

The Coastal Tide

www.grandstrandmoaa.org

SEP/OCT 2021



Grand Strand Chapter

Military Officers Association of America

President's Letter

As Fall moves along we are beginning to see temperatures and humidity drop to a more comfortable range. Knock on wood, we are also nearing the end of the 2021 hurricane season and will move clocks to "Fall Back" and gain an hour of sleep on Sunday, November 7th. Unfortunately, that means we lose an hour of sunlight at the end of the day so it will start getting dark early again. A very good news story is that Covid cases in the state (& country) are down about 90% since the peak in September and continue to decline as more people get vaccinated and "boosted" and herd immunity takes hold. Don't forget to also get your flu shot, if you are so inclined, before the winter gets here.

Over the last couple months we ended our Fiscal Year 2021 and started Fiscal Year 2022. We also held our annual golf tournament fundraiser & began Veteran Outreach Stand Downs to help homeless and needy veterans and their families through the winter with essential supplies and services. In summary, we raised a near record \$23,000+ from our golf tournament, had more golfers than ever, and ended the fiscal year with a net gain to our operating funds of about \$5,400.

As we approach the end of the calendar year, it is time for chapter elections. My two-year term as President will end on January 11, 2022 when we swear in a new slate of officers and I hand the gavel to our new President, whoever that may be. To say the least this has been an "interesting" 2 years navigating choppy waters of a global pandemic, while continuing to maintain membership, add to our broad base of support and services to the region's veterans and families, and increase our financial strength. These three major achievements resulted in our continued receipt of the highest national MOAA awards for Leadership & Communications, extending a ten-year streak as one of the top chapters in the country. For that, I am thankful to all our Officers, Directors and members for keeping things moving forward during an extremely stressful time. Thank you all. You are true heroes and you make a real difference to many veterans, cadets and families in need.



James R. Albert, LtCol, USAF (retired)

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Newsletter: VACANT

Never Stop Serving

Mark Your Calendar

EDITORS NOTE: Any schedule changes will be announced via email and Grand Strand MOAA website and/or Facebook.

Nov 9—Chapter Dinner Meeting.
Guest speaker Paige Sawyer.
Topic: History of Armistice Day/
WWI. Social hour 5PM at Pine
Lakes CC in Myrtle Beach, SC.

**Nov 11—Veterans Day & Wreath
Laying 10AM Warbird Park**

**Nov 12—Veterans Service Fair
and Stand Down, General Reed
Recreation Center, 800 Gabreski
Ln, The Market Common, Myrtle
Beach, SC (9AM-Noon)**

**Nov 13—Stand Down at
Georgetown Presbyterian
Church, 558 Black River Road,
Georgetown, SC (9AM-Noon)**

**Nov 20—Stand Down at
Waccamaw Indian Tribal
Grounds, 591 Bluewater Road,
Aynor, SC (1-4PM)**

Nov 25—Thanksgiving Holiday

**Dec 14— Holiday Concert—Pine
Lakes CC, with Carolina Forest
High School Musical Director
and his string quartet**

Dec 25—Christmas Holiday

Jan 1—New Year's Day Holiday

**Jan 11—Chapter Dinner Meeting
location and speaker TBD.**



5-star Harris Communications Award Winner*
*6th Award



5-star Levels of Excellence Award Winner*
*10th Award

Chaplain's Corner

(Chaplain Greg Hill: 843.231.4507 or ghill54808@aol.com)

As a people, we have much to be thankful for: our God, our Nation, our houses of worship, our families, our friends and our health. I, for one, am also thankful for our Grand Strand Chapter of MOAA. In addition to monthly chapter meetings, we continue a lifetime of service to our community through a wide variety of outreach and support efforts.

We now have four Chaplains to serve our Chapter! Besides myself, Chaplains Pete Brzezinski and Lenny Kircher are both retired Army Chaplains, while Chaplain Bernie Calaway is a retired Navy Chaplain. We have formed a Chaplain Advisory Committee to share the needs of our chapter and community and have begun planning for calendar year 2022.

Enjoy your Thanksgiving, wherever that may be, and with whomever you are with. Count your many blessings for they are many.



