



THE DEFENDER

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

Vol. 30 No 10

Serving All Branches of The Uniformed Services

October 2024

Lunch Meeting & Discussion

When: Thursday **October 3rd**
Time: Gathering 1130, Lunch 1200, Program to follow
Place: Fort Walton Yacht Club
180 Ferry Road, NE, FWB
Program: **Col David Skalicky,**
Commander 33 Fighter Wing.

MAKE A RESERVATION

- Reservations are Required
- Wear a name tag
- Bring proper change: \$16

Reservation deadline is Saturday at noon prior to meeting. Go to <http://nwfmoe.org> and select the link "Click here to make reservations", or email nwfreservations@gmail.com, or call Fred Westfall at 850-609-8075 to make a reservation.

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OUR OCTOBER LUNCH WILL FEATURE COL DAVID M. SKALICKY COMMANDER OF THE 33 FIGHTER WING

Colonel David M. Skalicky is the Commander, 33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. Previously, he served as the Chief, Force Application Division, Joint Staff, J8, Pentagon, Washington, D.C. In this position, he led twenty Joint Staff professionals to identify, assess, and prioritize programmed, projected, and potential Joint Force warfighting capability needs.



Colonel Skalicky entered the Air Force as a graduate of the Reserve Officer Training Corps at the University of Minnesota, while earning a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering & Mechanics. He also holds a master's degree in international relations from Webster University and a master's degree in National Security Strategy from the National War College.

Colonel Skalicky attended Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training at Sheppard AFB, Texas, and has served in a variety of positions at the squadron, group, and wing level, including the Commander of Air Combat Command's F-22 Demonstration Team, Chief of Wing Safety, Commander of the 90th Fighter Squadron and Commander of the 354th Operations Group. He has deployed multiple times to the INDOPACOM and CENTCOM AORs and served as an Operations Inspector for the Air Combat Command Inspector General.

Colonel Skalicky is a combat-experienced Command Pilot with 2,800 hours in the F-35A, F-22A, F-15C/D, T-38, and T-37.

Please make reservations to join us. **[Sign up HERE.](#)**

From the President's Pen

By Fran Hendricks

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MOAA President Visits NWFMoa

Gen Brian Kelly, President and CEO, MOAA National and his wife Garrety visited NWFMoa as part of the Chapter's 65th Anniversary celebration. Also joining Gen Kelly was COL Steve Bond, President, Florida MOAA Council and Chapters.

Their visit started out early with breakfast with fellow NWFMoa Member "Westy" Westenbarger and the Crispy Warriors. This group of warriors (of which many are NWFMoa Members) meets every Thursday morning at Crackings for breakfast. Gen Kelly addressed the group and enjoyed the comradery of this special group.

From there, we proceeded to Bob Hope Village for the Victory Village briefing and tour of the facility. Chief Brooke McLean, President and CEO, Air Force Enlisted Village, provided the briefing and the tour. Chief McLean mentioned the special relationship Bob Hope Village has with NWFMoa and its annual Valentines for Veterans celebration.

Gen Kelly attended our monthly luncheon, engaged our members during the social period, and addressed the Chapter as our guest speaker. He addressed matters MOAA is working, welcomed our questions, and provided answers to our questions.

Next up was a town hall at the Veteran Foreign Wars Post 7674 where he again spoke on items of interest of those gathered. He also welcomed their questions and provided answers.

The Community Reception was held that evening at the Air Force Armament Museum. Attendees included Brig Gen Mark Massaro, 96 TW/CC, and his wife Becky, numerous Mayors, County Commissioners, Active Duty personnel, AFJROTC Cadets, representatives from likeminded Veteran Organizations, and members of NWFMoa. Jeff Watson was the MC and kept everything on track. The Eglin Honor Guard presented the colors. One highlight of the event was Al Stearns and the Emerald Coast Chorus performing a musical tribute. I gave a summary of the impact the Chapter has had on the community this past year. During Gen Kelly's keynote address he congratulated NWFMoa on its 65th Anniversary of serving the community. We concluded the evening with Dave Parisot and Fred Westfall, recent National MOAA President Leadership Award recipients, cutting the ceremonial cake. Although not present, George Colton was also acknowledged as a recent National MOAA President Leadership Award recipient.

The next morning, Gen Kelly addressed members of the Fort Walton Beach Chamber at their First Friday Coffee. He then toured the Women's Veteran Memorial Park before heading to the airport for his trip home.

Thank you to all who made this visit something the General and his wife won't soon forget, especially Fred Westfall who captured the entire visit in photos. Congratulations NWFMoa on 65 years of serving the community and making a difference in the lives of others.

H2S (Here to Serve),

Fran Hendricks, Brig Gen, USAF Retired
President, NWFMoa

REMINDER

Bring your Booze to the October and November NWFMOA Luncheons



If you would like to contribute to the booze raffle for the Military Ball on December 12, bring what you have to the membership meetings on 3 October and 7 November. If you haven't purchased your tickets to the Ball, click [HERE](#) to fill out the ticket request.

