



# MECMOAA CHAPTER NEWS



2023 has been a fantastic year for the Mountain Empire Chapter! Our membership steadily grew, as did our relationships with local ROTC and JROTC units. We're doing more of what matters to our members, and we formally share relevant information through this semiannual newsletter (June and December). Still, the most important communication happens among members and spouses during our bimonthly meetings over brunch. We hope you'll be able to participate in every gathering in 2024!

Here's a look back at some of our activities in 2023:

- ◆ We welcomed eight new members and their spouses!
- ◆ We presented four Herb Ladley and MECMOAA scholarships and awards totaling \$3,000 to three ROTC and JROTC cadets
- ◆ As he does every year, Ed Champion organized Chapter members to present MOAA awards at 10 local high schools and ETSU
- ◆ We were again recognized with a 5-star Colonel Marvin J. Harris Communications Award for both our website and newsletter (2022)
- ◆ Dan Bishop, Chris Carrier, Glenn Stroup, and Woody Johnson volunteered as Salvation Army bell-ringers in support of local missions including our veterans
- ◆ 15 members and spouses gathered with hundreds of other Wreaths Across America volunteers to lay 13,357 wreaths at Mountain Home National Cemetery; Chapter members donated nearly 50 wreaths in partnership with the Tri-Cities Military Affairs Committee (TC-MAC); Jim and Carol DuBose were the first
- ◆ We welcomed CAPT Erin Stone, JAGC, USN (Ret.) on her last Chapter visit as the Senior Director, Council and Chapter Affairs, as well as Lt Col Pete Warner, USAF (Ret.), the incoming Tennessee Council of Chapters President
- ◆ We served on Senator Blackburn's service academy nomination boards at the local and state level for the third year in a row, building relationships across TN

A photo recap of 2023



Is there something you're involved in that we don't know about?  
We'd love to share it with all members at our upcoming January brunch!



## New Member Spotlights

### Malisa Rader, Maj, USAF (Ret.)



Malisa served 23 years in the Air Force as an enlisted member and a commissioned officer. She retired 12 years ago.

As an enlisted member, Malisa was a Communications Systems Operator, a COMSEC Accountant and an Intelligence Analyst. She achieved the rank of MSgt (E-7) before she received her commission.

Upon commissioning, Malisa's career was two-fold. She performed specific military duties/deployments, and she performed missions with law enforcement. She served as a Base Systems Commander in a Combat Communications Squadron. Malisa also served as an Intelligence Analyst Officer in Charge for both Air Force and Army personnel that were assigned to state and federal law enforcement agencies that investigated illegal narcotics. Although she worked with FBI, ATF, AHIDTA, DHS, IRS, CBP and many other “alphabet soup” agencies, she spent more time with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) where she oversaw investigative intelligence activities. She was also an instructor to military and law enforcement personnel in the areas of wiretap, internet exploitation, and air/highway interdiction.

Malisa participated in Operations Desert Shield/Storm, Enduring Freedom, and other undisclosed contingencies.

Malisa has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and a Master's degree in Military Operational Art & Science. She has two children and loves playing golf, growing flowers, and scuba diving.

*Welcome to MECMOAA, Malisa!*

## Christopher Carrier, COL, USA (Ret.)



Chris is from Cincinnati, Ohio, and moved to Johnson City in 2022. He was an active duty Army judge advocate for more than twenty years, including assignments in criminal law as a military prosecutor, trial defense attorney, trial judge, and appellate defense attorney. He also did international and operational law in Bosnia (MND-N), Iraq (2/101st AA), and Belgium (SHAPE).

From 2016 to 2020, Chris was the Capital and Complex Litigation Branch Chief at the Defense Appellate Division, working on the Army's most difficult and high profile cases. From 2013 to 2016, he was a Military Judge and presided at scores of court-martial trials, both by panel and by judge alone, in Germany, Italy, Kuwait, and the United States.

Chris has a Bachelor of Arts from The Citadel, a Juris Doctor from the University of Cincinnati, a Master of Laws (criminal law focus) from the Army Judge Advocate General's School, and a Master of Laws (comparative law and legal history focus) from George Washington University.