Brookgreen Gardens, Murrells Inlet, SC



Financial Report by Tony Prince, Treasurer

We ended Fiscal Year '21 with over \$20,000 in our operating account— a gain of about \$5,400 — and over \$6,500 in our grants account. Our golf tournament, on the 20th anniversary of 9/11 at Wild Wing Golf Course in Conway, SC, netted over \$23,000. We also received almost \$12,000 in Outreach grants and donations, including a recent grant of \$2,000 from Providing Hope VA and \$1,000 from North Myrtle Beach Walmart to purchase Food Lion gift cards for needy veterans and families.

In turn, the Chapter provided donations and grants to veterans, families, cadets and support groups including: The American Red Cross, Blue Star Mothers, Friendship Place, Patriots at the Beach, Wreaths Across America, Quilts of Valor, Gordon Stone Memorial, Service Dog training, 17 Junior ROTC Units (\$5,950), 4 Junior ROTC Scholarships (\$8,000), and a CCU ROTC Col Robert Hawkins Leadership Award (\$2,000).

Lastly, your Board of Directors approved an aggressive FY22 operating budget of over \$56,000, which continues to support our membership, ROTC/JROTC cadets, disadvantaged veterans and their families, and other community and veteran support programs.

SEPTEMBER 2021 DINNER, Pine Lakes Country Club, Myrtle Beach, SC

Guest Speaker: Jerry Rovner, CAPT, USN (retired)

Topic: Memories of the Attacks of 9/11/2001

NEVER



FORGET

(Capt Jerry H. Rovner, left, and Chapter President LtCol Jim Albert, USAF (ret))

Grand Strand Chapter member and retired Navy Captain, Jerry Rovner, gave a detailed and passionate presentation of his first-hand experiences during the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001. Capt Rovner witnessed the attacks from his office in New Jersey and was called back to active duty that day to help coordinate emergency response personnel on the ground, clear debris, and direct response efforts. His first-hand account of the chaos and destruction brought about by the attacks, and subsequent organization of response teams, left the audience glued to their seats and extremely impressed with Capt Rovner's abilities to provide critical leadership to hundreds of emergency personnel with no notice and little prior planning. Thank you, Jerry, for an incredible presentation and for your exceptional service and leadership of critical assets during a time of national crisis.

October Luncheon – The Dunes Golf and Beach Club, Myrtle Beach, SC



(CCU President Michael T. Benson discusses his vision for the university)

President Mike Benson wowed our members with his impressive academic and management background and achievements. To say he is an “overachiever” is a serious understatement. Dr. Benson has multiple advanced degrees, in several disciplines, from several institutions. He has been President of numerous colleges and universities across the country, usually as the youngest person chosen for the job in the school's history. He has an incredible track record of growing his schools beyond anyone's expectations and raised more funds in his short time at several institutions than they experienced in the schools' entire history. Since taking over the reins at Coastal Carolina University, less than a year ago, the school has risen in the ranks of Division I sports and increased its student enrollment by a record percent, including the ROTC detachment, which has grown to 64 cadets. CCU is very fortunate to have a strong visionary like Michael Benson at the helm. Good luck Dr. Benson!

Veterans Stand Downs

(Col Truman Parmele, USAF (ret), Outreach Chair)

For the past 8 years, members of the Grand Strand Chapter of MOAA have partnered with the VA, Veterans Center of Myrtle Beach, AARP, Vietnam Vets of America, Rolling Thunder, Low Country Veterans Group and several other veteran and community support organizations to provide homeless & disadvantaged veterans with critical supplies, such as food and clothing, and services to help them thru the winter, and beyond. Historically, one Stand Down took place inside the Army Reserve Center on Market Common servicing about 200 veterans. However, last year, due to the pandemic, we moved Stand Down outside, took it on the road to various locations and provided Food Lion gift cards and donated groceries instead of a hot meal.



Despite these modifications, we were still able to serve about 200 needy vets and were the only MOAA Chapter to offer Stand Downs during the pandemic. In fact, we expanded our services to include job, degree and technical training at Horry-Georgetown Technical College, free to veterans and Native Americans. This year we are continuing our “mobile” Stand Down at various locations across the region including the Waccamaw Indian Tribal Grounds in Aynor, Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, Veterans Welcome Home & Resource Center in Little River and the Reed Recreation Center on Market Common. We hope to, again, reach hundreds of needy veterans as we combine our efforts with other big events such as a statewide tribal gathering in Aynor and a Veteran Expo at the Reed Recreation Center.



