



# THE DEFENDER

A monthly publication of the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association  
[www.nwfmoa.org](http://www.nwfmoa.org)

Vol. 17 No. 7 Serving All Branches of The Uniformed Services JULY 2011

## Breakfast Meeting & Discussion

**When:** Wed. 6 July 2011  
**Time:** Open: 0700; Bkfst: 0715; Meeting: 0800-0900  
**Place:** Eglin AFB Club  
**Program:** F-35 Training Program, Col Arthur Tomassetti, 33rd FW/CV  
**Eglin Club Breakfast**  
 Please:

- Make a reservation
- Wear a name tag
- Bring proper change.  
 \$7.00 for Club Members  
 \$9.00 for Non-Members

Reservation deadline is Friday at noon prior to the meeting. Call Dan Cobbs at 685-9415 or send an email to: [clavalle@bridgeway.org](mailto:clavalle@bridgeway.org) if you are attending.

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## Thirteenth Amendment

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

## The F-35 Is Alive and Well and Coming to a Base near You

By Dan Cobbs

This month we will learn more about the F-35 program at Eglin AFB as Colonel Arthur Tomassetti will be our July guest speaker and be giving us highlights on the program.

Colonel Arthur Tomassetti is the vice commander of the 33rd Fighter Wing, Air Education and Training Command, Eglin Air Force Base, FL. The 33rd Fighter Wing serves as the home to the Joint Strike Fighter Integrated Training Center and provides pilot and maintenance training for nine international partners.

Colonel Tomassetti earned his commission from the United States Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps in 1986. He completed flight training in Beeville, TX, and Pensacola, FL. He became a pilot and trained in the AV-8B Harrier at Cherry Point, NC. He's served with two Fleet Harrier Squadrons--VMA-542 and VMA-513.

Colonel Tomassetti served as a member of the Joint Strike Fighter Test Force and became the lead government pilot for the X-35 Test



Col Arthur Tomassetti

Team. He was the only U.S. Government pilot to fly all three variants of the X-35 aircraft and flew the first ever Short Take-Off, level supersonic dash, and vertical landing accomplished on a single flight.

Colonel Tomassetti is a designated USMC Acquisition Professional Officer holding Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) Level 3 certifications in Test and Evaluation and Program Management

He is a command pilot with more than 3,200 hours in 35 different aircraft.

# President's Corner

## SEMPER PARATUS

By Ken Wright

Ladies and Gentlemen: I hope I find you in good spirits as we move through these interesting times. I continue to be amazed by the efforts of our organization throughout the community donating time and money for the benefit of others. Many of you still take it upon yourselves to seek out causes that benefit our servicemen and women and jump in to fight the fight to defend our benefits we earned while making sacrifices for our country. With this said, I say "BRAVO ZULU". But let us not sit back on our heels, because now more than ever, your efforts to protect our benefits earned and promised must continue.

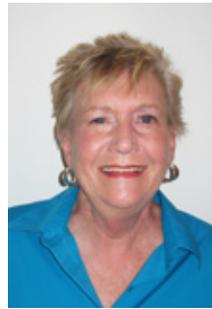
In the past few months I have asked for your input on how we are doing in meeting your expectations as an organization. I have taken from your silence you are satisfied with our direction. We also had a survey conducted by our organization where we received a glowing review and was well above our expectations. Does that mean we can't improve? Absolutely not. Continued improvement is a hallmark of a great organization and with the help of our leadership and the membership I hope we continue to do so. But always remember, your input and assistance is greatly appreciated and encouraged in meeting the goals of our organization, which are: (1) To promote the social welfare of the community, (2) To conduct programs for charitable, scientific, or educational purposes, (3) To sponsor or participate in activities of a patriotic nature, and (4) To provide social and recreational activities for its members.

Continued on page 6



Ken Wright

# MEMBERSHIP By Gayle Norgaard



Gayle Norgaard

Welcome to our new members: LCDR Bala F Lemak, USN, (Ret); Col Edward J McAllister III, USAF, (Ret); Lt Col Carolyn E Wilcox, USAF, (Ret); and Mrs. Nannette M Abney, Auxiliary.

The symposium on "What Your Family Should Know" held in May was very informative to the 40 members who attended. In reviewing the critiques, attendees indicated they would like more special programs held the middle of the week and later in the day. If possible we may be able to have a special program about once a quarter. Please contact me with topics you would be interested in at [gayleret@cox.net](mailto:gayleret@cox.net) or 850-259-1155.

Tentative plans are being made for a tour of the Fisher House on base in September. Watch for more information in the August Defender.

**Continue to recruit new members!!!!**

## Sheriff Ashley "deputized" by NWFMOA



Sheriff Ashley "deputized" with challenge coin by 1st VP Dan Cobbs



Sheriff Ashley speaks to chapter members at last month's breakfast

# PUBLIC RECORD

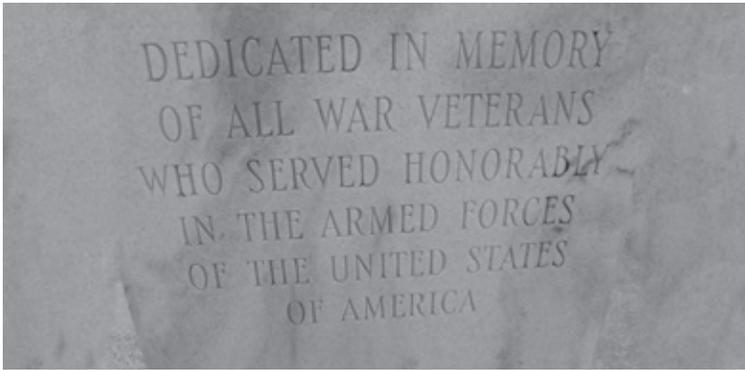
**IN MEMORIAM:** Col George P. Brenner, USAF (Ret), 6/13/2011. Col Brenner was a past NWFMOA president (1973-1974).

**NEW MEMBERS:** LCDR Bala F. Lemak, USN (Ret), Col Edward J McAllister III, USAF (Ret), and Lt Col Carolyn E Wilcox, USAF (Ret).

# MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTES

# The Devil is in the Details Fine Print

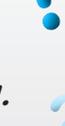
By Gerald Moore



We enjoy Freedom because we're standing on the shoulders of those who served before us.

**The following members left us since names were read at Beal Cemetery on Veterans Day 2010**

Lt Col Arthur Bourque, USAF, (Ret)  
CW4 Dean M Fletcher, USA, (Ret)  
Col Walter P Glower, USAF, (Ret)  
Col John P Meade, USAF, (Ret)  
Lt Col (Ch) Paul S Mixon, Sr. USAF, (Ret)  
Col Robert Clyde Ogletree, USAF, (Ret)  
Col Albert C Weidenbusch, USAF, (Ret)  
Maj Herman F Weiss, USAF, (Ret)

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

## Military Wisdom

"You know that your landing gear is up and locked when it takes full power to taxi to the terminal."

-Lead-in Fighter Training Manual

Beware of the words "opt out" in any mail you might receive. This is an old scam that is being renewed now that economic times are tough.

I recently received a membership packet that I would normally toss in the junk mail waste bin. But I have a wife who reads everything and she came to my rescue. She called to my attention that I must opt out of a program connected to my checking account or be charged a monthly fee. She said that I had enrolled in a program about 10 years ago when the program was a free service offered by my local bank but the bank would soon be charging a fee.

At that time banks were offering extras and/or perks to entice new customers. In checking my application, I found a small clause that stated they could attach a membership fee to my bank statement at a "later" date should they increase the coverage and offering.

Tricky, tricky. Many busy people and seniors will toss this mailing into the garbage like I was about to do. The "opt out" provision is a questionable business practice at best and a borderline scam.

The company that offered the membership had neither a physical address nor a website on their mailing packet: only a post office box. But an 800 number was listed to call to "opt out".

