



# Piedmont Chapter



ARMY NAVY AIR FORCE MARINES COAST GUARD SPACE FORCE NOAA USPH

## MAY 2025 Newsletter

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

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|  | <a href="#">VISIT OUR WEBSITE</a>           |  | <a href="#">FUTURE SITE<br/>(NOT ACTIVE)</a>                                                      |  | <a href="#">EMAIL US</a>                  |
|  | <a href="#">VISIT OUR FACEBOOK<br/>PAGE</a> |  | <a href="#">JOIN OUR CHAPTER<br/>Choose SC as your state<br/>and Piedmont as your<br/>Chapter</a> |  | <a href="#">SUPPORT OUR<br/>CHARITIES</a> |

## Piedmont Chapter – President's Message

Spring!!! Back on the golf course, flowers blooming, grass is greening up, and seeds and The seedlings are in my raised gardens. I pray you all enjoy the springtime.

### **RECENT HAPPENINGS:**

- CONGRATULATIONS, PIEDMONT CHAPTER!!! For 2024 - You / we are a 5-STAR Level of Excellence Chapter; and we are also a 5-STAR awardee of the Colonel Marvin J. Harris Communications Award for our Newsletter!!! Well done to all.
- We welcome two new members – Capt. Paul Moran, USAF (Fmr) with his wife, Pat; and COL Eddie Barnett, Chap, USA (Ret) and his wife, Wylette. I look forward to presenting Eddie with his MOAA/Army lapel pin when we welcome him and Wylette at our 15 May luncheon meeting at Tucker's Restaurant.
- We had very good attendance, a great lunch and an excellent and reassuring talk by Anderson County Sheriff Chad McBride regarding crime and law enforcement in Anderson County. We welcomed and presented lapel pins to new members Capt. Paul Moran, USAF (Fmr) and LTC Claude Cooper, USA (Ret) and his wife, Louise.
- We are now a registered non-profit, tax-exempt, charitable VETERANS organization with the State of South Carolina. With your generosity to date, we are just over 50% toward our May 2026 goal to support the organizations that we have been aligned with and supported for years. Thank you to those of you who have donated so far.
- Our Scholarship Committee chaired by COL John Benson and members Col Tom Turner, Col Rod Andrew, Lt Col Howard Stammerjohn, and LTC Neil Lark are on track to award an annual scholarship to a deserving JROTC graduating cadet for College Fall 2026 academic semester. That cadet must demonstrate excellence in military, scholastic, and community service and be seeking to serve in one of the armed services through a college ROTC program.  
Additionally:
  - the guidelines, eligibility requirements and application process have been drafted and sent to several of the JROTC commanders for their comments.
  - final guidelines and the application process will be ready by this summer and sent to each JROTC unit in our 3 counties by September this year.
- Our Fundraising Committee, co-chaired by Capt. Randy Bannister and Capt. Hal Cannon; and members COL Dale Ellenburg, LTC Neil Lark, and CPT Alex Glass has met and:
  - is developing the fundraising program to support our annual ROTC and JROTC MOAA medal award program, our Campbell Veterans Nursing Home, our Cooper Veterans Cemetery, and the annual JROTC scholarship program.

- is in the initial stages of identifying the requirements for success, development and implementation of our fundraising efforts.
- members have discussed key takeaways from the 2 April fundraising presentation and how the concepts, processes, and procedures can best be used to support our Chapter's fundraising.
- At our 20 March luncheon meeting, the membership approved a motion to create a new Board Position – Director for Public Relations and Publicity; and approved COL Dale Ellenburg as Director – with assistance from COL Wayne Beam in the Clemson/Seneca area and a to-be-named helper in the Anderson area. Their major responsibility will be to raise the local communities' awareness of our Chapter, what we do to support our veteran community, and why what we do is important to all residents and businesses.
- In March, our member LTC Tom von Kaenel, planned and hosted two excellent "Vietnam Remembrance" events: one was "Vietnam Echoes – The War at Home;" a panel discussion at the Anderson County Museum on the impact of the Vietnam War on the family at home; and the other was for the "National Vietnam War Veterans Day" at the Semper Fi Barn in Central where about 125 of us attending honored and hung dog tags of 500 of our servicemen and women who were killed in the Vietnam War.
- Hilda and I hosted our first "new members and spouses" continental breakfast on 11 April to get to know our newest members better and to give them current information about MOAA, our Chapter, and details about the important things we are doing in our veteran communities. We plan to do that quarterly.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- Our 15 May luncheon membership meeting will be at 11:30 at Tucker's Restaurant in Anderson. Our guest speaker will be Capt. Linda Caldwell, USA (Fmr) and President of the South Carolina Council of Chapters. Linda was an Army nurse in Vietnam and has a riveting and compelling story to tell (as you will see in a program aired by NBC News some years ago) about her service and giving a severely wounded soldier "the will to live." She will also update us on the SC Council activities. Please plan to join us for Camaraderie, a great luncheon, and a very interesting talk -- and feel free to bring a MOAA-eligible guest.

