

MOAA



VOICE

Military Officers Association of America
Redwood Empire Chapter

Post Office Box 2801
Santa Rosa, CA 95405-0801

VOLUME 54, NUMBER 4

“Serving Those Who Serve America”

APRIL 2024

MOAA Redwood Empire Chapter: Officer Vacant Positions and Duties

President:

- Preside over monthly chapter membership meetings.
- Preside over Board Meetings
- Appoint committee members of standing committees (with board approval)
- Maintain liaison with Cal MOAA and National MOAA.
- Write article for MOAA Redwood Empire Chapter monthly Newsletter.

1st Vice President:

- Preside over chapter and board meetings in the absence of the President.
- Arrange and coordinate meetings venues and menu items for the general membership.
 - Maintain custody and responsibility for the flags, colors and insignia of the chapter and ensure their presence at appropriate meetings.

2nd Vice President:

- Arrange for speakers at general membership meetings.
- Assume duties of the 1st VP and President in that persons absence.
- Prepare, maintain and publicize press relations for the chapter.

It is essential that we have a President to continue the functioning of this organization

Someone must volunteer for the above positions.

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS: AT THE MARCH 28th LUNCHEON MEETING WE HAD NOMINATIONS OF OFFICERS FOR 2024. FINAL NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS WILL HAPPEN AT THE APRIL 25th LUNCHEON MEETING

See Page 4 for Ballot and more information

MOAA BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING

will be at the Santa Rosa Veterans building in the Conference room.

Tuesday, April 2, 2024, 11:30am.

Chapter members are always welcome at these meetings

Thursday, April 25, 2024

**Buffet Luncheon at the
POPPY BANK EPICENTER**

in Santa Rosa

11:00am ~ Dine at Noon

Guest Speaker: Jeane Slone, who has written five books on women in the military. She will talk about one book but, will bring books in case anyone wants to purchase them. Both her parents served in the military, a fact she didn't learn until her father passed away. She will do a power point presentation

**PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS
FOR DINING,**

this is needed for head counts for meals and making name tags.

See page No. 5 for the Luncheon menu.

CHAPTER DUES FOR 2024

At the present time we have 8 (eight) members that have not renewed their memberships. They are: CWO4 CB, Capt R.LB, LCDR VEH, LTC DDJ, 1/Lt DJN, COL HAS, LCDR TJS, and Maj MGW. Please check with your Chapter Secretary for further information. March 1, 2024 was the Deadline. Dues are only \$25.00

“GOOD SPEAKERS ARE NEEDED”

Chapter members:

Who do you want to hear from?

Please send your suggestions to

Bob Safreno, (707)795-3963, Cell: 707-479-9374

or by e-mail: shadowbob1@juno.com

“Sunshine Lady”

Call Myrna Hurst, 707-468-0146, if you know of anyone in the chapter who might enjoy a get well or sympathy card.

Legislative Update - April 2024

General Comments. As your Legislative Affairs Chairman and looking at the status of our chapter, I would like to point out that we really need to revitalize our activities particularly in view of current situations - both on a national and state level. National MOAA cannot do much of the "heavy lifting" that needs to be done at the grass roots level. This is exemplified by an "all hands" effort to make contact with your local Congressmen, Assemblymen, State and National Senators. We simply cannot let this chapter close by default.

If we do not get State exemption for our retired military pay, or if we lose out TRICARE benefits as they get "rolled" into the California Single Payer Health System being taxed for something that we earned as a benefit many years ago after a long legislative fight, we all need to look around and ask yourselves, "Have I done everything I could to influence a favorable decision?" Remember that it's the "squeaky wheel" that gets lubed.

In Mendocino County, the VSO was going to be transferred to the county building from its very adequate house from which could take of veterans that required assistance. Fortunately after a large dissent by local vets, I believe that the move has been stopped. These are some of the reasons we need to **stay** as a viable chapter.

Federal. At the federal chaos continue to reign. We are still facing government shutdown or another continuing resolution the budget for 2024 being pushed into the budget talks for 2025. With the NDAA funding still in a fluid situation, we will continue with the following legislative priorities listed below however, if you should so choose you may select other bill from the list from MOAA in Action .