Chris's military awards include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, and the NATO Medal. His recent legal publications include "Passages of Arms: The English Bill of Rights and the American Second Amendment," in the Nebraska Law Review Bulletin; "Schneider v. New Jersey: Weapons in Defense of Liberty," in the Mississippi Law Journal; and "The Possibility of Special Verdicts by Court-Martial Panels," in the Montana Law Review. Chris is now "of counsel" to the military law firm of Bill Cassara (court martial.com).

*We're fortunate to have you in our ranks, Chris!*

## James Floyd Holmes

Jim was commissioned a 2d lieutenant in March of 1966. He graduated from both transportation and quartermaster basic officers training. Jim served at Fort Bragg as executive officer of the 517th Aircraft Direct Support Company where he created a property book that ranked a 98 score on an AGI weeks after creation.

Jim was next assigned to Fort Lee for more schooling and promoted to 1st lieutenant while there. He shipped to Vietnam Nam in August 1967 and spent three months running convoys from Ving Long, to and from Can Tho with aircraft parts for the 617th Transportation Aircraft Direct Support Company. Jim then moved to the 56th Transportation Aircraft Direct Support Company in Saigon. He became the motor pool officer and repaired all vehicles, except a 1955 gasoline tractor. When Jim took over the motor pool, only a single Jeep was running!

Jim was charged as the movement officer for the company and moved the company from Saigon to Bear Cat during the Tet Offensive. Afterward, he ran the rigging crew and the maintenance platoon, and finally served as the tech supply officer with 19,000 line items of aircraft parts. In three weeks, Jim directed a platoon-wide inventory of all parts and reset the NCR 500 computer with accurate inventories. Jim probably had the best tech supply in Viet Nam.

Jim and his men were proud of what they accomplished. He actually gave the Air Force all of their Caribou parts since operation of that aircraft was moved to them. He got lots of plywood in return...

Jim returned to the USA and served in the Active Reserve in Kingsport, promoting to Captain in an engineer outfit.

Jim later worked for Mason Dixon and helped create and overhead billing system. He then became Manager of Research and Development after obtaining his MBA at ETSU. Next, he went to Roadway Express as their Manager of Linehaul Planning for

nine years. He made a big career change by buying two franchise stores and successfully sold beer, wine, cigarettes, lottery and other products for 17 years.

Jim retired in 2004 and traveled in the Caribbean, Central America, the Western US and Hawaii with his lovely wife Phyllis. They had two children and two grandchildren. Phyllis died of interstitial lung disease or pulmonary fibrosis on December 10, 2022, after and incredible 57 1/2 years of marriage. Jim and Phyllis really enjoyed their lives together.

*Jim, thank you for your service in Viet Nam, and we're happy you're now a part of  
MECMOAA!*

### Steven Pecinvosky, Col, USAF (Ret.)



Steve served our nation for 22 years as a judge advocate and provided legal advice to military members and commanders across the world. He retired as an appellate judge on the Air Force Court of Military Appeals.

Steve continued his service to our nation with the US Department of Homeland Security for four years as the Senior Litigation Counsel, Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary of DHS, and Director in the Office of the DHS Chief Financial Officer providing legal advice to senior leadership in the 22 Federal agencies in DHS. He recently retired from DHS as the Chief of Staff for US Citizenship and Immigration Services, Tampa District, after 12 years providing legal advice to Federal employees in his agency and administering the oath of allegiance to new US citizens.



Steve continues to serve as the judge advocate for Johnson City American Legion and the Chairman of the advisory board for Federal Retirement Experts, providing retirement advice to federal employees.

Steve graduated from the University of Notre Dame with honors with a BA in Economics, as well as The Ohio State University College of Law with a Juris Doctorate degree. He is currently a student with ETSU studying kinesiology and music as a cellist. He is married to Sandra Pecinovsky. Sandra served the public as an RN and an acupuncture physician. She has a Master's degree in acupuncture and orientalist medicine.

*Welcome to MECMOAA, Steve & Sandra!*

What an incredible range of experience, talents and interests  
our new members bring to our Chapter!

## 2024 Membership Brunch & Meeting Schedule

We meet at Blackthorn Club in The Ridges on a bi-monthly schedule. Cost is \$25 per person at the door.

