

The Beacon

February 2024

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UPCOMING EVENTS

March Chapter Meeting, Date/Time/Location TBD

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We have started this new year with an extremely successful chapter general membership meeting on January 29. We welcomed Caroline Holmes, the first-place essay winner in the 2023 Veterans Day Poster and Essay Contest. Caroline read her essay and received her award from our honored guest speaker, Harford County Executive Bob Cassilly. Bob spoke on the array of support provided to veterans within the county and thanked our chapter and the various other Veteran Service Organizations who help provide this support.

It was a privilege to have the installation of elected officers for 2024 conducted by longtime member and former Chapter President, Jim Wasson. I now embark on my second year as your chapter president and am honored to have Bob Beahm continuing to serve as your Vice President and Connie Richardson continuing to serve as your Secretary. We are very fortunate to have Board member Frank King stepping up to serve as your Treasurer upon the “retirement” of Bill Beddow in that position after six years of dedicated service. It was my privilege to award Bill the National MOAA Leadership Award for his outstanding service as our Treasurer. Thankfully, Bill will continue to serve as the chapter webmaster.

The 2024 Maryland Legislative Session is well underway convening from January 10 to April 8 and MOAA National is busy planning for this year’s Advocacy in Action (AiA) campaign so let us remain vigilant in our continuing efforts to advocate for our military community and connect it to the nation we serve. Please visit the MOAA Legislative Action Center at <https://moaa.quorum.us/>

Planning is underway for our next chapter general membership meeting in March so stay tuned for the details as they emerge.

Yours in service,

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Keith Reagan
LTC, USAR (Ret)
Chapter President

CHAPTER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

On 29 January the General Meeting was held at MacGregors Restaurant in Havre de Grace which included the induction of new officers, awarding of poster/essay contestant Caroline Holmes and guest speaker Bob Cassilly, Harford County Executive. See the pictures below:



Caroline Holmes receiving award with Bob Cassilly



Induction of officers

HARFORD COUNTY PROPERTY TAX CREDIT

Harford County will provide a 20% tax credit for a maximum of 20 years, on county property taxes for individuals who are over 65 years of age, have a dwelling with an assessed value of \$600,000 or less, and who either own and have lived in the dwelling for at least 35 years or are a retiree or surviving spouse of a retiree of the United States' Uniformed Services who has not remarried.

This credit is also applicable to veterans or surviving spouses of veterans of the United States' Uniformed Services who have not remarried, who have a dwelling with an assessed value of \$600,000 or less and a permanent disability that is service-connected with a combined service-connected evaluation of 50% or higher that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Information is available on the county web page with links to appropriate forms at:

<https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/3466/Real-Property-Tax-Credit-Information>

If you were approved for this tax credit last year you should have received a letter/form in the mail which you need to send in for renewal this year.

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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Updates to the latest legislative affairs can be found on the national website noted above or at the Maryland Council of chapters web page at <https://www.mdmoaa.org/>

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

WE NEED YOU!

Did you know that your current Regular Annual Member status with The Susquehanna Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America is about to expire? Your support over the past year has been appreciated and we would hate to lose you. Over the past years the Chapter has been instrumental in fighting for your benefits as a service member in Maryland at the legislative, legal, and community levels. And indirectly at the national level through MOAA.

Even with all the challenges that COVID-19 has placed in our path, the Chapter has maintained an active status using the Zoom meeting platform.

Please visit our website to renew your membership today. To renew, follow these easy steps: 1. First login using the Member Login button at the top of the page. www.moasusquehanna.org 2. Once logged in, renew your membership by clicking the Membership or Join button at the top third of the page in the blue bar.

- For those who have forgotten their username and/or password, there is a "Forgot Login?" link on the Login page. *Note: If this is your first login, click "Request Login Information" to get your temporary password.*

You may also renew directly at the link on the MOAA web site <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx> Just follow the online instructions for completing your renewal.

Should you not want to renew online you can go to this link and download the membership renewal. Fill out the form, enclose a check for \$20.00 and mail to the address on the form.

National MOAA and local affiliate membership are two distinct memberships. You do not have to be an MOAA member to join the Susquehanna Chapter. Submitting your dues payment through this online application is for Susquehanna chapter dues (joins/renewals) only. If you are attempting to join/renew for National MOAA, please go to www.moaa.org/join.

If you need any assistance in accessing your account, please email us at info@moasusquehanna.org

Thank you very much for your continued support of the Susquehanna Chapter of The Military Officers Association of America.

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NATIONAL NEWS

New Army App Will Offer Families the Latest Information on Their Communities

By: Kathleen Curthoys

The Army is rolling out a new effort to deliver real-time information within its communities, acknowledging the longtime challenge of getting the word out.

The new app, called My Army Post, is being developed by soldiers for soldiers, family members, and Army civilians and designed to be local to their installation, said Army Chief of Staff Randy George at the Army Senior Leaders Town Hall during the 2023 Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Annual Meeting and Exposition. [GET THE APP: [Google Play](#) | [Apple Store](#)]

George, Army Secretary Christine Wormuth, and Sergeant Major of the Army Michael Weimer emphasized the importance of giving everyone on post information they need when they need it.

A reservist in the audience reflected a frustration common to military families when he said his wife would rather deal with their cable and internet provider than to try to get information from the Army.

“We have soldiers working on this right now,” George responded. He then introduced a team of soldiers who are product engineers with the Army Software Factory in Austin, Texas, and working on the new mobile application.

The app will be developed in iterations, starting with Fort Cavazos and adapted to installations across the Army. It will provide real-time information on installation dining facilities, gyms, medical facilities, traffic at the installation gates, weather conditions, post-wide alerts, and other aspects of life on post. A key feature is a QR code and feedback tool allowing users to send notifications if information needs updating.

“One of the things that was really impressive to me,” George said, giving an example of the app’s capability, “[is if] you want to know what the gate hours are, it’ll actually show you the gate, it’ll show you how much traffic is at the gate.”

Feedback is a priority for the app’s continuing development, George said. The Army has been seeking comments from soldiers, spouses, and Department of the Army civilians and posted an online survey to learn what capabilities would improve readiness and make on-post life easier.

My Army Post is replacing the Army’s Digital Garrison app. It is one of the newest among various types of apps that service branches offer; for example, Navy Region Southeast released in early 2023 its new installation-focused OneApp.

The Army’s app is geared to providing “a single source of reliable, accurate, current information,” Lt. Gen. Omar Jones, commander of Installation Management Command, said at another AUSA forum.

Information flow for families is a top priority for Sherrill Isenhower, volunteer coordinator for El Paso County and spouse of Maj. Gen. James Isenhower, commander of 1st Armored Division at Fort Bliss, Texas. As a

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panelist at the forum focused on installation management, she noted the numerous ways leaders use to try to get messages out.

“The unveiling of this new app is going to be fantastic,” she said.

Do Business Cards Still Matter?

By: Erin Cardinal

Think about the last time you were at an event and collected a bunch of business cards. What did you do with them when you got home? Be honest.

My guess: Cards from people who you couldn't remember ended up in the trash, and you kept a few from people you planned to contact ... maybe the ones with a note or a star on the back as a reminder.

In a networking setting, the business card is a means to an end – connection. Whether you have a paper or digital business card matters a lot less than ensuring you have one. Your card is both a practical tool and a personal-professional branding medium.

Building a Better Card

Do not overthink your business card. Make it as user-friendly as possible. If you've decided to go the traditional, printed route, consider the following:

- Keep it simple. Your name, email, and phone number will suffice. Feel free to add your LinkedIn QR code or link, but avoid too much clutter.
- Finish strong. Use a matte finish, not a shiny gloss, so either you or your contact can make a note on the card without a smudge or an ink-stained finger.
- Stock options. Use a white or light-colored stock card – notes made by a blue or black pen should be easily readable.
- Include a rank? That's up to you. If you are targeting the defense sector, your rank can show you have experience in the industry. If you are not targeting that space, consider leaving it off. Still not sure? Consider making two sets – it won't break the bank!

Want to learn more tips and best practices for transition, or find upcoming opportunities to get your card (and yourself) into circulation? Check out MOAA's events page for upcoming seminars, webinars, career fairs, and much more!

Third Short-Term Funding Extension Will Keep Government Open Until March

By: Cory Titus

President Joe Biden signed legislation Jan. 19 to temporarily extend federal funding into March, averting a partial government shutdown.

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The House and Senate approved the continuing resolution in bipartisan votes after congressional leaders reached a broader agreement on spending levels through September 2024. The stopgap measure buys lawmakers additional time to finalize the \$1.59 trillion appropriations legislation and clear both chambers.

The continuing resolution finances federal operations at current levels through March 1 for most agencies and March 8 for others, including DoD. This marks the third short-term extension since September.

The latest continuing resolution staves off imminent funding disruption while negotiations proceed on the broader spending package. Lawmakers will utilize the coming weeks to translate the agreed budget framework into detailed appropriations language needed to keep the government running past March.

Congress must reach a funding deal by April 30 to avoid an automatic 1% across-the-board budget cut, as required by the Fiscal Responsibility Act passed in June 2023. MOAA urges all members to contact their lawmakers immediately and demand they finalize full-year appropriations to avert further disruption. Write your lawmakers today to make your voice heard – Congress needs to pass the funding bills our community relies



Standing with you at every stage.

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CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

President	Keith Reagan USA LTC Reserve (Ret)	keith@reaganhouse.net
Vice President	BG Robert Beahm, USA (Ret)	rbeahm0546@verizon.net
Membership	COL Ted Newing, USA (Ret)	ted.newing@gmail.com
Programs	MAJ Cathy Hampton, USA (Ret)	cathyhampton51@gmail.com
Treasurer	Francis King, USA COL(Ret)	frank.king22@yahoo.com
Secretary	Connie Richardson	Car0992@comcast.net
Legislative Affairs	LTC Bob Brown, USA (Ret)	brown.r.1627@gmail.com
Newsletter	LCDR Lawrence Archer, USN (Ret)	archerl211@yahoo.com
Chaplain	Bill Whitford USA CPT Reserve (Former)	bndwhit4d@comcast.net
Publicity	MAJ Cathy Hampton, USA (Ret)	cathyhampton51@gmail.com
Webmaster	MAJ Sidney (Bill) Beddow, USA (Ret)	sbeddow@zoominternet.net
Director	CAPT Carl Kilhoffer, USNR (Ret)	ckilhoffer@comcast.net
Director	Vacant	
Immediate Past President	MAJ Cathy Hampton, USA (Ret)	cathyhampton51@gmail.com
Surviving Spouse Liaison	Connie Richardson	Car0992@comcast.net
Community Outreach	Francis King, USA COL(Ret)	frank.king22@yahoo.com

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ABOUT MOAA

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. It is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization. <http://moaa.org>. The Chapter is an affiliate of the national MOAA. Like MOAA National, the Chapter is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization.

The MOAA Legislative Action Center provides information regarding MOAA's top national legislative priorities for the year and COLA, as well as perspective on issues in the military community that could affect you and your family <http://takeaction.moaa.org>

If you are not a member of MOAA, you can join at <http://bit.ly/JoinMOAA>. Membership in MOAA is separate from membership in the Susquehanna Chapter.

MOAA MISSION

To preserve and protect earned benefits for our uniformed services, veterans, their families, and surviving spouses through:

Advocacy, Leadership, Education, and Service.

Advocacy Highlights:

Pay Raises for all ranks, Widows Tax repeal, MTF restructuring delays, protecting TRICARE benefits, military housing reforms, PACT Act support, MISSION Act reforming VA programs, GI Bill upgrades, COLA adjustment improvements.

Current Legislative Goals:

Compensations and Service-Earned Benefits, Military Housing, Health Care for currently serving, retirees, and veterans, Survivor families benefits, and improve Guard and Reserves pay and health coverage.

SUSQUEHANNA CHAPTER MOAA:

Susquehanna Chapter, a 501(c) nonprofit organization was affiliated in October 1969 with the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), formerly TROA. Chapter members live in Harford and Cecil Counties . We promote the MOAA purposes and objectives to foster fraternal relations among retired, active and former officers of the seven uniformed services and the Reserve Components.

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The chapter has 60 active members, who are currently serving, former, and retired officers, and their spouses and widows/widowers. Working through the Chapter, we provide assistance to our membership, enabling them to continue to serve their nation and communities, maintain contact with the other services, and enjoy social fellowship with people who share common values of patriotism, honor and selflessness.

Our Chapter helps provide critical grassroots support for MOAA's national legislative agenda. Our benefits are under attack, and MOAA is in the fight to preserve them. Chapter members let their legislators know what's on their minds and open doors for MOAA's legislative team in Washington, D.C. In these difficult times, our chapters are the best way we know to do that.

At the local level we successfully advocated for reduction of Harford County property taxes for retired veterans and reductions of MD State taxes on retired pay for military members and first responders. We sponsored scholarships, engaged Harford County Board of Education to establish a JROTC program, and continue to coordinate community outreach to schools for Veteran Poster essay contests. We coordinated COVID 19 grants for qualifying veterans, volunteered with the Susquehanna Habitat for Humanity, and participate in local veteran memorial activities

