

NORTHWEST FLORIDA MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION  
LUNCH MEETING  
8/5/2021

**LUNCH MEETING**

The meeting was called to order by President Mike Griffith at the Fort Walton Yacht Club at 1200. Father Stephen Voyt gave the invocation. Mike then led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then introduced our two newest members, Chris Caravello and Tom Gainer. Pointing out that some of our current Olympians, like others in the past, have protested the playing of the national anthem, Mike gave a very informative monolog about the national anthem and pointed out the reasons some people may be offended by it, specifically the third and fourth verses. He concluded by saying that regardless of what some hear in the lyrics, to him and many others, the national anthem portrays our country's commitment to freedom...to do as we please without government interference. Following lunch, Mike introduced our guest speaker, our own member and Florida State Representative Patt Maney. Rep Maney started by explaining the problems faced by freshman in the legislature and concluded with the major bills he introduced for the state and Okaloosa County. Those included the "Grandparents" bill which encourages highly qualified out of state students to Florida, and the "Purple Heart" bill which is designed to get schools to provide help to students of military families. He was also instrumental in bringing a recurring \$600,000 to the Northwest Florida State College to help military students.

Mike called upon the membership to volunteer for a board or officer position for next year's slate of officers. He also announced that he had just learned that Lt Col Jim Tucker's wife had passed away earlier in the day.

Dave Parisot presented Patt Maney his Gold Century Club certificate and mentioned that Patt and Don Litke had both achieved Gold Century Club status since our last meeting.

Carl Eschmann reminded the group to save the date of December 9, 2021, for our annual Military Ball.

Dick Solt announced that our next Officers Call will be at Cheers Pub in Shalimar on September 23. More information will be coming via email and online.

**OTHER TOPICS**

Dave Parisot conducted the 50/50 raffle. The winning ticket pulled by Patt Maney's legislative assistant was Chuck Merkel, who donated his winnings back to the Scholarship Fund in honor of Patt Maney. The raffle brought in \$200 so that entire amount went to the NWFMOA Scholarship Fund.

Attendance for the lunch was 67 (62 meals + 5 just attending). The meeting was adjourned at 1315.

Following the lunch meeting was a Board meeting.

**//signed//**

FRED WESTFALL, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)  
Secretary  
NWFMOA Chapter FL 19

Distribution: Email to board members and non-board members in attendance.