### **THIS DAY, 1 MAY, IN AMERICAN MILITARY HISTORY:**

- In 1863, the Battle of Chancellorsville began with General Joseph Hooker commanding the Army of the Potomac attacking General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. That did not work out well for General Hooker's Army.
- In 1898, the U.S. Asiatic Squadron destroyed the Spanish Pacific Fleet in the first battle of the Spanish-American War.

- In 1937, President Franklin Roosevelt signed an “act of neutrality” keeping the USA out of World War II. We know how that worked out!

### **REMINDERS:**

- If you haven’t donated to help fund our Chapter charitable giving projects yet, we can use your help. And you get the satisfaction of participating in some very important giving opportunities to support our veteran communities. For now, just make a check out to “The Piedmont Chapter” and send it to Maj Dan Tollison, 120 Park Way, Anderson, SC 29625. Annotate it in the memo section if you want it designated 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 – 15 May MOAA Membership Meeting**

**Date/Time: 1130 Thursday, 15 May 2025**

**Place: Tucker’s in Anderson**

**Address: 3501 Clemson Blvd, Anderson 29621**

**Speaker: CPT. Linda Caldwell, USA (Fmr)**

**President of SC MOAA Council of Chapters**

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

**RSVP/Mail Checks: Dan Tollison, 120 Park Way, Anderson, SC 29625**

**Email: [dan@majorgrumpy.com](mailto:dan@majorgrumpy.com) / Phone: 864-958-0975**

**Checks payable to: Piedmont Chapter, MOAA**

**Luncheon RSVP Date: NLT, 13 May 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, and contact the following:

**Chairperson Membership: Howard Stammerjohn**

**Phone: 864-964-1631 / Email: [piedmont.moaa@aim.com](mailto:piedmont.moaa@aim.com)**

## March Meeting Speaker's Recap

Sheriff McBride opened his presentation with thanks to all who served and for the opportunity to speak at our luncheon. He served 8 years in the service and National Guard and saw much of the world. He entered Law Enforcement in the year 2000 and has seen a lot of changes in the ensuing 25 years.

Key notes of interest from his presentation:

- His third term as Sheriff began in January 2025 and he is excited about the opportunity
- Anderson County is about 800 sq miles. His officers deal with or are engaged in fights every day somewhere in the County. The work is very dangerous. He is proud of his people, generously brags on their capabilities and holds himself accountable to the people. Since coming into the office overall crime has gone down by over 30% (Anderson County is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest county in the state).
- There is a "Citizen's Academy" available to all county residents. It is held twice a year in the Spring and Fall. It meets one night per week for 10 weeks. You get to experience officer training simulators with a capacity of over 60,000 scenarios at a cost of \$300,000 paid for entirely by confiscated drug money.
- Anderson County Sheriff Office is the ONLY fully staffed Sheriff Office in South Carolina
- Any officer who chooses to grow a beard, pays \$10 per month "Beard Tax". Last year they collected \$30,000 dollars and all the money went to Community Organizations such as AIM and Meals on Wheels
- The Sheriff's Foundation 501(c)3 money goes to department member's needs. Last year an officer had a 10-month-old child with significant medical issues. Money went to Family Counseling, medical expenses, room and board at the hospitals and replacement of a home hot water heater.
- Helicopter maintenance and use is partially paid for with narcotic money
- Drone program is actively being used and has proven very effective.

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

**17 July 25:** 1730 Dinner - Occasions at Wedgefield, Central, SC

Speaker: Honorable Davey Hiott, Majority Leader, SC House of Representatives

**18 Sep 25:** 1730 Dinner - Tuckers in Anderson

Recognition of Clemson ROTC programs

**20 Nov 25:** 1130 Luncheon – Tuckers in Anderson

Speaker: Joel Collins (invited), Attorney at Law, Columbia, SC

"The Oversized Influence of SC on the Establishment of our Nation"

## Piedmont Chapter –New Members / Membership

### HERE WE GROW AGAIN!!

Our Piedmont Chapter membership stands at **88** members with the following new members:

Edward Barnett, COL (Chaplain) USA (Ret), 102 Engram Lane, Anderson 29621  
540-521-9882 [eddiebarnett1@aol.com](mailto:eddiebarnett1@aol.com)...wife is Wylette

Paul Moran, Capt, USAF (Fmr), 119 Chapelwood Drive, Anderson 29626  
864-245-8081 [figmo17@gmail.com](mailto:figmo17@gmail.com)...wife is Patricia

**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

### **MAY**

Pam Durham  
Bob Heller  
James Murphy  
Art Phillips

### **JUNE**

Dale Ellenburg  
Steve Ford  
Gordon Johnson  
Lena Jones  
Larry Morelock  
Juliana Heck



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

## Our own Backyard

02 May



# THE 21ST ANNUAL RETIREE APPRECIATION GOLF TOURNAMENT

WILDCAT GOLF COURSE FRIDAY 2 MAY 9A.M. SHOTGUN START

Captain's Choice, Gross and Net Scoring.