Read more about the Military Ball later in this issue.

To sign up for the ball, click here



TECH TIP

Tech tip: Use your spacebar as a scroll wheel: It's easy. Press your **spacebar** to scroll down a page and **Shift + spacebar** to scroll up. You can even use that trick to scroll through this email.



SPECIAL THANK YOU



We received several proclamations and letters congratulating NWFMOA on its 65th Anniversary. They came from:

1. Governor DeSantis
2. Senator Scott
3. Representative Maney
4. Okaloosa County Commissioners
5. Mayor Rynearson, Fort Walton Beach
6. Mayor Stein, Mary Esther
7. Mayor Whitten, Crestview

The following organizations and individuals aided or made donations to help defray the cost of the Community Reception:

1. Eglin Federal Credit Union
2. Destin Area Chamber of Commerce
3. Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce
4. Emerald Coast Military Affairs Council
5. Air Force Armament Museum Foundation
6. Tricia Brunson
7. Dave Whalen
8. Sam's
9. NWFMOA

We will finish this year out as we have the previous 64 years...laser focused on serving those who are serving or have served. For the fifth consecutive year we will purchase Commissary Gift Cards for Junior Enlisted Families at Thanksgiving. In December, we will participate in Wreaths Across America and lay the wreaths we purchased on the graves of fallen Veterans.

Never Stop Serving

**We cordially invite you to join us
in celebrating our 65th year of
Service to our Community
1959 - 2024**



How can you join our celebration?
If you donate you will to be placed on the marquee (above)
and listed in the *Defender* for up to 12 months
 Individuals...minimum \$25
 Businesses...minimum \$50

Each donor will also receive a commemorative, numbered RMO!



**Click here to donate to our
65th Anniversary Celebration**

Below is an example of the banner. Click it to see it on our webpage.



Donors so far include:

- Air Force Armament Museum
- 919 SOW First Sergeants Council
- The Mistys
- Zaxby's Chicken
- Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce
- L J Schooners' Restaurant and Oyster Bar
- Doc's Oyster Bar & Grill
- Merrill – Tess Bass & Associates
- Faith Independent Baptist Church
- Hurlburt First Sergeants Council
- Cut-Off Barber Shop
- Advanced Fire Protection Services, Inc
- Melinda Wickham
- Ron "Westy" Westenbarger
- Marcus D. Chambers
- Lt Col Bert Everhart
- Marian K. McBryde
- Major General Don Litke
- Dr. (Col) Teresa Skojac
- Doug and Judy Stauffer
- Rod and Sue Gerdes
- David Jeffcoat
- David Hadzima
- Pat and Mary Kluever
- Bob Allen
- Jeff and Judy Watson
- Al and Carol Stearns
- Howard and Irene Fisher
- Karl and Charlotte Eschmann
- Steve Bond
- John Murphy
- Ron and Nancy Birchall
- Scott Berry
- RADM Richard Buchanan
- Paul Chlebo
- Dick and Dulce Solt
- Chris Beam
- Bob and Karen Gramm
- Kevin Kirby and Victoria Hansen
- Chris and Richard Hallion
- Fred Westfall
- Dave Parisot
- Fran Hendricks
- Hopefully, many more

Click on the link above to donate and get your name on the banner.

Test Your Knowledge

Take the quiz for a chance to win a free lunch at our next meeting.

This month the quiz is about some important military history. When you click on the link below, you will see a single question and a place to give your answer and name. If your answer is correct, you will be entered into the drawing at the monthly meeting (you have to be present to win your free meal at the next meeting). You may answer the question multiple times but only the correct answer will count for the drawing (so answering the question correctly 5 times will not give you more chances to win). We don't tell anyone that they got it right or wrong until we disclose the winner at the meeting. At the meeting, we state the answer and how many got it right. Then we pull the one winning entry from the hat.

Last month we had no meeting so we will have two drawings at the August meeting.

Click the link below to get to the quiz. The winner will be announced at the next meeting. The person must be present to win.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Last Month's Trivia Quiz...A Real Stumper

No one correctly got the exact correct answer to the September Trivia Quiz. So, from Bob Allen, here is the story.

I was recalled to active duty from the 913th Tactical Airlift Group at the Willow Grove (Pa.) Air Reserve Facility in September, 1968 where I served as Chief, Standardization and Evaluation in the C-119G.

After TDY trips to Hurlburt for a counterinsurgency course and then to Fairchild for survival school, I reported to Lockbourne AFB, Ohio for fixed wing gunship training. On January 10, 1969, I departed for a year in Vietnam.

When my tour in SEA was over, I returned to Lockbourne, this time as an instructor. It was also when and where I met the young lady who eventually would become my bride. In April, 1971, on a Sunday afternoon, Gigi and I were out, driving about when we saw an open house that was on the market. We found this place to our satisfaction and liked it so much that I placed a \$500.00 down payment to insure that it wouldn't get away.