- You'll receive an email requesting RSVP approximately two weeks prior
- Begin gathering at 12:30 in the outdoor pavilion unless otherwise noted
- Meeting formally begins at 1:00 with brunch, chapter business and our speaker's presentation

2024 meetings:

**January 21**

**March 17**

**May 19**

**July 21**

**September 15**

**November 17 (Annual Business Meeting)**

Note: Nametags are funded for members and spouses through membership dues. Once you pay your first-year dues, we'll order you and your spouse a new nametag.

We'll see you at brunch on January 21!

## Legislative Update

Col Don Thompson, USAF (Ret.)



MOAA's advocacy efforts continue to be recognized! The Hill newspaper just released its Top Lobbyist list for 2023 and has recognized MOAA in the "Grassroots" category for the 17<sup>th</sup> year in a row. Here's the link to the story: [The Hill's Top Lobbyists 2023](#)

**Healthcare Issue Liaison Team (HILT)** – There is a new initiative to gather grassroots information about healthcare issues in the Defense Department and the Veterans Administration. It has been developed by the MOAA Virtual Chapter of Uniformed Services Nurse Advocates and can be reached at [MUSNAVC Healthcare Issue Liaison](#). Their goal is to identify trends or issues which may impact the overall healthcare of our Uniformed Services beneficiaries. This is not a site to get resolution of a particular issue, but to collect information on trends that may be developing. Check out their site and notify them of your issues and concerns!

**National Defense Authorization Act** – As of December 13, 2023, the NDAA is still in discussion between conservatives and liberals in the House and the Senate. One side wants to pass it without any significant changes, and the other wants to push back on some of the policy actions of the Biden administration. Details to follow, so keep an eye on the MOAA newsletter for timely updates.



**REMINDER! Legislative Action Center and Advocacy – The MOAA**

Legislative Action Center at Quorum is the easiest, most important tool we can use to advocate as a national organization. The top two issues at the Legislative Action Center are the two that we emphasized during our Advocacy in Action in Washington, DC in April. Please go to the website, sign up, and click the buttons to the right to see draft letters on each issue with prepopulated emails for Senators Blackburn and Haggerty and Representative Harshbarger. You can edit the letter if you want to make it more personal.

As organizations exempt from federal taxation under Sec. 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code, MOAA and its affiliates must take care to avoid engaging in partisan political activities. Under IRS rules, we are prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

**Treasurer's Corner****MAJ Brett Monette, USA (Ret.)**

The state of the treasury is looking great as we close out 2023! The chapter has \$13,809.30 total for use in our programs as we start out the new year. The money breaks down as follows: \$4,065.50 in Banking accounts with \$946.20 available in Checking, \$763.30 in the Herb Ladley Fund, \$2343.69 in the MECMOAA Scholarship fund. The Scholarship fund grew substantially during our last meeting request for donations!

Investment Accounts with Edward Jones total \$9,743.80 breaking down as \$6,749.41 earning in a Mutual Fund and \$3000 deposited this month in a 3 month CD to gain interest for the Herb Ladley Fund by March 2024.

Again, we thank each and every one of you that donated for the Scholarship awards. We will always accept donations throughout the year if you still wish to contribute to the Scholarship/Award program for our chapter. *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*

## Chapter Officer Nomination and Election

In the second half of 2024, we'll begin another round of election for our Chapter officers. Any member in good standing may be nominated and elected, and we want new members on the board, as the current board members can't fill their positions forever! If you have a desire to serve in any role, there's a place for you!

Use this link to see the current Board of Directors listing:

[MECMOAA Board of Directors](#)

You can read our bylaws that govern officer election here:

[Chapter Bylaws](#)

More information on nominations & elections will follow in our June 2024 newsletter.

### **Are you a MOAA National Member?**

If not, why? As John Rice says, "The magazine alone is worth the cost of membership." Just click this link to see MOAA membership options, from Basic (free) to Lifetime:

[\*\*Join MOAA\*\*](#)

We hope you enjoyed this newsletter.

Please send any comments or suggestions to [mecmoaa@gmail.com](mailto:mecmoaa@gmail.com).

***Never Stop Serving.***

Mountain Empire Chapter (MECMOAA) is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America

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