Other Veteran Outreach Efforts

- ◆ Service Dog Training: With our ongoing assistance, a local dog trainer, working for Freedom Fidos of Georgia, is preparing a dog to become a certified service dog for a disabled veteran in our area. The time to fully train a service dog is about two years of intense training. Grand Strand MOAA provides \$400 per year to help pay for the training and the waiting list is very long to receive a dog.
- ◆ Veteran Computer Centers: We successfully installed two centers at the Eastern Carolina Housing Organization (ECHO) in Myrtle Beach and Veteran Welcome Home & Resource Center in Little River. Veterans use these centers to prepare resumes, register for classes at HGTC and take on-line classes. A third computer center is planned for Georgetown providing the Low Country Vets Group and other Georgetown County veterans the same support. A fourth Center will be installed at the Waccamaw Indian Tribal Grounds in Aynor and is currently awaiting final electrical connections.
- ◆ Career Advancement: three students are currently enrolled in college taking advantage of free career and job training. One is seeking a business degree and started his own handyman business. Another is working through the machine tool program. And a third is in the HVAC program. Several students have completed these programs and found jobs as a result of our assistance. More will begin in 2022.

JROTC

JUNIOR ROTC UNITS BEGIN THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

(CAPT Dean Brown, USN (retired), JROTC Liaison)

All seventeen JROTC Units our chapter supports returned to class this fall looking forward to a more normal experience than they have had since the advent of COVID in the spring of 2020. And with few exceptions, school life - both academic and extracurricular - is indeed more regular, although some limitations and restrictions remain.

The Units have been able to resume in-person classes, competitive events, and off campus community service functions such as providing color guards to our monthly evening dinner meetings. [We don't ask Units to provide color guards for luncheon meetings since it would require cadets to miss class and be difficult/impractical for the instructor to cover their teaching duties.] We have JROTC Color Guards signed up for all our evening meetings this year and greatly appreciate their participation.

Thanks to the success of our September Golf Tournament, the budget for JROTC support in fiscal year 2022 was restored to award five scholarships worth \$2,000 each to worthy graduating cadets going on to college. In fiscal year 2021, we pared back our scholarships to four due to reduced income from the pandemic. In addition, the annual grant to each Unit was restored in the FY22 budget to \$500, from \$350 in FY21. This grant is used by individual units to defray a wide variety of expenses they incur which have no military service or school district funding.

For example, costs to host and attend competitive events, field trips to colleges and places of historic importance, tuition and fees for service or patriotic organization-run summer Leadership programs, summer camp expenses, etc. all must be covered by funds raised by the Unit itself. Our chapter funds help Unit instructors and cadets participate in these educational opportunities, programs and competitions as part of building cohesion, leadership, teamwork and motivation.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

We contacted the 17 JROTC high school instructors to inform them of our Chapter's scholarship program and requirements for applications. This academic year we are programmed to award five (5) \$2,000 scholarships. Chapter members are encouraged to support this worthwhile cause with their contributions by participating in the 50/50 raffle at monthly meetings, or with separate donations. An opportunity for this might be when renewing a membership. Either way, your support is greatly appreciated!

Col Hans Duerr, USA (retired), JROTC Scholarship Chair



COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY ARMY ROTC

(CPT Greg Youngman, USA (former), CCU ROTC Liaison)

The Army ROTC program at Coastal Carolina University has a record 64 Cadets. The largest senior class is expected to graduate 13 cadets this May and two more will graduate in December. Graduating cadets compete for an active duty assignment, the reserves, or an Army National Guard unit within their respective State.

In addition, this summer 14 junior cadets successfully completed Cadet Summer Training (CST) held at Ft Knox, Kentucky. While attending 6 cadets earned their Recondo Badge for receiving over 90% or higher in all events scored at CST. Cadet Reynolds also received an Outstanding performance summary and was 1 of 3 in the whole Gamecock Battalion to accomplish this outstanding recognition. Finally, 2 cadets also completed Cadet Troop Leader Training (CTLT) in regular Army units and another cadet completed Air Assault training.