The next morning, I walked into Operations and very cordially asked our Operations Officer "What's the good word?" Much to my surprise, he replied "Don't buy real estate." When asked "why," he told me that we were moving to Hurlburt! Fortunately, I was able to get my money back from the realtor.

Realizing that we had to move rapidly if I was moving in a couple months, we planned our wedding, got a realtor to manage her house, and get her two kids attuned to the idea that they would soon be moving from the area and their friends.

On June 5, 1971, Gigi and I were married, and left for our honeymoon in Bermuda. Eight days later, on June 13th, we returned to Ohio, and on June 14th, I walked in to our Operations and saw our Ops Officer. After a friendly chat about our wedding, I asked how things were going about our move. To this inquiry I was told, "Everything is going along well, and in fact, you're taking a bird down there tomorrow."

This is how I remember precisely when the fixed wing gunships left Lockbourne, later renamed Rickenbacker, and found a few home at Hurlburt. Yes, there were AC-119G, AC-119K and AC-130A aircraft involved. (Shortly after getting down here we sent the last AC-119G birds to the war; in October, 1972, I served as the mission commander to move the last six AC-119K aircraft across the pond.)

So, if anybody disputes the correctness used in awarding a free meal, you have my reasoning.

Post script: According to Bob, the closest answer was from Bob Gramm as he at least got the AC-130A. All the dates were far, far away, and nobody identified the AC-119K as also coming in at the same time. So, Bob Gramm was deemed to have the closest answer so will receive a free lunch in October.

Time To Pay Your Dues

If you haven't done so already, it is way past time to pay your 2024 dues. Please make a check for the amount payable for the next year or beyond.

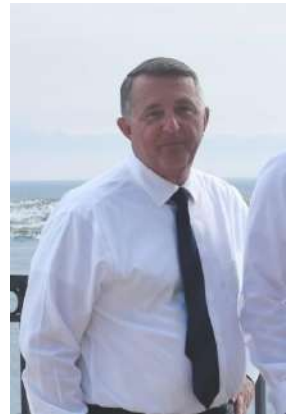
- Not sure if you owe dues? Click [HERE](#). If your MOAA ID is listed, you owe dues.
- Don't know your MOAA ID? Click [HERE](#).
- If you owe dues, click [HERE](#) to fill form and send it along with your check to
Treasurer, PO Box 1213, Shalimar, FL 32579.
- You can also now pay your dues by **credit card**. To do that, click [HERE](#).

OUR MISSION

The mission of NWFMOA is to benefit the members of the uniformed services, their families and survivors and to advocate a strong national defense, while providing needed support to the community and its members.

Chaplain's Corner

By: Chaplain Ray Alexander



A Lesson in Strength and Experience

It was a holiday weekend, and the waters were busy. Finding a place to anchor the boat was difficult. The tide was going out, and I didn't want to risk anchoring in shallow water for fear of being grounded. We eventually dropped anchor in about 4-5 feet of water. As we began settling in, I noticed two young kids drifting farther away from their boat. One was wearing a life jacket, but the older brother wasn't.

I watched for a moment, yelling at them to come closer, but they were caught in the current and drifting further away. I wanted to throw the life ring, but it wasn't quite close enough. Someone from our boat decided to jump in and help, but they did so without wearing a life jacket, complicating the situation. Pulling two people back against a current without support would be hard for even the strongest swimmer. Now, three people were in the water.

A person from the kids' boat jumped in to help, but they quickly turned back, realizing the current was too swift. Despite their best intentions, they, too, had forgotten to wear a life jacket.

The situation worsened as no one heeded my warnings to stay out of the water without a life vest. Two more people had jumped in, now five were in the water, all struggling against the current, and only one had a life jacket.

At that point, I knew I had to act. I jumped into the water, letting the current take me straight to them. I handed the life ring to the first two and gave a life jacket to the younger boy and his brother. I began swimming back to the boat, but one person was still without a life jacket.

Swimming against the current at my age, 65, was exhausting. I wanted to stop, even for a second, but I knew that would mean giving in to the current. So I pushed on, forcing each stroke to be deeper and more consistent. The life jacket, though restricting, became my lifeline—it allowed me to do what was necessary to save myself and others.

Eventually, I reached the boat, and thankfully, another boat had arrived to pick up the two brothers, while a second boat rescued the other two. Finally, the last person was safe.

The effort drained me. Climbing back into my boat took every ounce of strength I had left. The day's heat and exertion wore on me for hours afterward, but I was thankful for those who stayed on the boat and were there to assist me.

The lesson from today's events is clear. Though our physical strength may fade with age, our years of experience and service still make a difference in the lives of others, every single day.

Veterans, I salute you!