Cost is \$45-FJGC member, \$55-Authorized Patrons, and \$60-Civilians.

Entry fee includes all golf fees, prizes, and a post tournament meal.

Register your team today or sign up as a single and the FJGC PGA Professional will pair you with a group.

Register your team by calling the  
FJGC Golf Shop at 803-562-4437.



FOR ALL THAT YOU ARE...FAMILY AND MWR IS FOR YOU...SOLDIERS · FAMILIES · RETIREES · CIVILIANS



15-18 May

“The Wall That Heals” is coming to Liberty, SC!!!



## Treasures Report

We now have over \$9,000.00 in CDs working for us. Our goal is \$25,000.00.  
Alex Glass's name tag was drawn for the free meal at our March meeting.

## SC Legislative Affairs

**Historic Tax Reform:** South Carolina's current top income tax rate of 6.2% is the highest in the Southeast - and it's time for that to change.

**Flatter, simpler system:** This plan replaces our progressive income tax with a single flat rate of 3.99%, immediately making South Carolina more competitive than North Carolina (4.25%) and Georgia (5.39%).

**No Burden on Low-Income Filers:** A \$6,000 exemption that begins to phase out at \$30,000 of income and fully phases out at \$40,000.

**Special Tax Exemptions Remain:** Previously enacted exemptions for those earning military retirement or Social Security benefits will have those benefits remain tax-free.

**Other Key Exemptions:** The bill retains the \$9,000 deduction for taxpayers who file as head of a household and a \$12,000 deduction for those who file as married filing jointly or as a surviving spouse.

**Future cuts on the horizon:** The plan continues cutting the rate from 3.99% to 2.49% as economic conditions are met - putting South Carolina on track to have the lowest income tax rate in the entire nation.

**No shifting burden:** These are real tax cuts - not by shifting the burden to higher sales or property taxes.

**Take back control from Washington:** By flipping from federal taxable income to gross income, we stop being handcuffed to federal tax policy decisions that don't fit South Carolina's unique needs. This puts South Carolina - not Washington - in the driver's seat.

**Bigger paychecks:** This historic tax cut for most South Carolinians means you will have more monthly money in your pocket.

**Keeping sales tax exemptions:** Zero taxes on groceries and medicine remain in effect

**Agenda:** This plan is the first step in the House Republican Caucus's bold two-year strategy.

## Military News

Beginning May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, your SC standard driver's license, permit, or identification card must have a gold star on it to show it's a **REAL ID** in order to use it as your primary identification to board a domestic commercial flight (a valid passport will still work), enter a secure federal building, or visit a military installation.

**New military ID's:** Legacy ID cards will remain valid through their expiration date. Individuals with an indefinite expiration date on their card can replace their card with the next generation

USID card. Starting in 2026, legacy USID cards will no longer be accepted for access to benefits, privileges, or DOD bases.

Clemson Area: (385 Anderson Hwy 29631) Tuesday-Friday 0800-1600 (lunch 1145-1300)

Walk ins are okay 803-299-1353

<https://www.cac.mil/Next-Generation-Uniformed-Services-ID-Card/>

## **In Remembrance**

### **Jerry Rookstool**

Jerald Clifford Rookstool, 87, lovingly known as Jerry, passed away on February 19, 2025, in Anderson, South Carolina. He was born on April 18, 1937, in Blakers Mill, West Virginia, to Clifford Clark Rookstool and Dorothy Jane Flack. He was the grandson of Clark Clifford Rookstool and Christopher and Spicer Flack of West Virginia.

Jerry was a devoted husband to Aundre Sue Keaton of Charleston, West Virginia, and a father to Mara (Jay) Myers, Christopher (Carol) Rookstool, Leslie (Terry) Harosky, and Benjamin (Ann Cohen) Rookstool. He was a cherished grandfather to 12 grandchildren and a proud great-grandfather to 13 great-grandchildren. He also leaves behind a large extended family, all of whom he loved deeply and who loved him in return.

Those who knew Jerry best would describe him as intelligent, adventurous, and analytical – a man whose wisdom and curiosity inspired those around him. His legacy of service, knowledge and love for his family will be cherished and always remembered.

