



THE DEFENDER

A monthly publication of the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association
nwfmooa.flmooa.org

Vol. 32 No 3

Serving all Branches of The Uniformed Services

March 2026

Lunch Meeting & Discussion

When: Thursday **March 5th**
Time: Gathering 1130, Lunch 1200, Program to follow
Place: Fort Walton Yacht Club
180 Ferry Road, NE, FWB
Program: **Guest Speaker Lt Col Derek Haun, 20th SPSS/CC**

MAKE A RESERVATION

- Reservations are Required
- Wear a name tag
- Bring proper change: \$16

Reservation deadline is Saturday at noon prior to meeting. Go to nwfmooa.flmooa.org and select the link "Click here to make reservations", or email nwfreservations@gmail.com, or call Karl Eschmann at 850-621-7482 to make a reservation.

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March Luncheon - Lt Col Derek Haun Commander 20th Space Surveillance Sq.

Lt Col Derek Haun is the Commander, 20th Space Surveillance Squadron, Eglin Air Force Base Site C-6, Florida. The 20th Space Surveillance Squadron generates, presents, sustains, and improves combat-ready SDA forces who, through integrated radar operations, sense and understand the space domain to achieve national security objectives. The 137-person squadron employs the ST-85 Eglin phased array space surveillance



radar at Eglin AFB Site C-6 and the ST-20 Space Fence phased array radar located at Kwajalein Atoll. Lt Col Haun entered the Air Force in 2008 as a graduate from the United State Air Force Academy. He is a career space operations officer that transferred to the Space Force in 2020. He has served in a variety of staff and operations positions at the squadron, group, and combatant command component levels, to include serving as a planner and strategist at the National Space Defense Center where he developed space defense strategies and led campaigning to shape component operations, activities, and investments. Lt Col Haun has extensive missile warning and space battle management experience. Prior to his current assignment, Lt Col Haun was the Director of Operations at the 328th Weapons Squadron.

Please join us for our **March 5th** lunch which will start with a social gathering at 1130 with the meeting beginning at 1200 followed by lunch. To make reservations click [HERE](#). You may also call Karl Eschmann at 850-621-7482.

Reservations are **REQUIRED** (no walk-ins please) and must be made by **no later than February 28, 2026**.

From the President's Pen

By Fran Hendricks



Officers & Directors

PRESIDENT: Fran Hendricks:

fcashendricks@msn.com

1st VICE PRESIDENT: Jeff Watson:

jeffwatson2011@gmail.com

2nd VICE PRESIDENT: Bob Allen

bopper1@cox.net

TREASURER: Doug Stauffer:

docdoug4@gmail.com

SECRETARY: Bob Gramm

bobgramm5@gmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Karl Eschmann: phanfix@cox.net

Rod Gerdes: gerdesusmc@msn.com

Bob Gramm: bobgramm5@gmail.com

Kevin Kirby: shotgun0603@yahoo.com

Dick Solt: richdulce@aol.com

DEFENDER EDITOR

Bob Gramm:

bobgramm5@gmail.com

WEBMASTERS

Fred Westfall: nwfmoe@gmail.com

Liz Plauche liz.pl.454@gmail.com

Florida Council of Chapters' Leadership Training Seminar-Convention

I recently had the pleasure to attend and represent NWFMOA at the annual Florida Council of Chapters (FCoC) Leadership Training Seminar and Convention. Also attending from NWFMOA was 1st VP Jeff Watson and his lovely bride, Judy. The training seminar/convention started on Thursday, January 29 and ended on Sunday, February 1. Highlights of the 4-day seminar included presentations from MOAA National, the MOAA Foundation, FCoC, and breakout sessions with other Chapters to discuss issues of shared concern.

Because of NWFMOA's success in obtaining MOAA Foundation grants, I was asked to make an hour presentation during the convention on the how and why pursuing a MOAA Foundation Grant is important to your chapter. Joining me on the dais during the presentation was Lauren Walters, MOAA Charities. Together, we explained the how and why. The success NWFMOA has enjoyed in obtaining MOAA grants was used throughout the presentation to demonstrate the ease of obtaining a grant, the impact of the grant on the designated community you are trying to

serve, and how a grant increases the public's awareness of your chapter. The presentation was well received and garnered many favorable comments and follow up engagements with members from other chapters. (Special thanks to Fred Westfall who made my slides look outstanding).

The highlight of the convention was to hear from General Brian Kelly, President and CEO of MOAA National. He sat with us throughout the training sessions and gave a formal address at the awards dinner. I am happy to report that MOAA had a very successful 2025 safeguarding and promoting the benefits each of us earned through our service. He stressed the importance of each of us being active in the MOAA Legislative Action Center. Through our individual responses, we send a strong message to Congress supporting MOAA's targeted actions. (Please see my Legislative Corner in this edition of the Defender for how to sign up for MOAA's Legislative Action Center and have your voice heard, thereby helping MOAA in its efforts). Gen Kelly also complimented NWFMOA by name several times during his various speaking engagements at the convention.

The annual convention also had a solemn session where we gathered for a memorial service honoring all our members we lost during the year. I had the honor to read the names of NWFMOA's fallen. When I finished the list, a bell was rung honoring them and their service. The memorial service had several readings from the Bible and ended with Amazing Grace being played on bagpipes.

