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# Beyond The Call

Dedicated to the men and women who sacrificed their yesterdays to ensure our free tomorrows ... from a grateful state and nation.

## Serving Fort New Hampshire

By Randee Rae Martin



Chapter member Col Robert W Fortnam, USAF (Ret.) was awarded the USAF Air Medal for meritorious achievement while a member of a flight crew flying a mission over Europe during World War II. Bob Fortnam received the medal from chapter president, CDR Peter Burdett, USN (Ret.) at the chapter's Fall Luncheon on October 1, 2011.

Have you ever heard of Fort New Hampshire? If you are a veteran or serving active duty and live in New Hampshire, you may know exactly what that means. For those who question its location, it is the entire state. Since there are no army posts or naval and air bases here, the many organizations that support the needs of the New Hampshire service men and women and their families have embraced all of New Hampshire and fortified it with care.

One such organization is the New Hampshire Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), which was formed in November of 1979 and serves to aid active and retired personnel of the seven uniformed services from which their members are drawn. Anyone who is or has been a commissioned officer or warrant officer in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, as well as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Public Health Service, and the reserve components and National Guard are welcomed to join. By joining the New Hampshire Chapter, one will also receive a free one-year membership in MOAA national.

Commander Peter S. Burdett, USN (Ret) is the MOAA president and on his second tour, as he was in office from 1996-98. As a Naval Aviator, he served for 21 years and

after living all over the world and serving in Desert Storm and Desert Shield, he and his family returned to his native state of New Hampshire. He said, "I have been retired now for over 18 years. However, the need to serve this country does not just go away at retirement. So I choose to work on veteran issues in New Hampshire."

Speaking in November at a Manchester Mayor's Prayer Breakfast, a fundraiser for Veteran's Count Club

(VCC), a program of Easter Seals of New Hampshire, he continued, "I am joined by many others who have come together to do our part. That is one of the unique items of New Hampshire—we do it really well!"

CDR Burdett praised the other participating groups and individuals who, like MOAA, have joined forces to improve the lives of our servicemen and women, active or retired, and ease their burden by carrying for their families back home:



MOAA president CDR Peter Burdett met with U.S. Senator Kelly Ayotte ... her first speaking engagement after becoming Senator from New Hampshire last year.

- The State Veterans Advisory Committee (SVAC) founded in 2002 with fifteen Veterans Service Organizations, four voting legislative members, and a number of valued committee advisors from the Veterans Department, The Adjutant General (TAG), Veteran's Cemetery at Boscawen, Veterans' Homes and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). SVAC provides guidance and testimony on veteran bills to legislative committee and helps coordinate veteran events.

- Employer Support for Guard and Reserves (ESGR): Employers hold jobs for our men and women for up to five years who have been called up to serve.

- Deployment Cycle Support Program (DCSP): Which was established in 2007 and in which the Veteran's Count Club is a participant and has raised over one million dollars in our state to provide direct support to the service families through volunteer care givers.

- Our New Hampshire TAG is Major Gen. William N. Riddel III, Commander of the NH Guard. He is the individual who has called our community-based support of this true one percent of our population who serve in our country's all-volunteer force, Fort New Hampshire, and pledges that the National Guard will care for ALL the uniformed services in our state.

- Peter and Carol Moore founders of MooreMart in 2004, who recently packed 1,840 packages—totaling 4,589 for the

year—to members of the armed services from New Hampshire serving in the Middle East, to those serving throughout the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan, to retired veterans residing at the Tilton Veterans Home, Liberty House in Manchester, Buckingham Place and Dalianis House in Nashua, and the Veteran's Hospital in Manchester—bringing the total number of care packages shipped by MooreMart to 43,417. Humanitarian aid to schools and orphanages in Iraq and Afghanistan now total 4.1 tons.

Later that afternoon, I spoke with CDR Burdett about MOAA's specific work within the state. He said that the chapter provides awards to college and high school ROTC units as well as awards to the New Hampshire National Guard units. They make interest-free loans to children and grandchildren of members from the Scholarship Loan Fund and provide for the Veterans Home in Tilton.

MOAA programs include six or seven meetings a year, usually on Saturday at noontime, with a timely speaker or various social activities. The meetings are held around the state so members can share the short or long drives to the functions. Senator Kelly Ayotte's first speaking engagement after becoming Senator last November was at a MOAA meeting. One purely social activity for the whole family is the annual Clambake at the Jamaica Island recreation area at the Portsmouth Shipyard.



If you are an active or retired officer who would like to continue to serve, joining MOAA would surely serve you well, too. There are many ways to be a part of Fort New Hampshire, and if you are not an officer but would like to be a part of the support for our active and retired servicemen and women, check out the Easter Seal's Veterans Count Club and to learn more about how you can help. Look online at [www.moaa-nh.org](http://www.moaa-nh.org) or [www.eastersealsnh.org](http://www.eastersealsnh.org). CDR Peter Burdett is available at (800) 778-4251 or by email: [peter\\_burdett@ml.com](mailto:peter_burdett@ml.com).

Fort New Hampshire continues to fortify those who serve. Whether it's paying it forward or moving forward from what we've learned from our past—this group helps that legacy last.

ToDo

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