



# The Granite Slate

The official newsletter published quarterly for the  
New Hampshire Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America  
P. O. Box 712, Dover, NH 03821



June 2023

Summer News & Events

Volume 45, No. 2



## MOAA-NH Chapter's Mission

- To promote the aims of the MOAA stated in the By-Laws of that Association
- To further legislative goals and objectives of MOAA
- To encourage and facilitate camaraderie among our membership
- To provide useful services for and to protect the interests of members, their dependents, and survivors

## Our April Luncheon at the Common Man Inn and Spa, Plymouth, NH.

It was a warm, bright, clear, sunny day for our annual Spring luncheon at the Common Man Inn and Spa in Plymouth! **NOT!!!** Mother Nature again played an April Fool's joke on us all this year presenting us with a mix of cold, cloudy weather, with a sprinkling of snow showers, and some leftover ground cover of snow, but the seventy-two members and guests who attended the luncheon experienced an atmosphere that was warm and welcoming, as always, inside. After an enjoyable social hour, our President, James LeFebvre, made some brief comments about the Chapter trying to find activities that were of interest to members so that we can attract and retain members. He also mentioned that our former President, Bob Jaffin, had recently attended the annual "Advocacy in Action", formerly called "Storming the Hill", in Washington, DC to speak to our Congressional delegations about issues we are concerned about affecting veterans in general, but particularly about several issues of concern here in NH. Jim also mentioned that this chapter had donated over \$800 to Alex Ray's Ukrainian project. This request was included in the luncheon flyer asking everyone to consider making a separate donation to Mr. Ray's humanitarian project in addition to paying for your luncheon. The chapter was pleasantly surprised by the response we got. After lunch and just before our guest speaker was introduced, the President announced that the Chapter had again been awarded our 20th Level of Excellence award, and he asked members of the Board of Directors to pose for a picture. Much of the effort for

attaining this reward again was due to the efforts of the Chapter Secretary, Michael McLean. Gerry Boyle then introduced our guest speaker, Colonel Davis Ulricson, USARNG, Commander of the 197th Field Artillery Brigade, and had just returned from a nine month deployment to the Middle East. NH has one of the eight national guard field artillery brigades and five on active duty, one of which has rotated into the Middle East on a continuous basis since 2011. The 197th has already completed this rotation twice, and since 2016, this has become a permanent ARNG rotation requirement. This allows the national guardsmen to train on a daily basis for the entire nine month deployment, and NH is expected to take this rotation about every 5-6 years. The 3rd Battalion, a HIMARS unit, deployed on 3 April. Colonel Ulricson gave us a brief history of the 197th which dates back to the Civil War, deployed for the Spanish American War, WWI in France, WWII in New Guinea and then began deploying regularly to the Middle East after 9/11 and has completed four deployments so far. They were extensively involved in assisting with Covid missions in state. "It's not your dad's NG anymore" said Colonel Ulricson. Within the 197th, there are four battalions; one unit of 155mm towed artillery, one unit of 155mm self-propelled artillery, and two battalions of the "High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS)". Preparations for deployments begin two years in advance with emphasis on certification for our "targeters" prior to deployment. (cont. p.4)



## CHAPTER OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

CPT James R. LeFebvre, USAR, 603-356-7296, lefebvrej@att.net

### VICE PRESIDENT

Lt Col Laurance M. Miller, USAFR (Ret), 603-440-5054, millerlm73@me.com

### FINANCE (TREASURER)

VACANT

### SECRETARY

CDR Michael A. McLean, USN (Ret), 603-767-0411; mamclean@comcast.net

Visit the chapter's website at [www.moaa-nh.org](http://www.moaa-nh.org)

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Col. Andrew J Breuder, USAF, MC, CFS, 603-494-6639, abreuder@comcast.net

***President's Corner***  
***CPT James R. LeFebvre, USAR***



Jim LeFebvre  
President  
NH Chapter of MOAA

ROTC and JROTC Award Presentations

The majority of this President's Corner was written a few days after Memorial Day, 2023. I trust that many members were able to honor their fellow veterans who gave all to their comrades and the nation. In a future edition, I would like to publish member's photos from Memorial Day and the 4th of July, so all can see our involvement in local communities and larger venues.

Board members have continued their coverage of many state, regional and national events since the last edition of the Slate. Space limitations allow me to cover only two of these events, beginning with MOAA National's Advocacy in Action (AIA, formerly known as Storming the Hill). Immediate Past President Bob Jaffin ably represented the chapter at this DC event. Bob's slightly edited report is provided for your information. Chapter members also participated in Senior and Junior ROTC Award Ceremonies in New Hampshire and Vermont. Program Head Joe DiChiaro led this challenging process again this year. A new twist was our fulfillment of a request from Norwich University Senior ROTC cadre to present awards to cadets of the Vermont college. Thanks to all members who went out of their way to honor these highly skilled cadets.

Summer will soon be upon us. We will be gathering in Conway/Albany on June 17th for the start of summer event, this year to be held at Tin Mountain. Gary Lovgren has come up with a different twist for the event, which promises to be interesting. Looking forward to seeing many folks in attendance. In later summer (August 4th), we return to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard for our annual World-Famous member run "Bake", run by an experience committee of MOAA-NH volunteers. Flyers to reserve attendance will be out shortly, save the date!

Rounding out the year, our Chapter Annual Meeting will take place at Nashua Country Club on November 4th. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, the importance of attending the annual meeting cannot be overstressed. Members present will be electing a new President and Vice President, and as Sharon Day writes elsewhere in the Slate, up to six new Chapter Directors.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not thank the four-person team, headed up by Larry Miller, our current VP, who attended the MOAA National Northeast regional conference in Providence, RI in early June. This provided the team with the opportunity to refamiliarize themselves with members of the MOAA national staff and national operational issues. In closing, KUDOS to all members of the best MOAA chapter in the USA.

All awards are now in the possession of the respective programs ready for presentation. My thanks to each of you who stepped up to cover the presentations. So few presenters now participate which does not show the cadets how they and their programs are especially significant in today's culture.

If you have not already done so, please send me a report of your experience as a presenter this year.

I have done the UNH AFROTC and Alvirne AFROTC and will be doing the AFJROTC at Salem HS on Memorial Day and Pinkerton Academy on 31 May, the last program of the year. Sadly, many programs have suffered loss of cadets and cadre since COVID. Nashua North (which serves both Nashua campuses) has no officer, leaving the entire operation to an NCO. They didn't have an awards program this year for the 3rd year as is also the case with the Marine JROTC which has not responded to contact efforts by me as well as the other schools' JROTC staff.

Army JROTC at Fall Mountain Regional HS had no seniors this year.

LTC Howard Stedman who initiated the largest JROTC program in NH at Pinkerton Academy and has led the program since its inception is retiring and no officer replacement has been found.

Please pray for our young people as the WOKE culture that permeates our education system is impacting both these programs and active duty and reserve recruiting.

Submitted by Joe DiChiaro

Note: I've had the opportunity in the past to make a presentation at Nashua North, was the guest speaker at the UNH AFROTC Dining-Out last year, and made three presentations at Manchester West HS this year on behalf of MOAA and the Order of Daedalians. I encourage anyone interested in participating in these events to contact Col. Joe DiChiaro early next year at [j.dichiaro@comcast.net](mailto:j.dichiaro@comcast.net).

A. J. Breuder, Col (Ret), USAF, MC, CFS  
Editor



*Is travelling on your bucket list?  
Maybe this list will help . . .*



### 2023 MOAA-NH TRAVEL PROGRAM

All our 2023 trips are posted on the MOAA-NH website (moaa-nh.org) under Group Travel and through our periodic "Trip of the Month" blast email messages, the Granite Slate and travel displays at our luncheons and special events.

#### 2023 TRAVEL PROGRAMS:

**Alaska Discovery Land and Cruise** featuring a 7-night Holland America cruise and 4-day land journey; August 30 – September 10, 2023; 12 Days; \$5299.00 per person, double occupancy. Price includes 26 meals, air from Logan, transportation to and from Logan, taxes, surcharges, hotel transfers and scheduled tours. Highlights include Fairbanks, Denali National Park- Talkeetna, Anchorage, 7-Night Cruise through the inside passage Hubbard Glacier, Glacier Bay, Skagway, Juneau, Ketchikan

**Montana: Exploring Big Sky Country, featuring Yellowstone & Glacier National Parks:** September 14–24, 2023. Book now and save \$200/person. \$5,999.00 per person, double occupancy. Price includes air from Logan, taxes, surcharges, travel to and from Logan, sixteen meals and scheduled tours. Highlights include hotel transfers and sightseeing.

#### 2024 TRAVEL PROGRAM:

**Spotlight on the French Riviera:** April 18–26, 2024, 9 Days; \$3,649.00 per person, double occupancy. Price includes air from Logan, taxes, fees, surcharges, hotel transfers, scheduled tours in Nice, Monaco, Cannes, and back to Nice, Italy, transportation to and from Logan and 12 meals.

**Spotlight on South Dakota** featuring Mount Rushmore & the Badlands: 12–30 May 2024, 7 Days. Book now and save \$150/person. \$2999.00 per person, double occupancy. Price includes air from Logan, transportation to and from Logan, taxes, fees, surcharges, hotel transfers, 9 meals, scheduled tours to Mt. Rushmore, Badlands, Custer/Crazy Horse, and Devil's Tower National Monument in Wyoming/Rapid City.

**AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS AND DENVER:** 14 days, 20 meals, September 24 - October 7, 2024. Book now and save \$50/person. \$6499 per person double occupancy. Tour includes Sedona, Grand Canyon, Lake Powell, Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, Jackson Hole/Grand Teton & Yellowstone National Parks, Rapid City, and Rocky Mountain National Park. Price includes round trip from Logan, air taxes/fees, hotel transfers, 20 meals, including 13 breakfasts and 7 dinners.

**MEMORIAL OF WAR – NORMANDY,** 11-20 October 2024. Book now and save \$100/person. \$4,799 double occupancy. Tour includes tours of London, Portsmouth, English Channel Crossing, D-Day landing sites in Caen, and Paris. Price includes round trip from Logan, air taxes/fees, hotel transfers, 12 meals including 8 breakfasts and 4 dinners.

## **LEADERS WANTED!**

The MOAA-NH Board of Directors is the leadership team for MOAA-NH. The Board supervises, controls, and directs the organization's affairs, promotes its purposes, and approves funds disbursement. This includes, amongst many endeavors, our luncheons, the clambake, the "Granite State Warrior" award, scholarships, and monetary donations to organizations that assist veterans such as the NH Veterans Home, and others.

This November at our annual meeting the membership will vote on BOD Officer and Director nominees. We need to recruit **ONE Treasurer** (currently vacant) **and up to FIVE Directors**. These vacancies comprise a significant portion of the Board's membership. **The future of how MOAA-NH functions and what it can accomplish is at stake. Please consider volunteering for one of the 6 open Board positions.**

The MOAA-NH By-Laws are contained in the 2022 MOAA-NH membership Directory starting on page 31. The duties and responsibilities of Officers and Directors are explained therein, that is, in Article X for Directors and Article XI for Officers.

For further information, questions, or to step up to the plate, please contact:

**For Treasurer:** former Treasurer CDR Roby Day, USN (Ret.): (603) 642-7956; [fuzzbutthall@comcast.net](mailto:fuzzbutthall@comcast.net)

**For Directorships:** CDR Sharon Day, USN (Ret.): (603) 642-7956; [cimice89@comcast.net](mailto:cimice89@comcast.net).

### UPDATES TO HANSCOM RAO DATABASE

Michael,  
I had an extremely nice conversation with Gene today at the RAO office about updating our RAO database with the assistance of MOAA-NH. We at RAO certainly understand your position that you would prefer to have MOAA-NH members themselves initiate a request to have their names placed within our email database so they can receive newsletter and our information we disseminate via email correspondence. We would ask that you put a notice in your next newsletter to have those members who would like to receive correspondence from us to send us an email to [rao.hanscom.afb@gmail.com](mailto:rao.hanscom.afb@gmail.com) with the subject line **ADD TO EMAIL LIST** requesting inclusion to our database.

This would be most appreciated. Many thanks for your help.

Best regards,

Mike Hennessey, Captain, USNR, Ret  
Deputy Director,  
Retiree Activities Office



## Congressional tour of the VA medical center in Manchester.

In many respects an eye-opener but not really completely new information for those who had participated in earlier reviews of the medical center. Congressman Pappas and his staff attended for the presentation as well as staffers from Senator Hassan's offices and Congresswoman Kuster's office. Justin Troiano had contacted Bob Jaffin earlier and as a result we were able to get four of our members on the tour – I believe we were the only outsiders beyond VA staff and congressional staff. The presentation by VAMC's engineering staff demonstrated an extremely complex but well thought out 10 year plus strategic management plan. Bottom line is that expansion continues pretty much on track and total upgrade of the physical facility is underway with a solid long-term strategic plan in place. As always funding in the out years will remain a challenge but at this point in time the congressional staffs are staying on top of this and keeping pressure on the VA in DC. In simple terms the primary structural components of the existing facility are good, however, there were issues with the heating plant and the actual method of insulation, or lack of insulation, and waterproofing in the original construction and recent repairs and updates. That is now being corrected with a planned total upgrade of the primary structure's heating system and insulation as well as upgrading of windows and to the HVAC systems although the steam plant is not due for replacement. As a side note there are challenges with finding skilled people such as steamfitters to work on the old heating plant. Expansion and upgrades to other buildings have all been integrated into that 10 year plus plan and the engineering team deserves kudos for coming up with a minimally invasive, extremely complex, but extremely well integrated overall approach to correcting existing problems with the facilities while both expanding and updating existing services and spaces beyond the primary structure.

Submitted by Robert Jaffin  
Past President

PS: Although I was only able to stay for the initial briefings on the status of the main building and the projected costs and timelines of the planned renovations, I was impressed by some statements that were made by Mr. Ryan Lilly, the VISN 1 Network Director, regarding the status of facilities across the New England network. First, infrastructure is a challenge across the entire VA healthcare system, not only the New England VA.

Second, the current average age of all VA healthcare buildings is 61 years, and just to prevent the average age of facilities from increasing each year, at least two major facility replacements would need to be completed **EVERY YEAR** for the foreseeable future just to stay even. Third, facilities are graded on a five letter grade scale; A, B, C, D, and F, with "A" the best and "F" the worst. Currently the Manchester VAMC is rated as a "D", the Boston West Roxbury VAMC rates a "D-", and the Connecticut VAMC is rated as an "F".

Andrew J Breuder, Col. (Ret), USAF, MC, CFS  
Editor



(Continued from front page, April Luncheon).

The "targeters" in theater are the resident experts for all surface firings in the Middle East. They sit in the Coalition Operation Center with Air Force personnel to coordinate all targeting. Of the 130 personnel who deployed, 15 were female and 40% deployed for their first time. The deployment began last May replacing a



unit from Arkansas. Task Force Spartan had three missions: partnership with all Middle East countries, deterring aggression and extremist organizations, and supporting the fighting in Syria, Operation Air Resolve, and finally responding to any other issues occurring in the Middle East to protect our allies. Colonel Ulricson responded to several organizational and technical questions regarding HIMARS operations from the audience. Colonel Ulricson also mentioned some of the issues involving deployments from NH, especially issues involving family support as well as issues with recruiting. The President thanked Colonel Ulricson for his comments and presented him a MOAA Challenge coin, a chapter Certificate of Appreciation, and a MOAA-NH briefcase.

AJ Breuder, Col (Ret), USAF, MC, CFS  
Editor

### Travel (continued from page 3),

We continue to emphasize our **"WORLD CONNECT"** with Collette Travel. You are entitled to select any state, country or specific tour offered by Collette. View available Collette Travel tours on the web <https://www.gocollette.com> or <https://www.tourvacationstogo.com>. Contact me or Tom and we will provide you with our World Connect member number and any other information you need for your desired trip that is not scheduled on our group travel program. Reservations are made through the retail division of Collette. Tom or I can assist you through the reservation process.

For additional information or reservations, contact me, 603- 391-7106, email: [tonyajjb@gmail.com](mailto:tonyajjb@gmail.com) or Tom Kyle, 603-686- 2663, email: [tkyleh@yahoo.com](mailto:tkyleh@yahoo.com).

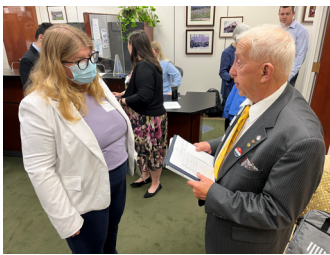
Please feel free to send this article to relatives and friends. They may be interested in our travel program.

We continue to seek partnership with community organizations such as Kiwanis, Elks, religious organizations and other veteran organizations such as The American Legion, VFW, etc.

## Advocacy In Action Report

Some quick background. We in New Hampshire are extremely lucky as folks from other chapters and councils who were covering 7-11 elected officials during the day, and most were happy to get 5-10 minutes in their Congressional offices. We spent a minimum of 30 hours in every one of our four offices, and had to cut two visits short because I had scheduled visits too close together and got almost a full hour in Senator Hassan's Office. Based on the training provided on Tuesday before we went to the Hill, we also asked for sponsorship on specific bills where appropriate and made sure to educate on the difference between "Armed Forces" and the more inclusive "Uniformed Services". MOAA National asked that we try to keep focused on BAH and TRICARE, but our state staffers had made clear that our delegation wants to hear about those issues that are of greatest concern to their constituents and we had made the three position papers available well in advance so most were familiar with them. As a result, we covered just about every issue that has been raised by MOAA with special emphasis on the following items: BAH, TRICARE, the All-Volunteer Force encompassing multiple specific pieces of legislation, the national Cemetery System, PACT act flaws with a focus on the elimination of the tort cap and a secondary concern with hypertension and implementation of the act, and the VAMC Manchester. I was accompanied by Ryan Hogan from MOAA National. I talked to many of the MOAA leadership team including Gen. Kelly, Gen. North, Gen. Lynch, Jim Carman, Cory Titus, Karen Ruedisueli, Rene Campos, Dan Merry, Frank Michaels, Suzanne Walker and some of the current MOAA BOD. As was expected, only three of the four DC staffs had actually seen the three position papers I had sent down well in advance of AIA.

A. First visit was in Sen. Shaheen's office where we briefly saw the senator but spent most of our time with three staffers: Michael Kans, Sophia Hays, and Quentin Miller.



Covered BAH, TRICARE, AVF, Cemeteries, Retain skilled vets, VAMC, PACT act flaws with focus on elimination of tort cap and a secondary concern with hypertension & act implementation, and a new commissary for Pease ANGB.

Basic response was lukewarm support for most of these issues and a lack of commitment of any sort of BAH. Staffers were interested, responsive, and took extensive notes. It would appear that military and veteran service issues are not among their top priorities. Made it a point to thank the senator in person for her comments the previous Saturday in Manchester concerning eliminating CR's. B. Second visit was with Senator Hassan and her primary staffer for this area, Melissa Reilly-Diakun. Covered the same issues as we covered with Senator

Shaheen's staffers. The senator did spend time with us but did have to go back to the floor while Melissa spent and extended



period of time with showing interest and support across the board. We specifically suggested that the Senator help to push for national academies study the impacts of the TRICARE pharmacy cuts on the entire supported community. This

was the result of a combination of the training we received prior to our day on the Hill and also represents discussions I have had at the last two national events with various members of MOAA's national leadership team. Karen Ruedisueli and/or other MOAA national staff need to follow up with the senator and her staff on this issue. Also asked for consideration to be a co-sponsor if Senator Warnock introduces his companion bill to the house resolution.

C. The third visit was in Congresswoman Kuster's office. Again, we discussed the same issues already mentioned with out two Senators. We had already been told that the Congresswoman simply would not be available, but Milla Anderson spent the full half-hour with us and was knowledgeable and supportive on all issues. We did have to cut this one short because of the close timing of the next appointment, but we got the full half-hour that we had planned on.

D. The fourth and final visit was with Congressman Chris

Pappas in his office with his staffer Jake Friedman. Again, we covered basically the same issues previously described with each of our other representatives. Chris was waiting for us and his very first question was "when is the clam bake?". It might



pay for the MOAA government relations team to circle back with Jake and Chris on VA issues and the TRICARE study. The bottom line is that Maggie Hassan and Chris Pappas work together regularly on veteran's issues and have done an outstanding job for all veterans as well as extending their concerns well beyond just the VA issues.

Robert Jaffin, CWO4, USN (Ret)  
Past President

Editor's Note: The above report from Bob was slightly abridged from his original report.

Photos: Bob & Sophia Hayes (Shaheen office); Bob & Melisa Reilly-Diakon (Hassan's Office); Bob, Chris, & Jake Friedman (Pappas office).

Andrew J Breuder, Col. (Ret), USAF, MC, CFS  
Editor



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WHY MOAA?  
YouTube video

**Welcome to Our New 2023 Chapter Members!**

Col Noel F. Austin, USAF (Ret) - Durham, NH  
MAJ Barry D. Emmert, ARNG - Trumbull, CT  
Capt David A. Rosa, USAF (Ret) - North Dighton, MA



**Taps**

**June 2023**

Mrs. Phyllis B. Crosby

BG Richard J. Mallion, USA (Ret)

Maj Constance E. Reed, USAF (Ret)

LT Joseph J. Simpson, USN (Ret)

Col Harold B. Wilber, USMC (Ret)



New Castle, NH

Whitefield, NH

Hampton, NH

Durham, NH

Dover, NH



### CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK

Did you know that MOAA-NH has a Facebook page? We do . . . at <https://www.facebook.com/MOAA-NH-403462326493407/> Check out all the latest pictures and information about the chapter. While you're there, be sure to "like" us.

Cut and paste or type the link below into your browser. It will take you directly to National MOAA's "Take Action" tab. There you can learn about current legislative issues and voice your opinions about their efforts.

<http://www.moaa.org/takeaction>

### FOR LINKED-IN USERS

MOAA-NH members: We have established a group on LinkedIn for the purpose of helping members find employment in the New Hampshire area. If you have a LinkedIn account, please request to join the "New Hampshire Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA-NH)" group. If you are seeking employment or know a prospective member who will be, create a post for the group with a link to the member's profile. We also ask that recruiters and human resource professionals from companies around New Hampshire who are interested in hiring former officers to join the group. If you have suggestions for the LinkedIn Group, please contact Tom Goff at [tgs64@gmail.com](mailto:tgs64@gmail.com). MrsM