About 8 years ago I had a similar mailing from a credit card company and my calls to the 800 number went ignored.

This time I called my local bank and strongly urged the customer service representative to make the call to the membership company while I was online and get a cancellation confirmation number, which she agreed to do.

The bank is scheduled to collect the fee for the provider of services. This connection between the two gave me the leverage to push the issue. I also mentioned that if they did not make the cancellation for me that my next step was to file a complaint with the Florida Attorney General's office.

<http://myfloridalegal.com> is a useful site to keep handy and to view occasionally.

Beware of memberships or any company using the "OPT OUT" technique whether it be through the mail or internet, especially when you are ordering something online. Read the fine print.

*(Editor's note: Gerald Moore is a chapter member and in the past made presentations on behalf of the State of Florida on similar topics.)*

## World War II Veterans: The Ranks are Thinning, but Still Strong

If projections from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs are correct, it will be several decades before Americans will have to say farewell to the last veterans of World War II.

About 2 million U.S. veterans of that conflict remain from among the more than 16 million who served between 1941 and 1945. Most World War II veterans are in their mid-80s and, as a result, their number is declining rapidly. Nevertheless, the VA estimates that about 57,000 World War veterans will be alive in 2025, the last year for which the federal agency has made a projection. Of the 5.7 million men and women who were in the armed forces during the time of the Korean War, about 2.5 million are alive. The VA estimates that 1.8 million men and women served in Korea. About 8.7 million Americans were in the armed forces during the Vietnam-War era, with 3.4 million deployed in Southeast Asia. There are 7.8 million living veterans from that period. Of the 2.32 million men and women who served during the time of the first Gulf War -- Desert Storm and Desert Shield -- in 1990 and 1991, about 3 percent -- approximately 70,000 -- have died.

VA statistics on veterans of America's wars include at least two unlikely facts. While the last veterans of the Civil War have been gone for more than a half-century, two of their children are still listed on benefit rolls. Even more surprising perhaps, is that the government reports that 82 parents of World War II service members are receiving benefits.

You think? (Source: Florida Department of Veterans Affairs)

## NWFMOA SCHOLARSHIP

FUND By Frank Glunn



Frank Glunn

Hello, All! Those of you who attended the May meeting had an unusual opportunity to see not one but five of our NWFMOA scholarship awardees for 2011! With the able assistance of Colonel Sal Nodjomian, Commander of the 96th Air Base Wing, we presented the annual awards to the junior

and senior winners from both Crestview and Fort Walton Beach high schools followed by the presentation of the overall scholarship award to the top senior Okaloosa County JROTC winner for 2011, Cadet Lt Col Nathan Shaw, from Choctawhatchee High School. If you found that Cadet Shaw looked a little familiar to you, that's understandable. He has been the commander of the honor guard team that has honored us with its presence at our monthly meetings this past year!

If you've ever wondered if our sponsorship of the JROTC Scholarship program is a good idea, these young awardees should erase any doubt in your mind! I submit that anything we can do to foster the ideas of patriotism, dedication, academic excellence, and scholastic achievement in this crazy world we live in should be worthy of our best efforts. If you'd like to know what you can do to be a part of our scholarship program, stop me at any time at one of our meetings, or give me a call; I'm at (850) 582-2764.

Have a great Summer!

---

## Having Trouble Sleeping At Night Or Just Curious?

The Department of Defense recently published the FY 2011 Statistical Report on the Military Retirement System. It is a trove of information that will a) put you to sleep, b) increase your competitiveness as a Jeopardy! contestant, and/or c) provide insight to a depth never before realized on the who/what/when/where/how and how much? of the military retirement system. It is a virtual veteran's vegematic for those who enjoy details. You can view it at: <http://actuary.defense.gov/statbook10.pdf>.





Chaplain Shirley

## Responsibilities of Freedom

By The Rev. Sarah A. Shirley,  
Chaplain, Major, Florida Air  
National Guard  
(Written in June 2011 toward  
the tail end of the European E.  
Coli outbreak.)

