



Piedmont Chapter



ARMY NAVY AIR FORCE MARINES COAST GUARD SPACE FORCE NOAA USPH

JULY 2025 Newsletter

Stay current on News of Interest to you....

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Piedmont Chapter – President's Message

HAPPY 249th BIRTHDAY AMERICA!!!

It's vacation and travel season – please travel safely.

RECENT HAPPENINGS:

- We just celebrated the Army's 250th birthday on 14 June, 2 weeks ago - **HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ARMY!!!**
- Welcome former Army Captain Alex Glass as our new Chapter Treasurer. Thank you, Alex, for serving with us on our Board.
- We welcome two new members – LTC Russell “Jerry” Davis, USA and his wife, Julie; and LT Bill Williams, USN (Fmr) and his wife, Pamela. Let's welcome them at our 17 July dinner membership meeting. I look forward to presenting Jerry with his MOAA/Army lapel pin and Bill with his MOAA/Navy lapel pin.
- We had very good attendance, a delicious luncheon, and an excellent presentation by CPT Linda Caldwell; USA (Fmr) and President, SC Council of Chapter at our May luncheon meeting -- an emotional story about her service as an Army nurse during the Vietnam War that was aired by NBC News in 1990. We also welcomed and presented lapel pins to new members COL Eddie Barnett, USA (Ret) and CPT Justin Adams, USARNG.
- Starting with this newsletter, we will have new sections for our JROTC Scholarship and Fundraising updates.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Hilda and I will host the next continental breakfast “welcome and orientation” for new members and spouses on Friday, 11 July. This helps me to get to know our newest members and spouses better and is a good time to give them current information about MOAA, our Chapter, and details about the important things we are doing in our veteran communities.
- MOAA National has contracted with an agency to provide an online system for chapter members to RSVP for membership meetings, pay dues, and other things. It's called “Cheddar Up.” We have been having difficulty for 2 months trying to get it functional. We are also pursuing contracting outside expertise to design our Chapter website to do the things we want it to do, design our social media sites and our Chapter trifolds for fundraising and new memberships. So, we are putting “Cheddar Up” on hold for now. We will update you as soon as we can on our direction and progress.
- Our 17 July membership meeting will be dinner at 5:30 at Occasions at Wedgefield located in Central, SC. Our guest speaker will be The Honorable Davey Hiott, Majority Leader, SC House of Representatives. He will give us an update on SC legislative actions that affect us veterans and veteran organizations. I look forward to seeing each of you there as we enjoy the camaraderie, a great dinner, and a very informative talk. Please feel free to bring a MOAA eligible guest.

THIS DAY, 1 JULY, IN AMERICAN MILITARY HISTORY:

- In 1850, the Naval School at Annapolis was renamed the United States Naval Academy.
- In 1863, the Battle of Gettysburg began -- the largest military conflict in North American history.
- In 1907, the world's first air force was established as part of the US Army.
- In 1966, USAF and USN aircraft carried out successful raids on fuel installations in the Hanoi-Haiphong area.

REMINDERS:

- We continue to get donations to help fund our Chapter charitable giving projects. Thank you to those of you who have done so. REMINDER -- If you haven't donated yet or want to donate again, we can still use your help. And you get satisfaction from participating in some very important opportunities to support our veteran community. For now, just make a check out to "The Piedmont Chapter" and send it to CPT Alex Glass, 106 Moorhaven Drive, Liberty, SC 29657. Annotate it in the memo section if you want it undesignated or for the nursing home, cemetery, or JROTC scholarship.