Officers Call

Our next officers call will be on October 31 starting at 1700,
[Doc's Oyster Bar, 303 Glen Ave, Valparaiso, FL](#)
(behind the Compass Rose).



PUBLIC RECORD

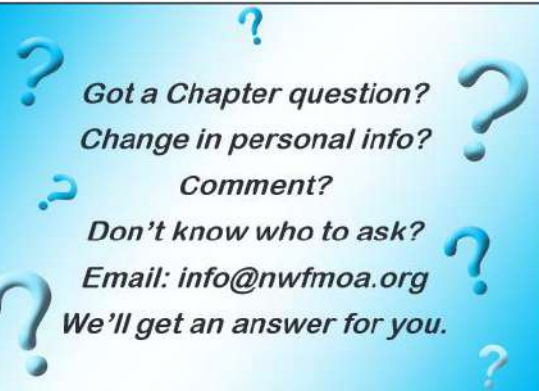
In Memoriam

Richard Schoditch, CDR, USNR (RET), 8/30/2024

New Members

Kathy Vandeburg, Col, USAF (RET)

Donna Schoditsch, SSM



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at every stage.**

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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.

Save the date

Annual MOAA Military Ball Reminder, 12 December 2024

Our annual Military Ball will resume this year again and is scheduled to be on Thursday, 12 December 2024 at the FWB Yacht Club. The dinner menu will be similar to the last Ball in December 2023. This year we will again be charging our members and guests \$60 per person. The ticket order form will be in the digital Defender starting in September. Just a reminder: the dress for the men at the Ball is Mess Dress (if it still fits), formal, tuxedo or business suit. For the ladies it is Gown or Cocktail Dress.

The Band at our Ball will be the Brighton Street Band. They are led by Doug Chambers and are composed of three Band Members. They have agreed to perform again for four hours from the start of the social hour, through dinner, and after dinner dancing. They play all types of music, not real loud, some Christmas music, and also patriotic songs. A good fit for our crowd. So if anyone has any specific questions about the Ball, please email either Karl Eschmann, phanfix@cox.net or Dick Solt at richdulce@aol.com.

Just to refresh everyone's memory on the Ball Night's program, it will look like this:

- 1800: Social Begins; Pay as you go Bar; Soft Band music (Raffle begins)
- 1845: Call to Dinner
- 1900: Opening Remarks by the MC, Invocation, presentation of colors, Pledge of Allegiance, President's Remarks and toasts
- 1920: Dinner is served (soft music by the band)
- 2000: Break
- 2015: Dancing to Brighton Street Band music
- 2100: Raffle winning tickets announced
- 2115-2200: More dancing to music

We hope to see as many of you all as possible this year, as well as active military and other guests at our event! We need your attendance and support for the Ball to have a good social setting for our members to start the Christmas Season! Please send in your checks and ticket forms by the end of November so we can turn in the estimated number of meals for the yacht club staff.

We will be soliciting for items and gifts from businesses and individuals for the Raffle fundraiser event during the Ball. Starting in October, please bring any items of donations into the luncheon and we will collect them. We do need to fill our adult beverage crates so we have several to auction!

To sign up for the ball, click the ticket



Mascot of the Month

This is May, proud owner of President Fran Hendricks, reporting for duty as the Mascot of the Month.



NWFMOA Shirt Purchase Options

**Order your NWFMOA
POLO Shirt today.**



Click this box for an order form.



Wear your shirt proudly.

Here is another option...

Looking for a NWFMOA Chapter shirt. In addition to ordering a shirt, you can also buy your own polo shirt (short or long sleeve) and take it to [American Athletic Uniforms, Inc](#) ([90 Eastview Ave, Valparaiso, FL](#)) to have it embroidered with our patch and your name. Cost of embroidery (Patch + Name) is \$15.



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.



Never Stop Serving

**If You Belong to the NWFMOA, You ARE
Part Of The Solution**

[Click here to join the NWFMOA](#)



The Council Communiqué

Florida Council of Chapters
Military Officers Association of America

[Click to read the FCoC Communiqué](#)

Member Spotlight

Robert “Bob” Allen, Lt Col, USAF (Ret.)

As a nineteen year old, I was working as a draftsman for the Naval Gun Factory in Washington, and I received notice to report for a preinduction physical examination. Now, you must understand that this was 1953 and there was this thing called the "draft." I took my physical and subsequently received the Selective Service classification of 1A - physically qualified for the draft!

A short time thereafter, a fellow employee was absent from work for a week, and when he came back he was bouncing off the wall, exclaiming that he was going to be a jet pilot! I had no idea of what he was talking until he told me that he had qualified for the Aviation Cadet program, something of which I knew nothing

Since this still while the Korean War was going on, the Air Force had lowered the requirements for pilot training to high school graduates who could pass the preselection testing. On a \$5 bet I told him that if he could pass the test, so could i!