Jerry was a proud veteran, serving 22 years in the U.S. Army, retiring as a Master Sergeant (MSG). He was a trained Combat Engineer, a foreman Class Graduate, and a decorated serviceman, receiving the Bronze Star (1970), the Joint Service Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster (1970), and the Chinese Army Service Emblem (1963). His love for his country and its founding principles was a guiding force in his life.

Beyond his military service, Jerry dedicated 30 years to coaching youth baseball, shaping the lives of many young athletes. A passionate history, geography and American literature student, he was an avid reader who enjoyed learning about the past and the people who shaped the nation.

## **Piedmont Chapter – Surviving Spouse Corner**

Surviving Spouse Corner: Improve Your Mental Skills with These Brain Exercises

By: Pat Green      April 01, 2025

Most of us have noticed a mental decline in a close friend or family member. Perhaps they don't seem as sharp, witty, or speedy as they once were.

You might wonder whether others are noticing this with you as well.

Mental decline is not just a phenomenon of aging. Stress, emotions, and poor diet and sleep reduce cognitive skills and affect all ages.

If you have had a stroke or a brain injury, or if you are concerned about a perceived mental decline, speak to your family doctor. If the doctor recognizes an issue, a neurologist can provide a detailed cognitive skills evaluation.

[RELATED: [More Surviving Spouse Resources From MOAA](#)]

Physical health and emotional health correlate with mental health. If you are consumed with grief or anxiety or dealing with a disease, deal with that first. If serious grieving extends more than two years, seek grief counseling for help. Complicated grief is seen in 9% of widows ages 60 to 75. A smaller percentage of men are affected.

If you want to improve your mental skills, try adding mental strengthening exercises into daily activities, such as:

Recall. Practice memorizing names, phone numbers, vocabulary words, baseball standings, NCAA March Madness lineups, or TV program schedules. Look at a magazine photo for a few seconds, close your eyes, and try to recall items in the photo.

Analysis. Read a newspaper article. Set it aside, then try to write a recap or summary of the article. Try to remember who, what, when, where, and why.

Spatial. Rearrange a linen closet, pantry, or garage. Look for the most pragmatic and yet economical use of space. Do the same exercise with drawers in kitchen, bed, or bath. While you're at it, set aside some donation items and throw out expired items.

Social. Have a conversation every day. If you live alone, this might be a challenge. Practice small talk at the checkout line of stores. Initiate a phone call or an invitation. This is a must. Accept any invitations you receive. Try to remember a joke you can tell at your next social event.

Focus. Stay focused on whatever activity you are engaged in. It might be conversation, gardening, dancing, chores, or workouts at the gym. Focus on listening, strength, the number of repetitions, muscles involved, posture, and breathing. Be in one with your thoughts. Meditation and prayer are very good options for mental focus.

Fun and games. This can be all manner of social get-togethers. But there are some good solitary options. Jigsaw puzzles provide color and form discernment. Manipulation of the pieces is also good hand-eye coordination practice. Sudoku uses number grids, but it is not a math game. It is a logical exercise. Start with easy grids, and progress to expert status. Using computer sites, you

can play Bridge, Gin Rummy, or Hearts with robots. These games require a memory of cards played and the counted.

"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



Mel Case with Sheriff Chad McBride



Sheriff Chad McBride



Mel Case with LTC Claude Cooper, USA (Ret)



Mel Case with Capt. Paul Moran, USAF (Fmr)



**Mel and Hilda Case with Congresswoman Biggs**



**Gordon Brown  
with Cadet  
Sergeant  
Major Taylor  
Hudson  
receiving the  
MOAA  
JROTC award**

## **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      | MAJ Daniel Tollison, USMC      | 864-958-0975 |
| Past President | LtCol Wayne Watson, USAF       | 864-296-1815 |

### **DIRECTORS**

|                           |                                  |              |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Legislative Affairs       | COL Dale Ellenburg, USA          | 864-225-1073 |
| ROTC Awards/Publicity     | CDR Janelle Merritt, USN         | 864-617-1153 |
| Membership                | LtCol Howard Stammerjohn, USAF   | 864-964-1631 |
| Newsletter                | CDR Alan Erisman, USN            | 678-778-0183 |
| Social Media/Facebook     | CPT Tim McKnight                 | 864-359-7646 |
| 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](mailto:julianaheck@yahoo.com). She's the record keeper of all the Chapter property.



## 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...

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

Dale Ellenburg COL, USA, (Ret)  
Legislative Committee Chair



**Standing with you  
at every stage.**

1-800-247-2192  
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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](mailto: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!](#)

learn more  
the

National MOAA membership benefits,  
click [HERE](#)

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

**“Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety”**  
- **Benjamin Franklin**

### 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:

