

WMMOA

Western Montana Military Officers Association

www.wmmoa.com



President's Comments

Welcome back, everyone, to the second half of WMMOA's 2022-23 meeting year! I hope you all had a joyful Christmas and are ready for the comradery of our bi-monthly meetings.

Member Bob Nasby has stepped up to occupy the office of Secretary. His involvement on the board will relieve those who have been doing double duty. By the time you read this newsletter, he will have had his first board meeting and have seen how much we need his help! Please thank Bob when you see him! My nose is thankful (reference last month's newsletter).

We lost Bob Whaley's wife Lawana in December. Please keep the Whaley family in your thoughts and prayers.

We had a great turnout at the Army/Navy football game watch party on December 10. I counted twenty-eight excited souls enjoying lunch and watching the game. Some were not as happy as others at the end, but it was a fun time.

The following Saturday, many members helped with Wreaths Across America at the Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery. It was bone-chilling cold, but the event it

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WMMOA OFFICERS 2021-2023

www.wmmoa.com

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JANUARY 2023

FRIDAY, January 13

Social Hour 6 - 8 PM

Westside Lanes

\$10.00

Justin Kendhammer

Veterans Service Officer

VA claims Process and PACT Act



FRIDAY, January 20

LUNCHEON DOUBLETREE

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

\$20.00

To RSVP [CLICK HERE](#)

Or email sptandberg@gmail.com , 406-251-4224
by January 18th

Jim McDonald, Architect

**History of the
Missoula County Courthouse**

(President's comments continued)

self was heartwarming. I encourage all to attend the annual ceremony.

Member Tom Wilkins introduced us to a potential new member last month, Kerry Daigle, former CMDR, US Navy. Kerry was among the hard workers at the Wreaths ceremony. I like his work ethics!

We have scheduled excellent speakers through mid-March. Our first Social Hour on January 13, 5:45 pm at Westside Lanes is brought to us by Vanessa Berry. Justin Kendhammer, Veterans Service Officer, will discuss the PACT Act. The acronym stands for **P**romise to **A**ddress **C**omprehensive **T**oxics.

Vanessa has also scheduled architect Jim McDonald to speak at our Luncheon, January 20, 11:45, in the Double-Tree. Jim is a wealth of Montana history.

Our banquet this year is scheduled for Saturday, May 20. This year involves swearing in new officers and, as always, we'll be enlightened by a great speaker. If you are booking this year's vacation, be sure it begins after May 20!

Respectfully,
Charlie Olinger

See page 3 for more information
from Charlie about MMOA's mission
in 2023.

Be sure to make your January 20th,
luncheon reservation by [CLICKING
HERE](#) or emailing/calling Sharon at
sptandberg@gmail.com, 406-251-4224.

THE WMMOA LIBRARY IS RETURNING TO THE MONTHLY LUNCHEONS!

In addition to bringing the WMMOA "library" to the monthly socials, Dean Bond will now be bringing it to the luncheons. This collection of military related books is a treasure trove of good reads. Also, Dean is always accepting additions to the library.



Keep Up to date on
Toxic Exposure Information from
the VA: [READ MORE](#)



WREATH CLEANUP DAY

Saturday, January 14th at 10 AM

Western Montana

State Veterans Cemetery

1911 Tower, Missoula

Come and help collect the wreaths that
we placed in December



SOCIAL HOUR is at 6:00 at Westside Lanes
and the **LUNCHEON is at the DoubleTree at 11:30.**



Dates to remember for 2023

January 13, 20 February 10, 17
March 10, 17 April 14, 21
May 5, luncheon only

Banquet, Saturday, May 20th, 2023

MOAA and WMMOA: Mission for 2023

As an independent chapter of MOAA, we have the responsibility to support its mission of advocating for active-duty service members and veterans across the military spectrum. **The Military Officers Association of America is a nonprofit veterans association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nations keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors. ***

How does WMMOA, with comparatively so few members, get involved? Many of you remember the annual “storming of the hill” during which chapter officers nationwide would travel to D.C. to personally present MOAA’s mission. Understandably, that effort is now known as Advocacy in Action and is accomplished via electronic means. Over the past two years, Vanessa Berry, Gary Swartz and I met with Montana’s Senators and Congressman via internet video. We emphasized bills in Congress that affected the military and called for action to support those bills on behalf of current, retired and former officers in Montana. The same was done by chapter leaders from all other states. The efforts conclude in the spring, often with excellent results.

What are MOAA’s concerns for 2023? The following advocacy issues are cited in their January issue of *Military Officer* magazine. These are the critical military topics that WMMOA’s officers will be posing to Montana’s legislators:

Compensation and Service-Earned Benefits The cost of living is tough all around. Our all-volunteer military personnel face the same problems.

Military Housing Take it from an Army brat son of a Sergeant Major, it’s difficult when a military base has a lack of housing, yet compensation to live off-base is usually inadequate.

Health Care for Currently Serving and Retirees Cutting back on health care benefits affects active duty and retired. Have Tricare and pharmacy benefits been on par with commercial health plans?

Health Care and Benefits for Veterans Some progress in this area has been realized in part due to advocacy groups such as MOAA. More action is needed. Our first Social Hour this year will address the PACT Act.

Service Families Refer to the previous comment about an all-volunteer military. What incentives do young people have to serve if their family life isn’t what it could be in civilian life? Basic needs allowances, affordable childcare options and improved health care procedures are all issues that need to be addressed.

Survivors

Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance and Veterans Group Life Insurance do not match inflation. Modifications need to be made to sustain survivors.

National Guards and Reserves

No Tricare coverage and delayed pay for Guard and Reserve when promoted and when retired makes it difficult to maintain readiness. Improvements are needed to maintain the strength of these critical segments of our military forces.

I imagine that a few of these issues have raised your eyebrows as retired and former military officers. Your participation in WMMOA has a significant effect on our lives and this year we’ll be ready to support the mission. Please continue to bring eligible new members, please continue to volunteer your services on the Board and, if you haven’t already, please consider joining MOAA!

Respectfully,

Charlie Olinger, President

*From *Military Officer*, MOAA, January 2023