Initially, I had to take a simple written test and a physical exam at Bolling Field, and when I had passed everything I was handed a TR and told the train for upper New York - I forget the name of the facility - left Sunday morning. This was mid-December.

Upon arrival up in the frozen part of the Empire State, I was given a bed in a WWII barracks and told to be ready the next morning to go to the base hospital for an extensive physical. The next day there were several busses awaiting all the pilot training candidates - 75 of us as I later learned.

The physicals were extensive, and anybody having a questionable condition had to go back the next day to see a specialist. With this accomplished, we - 37 of us! -sat down to eight hours of written exams, and on Thursday morning we filed in to take a psycho-motor (coordination) test. That afternoon, were gathered in a classroom, some high school grads like myself, and a majority who had several years of college. Finally, a sergeant walked in, called out my name and those of two others, and told us to step out into the hall to talk to "the major." As we did so, we received a thundering barrage of catcalls - "Ha, ha, we made it and you didn't!"

In the hallway the major asked, Who is Allen? When I responded, he said that I had qualified for pilot or navigator training. One of the others qualified for pilot training and the other for navigator. When asked about the others, he said that they didn't make it! In other words, of the 75 who started the process on Monday morning, only 4% qualified!

After we were congratulated, he asked if we had questions, and I responded one challenge, and that was my 1A classification. Instantly he took me into his office, took out a piece of paper, signed it, and told me to take it to my draft board - I was now Air Force property and exempt from the draft!



Now, that's how a teenager avoided sleeping in a foxhole and eating K-rations! If you are still interested, I will tell how I served four years, got out for a little more than four years, served another year, got out for five years, and then returned to active duty for fourteen years - meaning at I had a total of 28 years of association with the USAF to get 22 years for retirement.

Entry into the Aviation Cadet program was both eye-opening and shocking, for it had all the practices of old West Point class standing and harassment! Three months at Lackland featured many classmates either being thrown out or via SIE (self induced elimination).

Once away from Lackland, much of the petty stuff in favor of learning how to fly. Primary training was at Bainbridge AB, Georgia where we flew the PA-18 (Super Cub) and the T-6 (the WWII version). After six months and 140 flying hours, it was off to basic flying training at Bryan AFB, Texas and another 120 flying hours in the T-28 and T-33. The ironic thing about my flying was that upon graduation from single jet engine flying, I never flew another single engine or pure jet in my career!

After a short multi-engine training period at Randolph AFB, I was assigned to KC-97, aerial refuelers at Lake Charles AFB, Louisiana, where I finished out my first active duty tour.

Once off active duty, I enrolled at Ursinus College, and because the GI Bill only met about 40% of my costs, I joined the 512th Tactical Control Wing at NAS Willow Grove to help cover my expenses. Thus, it was in this assignment that I became qualified in the C-119G and that I became more proficient in the various missions assigned. The highlight came in the summer of 1960 when I was among several other crews that delivered several aircraft to India and where I had the opportunity to visit the Taj Mahal.

Four months after graduation, 14,000 Air Force Reservists were activated for the Cuban crisis, and I stay on active duty for a year, performing any and all airborne tasks assigned to my group.

I again left active duty in 1963 and was employed in the civil sector, meaning that my flying was relegated to weekends and an occasional weeklong trip whenever I was between jobs. In 1966 I was approached to assume a fulltime civil service position with the unit as Chief, Standardization and Evaluation, a position that I help until my third entry to active duty.

In January, 1973, after we had shipped our aircraft to the North Vietnamese, to August, 1982, I got involved in Airfield Management, otherwise known as Base Operations, and Operations and Training, otherwise known as OT - "other things."

I performed these duties at Wiesbaden, Germany 1973 - January, 1976, at my third time at Rickenbacker (the new name for Lockbourne), January, 1976 – October 1980, and at Grissom, Indiana October, 1980 - retirement, 1982.

As an aside, I sometimes marvel at the current retirement ceremonies that take place here at the museum, especially when I remember mine. I was retired on a Friday afternoon at a retreat ceremony. Just as the National Anthem was to be played and the flag lowered, the wing commander shouted, "Wait a minute, we have to retire this guy!" With that, my retirement order was read and then he said, "Okay, you're now retired." Then came, "Take down the flag!"

NWFMOA Celebrates Its 65th Anniversary

We were honored to have Lt Gen Brian Kelly, President and CEO of MOAA, his wife, and COL Steve Bond, President of the Florida Council of Chapters, join us in the many activities on our September 5 celebration.

The activities started with an early morning visit with the Crispy Warriors, a meeting at the Bob Hope Victory Village, followed by lunch at the Fort Walton Yacht Club, a Town Hall meeting at VFW Post 7674 in the afternoon and the culmination event at the Air Force Armament Museum in the evening.

Below are just a few of the pictures from the events. [To view all the pictures, click HERE.](#)







Picture of Paul Singleton and Gen Kelly from the Fort Walton Beach Chamber Of Commerce First Friday Coffee.