During the convention, the following NWFMOA members were publicly called out and recognized for their leadership...Dan Brown, Karl Eschmann, and Kevin Kirby. Each will receive a certificate at an upcoming chapter luncheon.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent our chapter at this annual event..

H2S (Here to Serve),

Brig Gen Fran Hendricks, USAF Retired
54th President, NWFMOA



**FLORIDA 2026-2027 Friends
and Family Cruises**
Join your fellow members for an
unforgettable group cruise, filled with
camaraderie, relaxation, and fun!

LEARN MORE



NWFMOA Website

Our new website is fully operational. The old website is linked to the new one, so if you type in the old address of <http://nwfmoa.org> you should be sent to the new website. The official website is <https://nwfmoa.flmoaa.org>. Let's hear it for Webmasters Liz Plauche and Fred Westfall!

And Remember...
Never Stop Serving

Officers Call

Thursday, April 30, 2026

5-6:30 PM

Doc's Oyster Bar & Grill (or TBD)

Bring a friend and a story to tell.



Click on the logo for a map to Doc's

Test Your Knowledge

Take the quiz for a chance to win a free lunch at our next meeting.

As you may have noticed, the quizzes this year are about Revolutionary War history in honor of America's 250th Anniversary. When you click on the link below, you will see a single question and a place to give your answer and name. If your answer is correct, you will be entered into the drawing at the monthly meeting (you have to be present to win your free meal at the next meeting). You may answer the question multiple times but only the correct answer will count for the drawing (so answering the question correctly 5 times will not give you more chances to win). We don't tell anyone that they got it right or wrong until we disclose the winner at the meeting. At the meeting, we state the answer and how many got it right. Then we pull the one winning entry from the hat.

The February Trivia Quiz winner was Chris Beam.

Click the link below to get to the quiz. The winner will be announced at the next meeting. The person must be present to win.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Upcoming Events

Honoring Our Heroes

Saturday, February 28th


SAVE THE DATE

SAT


FEB 28 2026

5:00 PM

DESTIN FWB RIGDON CENTER







Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce



HONORING OUR HEROES

A SALUTE TO SERVICE:
35TH ANNIVERSARY OF DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM


The war consisted of two phases the first was codenamed Operation Desert Shield (2 August 1990 – 17 January 1991) for operations leading to the buildup of troops and defense of Saudi Arabia. And the second was Operation Desert Storm (17 January 1991 – 28 February 1991) was the combat phase. In addition to distinguished national leaders, the event will highlight local veterans' stories, offering firsthand perspectives on pivotal moments in history, including Task Force Normandy, the hunt for SCUD missiles, the Battle of Khafji and other joint operations.

| | |
|--|--|
|  <p>VERY SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER Gen. Charles Albert 'Chuck' Horner</p> |  <p>MASTER OF CEREMONIES Lt. Gen. Marshall B. 'Brad' Webb</p> |
|  <p>KEYNOTE SPEAKER Lt. Gen. David A. Deptula</p> |  <p>KEYNOTE SPEAKER Dr. John Andreas Olsen</p> |

LISTEN TO THE STORIES OF LOCALS WHO WERE THERE

Joint Special Operations
Operation Normandy
The Hunt for SCUDS and Battle of Khafji

SPONSORED BY:



The Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce will host **Honoring Our Heroes: A Salute to Service - 35th Anniversary of Desert Shield/Desert Storm** on Saturday, Feb. 28, 2026, at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Rigdon Center (FWB Fairgrounds). The Honoring Our Heroes event will begin at 5:00 p.m. and will commemorate the service and sacrifice of those who served during the Gulf War.

The evening will feature **Gen. Charles Albert "Chuck" Horner** as a special guest speaker. Gen. Horner played a central role during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, leading coalition air operations that helped define modern military airpower.

Lt. Gen. Marshall B. "Brad" Webb will serve as master of ceremonies. Keynote speakers include **Lt. Gen. David A. Deptula**, a principal architect of modern air campaigns, and **Dr. John Andreas Olsen**, an internationally recognized military historian and strategist. In addition to distinguished national leaders, the event will highlight local veterans' stories, offering firsthand perspectives on

pivotal moments in history, including Task Force Normandy, the hunt for SCUD missiles, the Battle of Khafji, and other joint operations.

"For the past 15 years, our Chamber has been proud to honor local military heroes while helping our community better understand the history behind their service," said *Ted Corcoran, CEO of the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce*. "The Desert Storm commemoration is especially meaningful to me. Many Chamber members served during this time, and they are people I now know personally and consider true heroes. This event will honor their service while continuing to educate our community about our nation's role in global conflicts." For additional questions, please contact the Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce at (850) 244-8191. Click [HERE](#) to make reservations on the Chamber website.

Welcome Aboard

The following letter was sent to new NWFMOA member Gus Piccinini pictured here with his lovely wife Ruth. Gus's family owned and operated the Maryland Clothing Company for generations. As such, they made uniforms for all branches of Service. Their impact on those presently serving and those who had previously served is clearly stated in the heartfelt letter from the Fox family and its three generations of Airmen.

Gus, we thank you and your family for all it did for those of us who proudly wore our Nation's military uniforms while we were in the Service. Welcome to the NWFMOA!