Men of the Army Chorus Concert — Oct 15, Pawleys Island

Fourteen chapter members and guests had dinner at the Hanser House in Litchfield, SC on 15 Oct and then attended a delightful evening concert of music by Men of the Army Chorus at Precious Blood Catholic Church in Pawleys Island. The chorus is comprised of active duty and retired U.S. Army personnel, some of which have recently served in Afghanistan. They sang music that ran the gambit from Opera to Broadway to Country. Each song was enthusiastically received and duly appreciated. All who attended started their weekend with a smile. Please look for more chapter social events to be scheduled after the holidays.

Peggy DeVivo, Social Chairman and Surviving Spouse Liaison

GRAND STRAND MOAA ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

(CDR Jim Offutt, USN (retired), Golf Chair)



The Grand Strand Chapter held its annual Golf Tournament fundraiser on the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center, Pentagon and Pennsylvania and moved our location to Wild Wing Plantation Golf Club in Conway. As a result, we sold out the event, and then some, and were 4 foursomes “oversold”, with 157 golfers attending.

This stretched the ability of the course to handle us, but they found enough golf carts and tripled up on Par 5 holes to keep the flow going. The weather was spectacular (80s, light breeze, low humidity) and our sponsors and golfers helped raise over \$23,000, a near record for the event

We began the day with a 9/11 ceremony including an Honor Guard, guest speaker who survived the attacks and a moment of silence in memory of those who died during the attacks, and since.

Thank you, again, to Monarch Roofing, our major tournament sponsor, and all those who donated to our Junior ROTC and ROTC cadet scholarship and recognition programs (main recipients of the event).



As in prior years, golf registration fees (\$90 per golfer, \$85 for veterans) paid for a round of golf, plus breakfast, lunch, ice cream and various gifts. We also offered a cash 50/50 raffle, prize raffle, mulligans, silent auction, and hole-in-one contests.

Thank you to CDR Jim Offutt, our 2021 Golf Chairman and all on his Committee who helped find sponsors, raffle prizes, auction items, golfers, worked inside and outside for the tournament, made signage, etc., etc. Look for more information in the future about our 2022 tournament, which will, again, be held at Wild Wing in mid-September. Start practicing now!



Membership Updates

(Col Paul Williamson, USAF (retired), Membership Chair)

Members who need to renew their annual or three-year membership have been notified by email. If you are one of the 50+ members who need to renew, please do so by 1 Jan 22. As always, your dues goes to support several programs that help needy veterans and cadets. Thank you for your generosity!

A Big Welcome to our new Members:

- Fred W. Ritchie, LCDR, USN (retired) lives in Conway with his wife, Winefred.
- Charles “Bob” Skinner, Col, USAF (retired) lives in N. Myrtle Beach with his wife Ila Jean.
- C. Gene Whisnant, Col, USAF (retired) lives in Myrtle Beach with his wife Josie.



SC Council of MOAA Chapters Update

Go to moaa.org to see what MOAA is doing at the National Level

(CDR Jim Offutt, USN (retired), Legislative Liaison)

The nine MOAA Chapters that comprise the South Carolina Council of MOAA Chapters have undertaken several new legislative initiatives to promote issues of significance to veterans and their families. The top three federal legislative initiatives supported by SC MOAA are:

Parity for Tricare Young Adults: to ensure military families have the same health care protections for their young adult children as civilians covered by Obamacare or commercial plans. For example, Tricare stops covering adult children of veterans at age 23 instead of age 26 under Obamacare. After age 23, military families are required to pay a substantial monthly premium to keep their adult children covered. Tricare affordability and accessibility should be on par with other plans.

Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Reform: currently veterans must go through different processes to seek compensation for toxic exposure during their service. Each type of exposure has a different process, forms, approval rules, contacts, etc. This bill seeks to combine all exposure cases to one office and one process.

Basic Needs Allowance (BNA): this perennial legislation would provide an extra \$400 per month food allowance to junior enlisted families that live at or below 130% of the U.S. poverty line.

The annual State Council of Chapters conference will take place on Nov 5 and 6, hosted by the Aiken, SC Chapter. The focus of this year’s conference will be on Surviving Spouse benefits. Further, Grand Strand Chapter President, LtCol Jim Albert, has been nominated to serve as State Council Secretary in 2022. Good luck Jim!