President Fran Hendricks presents the NWFMOA 65th Anniversary Commemorative Coin to the Hurlburt First Sergeants Council.

Congratulations from Senator Rick Scott

RICK SCOTT
FLORIDA

ARMED SERVICES
HOMELAND SECURITY
BUDGET
SPECIAL COMMITTEE
ON AGING

United States Senate

September 5, 2024

Northwest Florida Military Officers Association

Dear Fellow Floridians:

It is my honor to congratulate the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association on their 65th anniversary of service to the community. As a United States Senator, it is my honor to thank you for your service and commitment to Floridians and I will continue to fight for you in Washington.

As a Navy veteran myself and the son of a World War II veteran, I know firsthand the sacrifices our veterans, military members and their families make to defend our freedom. Veterans of our Armed Forces truly represent the best of what it means to be an American and a Floridian. None of the opportunities and freedoms we have as Americans would be possible without the dedicated service of our brave heroes.

Fighting for our heroes continues to be my top priority as a U.S. Senator and a member of the Armed Services Committee. I'll keep working every day to support Florida's veterans, active duty military, and their families so that they are able to succeed and pursue their dreams in Florida.

Again, thank you for your service to our nation and your community. I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,



Rick Scott
United States Senator

Congratulations from Governor Ron DeSantis



RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

September 5, 2024

Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to send greetings and congratulations as you commemorate the 65th anniversary of the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association.

Florida is proud to be home to more than 1.4 million veterans, the third largest veteran population in the nation, and nearly 80,000 active-duty service members. The patriotism of those who served continues to inspire generations.

I appreciate your efforts in supporting the Northwest Florida military families and community. All the best in your event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron DeSantis".

Ron DeSantis
Governor

THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399 • (850) 717-9249



Northwest Florida Military Officers Association

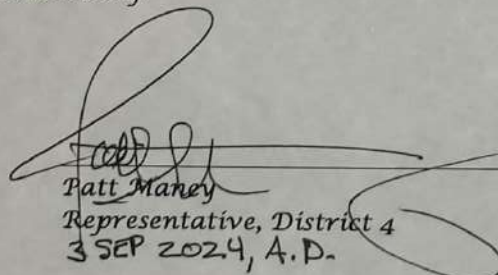
WHEREAS, established in 1959, the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association (NWFMOA) is celebrating 65 years of serving its community, and

WHEREAS, the NWFMOA is the local Shalimar chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and its sole purpose is to support and serve those who have served, are presently serving, or who have shown an interest in serving in the military, and

WHEREAS, in addition to community outreach programs, NWFMOA operates a scholarship fund for graduating JROTC high school seniors and college ROTC juniors and seniors who are on track to be commissioned officers, and

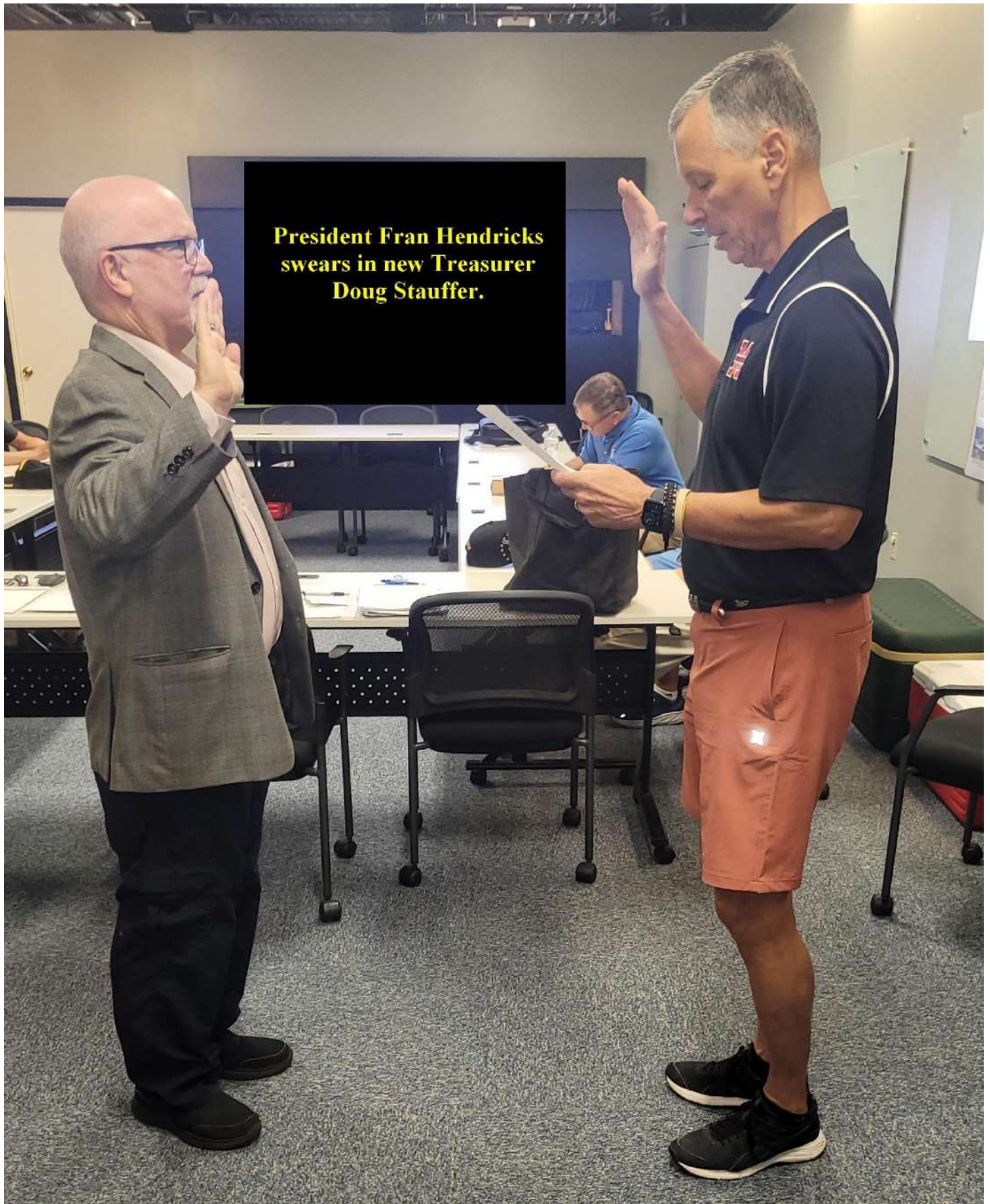
WHEREAS, with a motto of "Never Stop Serving," the NWFMOA has honored that motto by sponsoring many community outreach programs over the years including Valentines for Veterans, Veteran Stand Down, Military Family Appreciation Day, Wreaths Across America, and purchase of commissary gift cards for distribution to E4 and below enlisted families at Thanksgiving, and

BE IT RESPECTFULLY PROCLAIMED that the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association is honored for their significant and longtime contributions to the local community.


Patt Maney
Representative, District 4
3 SEP 2024, A.D.



Swearing in of the new NWFMOA Treasurer, Doug Stauffer





MOAA Webinar:

Understanding Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

[LEARN MORE](#)

Scholarship Fund

by Dave Parisot



September has been a slow month for scholarship activities. The primary activities for Treasurer George Colton and I have been paying out some of our twelve scholarships awarded in May 2024. So far we have received college and ROTC enrollment documentation for five of them and have sent scholarship checks to their respective colleges to be credited to each student's account.

The board of directors of the Scholarship Fund will meet in the last week of September to set the scholarship amounts and quantities for both JROTC and ROTC scholarships to be awarded in May 2025. I will post that information in the November Defender next month.

Below is the complete list of our **Endowed Scholarships**, our **Gold Century Club** members (\$500 cumulative minimum donation) and our **BG Frank Glunn Century Club** members (\$100 minimum donation) for the most previous 12 months, along with our **Business Donors**. Your support is greatly appreciated. All of these donations are used to fund our scholarships. [Note: (D) means deceased and (R) means Renewal of membership.]

Endowed Scholarships: Lt Col Jim and Mrs Una Heavener Memorial Scholarship (D) (via their estate, effective 2018); **Dave Parisot** in memory of his wife, **Chong Cha (Kim) Parisot** (effective 2017); **Dr (Lt Col, USAF, Ret.) Howard and Mrs. Irene Fisher Scholarship** (effective 2022); **Dr. (Lt. Col., USAF, Ret.) Fred and Mrs. Jan Westfall Scholarship** (effective 2023); and, **Col. (USAF, Ret.) Karl and Mrs. Charlotte Eschmann Scholarship** (effective 2024).