Maryland Clothing Company
3023 E Madison
Baltimore, MD 21205

18 June 2007

Gus Piccinini,

About two years ago I began a project that I had clearly underestimated. I simply wanted to get a uniform for my father. I talked to base exchanges from several different bases, but none of them could help, because he is overweight and needs a custom fit. When I was finally given your company's name, I wasn't very optimistic. But Charlene was so kind and helpful. Her patience and caring helped me get exactly what I was after.

The jacket you provided fits perfectly. Doug Barnett from Tennessee Apparel provided the trousers. My local base exchange had the other uniform items (except they don't make a belt large enough, so he wears suspenders).

When I gave him the uniform for Christmas, he just sat and stared at it. He didn't say anything for a long while. When he finally spoke, it was through tears. "Son, is this what I think it is?"

I, myself, have served for 24 years in the USAF. I retired this May, and my squadron gave me a retirement ceremony. I thought my ceremony would give my father an opportunity to wear his new uniform for the first time. But he informed me that he had already worn it for a church veterans tribute. Then, again, on Memorial Day, he wore it in a community ceremony. On Veteran's Day he has always worn a civilian suit with his ribbons on it. But from now on, he will proudly wear his uniform.

I am so warmed to see the transformation that occurs when my father wears that uniform. He looks younger and stronger and stands straighter. I have no doubt that he will wear it at every opportunity. And I know that one day he will be laid to rest in it.

My son is just beginning his Air Force career. It was a proud day for us to pose for a portrait that included three generations of Foxes in USAF dress blue uniforms. Please accept this copy of that portrait with my deepest gratitude. Your generosity has returned a fullen dignity to an old veteran. Please know that all your troubles in my behalf are very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Douglas Fox
113 Stone Tree Drive
Maryville, TN 37801
(865) 455-1240

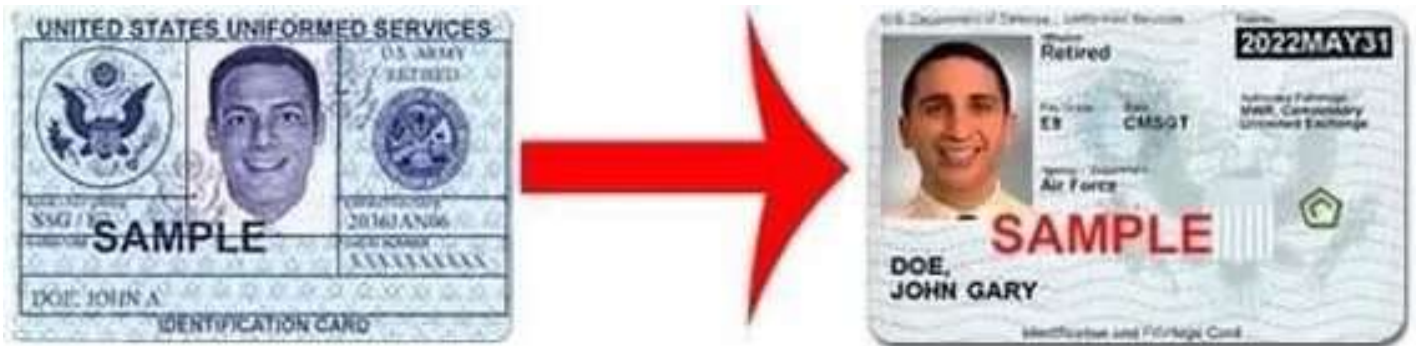


Call to Action 25-01

Replace Your Legacy Military ID Card

If you haven't changed your and your spouse's military ID to the new Next Generation Uniformed Services Identification (USID) card, you should do so at your earliest convenience.

How do you know if you have the correct military ID card? The new plastic-based Next Generation Uniformed Services Identification (USID) card is white. The legacy paper-based cards are red, brown, green, blue, and tan in color. See below.



As of September 2025, DoD had yet to announce a termination date for paper-based cards, including those with indefinite (“INDEF”) expiration dates. “It's important for USID cardholders to know these **older paper-based forms of ID will eventually be terminated**, and will need to be replaced by the new plastic-based USID card,” according to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS). “This is true even if your old ID card has an INDEF expiration date on it.”

Both you and your spouse can get your new Next Generation Uniformed Services Identification (USID) card by visiting the Eglin Military Personnel Section, Building 210 (310 Van Matre Avenue). Appointments are not required. Search military ID cards Eglin AFB online for instructions on how to sign into the queue before arriving, thereby shortening your wait time.

If you would like additional information on the new ID Card, please see the [MOAA ID Cards](#) page on the [MOAA website](#).

Bottom line: **recommend you replace your “old” military ID Card with the new one at your earliest convenience.**

H2S,

Fran Hendricks, Brig Gen, USAF Retired
54th President, NWFMOA

Chaplain's Corner

By: Chaplain Thomas Azar



Command Presence: Maintaining Your Spiritual Readiness

Decades ago, when my children were preteens, we were driving along and saw one of their friends struggling with a bicycle that wouldn't budge. My son looked out the window and said, "I think his bike is dead." Without thinking, I yelled out, "Check your battery!"

Of course, a bike doesn't have a battery, but the sentiment rings true for almost everything else in our modern arsenal. We all carry a smartphone—the ultimate tactical tool. Have you ever reached for it to make a critical call, only to see that battery icon hemorrhaging in the red? You're out of juice. In that moment, you're ineffective. Perhaps you felt a surge of "tech-rage" or helplessness. You looked for someone to blame: the spouse who borrowed the charger, or the fact that you left the cord at the HQ.

Whether it is the battery in your watch, the clock on the wall, the remote, or the battery in your vehicle, we rely on power sources to execute our daily "mission." Yet, we often fail to conduct a pre-combat check on our own internal power levels until the moment of total failure.

The Erosion of the Internal Battery

In the high-tempo environment of leadership, even the most seasoned officers can experience "power drainage." We run out of patience with the evening news; we run out of compassion because we've seen too many casualty reports, sat through too many briefings on illness, or written one too many "get well" cards. We get tired of the constant "output" required of a leader.

When the mission becomes a grind, it is time for a recharge.

When adversity strikes, I often counsel individuals by asking: "What do you do to reset your baseline? What restores your soul?"

The Divine Chain of Command

Scripture provides the ultimate standing orders: Trust in the Lord; lean not on your own understanding; cast all your cares upon Him. Let's be clear: wearing the "uniform" of a Christian does not grant you an exemption from the theater of war. Adversity is a universal constant; it hits every rank from Second Lieutenant to General. What distinguishes a mature, wise leader is not the absence of struggle, but the response to it. How you respond to a crisis determines your effectiveness in your home, your unit, your community, and—most importantly—your relationship with God.

Tactical Prayer vs. "God-Guard"

I don't wake up and apply "God-Guard" aerosol to my skin to repel problems. I've had my fair share of incoming fire. Instead, we must begin the day requesting a "sit-rep" from the Almighty—asking for wisdom and guidance.

When the "intel" is bad—the doctor's grim phone call, the mechanic's expensive repair list, or a child making destructive choices—our first movement should be toward the Creator. A true disciple stands up to adversity by first falling to their knees. A leader's first instinct should be prayer, not a lateral call to a peer just to complain.

The Pre-Check Ritual

Whenever my wife and I get into the car, we start with a prayer. Only after that do I scan the "gauges"—air pressure, temperature, fuel, and lights. We ensure the vehicle is mission-capable.

As we navigate life, we must remain "Situationally Aware." We use our training, our hard-earned experience, and our tactical knowledge. But we must also possess the humility to recognize when a situation is "Beyond our Capability." That is when we must rely on the Creator of all things.

The Habit of Resilience

Perhaps today is the day to request a resupply of patience, mercy, kindness, and goodness. Once you make this "spiritual maintenance" a habit, it becomes part of your permanent SOP (Standard Operating Procedure).

Life will always throw "wild cards" at you. You thought the funds were in the account; you thought the dentist could see you today; you thought the doctor wouldn't be on vacation while you waited for blood results. We all come up short. Sometimes the friction is caused by others; sometimes, we are the ones who tripped over our own feet.

In the end, we are the Commanding Officers of our own choices. We can choose to let the mission fail, or we can find a way through the objective with the strength provided by God.

Public Record

In Memoriam

None 😊

New Members

CDR Bill Treon, USN (Ret)

Mr Gus Piccinini, (Auxiliary)





Donors for the 67th Anniversary Banner



Click [HERE](#) to see the banner on our webpage

Corporate and Organizational Donors

Emerald Coast MAC
Cornerstone Church
FWB First Methodist Church
Eglin Federal Credit Union
Pros Heating and Air
Destin Chamber of Commerce
Greater FWB Chamber
American Legion Post 235
Crestview Rotary
RNR Property Solutions
Sceptre Security
American Legion Post 296

Tactical Assessment Consultants
Sunest Vettes of NWFL
Faith Independent Baptist Church
Fisher & Fisher Attorneys at Law
A Perfect Balance
Harvey F. Eckoff VFW Post 7674
Zaxby's Chicken
Playground Corvette Club
Air & Space Force Association
Cutoff Barber Shop
United Way of the Emerald Coast
VFW Post 7674 Auxiliary

Click [HERE](#) to see the donor page on our website

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Col & Mrs. R. Bancroft McKittrick
Gus and Ruth Piccinini
Dave Parisot

David Whalen
Les Matheson
Parker Destin
Doug and Judy Stauffer
Jeff and Judy Watson
Fred and Jan Westfall
Fran and Connie Hendricks

Thank You All

Community Outreach

NWFMOA Participates in the 3rd Annual Valentines For Veterans

For the third consecutive year the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association partnered with the Longwood elementary students to give Valentines For Veterans to the members of Bob Hope Village. This year the NWFMOA provided cookies and soft drinks for all.

Again this year, the students from Longwood Elementary hand delivered their Valentines to the residents of Bob Hope Village. Under the watchful eye of their teachers, the students walked from their campus to the Bob Hope Village to personally present their handmade Valentines to the anxiously waiting residents. The students made over 400 Valentines...they wanted to make sure everyone received one. From the smiles, laughter, and especially the hugs, this was once again a resounding success. Please click [HERE](#) to see all the great photos.



NWFMOA members who participated in the 3rd Valentines for Veterans were from left: NWFMOA President Fran Hendricks, Fred Westfall, Karl Eschmann, Bob Allen, Bob Gramm, Doug Stauffer, Dave Parisot, Rod Gerdes and Chaplain Tom Azar.

American Legion Honors The Four Chaplains

American Legion FL Post 296 in Destin paid honor to the Four Chaplains (Lt. George L. Fox (Methodist), Lt. Alexander D. Goode (Jewish), Lt. John P. Washington (Catholic), and Lt. Clark V. Poling (Dutch Reformed) who sacrificed their lives during the sinking of the troopship USAT Dorchester on February 3, 1943, by giving up their life jackets to soldiers and going down with the ship. Please click [HERE](#) to read more about the courageous chaplains.

Chaplain Tom Azar brought a stained glass artwork commemorating the event. This is a replica of ones in the National Cathedral in Washington DC and at the Army War College in Carlisle PA.

We were welcomed by Corlene Ziegler, Commander American Legion FL Post 296.



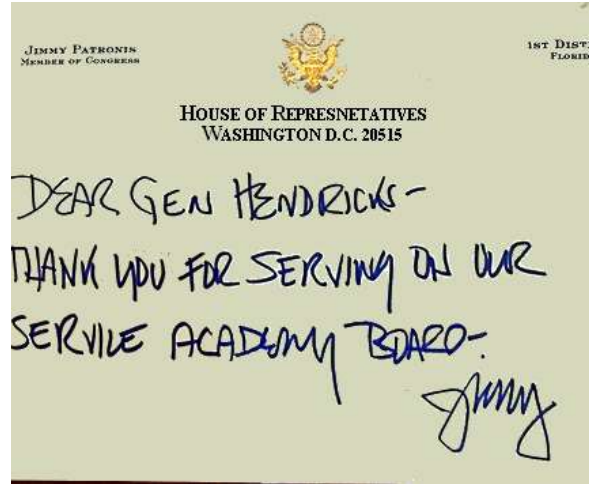
Tom Goldbold, a Crispy Warrior and former member of the NWFMOA, made opening remarks.

Guest speaker Ron Springer gave a moving account of the events of that day in February, 1943, including the actions taken by the Four Chaplains.



Thank You Note from Representative Patronis

President Fran Hendricks received the following note from Congressman Jimmy Patronis for serving on his Air Force Academy Recommendation Board. He and two other individuals interviewed 25 students for over 10 straight hours and made recommendations to the Congressman regarding potential nominees for a congressional appointment.



VFW Donates to the NWFMOA Community Outreach Program

Pictured are NWFMOA President Fran Hendricks, VFW Post 7674 Auxiliary President Betty Riker, and NWFMOA Scholarship Fund President Dave Parisot. Betty presented a sizable check to the NWFMOA Community Outreach Program in support of our Commissary Gift Cards for E-4 Families and below in need. Fran presented a thank you note to the Post Auxiliary for their very generous donation.



President Fran Hendricks thanked the VFW Post Auxiliary for their donation and provided a short description of our Chapter and our Community Outreach programs.

Calling all B-52 Aircrew, Maintainers and Enthusiasts

NWFMOA Board Of Directors member, Karl Eschmann, is the historian for the B-52 Stratofortress Association. You might remember that he authored “*Linebacker: The Untold Story of the Air Raids Over North Vietnam*” which was published by Random House Ivey Books in 1989. He submitted this article to inform those Chapter members who were also associated with the “Bomber” about this great association.



Tinker AFB OK Association Rendezvous, 2024

Over the past sixty years, tens of thousands of pilots, navigators, EWOs, and gunners have pulled alert with or flown the World’s Greatest Warplane. Together their stories tell its *raison d’être*, its reason for being.

A few years ago it was said that the last B-52 crewmember had not yet been born. Today that may or may not be true, but it’s probably true that that last crewmember is still in grammar school.

You don’t have to have had direct contact with the BUF to appreciate its contribution to history.

There are aviation historians, students of the Cold War, Vietnam, Desert Storm, the Balkan Wars of the ‘90s, and the current Middle Eastern wars who recognize and want to preserve the history of America’s Big Stick.

And, of course, they’re enthusiasts who just recognize greatness when they see it and want to be part of its preservation.

The People Behind the B-52

The Association brings together all those who have been or are associated with the BUF—designers and builders, aircrew, maintainers, enthusiasts — to exchange memories. We try to help old buddies find each other -- anything it takes to keep alive the history of the weapon known in its early days as “America’s Long Rifle.”

Association Purpose

The purpose of the B-52 Stratofortress Association is to document and perpetuate the history of the B-52 Stratofortress aircraft. Activities to this end shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- a. The accumulation, exchange, and distribution of historical information on the B- 52.
- b. Collection of historical materials relating to the design, development, and operation of the B-52. These materials are currently archived at the Castle Air Museum in Atwater, California.
- c. Publication of a newsletter to inform the active membership of the Associations’ activities and to carry out the first activity.
- d. Organize periodic reunions of those who designed, manufactured, maintained, and operated the B-52, as well as anyone with an historical interest in the aircraft
- e. Be a source of commemorative items highlighting the B-52 and its service.
- f. Facilitate renewed and continued fellowship among those who share association with the B-52 Stratofortress

Reunion 2026

Every two years, there is a Rendezvous Reunion of all the members for several days. Last year it was at Tinker AFB OK at the Air Logistics Center where B-52s are modified and upgraded, and also the Boeing B-52J Integration Lab where they are designing the 7-8 mods, including replacing the engines on the jet.

