



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

MOAA-NH Announces Ninth Annual Granite State Warriors Award Recipient

Rain was forecast; but, fortunately, it held off until that evening, so the day was clear and crisp when the Chapter held its first luncheon and meeting of 2020 on January 25 at the Portsmouth Country Club in Greenland, NH. A total of 97 members and guests enjoyed a tasty meal choice of Baked Lemon Crusted Haddock, Medallions of Beef, or Apple Cranberry Stuffed Chicken Breast.



We were there to honor the recipient of the ninth annual *Granite State Warriors Awards* (GSWA). These awards are given to the New Hampshire resident or NH-based organization making the most significant contribution to the Armed Forces of the United States that year.

Prior to the GSWA presentation, CDR Bruce F. Avery, USN (Ret) was presented with a Certificate of Meritorious Service from the Chapter. His wife, Shirley, was presented with a floral bouquet in recognition of her contributions with Bruce.



Chapter President, CWO4 Bob Jaffin, USN (Ret) then read a letter from MOAA National congratulating the New Hampshire Chapter on forty years of existence and service to the community.

The recipient of the 2019 Granite State Warriors Award was Long Term Care (LTC) Partners, Newington, NH.



As part of the presentation, Chapter President Bob Jaffin read letters of congratulations from US Senators Maggie Hassan and Jeanne Shaheen.

Finally, two Civilian Aides to the Secretary of the Army (CASA) were recognized – CDR Peter S.

Burdett, USN (Ret) of New Hampshire and LTC Brenda M. Pennels, USAR of Maine (both NH Chapter members).

We were joined by two first-time members: Arthur Beauchesne of Nottingham and Barry Waddell of York Harbor, ME.



CDR Michael A. McLean, USN (Ret)
MOAA-NH Secretary

Some Military Treatment Facilities to Stop Serving Retirees and Military Families

In February, the Pentagon released a list of military treatment facilities and clinics that will no longer provide care to military retirees and active-duty families as part of a shift in focus to supporting active-duty readiness. The report lays out the process through which officials selected the locations slated for changes that could impact 200,000 retirees and active-duty family members. Of those, about 80,000 are active-duty family members, while the remaining 120,000 are retirees and their families. For more details, go to <https://www.health.mil/About-MHS/OASDHA/Defense-Health-Agency/Congressional-Relations/Restructuring-and-Realignment-of-Military-Medical-Treatment-Facilities>

CREDIT: VFW Action Corps Weekly (February 21, 2020)

CHAPTER OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
VICE PRESIDENT
TREASURER
SECRETARY

CWO4 Robert D. Jaffin, USN (Ret), 207-850-1009; robertdjaffin@gmail.com
CPT James R. LeFebvre, USAR, 603-356-7296, lefebvrej@att.net
CDR James R. Day, Jr., USN (Ret), 603-642-7956; fuzzbutthall@comcast.net
CDR Michael A. McLean, USN (Ret), 603-692-4648; mamclean@comcast.net

Visit the chapter's website at www.moaa-nh.org

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Marie Chipola, 603-521-7708; marie.chipola@gmail.com

President's Corner

CWO4 Robert D. Jaffin, USN (Ret)



I must be having fun, because time has passed so quickly that I had to be reminded to write my second President's Corner article.

We barely made quorum at our last meeting but agreed to eliminate the February 2020 Board of Directors meeting. Our next meeting is in March, and I have proposed reducing the number of Board of Directors meetings to six per year. All those meetings would be tied to our six Saturday luncheons. With a number of Board members retiring within the next year, it is increasingly more important that we engage more of the membership to serve on boards and committees. I hope some of you can find the time and the enthusiasm to join us.

We are extremely lucky that Wayne Balcom has volunteered to take over the Scholarship Committee. This is the next area I hope our Board will address. Many things have changed since the program was originally put in place, and it has become more and more difficult to chase down repayments on our loan program. In fact in some cases, you're dealing with grandparents rather than parents or students for loan repayments. While we regularly talk about the Scholarship Committee, what we have, in fact, is an educational loan program rather than the scholarship program. As a number of scholarship committee members have pointed out, our loans are relatively low-value compared to the loans many students are carrying. Therefore, we are often left for last or essentially ignored when it comes to repayment.

For all those reasons, I am going to ask the Board and the Scholarship Committee to examine alternatives to the current program. I think working with National may offer some possibilities. Actually converting to a scholarship program that has fewer but larger dollars attached are areas we need to discuss. I will continue to keep the membership informed as those discussions and possible alternatives to the current structure and administration of the program move forward in the committee.

We are getting ready for storming the hill. Although I was unable to attend the last leadership webinar, I will be working with National and already have one firm appointment with our congressional delegation for the March storming the hill week. Based on continued discussions with members and other retirees, as well as my own involvement as our chapter representative to the Martins Point Military Advisory Council, I feel that Congress should look hard at the Defense Health Agency. What I am not sure many of our members fully appreciate is that TRICARE is (A) partially dependent on Medicare for setting prescription costs and many other issues; and, (B) DHA runs TRICARE and in fact is more restrictive and conservative than Medicare. The end result is that with the new Medicare advantage programs being offered by many different carriers basic TRICARE is becoming less competitive and covers fewer costs/items than the newer Medicare advantage programs.

I want to raise that issue with our congressional delegation in the hopes that we can see some major changes at DHA in the next biennium.

The one other issue I had hoped to address, but one I would like to hear back from our membership about, is the reestablishment of a new full-sized, full-service commissary at Pease. Access to and parking for the extremely limited commissary at Portsmouth Naval shipyard has become more and more difficult and the extremely small footprint of that facility heavily impacts both the number and the types of items – fresh/frozen and packaged that can be stocked or shelved in the commissary. At the current time, we have active Coast Guard at the shipyard as well as the Army Recruiting Battalion, the Navy Regional Clinic, and the SERE school. Pease now has an active component as well as a guard component on the air side. I've spoken to a number of members who make regular trips down to Hanscom in Massachusetts for commissary runs but that is not practical for many of us for a variety of reasons. Add in the various smaller active-duty command activities within Maine and New Hampshire and couple that to our large retired populations, I believe a new commissary at Pease would be beneficial. I'll be going down to DC on March 22. Hopefully, many of you will share your ideas on issues you believe MOAA National and Congress should focus upon.

Please feel free to engage with any of the Board members or myself to share your thoughts on these areas and any other areas of concern to you about the Chapter or MOAA National.

Many of you are already aware that membership has decreased significantly over the last 10 years while costs of meals have crept up and attendance at all our events has gone down. At a bare minimum, I would like to find a way to stabilize and grow our membership. To that end, I encourage everyone who reads *The Granite Slate* to contact us and let us know what you expect or would like from Chapter leadership.

Bob Jaffin

Let's Welcome Our New 2020 Chapter Members!

LT Terry D. Burgess, USPHS — Nashua
COL Eugene F. Madigan, USA (Ret) — Amherst
CAPT James Barry Waddell, USN (Ret) — York Harbor, ME

"Over the course of time, we have noticed a decline in the number of NH chapter members attending functions. As the chapter ages, demographics may explain most of that decline. However, we are interested in getting more complete information. Request that members provide Jim LeFebvre, Vice President of the Chapter, with information as to what drives you to come to functions, what we could do to enhance turnout, etc. You may send him an e-mail at lefebvrej@att.net, or call him at 603-356-7296. All responses will be used only for statistical purposes."

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



2020 MOAA Travel Program: (Additional information on the available 2020 trips is posted on our website, www.moaa-nh.org under "Group Travel")

2020 MOAA-NH Travel Program:

- *The travel event of the decade! Book early! Some of the trips are already sold out. All the trips listed below include the Passion Play in Oberammergau, Germany. Call Tony for prices and available dates.*
- Classical Danube River Cruise & Land Tours, 10 days
- Exploring the Alpine Countries, 13 days
- Austrian Delight, 10 days
- Discover Switzerland, Austria, and Bavaria, 10 days
- Imperial Cities, 11 days
- Germany's Cultural Cities and the Romantic Roads, 13 days

The following 2020 trips do not include The Passion Play:

- Heritage of America, October 4-12, 2020, 9 days, (\$3,049 per person with air)
- Memorials of World War II, (featuring the 75th Anniversary of the D-Day Landing), 10 days, 15 - 22 April 2020 (\$4,349 with air)
- Spotlights on the French Riviera, 9 days, 18-26 April 2020 (\$3,299 with air)
- Maritime Coastal Wonders (featuring the Cabot Trail) — Canada, 11 days, 7-17 July (\$3,799 with air)
- Mackinac Islands (featuring the Grand Hotel and Chicago), 8 days, August 14-21, 2020 (\$3,599 with air)
- Treasures of Europe (from London to Rome), 12 days, 3-14 September 2020 (\$4,499 with air)

If you, a family member or friend want a specific trip not listed on our program, contact me; and I will arrange the trip with Collette at MOAA-NH privileges.

Look for our "Trip of the Month" blast email messages sent out periodically. **For reservations or additional information, contact Tony Burdo, 603-391-7106 or email: tonyajjb@gmail.com.**

I am still looking to partner/co-op with a community organization such as the Kiwanis, the Elks, a religious organization, a men's or women's club, social clubs, etc., so we can increase our customer base. Please furnish me with a point of contact, and I will complete the coordination process.

~Tony B.



A Book On NH Veterans

"Portraits of Sacrifice and Bravery"



Photos above by Dachowski Photography

Mission: We are creating a book that will feature portraits and stories of our New Hampshire Veterans. Our goal is to showcase the diversity of all our NH Veterans, so service members from every branch, every era and every rank. This will be a special book that honors the sacrifices our Veterans have made for our country.

When: Two dates scheduled to take photographs and conduct interviews (March 28th and April 18th). Veterans can select a preferred date. The process will only take 1 hour.

Where: Dachowski Photography Studio in Bedford, NH

Deadline: Our submission deadline is March 1st.



If you are a Veteran currently living in New Hampshire and are interested in being one of the NH Veterans selected for this project, please visit our website to submit a short application form. <https://www.swimwithamission.org/book-on-nh-vets/>

PRESENTED BY SWIM WITH A MISSION

A 501(c)(3) non-profit that raises funds for Veteran service organizations



Please note that everyone will not be selected who applies



MOAA-NH Needs Your Help

Please consider volunteering for one of the following positions and being part of MOAA-NH's nationally recognized excellence.

Back-up Recording Secretary: fills in if the regular Recording Secretary is unavailable for a Board meeting. Takes notes/records the conduct of the meeting and prepares written minutes for distribution. Monthly Board meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday at the Red Blazer Restaurant in Concord from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, with a break for dinner. Chapter membership is not required – spouses are welcome! Contact Michael McLean, at 603-692-4648 or mamclean@comcast.net

Treasurer: The Treasurer's role within the framework of the Board of Directors is to prepare periodic treasury reports to the Board and membership, keep our books, write checks, make deposits, and complete reports external to the organization (e.g. IRS, State of NH, etc.). Your current treasurer, Roby Day, will be retiring from the position in November 2020, and is willing and able to assist a Vice Treasurer be prepared to step into the job as an elected officer of MOAA-NH. If you are interested in being a part of our leadership team, please contact Roby Day at 603-642-7956 (fuzzbutthall@comcast.net) or any member of the Board.



Reflections . . .

In Service to My Country

My Second Assignment in Vietnam: 544th Construction Support Company on Nui Soc Lu Vietnam

R. Kent Whitman, CPT, USA (Ret), Keene, NH
Edited by LTC Geoff Corson, USMC (Ret)

After my first assignment in Vietnam serving as Commander of HHC 169th Engineer BN Construction, I was reassigned to command the 544th Construction Support Engineer Company stationed on Nui Soc Lu in Vietnam. The unit was stationed just off QL1 (road designation) on a mountain banana plantation next to a resettled North Vietnamese town. The Company was attached to support the 169th Engineer BN Construction. It was the second largest industrial site in Vietnam at the time, second to the one at Vung Tau. We had six major rock crushing units, a 120-ton Barber Green asphalt plant, an attached Quarry Platoon, and many hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of equipment to run such an operation.

The unit consisted of about 200 officers and men along with some civilian engineers to support the crushing operations and asphalt plant. I had a Chief Warrant Officer 2 (CW2) as my Ordnance (vehicle) Engineer maintenance technician who took care of all rolling and track vehicles, a Chief Warrant Officer 4 (CW4) as my Senior Engineer technician who took care of all the engineer equipment like the rock crushers, the asphalt plant, and the generators, etc. I had a First Lieutenant (1LT) who oversaw the asphalt operations, a 1LT in charge of the crushing operations, and a Second Lieutenant (2LT) in charge of the Ordnance (vehicle) unit, and a Master Sergeant (E8/MSG) in charge of the Quarry Platoon. There were other Noncommissioned Officers (NCO) for each of the major sections as well as a First Sergeant, (E8/1SG) better known as "Top."

At one point I noticed one of the senior NCOs holding the morning formations. I asked him why *he* was doing it and not the First Sergeant. His reply was cautious indicating the First Sergeant was not often up in the morning because of hangovers. I approached the First Sergeant about this and after some discussion and more investigation, I relieved the First Sergeant of his position and sent him back to Long Binh ordering him to report to the Battalion Command Sergeant Major (CSM) E9. I later got counselled by the Battalion Commander about this action. I just could not afford to have an alcoholic who could not take formation in the morning as my First Sergeant. I gave the job to a senior E7 Sergeant First Class (SFC).

When they established the site, they assumed there was solid rock underground. Unfortunately, the assumption was false. While I was there, we moved over 200 feet of overburden (dirt we had to remove) before we hit any major rock formation. We were making 3/4-inch minus

rock for the asphalt & 2-inch minus for the base course of the road the 169th Battalion line companies were building.

I lost one man during a monsoon rainstorm. He was the operator of a bucket loader loading the line company trucks with 2-inch minus rock from the stockpiles when the storm hit. There was a large track-driven crane parked in the pit loading area. He and five truck drivers with one NCO huddled under the crane to get out of the torrential rain as there were no cab covers on the bucket loader or the trucks. The crane boom was lowered all the way down. Unfortunately, a lightning bolt hit the crane boom and went down through the crane frying all the wiring. My bucket operator must have been leaning up against the crane metal so was electrocuted from the lightning bolt. The others received non-life-threatening shocks and were knocked about but survived the incident. Although we were attacked with mortars and rockets from time to time, while I was in Command, we had nobody wounded; and we only lost the bucket loader operator to lightning.

My rock crushing and asphalt plant operations were so critical to the Battalion's road building mission that it resulted in the operations being monitored very closely by the Commanders above me all the way to the Corps Commander who would visit me often to see what was going on and have a meal or coffee in the mess hall. We had to report every hiccup in our operation to all higher headquarters. We ran our operations 24/7. The one exception to 24/7 ops was only producing asphaltic concrete during the day. This was because the VC/NVA owned the night. Driving the trucks on the road hauling asphalt at night was not healthy as it might draw enemy fire.

The quarry platoon also only worked days as their activities were out of the compound perimeter in the jungle and banana plantation. Additionally, working with explosives and drilling equipment at night adds to the hazardous conditions and is more than a bit dangerous. We used large Caterpillar D9 bulldozers, large 6-yard bucket loaders (the bucket will hold a small car), and 20-ton Euclid trucks to move the rock from the quarry to the headwall of the large four-foot jaw rock crusher that was set to make 12-inch minus rock. From the 12-inch minus size we had other smaller crushers, both jaw and cone, to break the stone down to the two-inch minus and 3/4-inch minus sizes.

I frequently wandered around the operations both day and night to keep abreast of what was happening and talking with the men. As a result, I only slept for about an hour each day. This finally caught up with me and I was forced to go to Long Binh to the Army hospital to be looked at by doctors. When they got me in the ER on the table, I passed out and fell on the floor. It took three or four of them to get me back up on the table where they held on to me so it wouldn't happen again. They drew blood samples every hour for five days. My arms looked like I was a junky. I slept most of the five days except when they woke me to take blood. While there, I was visited by Ann Davis who played the housekeeper on the Brady Bunch show. She was in Vietnam visiting the troops. She sat on my bunk and talked to me for a few minutes. I had no other visitors. I was

continued on page 5



Reflections . . . In Service to My Country

*Kent Whitman's Second Assignment in Vietnam
continued from page 4*

finally diagnosed with a fever of unknown origin and sent back to work. After that I got more than one hour sleep each day, but not much more.

Since I had been in Vietnam, I had not written to my wife or parents. This was now about five months into my deployment. My wife finally went through the Red Cross to find out my status. The Red Cross went through the Department of the Army to find me and find out my status. Hence, one day the Battalion Chaplain visited me and told me to write to them to let them know I was still alive. I did and wrote frequently after that. While I was over in Vietnam my father's black hair turned snow white. After I returned home, it grew back in black. Dad was afraid for me since all he saw on the TV news was soldiers dying in combat; and he did not know my status, because I had not written to my parents.

One night we lost (torn up from use) a 24-inch-wide, 200-foot long conveyor belt which halted our 24/7 operations. At the time I was in Long Binh picking up pay for the men of the company. At about 2100 hours (9:00 pm) my Battalion Commander ordered me to return to the company at Nui Soc Lu to manage the repair operations. In the dark on the way back by jeep to the company, my driver and I were ambushed.

continued in the June 2020 issue of The Granite Slate

Legislation Introduced to Study Cancer Among Fighter Pilots

In February, Representative Elaine Luria (D-Va.) and Representative Adam Kinzinger (R-Ill.) introduced H.R. 5858, the *Military Pilots Cancer Incidence Study Act*. This important legislation would require DOD to enter into an agreement with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to study and report on the incidence of cancer diagnosis and mortality among military pilots compared with other service members. In a press release, Representative Luria stated, "I am introducing the Military Pilot Cancer Incidence Study Act, so DOD and the VA understand the scope of the problem, identify service-connected illnesses, and address them appropriately. We owe it to these brave service members to know what health risks they assume and ensure we screen and treat early, so they live longer and healthier lives." The VFW thanks Rep. Luria and Rep. Kinzinger for introducing this legislation and for their efforts to expand health care and disability benefits for veterans.

CREDIT: VFW Action Corps Weekly (February 21, 2020)



MOAA – NH Statistical Summary as of 12/31/2019

RANK BREAKDOWN		SERVICE BREAKDOWN		AGE BREAKDOWN		WHERE MEMBERS LIVE (REGIONS)	
O10	0	USAF	173	<40 YO	4	Dartmouth - Sunapee	50
O9	0						
O8	5	USA	169	40 – 49 YO	9	Lakes	68
O7	8						
O6	158	USN	116	50 – 59 YO	48	Monadnock	35
O5	181						
O4	79	USMC	37	60 – 69 YO	103	Seacoast	176
O3	51						
O2	12	USCG	28	70 – 79 YO	180	Merrimack Valley	227
O1	3						
CWO5	6	USPHS	2	80 – 89 YO	189	White Mountains	30
CWO4	16						
CWO3	5	NOAA	2	> 90 YO	157	North Country	6
CWO2	2						
CIV	164	CIV	164	UNK	1	Other States	99
TOTAL	691	TOTAL	691	TOTAL	691	TOTAL	691

The New Hampshire Chapter of the MOAA
PO Box 712
Dover NH 03821-0712
Address Service Requested

NONPROFIT ORG
AUTO
US POSTAGE PAID
DOVER, NH
PERMIT 615



17th YEAR



www.moaa-nh.org



WHY MOAA?
YouTube video

March 2020

Taps

LT Ansel C. Braseth, USN
CPL Charles E. Cove, USMC (Ret) (Honorary)
LTJG Virginia M. Deady, USNR
CW3 Reginald C. Gray, USA (Ret)
Lt Col Helen C. Harrington, USAF (Ret)
Maj Sidney R. Katz, USAF
COL Robert J. Laflam, USA (Ret)
CAPT George E. Lamb, USNR (Ret)
Mrs. Grace S. Spooner
Maj Edward N. Warfield, USAF (Ret)
"Dot" Wood (Honorary)



2020 MOAA-NH Luncheons & Annual Meeting

April 25
Common Man Inn & Spa, Plymouth
June 20
White Mountains/North Country
August 1
Clambake, PNSY
September 19
Bistro Nouveau, Grantham
November 7
Nashua Country Club (Annual Mtg)



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 Jim Spotts at jim.spotts@hotmail.com.