Gold Century Club: **Bill Ryan** (Feb 2016); **Ruth Cullen, (D)** (Oct 2016); **Dave Parisot** (Feb 2017); **Janet Taylor** (Mar 2017); **Chris Beam** (Mar 2017); **Bob Garcia** (D) (July 2017); **Rod Gerdes** (Nov 2017); **Larry Bush** (Nov 2017); **Dr. Howard & Irene Fisher** (Nov 2017); **Eileen Arpke** (D) (Feb 2018); **Fred & Jan Westfall** (Apr 2018); **Clyde Locke** (D) (Apr 2018); WWII, Korea, and Vietnam Veteran **Sam Lombardo** (D) (July 2018); **Dennis Phillips** (Aug 2018); **Karl & Charlotte Eschmann** (Oct 2018); **Carol Baker** (Jan 2019); **Ann Adelsperger** (Feb 2019); **Don Litke** (Aug 2019); **Fred Boyer** (D) (Aug 2019). **Dr. Keith & Elizabeth Kulow** (Nov 2019); **Al Bills** (Nov. 2019); **Kay Dent** (Nov. 2019); **Dr. Roger Riggensbach** (Dec 2019); **Robert “Pete” Peterzen** (Dec 2019); **Nick Marotta** (Oct 2020); **Kathy & Jesse Bush** (Dec 2020); **Patt & Caroline Maney** (Dec 2020); **Kevin Kirby** (Apr 2021); **Scott & Janet Berry** (May 2021); **Douglas Hardin** (D) (Sept 2021); **Patrick & Mosla Boab** (Dec. 2021); **Bob Allen** (Feb 2022); **Bobbi Hanson Garcia** (Mar 2022); **Joy Houck** (Mar 2022); **George Colton** (May 2022); **Bob Secrest** (May 2022); **Brig. Gen Fran & Mrs Connie Hendricks** (Oct 2022); **Les Matheson** (Feb 2023); **Dan Brown** (April 2023); **Tess Bass** (August 2023); **Bob Gramm** (Dec 2023); and **Larry Tashlik** (Dec 2023) [Note: 42 total members]

BG Frank Glunn Century Club (past 12 months) (R=Renewal): August 2023: **Dan Brown** (R); **Christine Hallion**; **Kevin Kirby** (R); **Dick Solt** (R); **Dave Parisot** (R) (In memory of Col. ‘Skip’ Harrington and Col. Bill Byerley); **Tess Bass** (R); October 2023: **George Colton** (R); November 2023: **Pat Johnson**; **Pete Peterzen** (R); **Dave Parisot** (R) (In memory of Chong Parisot); **Keith & Elizabeth Kulow** (R); **Tess Bass** (R); December 2023: **Les Matheson** (R); **Jeff Watson** (R) (In memory of Maj. John Besten, USAF, Ret.); **Karl and Charlotte Eschmann** (R); **Bob Gramm** (R); **Brig. Gen. Fran & Connie Hendricks** (R); **Larry Tashlik** (R); **Kay Dent** (In memory of Troy Dent and Larry Kettter); and, **Janet Ryan Taylor** (R) (In honor of Major Bill Ryan); February 2024: **Rod Gerdes** (R); March 2024: **Don Litke** (R); **Kevin Kirby** (R); April 2024: **Fred Westfall** (R); **Dennis Phillips** (R); and **Dr. Keith Kulow** (R); May 2024: **Bob Secrest** (R); **Al Bills** (R); **Bob Cluskey**; and **Dave Parisot** (R) (In memory of Phil Krajeck); August 2024: **Bob Cluskey** (R); **Scott & Janet Berry** (R); **Chuck Merkel** (R); and **Dave Parisot** (R) (In memory of Eileen Arpke).

2023/2024 Business Platinum Donors: (\$1,000+): Dec. 2023: **Bass, Byrd & Associates at Merrill Lynch of FWB** (R); March 2024: **Florida Power & Light**



2024 Business Gold Donors (\$500 - \$749): April 2024: **Eglin Federal Credit Union** (R); **GSS Gear FWB, LLC**; May 2024: **Step One Automotive Group** (R)

2024 Business Silver Donors (\$250 - \$499): April 2024: Lisa Jo Spencer, PA (R).

2024 Business Bronze Donors (\$100 - \$249): **Eye M.D. of Niceville, LLC.**

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Legislative Corner



The Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Health Care and Improvements Act

For the *legislative minute* at our September monthly lunch meeting, I highlighted the provisions of the Elizabeth Dole Veterans Health Care Act. As fate would have it, Gen Kelly, National MOAA President (our guest speaker), shared with us that he had met with Senator Dole the day before he came to visit us. Specific provisions of this proposed bill include:

- Allow VA to carry out a pilot program to provide assisted living services to eligible Veterans.
- Improve VA home- and community-based services for Veterans, as well as support to family caregivers.
- Modify the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers to improve transparency and access to services for caregivers of Veterans, and aid in navigating Veteran Health Administration health-care program and services.
- Improve health care services, including dental care for Veterans with heart disease.
- Reverse penalties faced by surviving military spouses who remarry prior to age 55.

To engage our congressional leaders on this and other legislative matters that directly impact us, please go to the NWFMOA website and click on the blinking “TAKE ACTION” button towards the bottom of the page. This will take you to the MOAA Legislative Action Center and the list of legislative matters MOAA is pursuing. I strongly encourage you to have your voice heard on these important matters

H2S,

Fran Hendricks, Brig Gen, USAF Retired

President, NWFMOA

Surviving Spouse Corner

Chaplains Ray Alexander and Tom Azar have created a number of excellent resources for Surviving Spouses and it is on our website. Be sure to check it out by clicking on the link below. Or visit our [website](#) and click on the Member area.

Click here for Surviving Spouse Information



The Council Communiqué

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****The spouse of a deceased life member is automatically an auxiliary life member**

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