The Expanding America's National Cemetery Act (H.R. 1413), This is a significant piece of legislation protecting full uniformed services burial benefits introduced March 7 by Reps. Lisa McClain (R-Mich.) and Chrissy Houlahan (D-Pa.) is designed to preserve the option for full military honors now available at ANC and offers a long-term solution to Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) which would inevitably run out of room. It would authorize designating the next national cemetery location with equivalent honors to continue these benefits, rather than reducing eligibility at ANC. Unfortunately, some staffers have indicated: "No one promised you full military honors at your funeral," said one staffer - a troubling indicator of the challenge faced by MOAA and other military and veteran advocacy groups when only 18% of lawmakers have served in uniform. We need to reach out to our Congress members to support this bill.

Please use the **MOAA Advocacy in Action** to follow up with our Representatives.

Respect for Military Families Act (H.R. 3232/ S.1588) This act would prevent the government from immediately recouping any overpayment of benefits and instead gives survivors the opportunity to repay the benefits over a 12-month period. It would also allow the secretary of defense to forgive the repayment. We need co-sponsors from our representatives and senators.

Military Spouse Hiring Act (H.R. 1277). This act will help spouses who are currently discriminated against for employment due to their husbands frequent transfers. Both Senators are on board as co-sponsors, however, we need to get our Representatives on board.

The Major Richard Star Act - Concurrent Receipt for Combat Injured Veterans: two years in a row, Two-thirds of Congress has supported this bill for the past two years. This legislation would reverse an unjust offset requiring these combat-injured retirees to give up a dollar of DoD-earned retirement pay for every dollar of VA-provided disability benefits they receive. We need to get our legislators back on board for the upcoming year.

State. Follows are two major issues to be followed:

AB 46 Retired Pay Tax Exemption . This is NOT a dead issue - yet. We are on a "wait and see" status. Take a look at January's MOAA Voice regarding this subject. I have requested our board members and anyone else to email the new Chairperson of the Appropriations Committee asking to put this issue for a floor vote.

SB 770 California State Run Health System/1332 Waiver. We are facing another attack on our military/retiree health care benefits -TRICARE/CHAMPUS/TRICARE FOR LIFE. This plan would put everyone under the State run health program with no exceptions if an waiver is granted to eliminate Medicare and private medical plans to be incorporated into a single payer system. **Heads up everyone!**

Once more, I am including a copy of the letter I sent to Assemblyman Jim Woods which you all can use and plagiarize as you want with no penalty. This is a BIG ONE with long lasting consequences.

~~~~~  
"The Honorable Jim Wood  
State Assemblyman - 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
200 School St., Ste D  
Ukiah, CA 95482

*Subject: Protection from 1332 Waiver outlined by SB 770.*

*Dear Assemblyman Wood,*

*As Legislative Affairs Chairman for the Redwood Empire Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) - an integral part of the 2,300 member California Council of Chapters of MOAA, I am the principal chapter advocate for our chapter members in relation to concerns regarding proposed state or federal legislation.*

*Therefore, I am writing to you to share our concerns regarding a 1332 Waiver proposed by the recently passed SB 770 seeking to eliminate Medicare in California and establish a state run system. SB 770 requires that a 1332 Waiver be sought from the Health & Human Services Secretary which would pave the way for a massive health care tax being imposed on California residents and employers.*

*As I understand it, SB 770 proposes that the waiver be completed by the end of this year result in the elimination of Medicare and all private health coverage in California, replacing it with a costly, \$400 billion-dollar untested health system run by state government, and require the largest tax increase in state history. I am sure you are aware that previously, AB1400 mentioned a 15% payroll tax and an income based health care tax to help fund any short fall.*

*California's disabled veterans, who are entitled to no cost health care from the Veterans Administration, could find themselves paying an imposed "health care tax" based on that disabled veteran's income or spouse's income. Disabled veterans who are self-employed or small business owners could find themselves subject to a payroll tax, to fund a single payer health care system in California.*

Veterans who are entitled to Medicare could find themselves paying an additional health care tax based on income, above the dollar amount that Medicare already sets each year.

Military retirees who are entitled to Tricare for Life would experience a massive disruption to their Tricare medical benefits, currently provided by the federal government.

Our active-duty military families stationed at installations throughout California would have their Tricare medical benefits disrupted and current coverage's changed. Military families may find themselves subject to a state health care tax the federal Tricare benefits earned while serving our country. A self-employed military spouse may find themselves subject to a 15% payroll tax.

Therefore, I respectfully request your support to exclude the aforementioned veterans, military retirees and their dependents under Tricare, active duty military personnel and families from the provisions determined by SB 770 due to probable hardships to those individuals. "

Sincerely yours,

Vernon D. McNamee  
LTC, US Army Retired  
Legislative Affairs Chairman  
Redwood Empire Chapter MOAA"

Let me know if you have any questions

~~~~~  
Vern McNamee, LTC, USA Retired
Legislative Chairman
Redwood Empire Chapter MOAA (CA30)
707 972-3066
vernonmc@mcn.org

"Pub Crawl"

Chapter members, Friends and Guests: "Pub Crawl", is back on our event calendar.

We will meet at 12:00 noon the Poppy Bank Epicenter, April 15, 2024. Always on the **THIRD** Monday of each month. Our pub crawls are a great place to relax and share our past experiences. We all have stories to tell!!

Any other questions, please call your Past President Ken Johnson. (408)466-6764.



The guest speaker at the February luncheon was Philip McGough, the Adult Services Librarian at the Northwest library in Santa Rosa. In a PowerPoint presentation Philip explained the many services offered by the Sonoma County public library.

All you need is an active library card to access any of them. In addition to books, magazines, and CDs, there are many things being offered. Not only are there computers and printers, there is a 3D printer. You can also check out a WiFi Hot Spot. You can check out a host of things from toolkits to musical instruments. An Adult Literacy program is also available. In the summer free lunches are served in connection with Redwood Empire Food Bank. If you have any questions, Philip welcomes you to email him at pmgough@sonomalibrary.org.

APRIL 25th
CHAPTER GENERAL MEETING
ELECTION of OFFICERS
and DIRECTORS

At our luncheon meeting on Thursday, April 25th we will be electing officers and directors that need to be filled for the 2024 year. Come out and support your Chapter with your presence and your vote. If you can't attend the actual meeting, please complete and mail in the following absentee ballot.

NOTE: Do not vote more than one time PLEASE!!!

At the March 28th Luncheon we had nominations of Officers that needed to be filled. We have submitted the following list of candidates for offices indicated. All have expressed a willingness to serve if elected. If you are attending, please be prepared to complete a ballot at the meeting.

NOTE: The Chapter still needs some to volunteer to be a Director.



The guest speakers at the March luncheon were Barbara and Bruce Wohlert, owners of Trips 4U. After retiring from their jobs and looking for something to do that would give them pleasure and bring in an income, their love of travel led them to take over the Trips 4U business when it was for sale. Trips 4U offers day trips, overnight/several nights trips, and extended trips. Four times a year Trips 4U partners with the established and successful Collette tours. All tours are very accessible because there is a Santa Rosa pickup place with ample parking to leave cars for a day or several days. To find out more about what is offered, visit www.trips4U.org. If you want to be on the mailing list, call the office at 707-538- 4930.

Redwood Empire Chapter
Military Officer's Association
of America
BALLOT - 2024

CHAPTER PRESIDENT (Vote for One)

- [] Donna Poulter
- [] _____

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT (Vote for One)

- [] Mary-Gwen Neisingh
- [] _____

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT (Vote for One)

- [] LTC Steve Countouriotis, USA
- [] _____

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 (Vote for Three)