The other day I discarded a beautiful stalk of broccoli a friend had brought me from Germany. My able assistant had told me that German officials were not yet certain which vegetable(s) were the E. Coli culprit(s), so we were advised to avoid all green, leafy vegetables. A visiting doctor said, "Yes, it should be fine if you give it a good soap and water wash. On the other hand, broccoli has lots of folds and other hiding places where the E. Coli could lurk." I compromised by deciding to wash it very well and not serve it to guests. With a sigh, I tucked my gorgeous vegetable back into the fridge. I was having some of my co-workers into my office for some homemade deliciousness from my electronic pressure cooker and the plan included that lovely, but potentially toxic, broccoli.

I prepared tofu curry with peppers and without broccoli and planned to consume the broccoli myself after it had a good washing. Then I realized that if I was ill with E. Coli, my colleagues would have to pick up the slack for me. Since we already work a minimum of six 12-hour shifts a week, my being out sick would stress my already tired ministry partners. The risk of eating a possibly tainted vegetable, even if I didn't expose others to the toxin itself, would still harm others. I had to conclude that the only responsible thing to do was to discard the potential hazard.

Broccoli is small and insignificant in the overall scheme of things. In Afghanistan, where the dining facilities do a super job but it's still not the same as fresh and homemade, broccoli can seem more important than it actually is. So many things in life seem to take on out-of-proportion meaning . . . who has custody of the remote control, who got the bigger piece of pie, what Susie said about Mary at the coffee pot the other day, where to go on vacation, or the color of carpet for the new Sunday School room.

MOAA umbrellas dotted the landscape, but the rain didn't stop us from accomplishing our mission. On April 13, 150 MOAA board members, council leaders, Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee members, and staff "stormed the Hill," an annual pilgrimage to congressional offices that has been a signature event since 1996. Congressional representatives from every state heard MOAA's message, this year focusing on two things — protecting the currently serving force against manpower and pay-raise cuts and limiting future TRICARE fee increases so they do not exceed the COLA increase to retired pay.

We also provided leave-behind packets urging members to make more progress toward ending unfair compensation penalties imposed on thousands of disabled retirees, military survivors, and guardmembers and reservists.

We had an opportunity to visit with many new members in Congress and share MOAA's perspective on a strong national defense. The good news was the legislators and their staffs listened to our message and were open to discussion. But members are very aware of the dire budget issues facing the nation and finding solutions will mean everyone will have to share in the pain. We are counting on MOAA's clout to make sure we don't see disproportionate actions on top of the sacrifice already asked of servicemembers. We need your voice now more than ever. Ensure that your representatives and senators are cosponsoring key bills:

- H.R. 1092: grants Congress, not the secretary of defense, authority to set TRICARE fees
- H.R. 333, H.R. 186, S. 344: ends deduction of VA benefits from retired pay
- H.R. 178, S. 260: ends deduction of VA benefits from Survivor Benefit Plan annuities
- H.R. 181, H.R. 1283: authorizes reserve retirement age credit for all active service since Sept. 11, 2001, and eliminates a glitch that denies full credit for active duty tours that span more than one fiscal year.

Never forget MOAA's One Powerful Voice® includes yours! (Source: MOAA)

## PERSONAL AFFAIRS UPDATE

By Gayle Norgaard, Committee Chairperson

Many retirees, their families don't understand VA burial benefits

Retirees may qualify for burial benefits through Veterans Affairs, but it is important to understand what those benefits are and how to request them.

Many retirees and their families do not know all the facts. For example, a survey by Lindberg Research in 2008 shows that 60 percent of veterans mistakenly believe the VA pays funeral, cremation and cemetery expenses for all veterans. In truth, reimbursement of funeral or cremation expenses is limited, and certain restrictions apply.

Six out of 10 veterans also believe caskets are provided free of charge to all veterans. Actually, neither VA nor the various services provide a free casket for a deceased veteran unless death occurs while on active duty.