Next year, from 10-13 September 2026, the reunion will be in Seattle Washington. The Tours will include Boeing Facilities, The Museum of Flight, and Pike Place Market. If you join the association, be sure to sign up for the Rendezvous.

If you have any interest in joining the B-52 Association, simply go to the website <https://stratofortress.org> and go to the membership form. It is \$20 for individuals, or \$30 for you and your spouse jointly.

If you have any questions regarding the Association, please call your local area member, Karl Eschmann, at 850-621-7482, or email: phanfix@cox.net.





Scholarship Applications due by March 1st; Annual Scholarship Board met on Jan. 22nd; FWB High School JROTC to host drill competition on March 7th

Looking forward to an exciting year in 2026 for our Scholarship Program. We will be offering eight to ten scholarships for local JROTC cadets along with at least six scholarships for local ROTC cadets in their junior or senior of college. In mid-December I contacted our previous scholarship awardees who will be entering their junior or senior year of college in the fall of 2026 to see if they are still enrolled in ROTC and am happy to report that we should have many applications for our \$4,000 scholarships available for junior and senior year ROTC cadets. All scholarship applications are due by March 1st. 2026 should be our best year ever for scholarships. I will report on the actual number of scholarship applications we receive in next month's article. Scholarship Fund Board members will score each application prior to our in-person interviews with each JROTC applicant to determine which cadet will be awarded the \$9,000 (over two years) Heavener Memorial Scholarship.

On January 22nd we held our annual Scholarship Fund Board of Directors meeting to set the number of JROTC and ROTC scholarships to be awarded in May 2026. It is our desire that all qualified applicants (both JROTC and ROTC) will be awarded a scholarship. I am pleased to announce the addition of Lt Col **Jeff Fanto**, USAF, Ret, as a new member of the Board.

In 2022 we established our Education Support Grant (ESG) program in which we provide grants to our local JROTC units funding for cadet educational programs that are not funded by either the host military service or by the County School District. On Saturday, March 7, 2026, the NWFMOA Scholarship Fund will be the primary sponsor of the drill competition hosted by the Fort Walton Beach AF JROTC at Hurlburt Field. To date, seven area JROTC units will be competing for placements and awards at this event. Our sponsorship will pay for the lunch meal and trophies. This is the third year we have sponsored this drill competition.

Donations to the Scholarship Fund since my last article were made by Rod Gerdes. Thanks, Rod. We sincerely thank all our donors for your generous donations to help fund scholarships for local JROTC and ROTC cadets.

Below is the complete list of our **Endowed Scholarships**, our **Gold Century Club** members (\$500 cumulative minimum donation) and our **BG Frank Glunn Century Club** members (\$100 minimum donation) for the most previous 12 months, along with our **Business Donors**. Your support is greatly appreciated. All of these donations are used to fund our scholarships. [Note: (D) means deceased and (R) means Renewal of membership.]

Endowed Scholarships: Lt Col Jim and Mrs Una Heavener Memorial Scholarship (D) (via their estate, effective 2018); Dave Parisot in memory of his wife, Chong Cha (Kim) Parisot (effective 2017); Dr (Lt Col, USAF, Ret.) Howard and Mrs. Irene Fisher Scholarship (effective 2022); Dr. (Lt. Col., USAF, Ret.) Fred and Mrs. Jan Westfall Scholarship (effective 2023); Col. (USAF,

Ret.) **Karl and Mrs. Charlotte Eschmann Scholarship** (effective 2024); **Lt.Col. (USAF, Ret.) Larry Bush** in memory of **Mrs. Joan Bush** (effective 2025); and, **Florida Power and Light** (effective 2025).

Gold Century Club: **Bill Ryan** (Feb 2016); **Ruth Cullen, (D)** (Oct 2016); **Dave Parisot** (Feb 2017); **Janet Taylor** (Mar 2017); **Chris Beam** (Mar 2017); **Bob Garcia (D)** (July 2017); **Rod Gerdes** (Nov 2017); **Larry Bush** (Nov 2017); **Dr. Howard & Irene Fisher** (Nov 2017); **Eileen Arpke (D)** (Feb 2018); **Fred & Jan Westfall** (Apr 2018); **Clyde Locke (D)** (Apr 2018); WWII, Korea, and Vietnam Veteran **Sam Lombardo (D)** (July 2018); **Dennis Phillips** (Aug 2018); **Karl & Charlotte Eschmann** (Oct 2018); **Carol Baker** (Jan 2019); **Ann Adelsperger** (Feb 2019); **Don Litke** (Aug 2019); **Fred Boyer (D)** (Aug 2019). **Dr. Keith & Elizabeth Kulow** (Nov 2019); **Al Bills** (Nov. 2019); **Kay Dent** (Nov. 2019); **Dr. Roger Riegenbach** (Dec 2019); **Robert “Pete” Peterzen** (Dec 2019); **Nick Marotta** (Oct 2020); **Kathy & Jesse Bush** (Dec 2020); **Patt & Caroline Maney** (Dec 2020); **Kevin Kirby** (Apr 2021); **Scott & Janet Berry** (May 2021); **Douglas Hardin (D)** (Sept 2021); **Patrick & Mosla Boab** (Dec. 2021); **Bob Allen** (Feb 2022); **Bobbi Hanson Garcia** (Mar 2022); **Joy Houck** (Mar 2022); **George Colton** (May 2022); **Bob Secrest** (May 2022); **Brig. Gen Fran & Mrs Connie Hendricks** (Oct 2022); **Les Matheson** (Feb 2023); **Dan Brown** (April 2023); **Tess Bass** (August 2023); **Bob Gramm** (Dec 2023); **Larry Tashlik** (Dec 2023); **Jean Dutton (D)** (Oct 2024) and **Jeff Watson** (Oct 2024); **Dick Solt** (Mar 2025); **Michael Barnes** (Apr 2025); [Note: 46 total members]

BG Frank Glunn Century Club: (past 12 months) (R=Renewal): January 2025: **Dr. Keith and Elizabeth Kulow (R)**; **Janet Taylor (R)** (in honor of Bill Ryan).and, **Dave Parisot (R)**(in memory of Lydia O’Connor). February 2025: **Rod Gerdes (R)**; **Al Bills (R)**, and **Dave Parisot (R)** (in memory of Doris Day). March 2025: **Dick Solt (R)**; **Brig Gen Fran & Mrs Connie Hendricks (R)**; **Chris Beam (R)**. April 2025: **Dennis Phillips (R)**; **Michael Barnes**; and **Dave Parisot (R)** (In memory of Angela Colton); May 2025: **Michael Barnes (R)**; **Kevin Kirby (R)**; **Bob Gramm (R)**; **Patrick and Mosla Boab (R)**; **Dr. Howard and Mrs. Irene Fisher (R)**; June 2025: **Dave Parisot (R)** (In memory of Col. Jake Bush); July 2025: **George Colton (R)** (In memory of Angela Colton). November 2025: **Pete Peterzen (R)**; **Karl and Charlotte Eschmann (R)**; **Fred and Janet Westfall (R)**; **Tess Bass (R)**; **Dave Parisot** (In memory of Chong Parisot) (R); December 2025: **Dr. Keith and Elizabeth Kulow (R)**; **Les Matheson (R)**; **Bob Gramm (R)**; and **Chris Beam (R)**; January 2026: **Jeff Watson (R)** (In memory of Larry Bush); **Dennis Phillips (R)**; and **Dave Parisot (R)** (In memory of Larry Bush). February 2026: **Rod Gerdes (R)**.

2025/2026 Business Platinum Donors: (\$1,000+): Apr. 2025: **Florida Power & Light (R)**; **Eglin Federal Credit Union (R)**; Dec, 2025: **Bass, Byrd, Jones & Associates at Merrill Lynch of FWB (R)**.



(Bass, Byrd, Jones & Associates)



2025 Business Gold Donors (\$500 - \$749): April 2025: GSS Gear FWB, LLC (R); Daisy Day Brands; and, Step One Automotive Group (R).

2025 Business Silver Donors (\$250 - \$499): March 2025: Lisa Jo Spencer, PA, Attorney (R).

2025 Business Bronze Donors (\$100 - \$249): April 2025: Eye M.D. of Niceville. LLC.

Please support our local businesses that have contributed to our scholarship program.

NWFMOA Scholarship Fund: “HELPING TO BUILD FUTURE MILITARY OFFICERS AND LEADERS”

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**To make a contribution to the
NWFMOA Scholarship Fund
Click Here.**



OUR MISSION

The mission of NWFMOA is to benefit the members of the uniformed services, their families and survivors and to advocate a strong national defense, while providing needed support to the community and its members.

Legislative Corner



Legislative Corner...How to Sign Up for MOAA's Legislative Action Center

During our February lunch meeting, I explained the importance of MOAA's Legislative Action Center and how to sign up to participate in protecting your earned benefits.

Bottomline up front...MOAA is our advocate on Capitol Hill for all things that matter to safeguarding our earned benefits and pay. MOAA lists the bills it is advocating for in its Legislative Action Center. As MOAA members, we are encouraged to show our support of their advocacy by sending a letter to our Senators and Representative. MOAA has already drafted letters on each issue for us. All we need to do is hit send. It is through our letters that our legislators know what we support, thereby assisting MOAA in its quest to advance our agenda.

Following are the simple steps needed to sign up to make your voice heard.

1. Click on the MOAA TAKE ACTION icon below.
2. That will take you to the MOAA Legislative Action Center page.
3. Depending if you are on a phone/tablet or a desktop computer you will do the following:
 - a. On a phone or tablet, click on the box with 3 lines at the top right of the page, then click on the red "Sign Up" icon.
 - b. On a desktop computer, click on the red "Sign Up" icon at the top right of the page.
4. Fill in the requested information. Be sure to annotate your Chapter Affiliation: **NWFMOA is FL19.**
5. Now you are signed up and ready to have your voice heard!
6. While there, please look at the issues MOAA is focusing on. Click on any and show your support by sending the letter they have drafted for you.