Respectfully,

Mel

Mel Case; Colonel, Infantry (Ret)
President, Piedmont Chapter, MOAA
904-304-8871
melcaseusma64@comcast.net



Piedmont Chapter – 17 July MOAA Membership Meeting

Date/Time: 1730 Thursday, 17 July 2025

Place: Occasions at Wedgefield

Address: 1551 18 Mile Rd., Central, SC 29630

Speaker: Honorable Davey Hiott

Majority Leader, SC House of Representatives

Cost: \$25 per person (includes tax and gratuity)

RSVP/Mail Checks: Alex Glass, 106 Moorhaven Dr, Liberty, SC 29657

Email: aglass1949@gmail.com / Phone: 843-801-1509

Checks payable to: Piedmont Chapter, MOAA

Dinner RSVP Date: NLT, 15 July 2025

Please pay with a CHECK NOT CASH! Thank you

Spouses and guests are encouraged to attend. If you are a prospective member and wish to attend this function, and/or join the chapter, please send in your reservation or contact the following:

Chairperson Membership: Howard Stammerjohn

Phone: 864-964-1631 / Email: piedmont.moaa@aim.com

May Meeting Speaker's Recap

CPT Linda Caldwell, (Fmr) – US Army Nurse and President, SC Council of Chapters. Her extensive resume and personal history include:

- Former Army Nurse (CPT) 1966-1969
- Served 1 tour in Vietnam
- Received a master's degree at Rutgers
- Currently President of SC Council of Chapters
- Director of Aiken County Hometown Heroes
- Over 250 Hometown Heroes Banners in Aiken County since 2019
- Daughter of American Revolution
- Past President of Aiken MOAA
- Member of VFW
- Member of American Legion
- Member of Vietnam Veterans of America
- Father was career USAF
- Grandfather served in France during WWI

CPT Caldwell began her presentation by recalling that in 1964, while in college, the Vietnam War was ramping up. She learned of a Student Nursing Program and decided to take part. She was sent from Ft Sam Houston to Walter Reed and was assigned to work with the head injury patients from Vietnam. These experiences prompted her to volunteer to go to Vietnam. Over 10,000 women served in Viet Nam and 90% of them were nurses. CPT Caldwell served in Vietnam from Thanksgiving 1967 until December 7, 1968. She called this the "most profound experience that had a huge impact on who she is today."

Thirty-five years ago, she was watching a program on NBC. At the conclusion of the show, NBC ran a trailer about the next week's program, calling it "riveting and compelling" ... the story of Jim Baczowski searching for a specific nurse who treated him in Vietnam, giving him "the will to live" after he sustained critical injuries under fire in Vietnam. The trailer named the nurse he was searching for: Linda Sharp...her maiden name. CPT Caldwell then shared a documentary film filled with scenes of her work in the hospitals in Vietnam and her interaction of finally meeting with Jim.

Piedmont Chapter – Proposed Meeting Dates, Venues, and Speakers For 2025!

18 Sep 25: 1730 Dinner – Tucker’s in Anderson
Recognition of Clemson ROTC programs

20 Nov 25: 1130 Luncheon – Tucker’s in Anderson
Speaker: Joel Collins (invited), Attorney at Law, Columbia, SC
“The Oversized Influence of SC on the Establishment of our Nation”

15 Jan 26: 1130 Luncheon – Tucker’s in Anderson
Speaker: (Tentative) MG Robin B. Stilwell, The Adjutant General of SC
“The State of the SC National Guard “

Piedmont Chapter –New Members / Membership

HERE WE GROW AGAIN!!

Our Piedmont Chapter membership stands at 90 members with the following new members:

Russell G. Davis, LTC USA (Ret), 511 Allenby Road, Anderson 29621
864-540-6108 rgd4590@icloud.com (Goes by Jerry) ...wife is Julie

William D. Williams, LT, USN (Fmr), 2003 Pompano Drive, Anderson 29625
864-261-8208 xlaxcoach@gmail.com (Goes by Bill) ...wife is Pamela

Wear that military gear and keep those chapter business cards handy. When you meet a potential member, please obtain their email address and/or phone number for me to follow up. Tell your contacts how we support **ALL** veterans, of **ALL** ranks, and **their military families.** Thank you for your membership, dedication and faith in MOAA and the Piedmont Chapter mission.