Myrtle Beach Veterans Expo

Grand Strand MOAA will be a key participant along with other local Veteran Service Organizations at a Veterans Expo, to be held on 12 November 2021, 0900-1400, at the Reed Recreation Center located at the Market Commons, 800 Gabreski Lane, across from the HGTC Culinary School. Attending VSOs will provide veterans with information and assistance covering multiple critical services such as help with VA claims, housing assistance, medical and dental appointments, and more. GS MOAA will provide veterans with Stand Down supplies to include backpacks, boots/shoes, winter clothing, food, blankets, sleeping bags, toiletries and other articles. Also, we will encourage veterans to request vocational/professional training and employment assistance thru HGTC. Any GS MOAA member interested in helping provide products to needy veterans, please contact Outreach Director, Truman Parmele, via email at: okomfan44@gmail.com.

Veterans Day Wreath Laying

The Grand Strand Chapter of MOAA will hold a Veterans Day wreath laying ceremony starting at 10AM at the MOAA monument in Warbird Park, Myrtle Beach. All Chapter members and the public are welcome and encouraged to attend. Parking is always an issue at Warbird Park, so get there early. Parking across the boulevard, or on the grass near the dirt access road is optional if there are no parking spots left around the circle.



GRAND STRAND MOAA ELECTIONS

After a call for nominations in October, the following candidates have been nominated for 2022 Chapter Officers:

President	S. Anthony "Tony" Prince, CAPT, USN (retired)
1st Vice-President	Kelly Sharbel, CPT, USA (former)
2nd Vice-President	Truman Parmele, Col, USAF (retired)
Secretary	Tracey Miller, LCDR (MSC), USN (retired)
Treasurer	Sarah "Gale" Fellowes, LCDR, USN (former)

These candidates, plus any others received from the floor at the November dinner, will be submitted to our membership in November for a vote. The winning officers will be announced at our December dinner (Dec 14th at Pine Lakes—Holiday concert) and the new officers will be sworn in at the January dinner (location TBD) on Jan 11, 2022.



Grand Strand Chapter MOAA: ___ Application/Renewal ___ Change of address /contact info

Chapter Annual dues: \$20.00 for regular membership or \$50 For 3-year membership.

For NEW MEMBERS: \$20 1st Quarter; \$15, 2nd Quarter; \$10, 3rd Quarter; \$20, 4th Quarter (Good for Following Year).

You may pay by credit card on line at www.grandstrandmoaa.org

Otherwise, please make check payable to: "Grand Strand MOAA". Mail to: MOAA Grand Strand Chapter, P.O. Box 15842, Surfside Beach, SC 29587.

Last name _____ First name _____ MI _____
DOB _____ Rank _____ Service _____ Spouse's name _____
Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Home phone _____ Cell phone _____
Email address (please print clearly !!) _____

Are you a member of National MOAA? _____ If yes, please provide membership number: _____

Status: _ Retired _ Active _ Reserve _ National Guard _ State Guard _ Former Officer _ Auxiliary _ ROTC _ JROTC _ Other

My signature below verifies that the above information may be shared in a Members-Only Directory & that I am eligible for MOAA Chapter membership.}

Amount: \$ _____ Check ___ Cash ___ For year(s) _____ Signature _____

Additional amount (donation) for this year's scholarship awards: \$ _____

Current employment (optional): _____

Professional skills (optional): _____

If Auxiliary member or applicant, please indicate your spouse's full name, military service affiliation, rank, and current status: _____

Interested in a Chapter leadership/committee position? If yes, what? _____ (continue on reverse)

MOAA Mission/Purpose: To foster fraternal relations (and mutual support) among retired, active duty, and former officers of the uniformed services and their National Guard and Reserve counterparts, ROTC cadets, their families and survivors; Assist community organizations that support active duty service members, veterans and their families; to provide funds for college scholarships for area high school seniors (normally JROTC students); conduct fund-raising to support other service member and veterans' programs (e.g. Wounded Warrior visits); provide annual MOAA leadership awards to graduating cadets in all area high school approved/active JROTC programs; participate, collaboratively, in coastal community events and activities, as priorities and resources permit; maintain a proactive chapter affairs program that supports members during health and other family emergencies; promote the aims and objectives of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA); and, the aims and objectives of the SC MOAA Council of Chapters. MOAA and its affiliated Chapters and Councils are non-partisan.