H2S (Here to Serve),

Brig Gen Fran Hendricks, USAF Retired
54th President, NWFMOA



Surviving Spouse Corner

Chaplains Ray Alexander and Tom Azar have created a number of excellent resources for Surviving Spouses and it is on our website. Be sure to check it out by clicking on the link below. Or visit our [website](#) and click on [Surviving Spouses](#) at the top of the page.

[Click here for Surviving Spouse Information](#)



Time To Pay Your Dues

It is time to pay your 2026 dues. And, if you haven't done so already, it is way past time to pay your 2025 dues. Please make a check for the amount payable for the next year or beyond.

- Not sure if you owe dues? Click [HERE](#).
- If you owe dues, click [HERE](#) to fill form and send it along with your check to **Treasurer, PO Box 1213, Shalimar, FL 32579.**
- You can also now pay your dues by **credit card**. To do that, click [HERE](#).

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Defender is a monthly publication of the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association. The purpose of this publication is to communicate with, inform, and educate chapter members. The national MOAA, this local chapter, and this publication are totally nonpartisan.

NWFMOA Shirt Purchase Options



The advertisement features a teal banner with three yellow circular icons: a spool of thread for 'EMBROIDERY', a screen for 'SCREEN PRINTING', and a shirt for 'UNIFORMS'. Below the banner is the 'DDB' logo for Daisy Day Brands, with the text 'Daisy Day Brands' and phone number '850-664-2113'. To the right, the address '310 Eglin Parkway, Fort Walton Beach, Florida 32547' is listed. At the bottom, the slogan 'Wear your shirt proudly.' is written in red.

EMBROIDERY **SCREEN PRINTING** **UNIFORMS**

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Daisy Day Brands
850-664-2113

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Fort Walton Beach
Florida 32547

Wear your shirt proudly.

Here is another option...

Looking for a NWFMOA Chapter shirt. In addition to ordering a shirt, you can also buy your own polo shirt (short or long sleeve) and take it to [American Athletic Uniforms, Inc](#) ([90 Eastview Ave. Valparaiso, FL](#)) to have it embroidered with our patch and your name. Cost of embroidery (Patch + Name) is \$15.



Never Stop Serving



The Council Communiqué

Florida Council of Chapters
Military Officers Association of America

[Click to read the FCoC Communiqué](#)

**Click here to join the
Military Officers Association of America
Basic membership is FREE**

Need more reasons to join MOAA? How about these...

- Legislative News Updates & Advocacy Efforts
- MOAA Newsletters
- Chapter & Council Membership & Involvement
- Exclusive Travel Discounts on Products & Travel
- Access to Member Books & Guides
- Financial Education and Consumer Advice
- Scholarships, Interest-free Loans & Grants
- Expert Advice on Military Pay & Benefits
- Career Transition Resources
- Subscription to Military Officer Magazine & Exclusive Publications
- Spouse Protection
- Fee Significantly Reduced at Army & Navy Club of Washington, D.C.

JOIN TODAY

**If You Belong to the NWFMOA, You ARE
Part Of The Solution**

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Click on the form to fill out and pay by mail or credit card.



Northwest Florida Military Officers Assn., Inc.
P.O. Box 1213, Shalimar, FL 32579

AN INVITATION TO YOU: The membership of NWFMOA extends a sincere invitation to join us in our social cultural, professional and service activities that extend for the local to national levels.

Today's Date _____

 Last Name First Name Initial

 Spouse Phone

 Address City State & Zip Code

 Email Address

 Rank Service MOAA Member Number

Regular Reserve National Guard Active Duty Retired

This application is for:

Life Member New Member Renewal Surviving Spouse Auxiliary Associate

Make Checks payable to NWFMOA or to Northwest Florida Military Officers Assn. Inc. Check here if you do not want your name, phone number, or email address listed in the printed chapter directories. Membership includes a subscription to *The Defender* for the dues period. We are a charter member of MOAA and recommend that our members belong to the national organization. Our association is also a member of the Florida Council of Chapters, itself an affiliate of MOAA.

Membership Application/ Renewal

New Members joining this year receive membership through December 31 next year for \$25.00

Membership Renewal
1 yr--\$25.00, 2 yr--\$48.00, 3 yr--\$65.00

Life Membership Dues

| Age | Dues | Age | Dues |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| 101+ | Free | 71-75 | 240.00 |
| 96-100 | 50.00 | 66-70 | 275.00 |
| 91-95 | 75.00 | 61-65 | 295.00 |
| 86-90 | 110.00 | 56-60 | 335.00 |
| 81-85 | 150.00 | 51-55 | 360.00 |
| 76-80 | 195.00 | <50 | 395.00 |

Effective in 2026, Surviving Spouses receive a FREE Life Membership.

Join Us Today



Important Things To Remember

| What | What to Click |
|--|--|
| Make a reservation for our monthly luncheon. | Click Here |
| Join NWFMOA | Click Here |
| Join MOAA | Click Here |
| Send feedback or comments about the Defender | bobgramm5@gmail.com |



Update Your Contact Information

Is Your Personal Information Up to Date?

If any of your vital information has changed, like if you've moved and have a new mailing address, or a new phone number or email address, please use the Update Your Information link on our NWFMOA website.

The link is http://nwfmoa.org/info_update.html

The information you provide helps us keep in touch with you and is **ONLY** used by the NWFMOA



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