"Never Stop Serving"

Howard

Piedmont Chapter – Birthdays

JULY

Mel Case
George Dunkelberg
Bill Geer
Sam Hammond
Tom Martin
Al Mathiason
William McCoy
CaroleAnn McClimon
Paul Moran
Jim Pinson
Aundre Rookstool
Richard Wholey
Ken Williams

AUGUST

Gordon Brown
Hap Carr
Alan Erisman
Bob Fant
David King
Wayne Watson
Wade Breaud



If you don't see your name mentioned in YOUR month,
Please call Howard Stammerjohn, Membership,
864-964-1631

Treasures Report

Welcome to my first update as your Treasurer [designate]. Dan and I are hard at work with transitioning responsibilities, and we expect to be done in July.

Tom Turner's name tag was drawn for the free meal at our upcoming July meeting.

JROTC Scholarship

- The Piedmont Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) will offer a \$1,000 scholarship to a deserving JROTC graduating cadet for the Fall 2026 collegiate semester.
- The cadet applicant must demonstrate excellence in military, scholastic and community service and be seeking to serve in one of the military services through a college ROTC program.
- Guidelines and an application process for the JROTC Scholarship program have been approved by the leadership team.
- The guidelines, eligibility requirements, and a scholarship application process with timelines for submission will be sent to each JROTC unit in Anderson, Oconee and Pickens counties by September 2025.
- The scholarship applications will be due 1 February 2026, and the cadet selected for the scholarship will be announced by 1 March 2026.

V/R, John Benson

Fundraising

- The Fundraising Committee continues to collect data related to requirements and means associated with the Piedmont Chapter's intent to support targeted fundraising efforts.
- A meeting was conducted with the Semper Fi Barn non-profit leadership to identify proven best practices that may be utilized in support of the Chapter's fundraising efforts.
- The Fundraising Committee held discussions with a web page developer and the results of these discussions and the committee's recommendations will be forwarded to the Chapter Board for consideration/approval.

V/R, Hal Cannon

Our Own Backyard

Semper Fi Barn event



Celebrating the Army's 250th Birthday.

CPL Ralph Conte a 105-year-old WWII veteran and 17-year-old PVT Daniel Scruggs a new enlistee cut the birthday cake.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Ralph H. Johnson VA Health Care System

Important Update: Use 843-577-5011 for All VA Health Care Calls

Dear Veteran,

We want to make you aware of an important issue that may be affecting your ability to contact your VA care team.

Some outdated clinic phone numbers have recently reappeared in Google search results.

To avoid any disruptions in care or communication, please use the following number for all needs:

Call 843-577-5011 for appointments, questions, and all VA health care services.

This is the official phone number for the Ralph H. Johnson VA Health Care System and all associated clinics. It is staffed by our centralized Call Center 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our trained staff will ensure your call is routed to the right team.

Please also note:

For life-threatening emergencies, always call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

If you or a Veteran you know is in emotional distress or crisis, call the Veterans Crisis Line at 988 and press 1. Help is available 24/7.

You can also utilize MyHealtheVet secure messaging for non-urgent needs.

We are working with VA web teams and external platforms like Google to correct outdated listings, but these systems can take time to update. In the meantime, please disregard any local clinic numbers you may see online or on printed materials and use 843-577-5011 exclusively.

Thank you for your patience as we work to resolve this issue. Our commitment remains the same: delivering safe, timely, and Veteran-centered care every time you reach out.

SC Legislative Affairs

Bills of Interest to Veterans, Service Members and Families in SC (filed legislation)

[H.3018](#)- A bill to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws by amending Section 44-53-370, relating to controlled substance offenses and penalties, so as to legalize the possession of twenty-eight grams or one ounce or less of marijuana or ten grams or less of hashish by certain Veterans diagnosed with service-connected post-traumatic stress disorder.

[H.3027](#)- A bill to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws by amending Section 43-35-25, relating to mandated reporters of vulnerable adult maltreatment, so as to exempt from the requirement to report the long-term care ombudsman program and its representatives in accordance with federal law.

