Roxanne Ruckdeschel** for their help with the raffle drawings and prize distribution to the winners at the December Military Ball.

The winner of the **50/50 raffle** at our January luncheon meeting was Bob Gramm who graciously donated his winnings to the Scholarship Fund. Thanks, Bob.

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Surviving Spouse Corner (cont.)

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the column “Your Secret Weapon” by Col. Terri Coles, USA (Ret), on page 48 of the November issue of Military Officer about the important roles of spouses and surviving spouses in local chapters.

Finally, in December, the SSAC named Shirley Phillips, of the Tucson (Ariz.) Chapter, its 2017 Surviving Spouse Liaison Excellence Award winner.

It has been a busy and exciting year with many new and challenging opportunities for the SSAC. We look forward to 2018 with the addition of new committee members, including a new virtual position aimed at younger surviving spouses who might not be able to travel because of jobs, children, etcetera, but who are interested in working on surviving spouse issues. Applications will be on the MOAA website in January 2018, and the two-year term begins April 2018.

SSAC member applications will be available in March 2018 on the MOAA website. Deadline for submission is June 30, and the four-year term, with an optional two-years, begins October 2018.

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.

Scholarship Fund (cont.)

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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 2017/2018 along with our **Business Donors**. Your support is greatly appreciated. Remember, all of these donations are used to fund our scholarships to JROTC cadets.

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 Fisher** (Nov 2017)

BG Frank Glunn Century Club: **January 2017:** **Clyde Locke** (Renewal); **WWII Vet Mel Bryant** (Renewal); **Dick Prater** (Renewal); **February 2017:** **Carol Baker** (in memory of David Baker) (Renewal); **Larry Bush** (Renewal); **Al Bills;** **Dave Parisot** (in memory of Chong Parisot) (Renewal); **Charlie Brown** (Renewal); **March 2017:** **Fred Westfall** (Renewal); **Rod Gerdes;** **Nick Marotta;** **Janet Taylor** (In honor of Bill Ryan); **April 2017:** **Eileen Arpke** (Renewal); **Don Litke** (in memory of Kay Litke); **Bob Gramm;** **Scott Berry.** **May 2017:** **WWII Vet Bill Colgan** (Renewal); **August 2017:** **WWII Vet Sam Lombardo** (In memory of Jean Lombardo) (Renewal); **Dr. Roger Riegenbach** (In memory of Janice Riegenbach). **September 2017:** **Beryl Brenner** (In memory of George Brenner); **October 2017:** **Doug Hardin** (In memory of Gen. Bill Kirk). **November 2017:** **Larry Bush** (Renewal); **Jean Dutton** (Renewal); **Charlie Brown** (Renewal); **Chris Beam** (Renewal); **Dr. Howard Fisher** (Renewal); **Karl Eschmann** (In memory of Col. Bud Day and Kay Litke) (Renewal); **December 2017:** **Dr. Roger Riegenbach** (Renewal); **Dr. Keith Kulow** (In memory of LtCol David Kulow); **Pete Peterzen** (Renewal); **Les Matheson,** **Dann Mittiza:** **January 2018:** **Fred Boyer** (Renewal)(In memory of Mike Flynt); **Clyde Locke** (Renewal); and **WWII Vet Mel Bryant** (Renewal).

2017/2018 Business Platinum Donor (\$750 minimum donation): **December 2017:** **Gold's Gym of FWB** (In-kind).

2017/2018 Business Gold Donor (\$500 - \$749): **December 2017:** **Eglin Federal Credit Union** (Renewal); **January 2018:** **Merrill Lynch (Beam, McLaughlin & Associates)** (Renewal).

2017/2018 Business Silver Donors (\$250 - \$499): **December 2017:** **Shalimar Pointe Golf Club** (In-kind) (Renewal); **Indian Bayou Golf & Country Club** (In-kind).(Renewal); **Rocky Bayou Golf Course** (In-kind) (Renewal).

2017/2018 Business Bronze Donors (\$100 - \$249): **October 2017:** **Eye MD of Niceville** **November 2017:** **Gator Lakes Golf Course** (In-kind) (Renewal); **Mary's Kitchen Restaurant** (FWB) (In-kind); **Buffalo's Reef Restaurant** (FWB) (In-kind); **December 2017:** **Tammy's Journeys of FWB** (In-kind) (Renewal); **Tommy Mattonie's Coastal Café** (FWB) (In-kind); **Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen of FWB** (In-kind); **Painting With A Twist of FWB** (In-kind); **Ernie's Dockside Café of Niceville** (In-kind); **Destin Party Boat Fishing** (In-kind); **Connect with Flowers of Shalimar** (In-kind); **Shalimar Cheers Pub** (In-kind); **The Twisted Grape of Shalimar** (In-kind); **Lee Nissan** (FWB).(In-kind).

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

NWFMOA Scholarship Fund, Inc.: "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):

Name _____

Address _____

Gift is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

This gift is a memorial in honor of: _____

Please inform the following of this gift:

Name _____

Address _____

City, ST ZIP _____

Make payable to: **NWFMOA Scholarship Fund**, and mail to: David Parisot, President; 56th 11th St, Shalimar, FL 32579

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