- [] Dayle Johnson
- [] Rosemary Rizzo
- [] *Need Volunteers*
- [] _____

~~~~~  
 While committees are not elected positions, we continue to seek volunteers for our committees, which are essential to our chapter functioning. Committees include Membership, Personal Affairs, Scholarship, and several more, as detailed in your 2023 Chapter Roster.

**FROM BY- LAWS (2020) - ARTICLE VI - VOTING**

- a. **Certification** For the election of chapter officers and directors, and other matters brought to the chapter membership for vote, the right to vote shall be limited to chapter members in good standing. The Secretary will certify the eligibility of members to vote.
- b. **Quorum** Participation by at least ten percent (10%) of the chapter's total membership in good standing shall constitute a quorum. All those present to vote in person, plus those who have submitted valid absentee ballots, shall be counted toward the needed quorum.
- c. **Proxies** Proxy voting shall not be permitted.
- d. **Absentee Voting** For the general membership meeting, absentee ballots and the slate of nominees shall be provided to all members in good standing either through the October *MOAA VOICE* or otherwise provided at least twenty (20) days prior to the date of any scheduled meeting at which a vote will be taken

(A Sonoma County Main Chapter event; all members are more than welcome to attend)

## Buffet Luncheon, Thursday April 25, 2024

**Epicenter, 3215 Coffey Lane, Santa Rosa**

*Socializing 11:00 to 11:45 am, Meeting starts, Lunch 12:00 noon*

Cost (including tax and tip) - **Price \$26.00**

**Salad:** House Salad and Fruit Salad

**Lunch:** Tempura Shrimp ~ Lemon Chicken ~ Penne with pesto

**Dessert:** Cookies. Water, Lemonade, Iced Tea, Hot Tea and Coffee

**Enclosed:** is my check for my advanced reservation \_\_\_ persons @ \$26.00 each. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** All must make **RESERVATIONS** Please Pre Pay if possible. (Late options only Pay At Door).

**Information** is needed for head counts for meals and making name tags.

**NO RESERVATION or Walk-Ins will cost \$30.00 per person.**

**Donations:** Col. Brey Scholarship Fund (Fully Tax Deductible). \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Speaker: **Jeane Slone**, who has written five books on women in the military.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_, Phone: ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Guests: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the names of all guest, so that we can make **NAME TAGS** for them too, thank you.

Make check (s) payable to: **RECMOAA**

To: MOAA, Redwood Empire Chapter, P.O. Box 2801, Santa Rosa, CA 95405

### Redwood Empire Chapter member CPT WILLIAM ANDERSON, USA

**Is offering his service to  
members and veterans in need.**

He realizes that the country is presently going through a rough time, because of the present COVID-19 virus and shelter in place, there are a lot of people with many different needs. He is offering to our members and any veterans organizations his help.

As a landlord he can repair many house issues for our their members. **FREE!** They only need to pay for parts.

He can transport supplies. He lives in Santa Rosa. He owns 60 properties in this state alone and is his own maintenance service. He does many kinds of things. He still offers a weeks worth of goods and 5 gallons of gas to needy members, vets and classmates.

Anyone can call him and he will give you more details. Call: William Anderson at 707-331-0366

**SEE PUB CRAWL PAGE No. 3**

Never ever, ever, ever go  
to the horse auction after  
4 margaritas  
Lesson learned.



## 2024 DATES TO REMEMBER

April:  
 2<sup>nd</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am – Scholarship winners  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 10<sup>th</sup> Wives Club Luncheon, **Epicenter**  
 15<sup>th</sup> **Pub Crawl** at Epicenter, **12:00** noon  
 24<sup>th</sup> United Veterans Council meeting  
 25<sup>th</sup> Luncheon, **Epicenter** Election of Officers

May:  
 7<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am – Scholarship winners  
 8<sup>th</sup> Wives Club Luncheon, **Epicenter**  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 18<sup>th</sup> Armed Forces Day – Rose Parade, Santa Rosa  
 20<sup>th</sup> **Pub Crawl** at Epicenter, **12:00** noon  
 22<sup>nd</sup> United Veterans Council meeting  
 23<sup>rd</sup> Luncheon, **Epicenter**  
 27<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day Ceremonies

June:  
 4<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 15<sup>th</sup> Saturday, Picnic Spring Lake, Lower Jackrabbit Area  
 Honor Scholarship Recipients?  
 \*\* 17<sup>th</sup> **Pub Crawl** at Epicenter, **12:00** noon  
 26<sup>th</sup> United Veterans Council meeting

July:  
 10<sup>th</sup> Wives Club Luncheon, **Epicenter**  
 15<sup>th</sup> **Pub Crawl** at Epicenter, **12:00** noon  
 24<sup>th</sup> United Veterans Council meeting  
 25<sup>th</sup> Luncheon, **Epicenter**

August:  
 6<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am, select a nominating committee  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 14<sup>th</sup> Wives Club Luncheon, **Epicenter**  