MOAA/Military News

House Panel Advances Defense Budget Despite Missing Details from White House

House appropriators on Tuesday advanced plans for a \$831.5 billion defense budget for next fiscal year over concerns from Democratic lawmakers that the spending package is rushed and incomplete, since the White House still has not unveiled its own detailed funding plans for the military.

The appropriations bill topline essentially matches spending levels from the current fiscal year, leaving defense programs without any increase for inflation or cost-of-living hikes in the base budget plan.

However, the funding plan is designed to run alongside congressional reconciliation plans, which would add another \$150 billion in funds for the Defense Department. Republicans assert

the combination could bring total military spending for next year to nearly \$1 trillion, even though those funds would be spread out over four years.

[RELATED: [What's in the Senate Defense Package, and What It Could Mean for Your Benefits](#)]

“[This bill] provides the resources necessary for maintaining American military superiority, leveraging our technological innovation into tactical advantages on the battlefield, and supporting the Defense Department’s most valuable assets: our warfighters,” said Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Calif., chairman of the House Appropriations Committee’s defense panel.

“Together, with the significant defense funding advancing through Congress as part of the reconciliation process, the FY26 bill ... [represents] a historic commitment to strengthening and modernizing America’s national defense.”

The measure calls for a **3.8% pay raise**, eliminates 45,000 civilian defense jobs and allocates \$13 billion to start the White House’s proposed Golden Dome missile defense program.

[MILITARY PAY: [A Look at Coming Years, and What a Key Figure Could Mean for Future Raises](#)]

But Democratic lawmakers said the legislation — which could advance to the full chamber for approval later this month — still has too many gaps to support because the White House is months behind in its promise to provide a detailed budget to Congress.

“We have zip, nada, no idea where we are going,” Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee, told Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth during a hearing before Tuesday’s subcommittee vote.

“Give us the details ... My hope was that we could get to it before a markup.”

Hegseth said those details will be sent to lawmakers soon, but he also supported the committee moving ahead with the broad outlines of the defense spending plan.

“[The president’s plan] realigns the military to the historic strength that began in President Donald Trump’s first term and makes generational investments in the president’s priorities including developing the Golden Dome, sealing the Southwest Border, investing in the F-47, revitalizing our shipbuilding industry,” he told lawmakers.

Pay Raise and Personnel Policies

The 3.8% pay raise matches the federal formula for the recommended annual military pay raise, a calculation that Congress has followed most years for the last two decades.

The formula is based on changes in wages for the civilian workforce and is designed to ensure that military paychecks don't lag behind compensation for other industries. Military pay has increased by at least 2% every year since 2017, and troops have seen a pay increase annually since the 1970s.

Last January, that military pay raise was 4.5%. In addition, Congress approved a targeted pay raise for junior enlisted service members that went into effect on April 1, raising their paychecks by up to 10%.

For junior enlisted troops, a 3.8% raise in 2026 would mean about \$1,200 more in take-home pay. For senior enlisted and junior officers, the raise would add about \$2,500 more to their annual paychecks. An O-4 with 12 years of service would see almost \$4,300 more over 2025 pay levels.

The pay increase will cost more than \$6 billion next year, taking up nearly all of the planned increase in the appropriations bill's personnel account hike. As a result, other procurement accounts are being held flat or losing funding, potentially cutting other equipment and modernization priorities.

The appropriations bill also projects \$662 million in savings from "slowing permanent change of station moves," although specifics of that plan were not released by the committee.

Democrats also objected to policy provisions in the bill blocking service personnel from traveling across state lines to seek reproductive health care, including abortion services. During former President Joe Biden's term in office, the department helped cover the cost of such trips, calling it a force readiness issue.

Senate appropriators — both Republicans and Democrats — on Tuesday raised concerns about missing details from the White House's defense budget plan. That chamber is expected to unveil its appropriations draft of the military budget for next year in the next few weeks.

Piedmont Chapter – Surviving Spouse Corner

Please check your emails for messages I may have forwarded about the latest information from Mrs. Janesko who provides updates for South Carolina MOAA chapters.