For a free copy of "10 Important Facts About Your VA Burial Benefits," call the Veterans of Foreign Wars member services at 800-821-2606, select Option 1, then Option 3.

(Source: *Afterburner*, March 2011)

## President's Corner (cont.)

Continued from page 2

In closing, thanks to those who participated in Memorial Day Events around the area and making a difference in a family with loss. As you know, this was a day of remembrance and thanks for the fallen and their families. For those of you who reached out to someone during this time, I am sure it made a positive difference in their lives, as well as yours. Another big thanks goes out to Mr. Scott Berry for stepping up and volunteering for the position as the Secretary of this great organization. Please take the time and give him your gratitude for this initiative which is one of the hardest jobs of our organization

Remember, our strength is our membership and with your help we will continue to make a difference in our country, our fellow military comrades' lives, and our local community. Thanks and God Bless.

Thanks and God Bless.

## Chaplain's Column (cont.)

Continued from page 5

My deacon in Las Vegas used to call these "high class problems." She would contrast these with what she considered genuine problems – poverty, hunger, cancer or other serious illness, homelessness, mental illness, etc. I have used this distinction to chastise myself on many an occasion, realizing that whatever I'm whining about would not be a problem were I homeless, profoundly mentally ill, sick or dying with a serious illness or injury without first class medical care available. Under the shadow of such a genuine problem, I would be grateful to have been warned about the broccoli, and have felt saved from a possibly serious illness, and would not have a glimmer of regret about not having what I wanted when I wanted it.

As we approach the Fourth of July, most of us will in some way celebrate our freedom. Since we are a nation at war, we will honor and remember those who have died in the cause of political freedom. Let's also pause to take inventory of how well we, as individuals, families, and communities, handle the responsibilities that come along with freedom. Not just the big freedoms like free speech, free exercise of religion, the right to bear arms, and the right to trial by a jury of peers, but also the little freedoms that come along with having choices. These choices . . . about where to live, what to eat, what to do with discretionary income, what to wear, what house of worship to attend . . . these can become "high class problems" if we let them. This Independence Day, let us resolve to exercise our freedom of choice with utmost responsibility and grace. Let us resolve to consider others and to be of service in all things, and not to permit our freedoms to create optional problems! May God bless you in your choices and your relationships this day.

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## Golf Tournament Fails to Make the Cut

NOTICE: Due to unforeseen circumstances, the NWFMOA Scholarship Inaugural Golf Tournament, scheduled for 16 July 2011 at the Shalimar Pointe Golf Club, has been indefinitely postponed. All registration fees received will be returned to the sender. For details, call Bill Van Hoesen at 850-225-2957.

# Editor's Etchings

By Scott Berry

Greetings!

Thank you to those non-board members who expressed their opinion on the new Defender—both of you! The transition went very smoothly because of stellar focus by Charles at Bayou Printing. This month you'll see another change. The use of color on the front page has been rolled back to save money but the content remains the same five-star quality as before—not that I'm biased in my opinion of course.



Scott Berry

In the past, the names of departed members have been read at Veterans Day and Memorial Day ceremonies at Beal Cemetery. For reasons beyond the scope of this article, it wasn't done last Memorial Day. In lieu of that, I've listed, to the best of my ability, the names of departed members since Veterans Day 2010.

Have a safe and memorable 4th of July.

Berry "OUT"

## DONATION FORM

Please accept this gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the NWFMOA Scholarship Fund.

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Your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

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1 yr - \$34.00, 2 yr - \$65.00, 3 yr - \$85.00

**Life Membership Dues\*\***

Age	Dues	Age	Dues
101+	Free	71-75	342.00
96 - 99	57.00	66-70	398.00
91 - 95	94.00	61-65	448.00
86 - 90	152.00	56-60	489.00
81 - 85	214.00	51-55	519.00
76 - 80	281.00	-50	549.00

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Pay one half of the above rates

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Rank                      Service                      MOAA mbr. no.                      Email address

Regular                       Reserve                       National Guard                       Active Duty                       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.**