 17<sup>th</sup> Saturday, Riverfront Regional Park, Annual BBQ  
 \*\* 19<sup>th</sup> **Pub Crawl** at Epicenter, **12:00** noon  
 28<sup>th</sup> United Veterans Council meeting

September:  
 3<sup>rd</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am – Approval of 2025 officers  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 11<sup>th</sup> Wives Club Luncheon, **Epicenter**  
 16<sup>th</sup> **Pub Crawl** at Epicenter, **12:00** noon  
 \*\* 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> Air Show at CMS Airport?  
 25<sup>th</sup> United Veterans Council meeting  
 26<sup>th</sup> Luncheon, **Epicenter**

October:  
 1<sup>st</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am  
 9<sup>th</sup> Wives Club Luncheon, **Epicenter**  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 21<sup>st</sup> **Pub Crawl** at Epicenter, **12:00** noon  
 23<sup>rd</sup> United Veterans Council meeting  
 \*\* 24<sup>th</sup> Luncheon Epicenter, Election of Officers for 2025

November:  
 5<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 11<sup>th</sup> North Bay Veterans Day parade (Monday)  
 13<sup>th</sup> Wives Club Luncheon, **Epicenter**  
 \*\* 15<sup>th</sup> Friday, Lobster Feed, Santa Rosa Veterans building  
 \*\* 18<sup>th</sup> **Pub Crawl** at Epicenter, **12:00** noon  
NO United Veterans Council meeting  
 28<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving Day

\*\* = Not Confirmed at this time ~ **CNX** = Cancelled ~ **UNK** = Unknown

## MOAA WIVES CLUB

(Sonoma County Main - All members welcome)

### 2024 Officers

|                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| President: Barbara Confer      | 707-763-8198 |
| Vice President: Donna Poulter  | 707-576-0513 |
| Secretary: Tina Lewis          | 707-758-9739 |
| Treasurer: Norma Viglienzone   | 707-542-1458 |
| Parliamentarian: Donna Poulter | 707-576-0513 |

The next meeting of the Wives Club will be a buffet lunch at the Epicenter on Wednesday, April 10th. The price is \$25.00. Lunch is served promptly at noon. The buffet menu will be roasted chicken with gravy, pork tenderloin, smashed red potatoes, seasonal vegetables, iceberg wedge salad, and cookies.

If the Telephone Committee does not contact you, you may make a reservation up to the day before the meeting; however, cancellations must be made by Monday preceding the meeting. For either situation, call Susan Linch at 707-538-3342.

In April we will hear from everyone the best and worst place they have ever lived

**Tina Lewis, Publicity 707-539-5546,**  
**tinalewis31@comcast.net**

## Redwood Empire Chapter Officers and Directors for 2024

|                              |                             |              |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| <u>President:</u>            | (NONE AT THIS TIME)         |              |
| <u>1st Vice President</u>    | (NONE AT THIS TIME)         |              |
| <u>2nd Vice President</u>    | (NONE AT THIS TIME)         |              |
| <u>Secretary:</u>            | Cpt Robert R. Safreno, USAF | 707-795-3963 |
| <u>Treasurer:</u>            | LCDR Tim Morgan, USNR       | 707-695-9293 |
| <u>Imed. Past President:</u> | Maj Ken Johnson, USAF       | 408-466-6764 |

|                                  |                       |              |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| <u>CAL-MOAA Director, Area I</u> |                       |              |
|                                  | Cpt Tom Walther, USAF | 530-673-5499 |

|                                          |                       |              |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| <u>Directors-at-large - Term 2023-24</u> |                       |              |
|                                          | Martina Lewis         | 707-539-5546 |
|                                          | Susan Linch           | 707-538-3342 |
|                                          | LTC Gary Meagher, AUS | 707-544-4089 |
|                                          | Mary-Gwen Neisingh    | 707-481-7614 |

|                                          |                              |              |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Directors-at-large - Term 2024-25</u> |                              |              |
|                                          | LTC Steve Countouriotis, USA | 707-763-5309 |
|                                          | Mrs. Myrna M. Hurst          | 707-468-0146 |
|                                          | Donna Poulter                | 707-576-0513 |
|                                          | CPT Lewis Wall, USA          | 707-837-7389 |

|                                             |                     |              |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| <u>Directors Representing Sub-Chapters:</u> |                     |              |
| <u>Mendocino:</u>                           | Mrs. Myrna M. Hurst | 707-468-0146 |

### MOAA VOICE

|                          |                                 |                            |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
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