To all Surviving Spouses members of the Piedmont Chapter. If anyone has an interest in specific issues concerning the rights of surviving spouses, please contact me at:

argojo@aol.com and I will respond quickly. It has been so good to know that “surviving spouses are not forgotten.”

Gordon Johnson
Chaplain

Piedmont Chapter 2025 Board of Directors

OFFICERS

President	COL Melvin E. Case, USA	904-304-8871
VP/Programs	COL Wayne Beam, USA	843-814-7145
Secretary	Juliana Heck, Surviving Spouse	703-475-5374
Treasurer	CPT Alex Glass, USA	843-801-1509
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Newsletter	CDR Alan Erisman, USN	678-778-0183
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Webmaster	Mr. Danny Nelson	864-209-1638
Chaplain/Personal Affairs	Rev (Col) Gordon Johnson, USAF	864-633-4995
Hospitality	Sharon Jacobs, Surviving Spouse	864-245-5501
	Penny Schriver, Surviving Spouse	864-224-4374

For Chapter property, anyone having equipment should notify Juliana Heck, Secretary, by email: julianaheck@yahoo.com. She's the record keeper of all the Chapter property.



Cadet Carson Homan with Steve Ford



Guest Speaker Linda Caldwell



Sharon Jacobs and Penny Schriver with Mel Case



COL Eddie Barnett, Chap, USA (R) with Mel Case



HELP MILITARY FAMILIES TODAY

ACT NOW: Now is the time to urge your senator to help military families by securing financial relief for the U.S. child-care industry.

You may have noticed some changes to the Take Action Website, it is now even easier to reach out to your lawmakers on these issues, as well as track what MOAA is engaging in the halls of Congress. To learn more about the new changes, [click here!](#)

Take Action Now



HELP THOSE IN NEED

Donate to help address emerging needs among currently serving and former uniformed service members, retirees, and their families.

Every donation, no matter what the size, makes a positive difference in the lives of uniformed service members and their families across the country.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Donate Now!

Advocacy in Action

How? Easy, just go to the MOAA website: <https://moaa.quorum.us/home2/>

Scroll through the topics, read the articles, support those issues that have impact on you or someone you know but let our voices be heard. As the prophet Isaiah answered back to God's challenge to a long list of commands by God and God ask of Isaiah who will do these things? Isaiah replied, "Who, but I."

MOAA IS ASKING FOR ALL MEMBERS, our families and friends to join in the never-ending attack by outside influencers, our own legislators, and at times the American people against our benefits and still serving military members. Who will answer those threats and attacks on our benefits? WHO but you and I...

Your Piedmont Chapter MOAA Officers ask all members to engage in the Advocacy and Action Program.



**Standing with you
at every stage.**

1-800-247-2192
www.moaainsurance.com/plans

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HELP SUPPORT OUR SPONSOR!



Association Member Benefits Advisors:

AMBA works with small and large associations nationwide. We have the expertise to meet any association's needs, regardless of cultural, geographic, and economic conditions.

Contact Person: Michele Armesto, CLU,
RHU

Telephone: 202-251-9488

Contact

Email: michele.armesto@amba.info

[Sponsor Website](#)

JOIN MOAA!

BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR CHAPTER

Join MOAA: If you want to join MOAA national go to [MOAA National](#).

To join our chapter, choose **JOIN**, choose the state of **South Carolina**, and choose the **Piedmont Chapter**.

To
about

[Become a Member Now!](#)

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the

National MOAA membership benefits,
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Disclaimer: The Piedmont Chapter of MOAA is affiliated with the South Carolina Council MOAA and the national MOAA organization and all are nonpartisan.

"I am careful not to confuse excellence with perfection. Excellence, I can reach for; perfection is God's business"
- **Michael J. Fox**

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

A reminder from National MOAA: "As an organization 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 the 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."

PIEDMONT CHAPTER LINKS:



MOAA SOCIAL LINKS:

