


ECAC

ECAC Newsletter

ecacmoaa.com

MAY 2025



Thursday, May 15th, 6PM, at the AU Club

President's Letter

Happy Summer everyone!

I hope you've had a great year so far and that everything is going well for you and your families. So far this year has been fairly busy from a legislative standpoint, but it appears as though our MOAA Representatives in DC have been keeping our rights and benefits intact. This is the most important reason for our organization to exist, and ALL Veterans benefit greatly from the work of our National Lobbyists.

We've got one more dinner at the AU Club before we go on our Summer break (June & July) and we don't have a speaker planned for May, so if you'd like to join us for a chance to drink, talk and eat together, it would be great to see everyone. Additionally, we're going to use the real menus so you can order whatever they have for dinner, which will be nice. After that, we'll put the word out on our Fall Luau and then for Christmas we're looking at having a party this year at my house as something fun and different. In the meantime, come to the AU Club and have a great summer!

CAPT Mike Horsefield (Ret.)
ECAC-MOAA President



Next Dinner Meeting
May 15, 2025
1800 —Thursday— 6 PM

1650 Yarbrough Farms Blvd.
Auburn, AL 36830

Take Shug Jordan Pkwy to
North Donahue Dr. and go north.

After 1/2 mile turn left
onto Yarbrough Farms Blvd.,
and the AU Club is on the right.

Please RSVP at 334-826-1107

or by email to

bohler1107@charter.net

by Tuesday, May 13th by 9PM.

Children of Fallen Patriots Day

Date: Saturday, May 13, 2025

About: Honors and raises awareness of the sacrifices and struggles the children of fallen patriots must endure in the wake of their parents' death.



Mark your calendars for the MOAA Luau Party

August 16th, Saturday, 4PM-8PM

Grove Hill Club House

The Auburn Planesmen R/C Flying Club,

<https://auburnplanesmen.org/>

is located on a private full-scale (700 feet long by 100 feet wide) grass runway, flying radio-controlled electric, glow, gas, and turbine-powered aircraft. There is a solar-powered battery charging station for 12V and 120V battery chargers. You can expect 5-7 of the flying club members out every weekend, most likely on Sunday afternoons.

Check out the website for more information.



Board Meeting was Monday, May 5, 2025.

As of April 30, 2025, the chapter has:

2025 Dues

58	Regular Members	\$50	Per regular member.
12	Surviving Spouse Members	\$25	Per Widow/ ROTC student
2	Associate Members	\$5	Per Past Widow/Associate
72	Total Chapter Members		

Per Chapter By-laws, you must become a member of National MOAA to belong to the chapter.

August's Board of Directors meeting will be Monday, August 4th, at 1145 at Chappy's. Any member wishing to attend should contact a Board member for an invitation.



Treasurer Report by Gordon Bugg
 \$2836.65 4-30-25 Bank Balance
 No outstanding checks or debits.

FYI: Distaff Club

If you are somewhat new to ECAC-MOAA, you may not be aware that there is a local organization called Distaff Club for military spouses. They restaurant hop on the second Wednesday of the month in the Auburn/Opelika area. Traditionally, the February meeting includes a bring a spouse/friend/Valentine to lunch and the December meeting has an ornament exchange. They enjoy getting together to socialize and getting to know one another. Dues are only \$5.00 a year and collected at the restaurant in the summer. If interested, please contact Judy Bohler, President, (334) 826-1107 or Cathy Golden, Treasurer, (334) 246-7142. Come join us!



Minutes from April General Meeting

- ✦ The ROTC/JROTC Awards Banquet was held at the Saugahatchee Country Club and was called to order by Mike Horsefield at 6:32 p.m. There were 58 members and guests present.
- ✦ The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chris Richie.
- ✦ The Invocation was offered by Ron Barto.
- ✦ The ROTC/JROTC Award ceremony dinner was focused on recognizing and honoring our twelve awardees and their instructors.
- ✦ The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Secretary

BJ
DeBardleben



ECAC-MOAA's 2025 Meeting Dates

Jan 16th	Thursday	6PM	Auburn Univ Club
<i>Feb 20th</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>6PM</i>	<i>Saugahatchee</i>
Mar 20th	Thursday	6PM	Auburn Univ Club
<i>Apr 17th</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>6PM</i>	<i>Saugahatchee</i>
May 15th	Thursday	6PM	Auburn Univ Club
Jun/July	No Meetings		
<i>Aug 16th</i>	<i>Saturday</i>	<i>4PM</i>	<i>Grove Hill Club</i>
Sept 18th	Thursday	6PM	Auburn Univ Club
<i>Oct 16th</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>6PM</i>	<i>Conquistadors</i>
Nov 20th	Thursday	6PM	Auburn Univ Club
<i>Dec 13th</i>	<i>Saturday</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>Horsefield Home</i>



100% of dues were collected.

Chapter Membership: 72

New Rosters were mailed.

****Friday, May 9th, is Military Spouse Appreciation Day. Thank you to all the spouses for the hard work and for the support to the military personnel.****

MOAA Mission Advocacy

The May 2025 edition of the Military Officer provides updates on MOAA's lobbying efforts in front of the 119th Congress to include:

◇ A renewed life for the Star Act.

The legislation aims to remove the legal roadblocks of Concurrent receipt that prevents retired Service members from receiving both retired pay and VA disability pay if they do not have a VA disability rating of 50% or more, and 20 years or more of service.

◇ Love Lives On Act

Surviving spouses who remarry under age 55 risk losing Survivor Benefit Plan payments as well as Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). This bill aims to correct that.

◇ Caring for Survivors Act

A Senate bill that seeks to support caregivers as they care for our nation's heroes with counseling services, professional licensure costs, their health care coverage, and studies on the barriers of caregiver employment.

Other issues such as: caring for toxic-exposed veterans, full funding for VA health benefits, TRICARE pharmacy changes and veteran transition programs are being highlighted by MOAA lobbying efforts. More information on these and other veteran's issues can be found on-line in MOAA's Legislative Action Center.

Ron Barto
Legislative Director



Memorial Day

Monday, May 26th



The Auburn community is invited to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice at the 25th annual Mayor's Memorial Day Breakfast. The event will begin at 8 a.m. on May 26 at the Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center.

LCDR Sam Nichols will be the guest of honor and the recipient of this year's Distinguished Veteran Award. His outstanding Naval service was from 1972 to 1994 when he retired. He is also a life member of MOAA and a chapter member since 2018. Auburn Heroes Remembered Award will be presented to the family of SSG Hugh Turner, Jr. Reverend Turner proudly served in the United States Army from 1964-1971 earning the rank of Staff Sergeant (E-6). He was a proud Vietnam Veteran and received an Army Commendation Medal before being Honorably Discharged.

Tickets can be purchased at City Hall (144 Tichenor Ave.) and are \$25 a person or \$250 for a table of eight.

A free memorial wreath laying ceremony will follow the breakfast at 10 a.m. at the Auburn Veterans Memorial Monument at the northeast corner of Ross Street and Glenn Avenue.

Attendees are encouraged to park at the Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex, Felton Little Park and the East Glenn Avenue Municipal Parking Lot. Ross Street between Glenn and Harper avenues and Glenn Avenue between Burton and North Debardeleben streets will be closed during the ceremony to provide room for on-street accessible parking.

The City of Opelika will host Memorial Day Services on May 26, 2025. The event will honor and remember our military heroes who fought for the freedom of our country, as well as the families who lost loved ones in the line of service. Services will be held at Courthouse Square at 10 a.m.

We have a special lineup this year:

- Welcome by Mayor Fuller
- Invocation and Benediction
- Guest speaker
- Presentation of Colors and Laying of the Wreath by Opelika Fire Department
- Music and TAPS

Following the Memorial Day services, the Museum of East Alabama will host a reception for the public to share the extraordinary memorabilia of Opelika's history.

In the case of rain, the 10 a.m. services will be moved to the Municipal Court Building at 300 Martin Luther King Blvd.

Tuesday, May 20th, at 11:30 AM
Cater Lawn at Auburn University
VRC Memorial Day ceremony honoring Vietnam Veterans

Twelve Students Receive ECAC-MOAA Awards



ECAC-MOAA High School JROTC Award Winners



Left: Auburn High School JROTC instructor MAJ Brett Wiersma –R with student Campbell Hooks-L



Right: Booker T. Washington High School JROTC student Lawrence Betts, Jr.-L with instructor LTC Chip Flowers-R



Leadership, Loyalty, and Level of Excellence



Left: Central High School JROTC student Journey Rodriguez-L with instructor Major Nathan Fenell-R



Smith Station High School JROTC student Nicolai Shomaker and instructor MSgt James Sturla had no photo submitted.

“Panther Pride. Go Panthers.”





ECAC-MOAA Tuskegee Univ. ROTC Award Winners



Photo Above Left:

Instructor Lt Col Lisa Cepero-R with
Cadet Alexandra Sinclair-L
Air Force ROTC



Photo Above Right:

Instructor MSG McFatriddle –R
with Cadet Rei-Ann Dean –L
Army ROTC

**Future
Leaders
Of
America**



Photo Left:
MOAA member,
Ron Barto, on
left presents
award to Mid-
shipman 1/C
Elijah Arcusa
on right.

Naval ROTC-
Navy

Naval ROTC-
Marine wasn't
submitted this
year.



ECAC-MOAA Auburn Univ. ROTC Award Winners



Photo Left: AU Instructor Capt. Justin Hitt-R with student Hunter Bryson Schmick -L Army ROTC



Photo Right: AU Instructor Lt. Col. Mayer -R with student Morgan Julian-L Air Force ROTC

★ War Eagle ★



Photo Above: MOAA award recipients Marine Midshipman 1/C Andrea Adams on the left and Navy Midshipman 1/C Eleanor Tomisek on the right pose with Auburn University's Aubbie in the center.

ECAC-MOAA Military Academy Award Winner



Southern Preparatory Military Academy instructor CSM Gregory Caywood-R with student Miller Backus-L

Who Can Join MOAA Chapter?

Membership in the East-Central Alabama Chapter is open to any National MOAA member who is on active duty, reserve, retired, or a former commissioned officer or warrant officer in any component of the Seven Uniformed Services of the United States (U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Space Force, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Public Health Service, or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). The Surviving Spouse of these individuals are also eligible to join and participate as regular members. Additionally, we offer Associate memberships to 4th year ROTC cadets at Auburn University and Tuskegee University as well as to the living spouse of a regular Chapter member.

ECAC Mission Statement

The East-Central Alabama Chapter is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and was chartered in 1970. It serves the cities of Auburn and Opelika, Alabama, as well as the surrounding areas of Lee, Chambers, Russell, Tallapoosa, and Macon counties in Alabama. The mission of the East-Central Alabama Chapter is to benefit the members of the uniformed services, their families and survivors, and to advocate for a strong national defense, while providing needed support to the community and its members.

Join ECAC Online!
<https://ecacmoaa.com/join-ecac>

Executive Officers, Board of Directors, Chair Positions for Oct 2023-Oct 2025.

President:	Mike Horsefield	Chair Positions	
Vice President:	Chris Richie	Surviving Spouses Liaison:	Kathy Barto
Secretary:	BJ DeBardeleben	Tops:	Mike Horsefield
Treasurer:	Gordon Bugg	Membership:	Judy Bohler
Director Chapter Affairs:	Ron Carson	Personal Affairs:	Ron Carson
Director Communication:	Jeff Bohler	Newsletter Editor:	Judy Bohler
Director Banquet:	Judy Bohler	Web Site:	Jeff Bohler
Director Legislative:	Ron Barto	Digital Communications:	Kathy Holtz
		News Release:	Ron Carson
		ROTC Awards:	open
		Monthly Meeting:	Judy Bohler
		Guest Speakers:	Chris Richie
		By-Laws:	BJ DeBardeleben
		State Council:	Ron Barto
		Legislative Updates:	Ron Barto
		MOAA News:	Ron Barto
		Chaplain:	open



Find
ECAC-MOAA
on Facebook
and Linked In



If you are interested in joining our *Facebook* group, you can use the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/300482473982236/>

If you are interested in joining our *LinkedIn* group, you can use the following link:

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12227504/>



Some of the articles on these pages are gathered online from various MOAA websites and newsletters. They are attributable to their reporters and personnel. Contact the club secretary with any questions.

ECAC-MOAA
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Editorial Policy. The East-Central Alabama Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and national MOAA provide their advocacy in a nonpartisan manner. Any conveyance of partisanship is unintended.