

December Meeting

As winter approaches in earnest, along with shorter days, the Army-Navy football game, and of course the holiday season, we put a wrap on 2024.

Accordingly, our last Dover MOAA meeting of this calendar year looms closely.

Dinner choices include the following:

- Chicken Parmigiana (\$31)
- Spaghetti w/meatballs (\$29)
- Tortellini Carbonara (\$32)

To secure your dinner choice, contact Tom Smith by 12 noon on Tues., 17 December

Email: rotorhead65@aol.com

Phone: (301) 904-0228



Thursday, 19 December

Franco's Restaurant

1708 E. Lebanon Rd. Dover DE 19901

Social Hour: 5pm-6pm

Dinner/Camaraderie/Fellowship: 6pm-8pm



Program "Agenda"

Our "special guest" for the December meeting will be none other than Santa Claus. Accordingly, there is no guest speaker scheduled, and our theme will be camaraderie and fellowship!

Lots to discuss among friends and allies in a friendly, service-connected atmosphere. Please join us if you are able.

Wreaths Across America



National Wreaths Across America Day is the culmination of a year-long mission to REMEMBER the fallen, HONOR those who serve and TEACH the next generation the value of freedom. This mission is in part carried out each December with the placement of sponsored veterans' wreaths on the headstones of those who have served our country. The observance is designated annually on the second Saturday in December each year.

By coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at more than 3,100 participating locations around the United States, Wreaths Across America strives to remember our fallen heroes.

The day honors those who serve, and it teaches everyone about the sacrifices made by veterans and their families to preserve our freedoms.

REMEMBER – HONOR - TEACH

**“TO BE KILLED
IN WAR IS NOT
THE WORST
THAT CAN
HAPPEN. TO BE
LOST IS NOT THE
WORST THAT
CAN HAPPEN...
TO BE
FORGOTTEN IS
THE WORST.”**



Dover MOAA Wreath-Laying

A reminder that this Saturday, 14 December, will be the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony and wreath laying at the Delaware Veterans Cemetery, 2465 Chesapeake City Road, Bear, DE 19701. Ceremony begins at 10:30am with wreath laying immediately following.

Thanks to everyone for supporting this program. Dover MOAA nearly reached our goal of 75 wreaths (71/75) for the Delaware Veterans Cemetery. Link to our site is below.

<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/166217/Overview>

A VA Secretary in Delaware... ?



Following is the Dover MOAA Chapter commentary on the proposal to create a DE Secretary of Veterans Affairs, from Chapter President Gene Thornton. (Segmented for print):

We are highly supportive of this idea. Delaware ranks among the top, per capita, of states with a high percentage of veterans and yet we rank at the bottom, per capita, of federal veterans benefits. This now becomes a bill for the state to pay, when there is federal money that could be used instead.

There is no “push” system to inform veterans of how to attain benefits. We would not need a “shark bill” if the veterans were getting their information and help FOR FREE as is intended in the federal law.

While the official talking point is that the Secretary of State is “doing a great job, but he is just too busy...” the fact is, he is NOT doing a great job with the Veterans

Home, nor the Cemeteries. The Veterans Home has been a public embarrassment on front pages of newspapers. It continues to cost the tax payers for a 144-bed facility, while only half of those beds are filled. Someone with more clout, such as a Cabinet Secretary, needs to be in charge.

Privatization is not the answer, because wherever that has been tried, veterans suffer; and, ultimately it shows up in the newspapers as well. As it is, the DVH is using far too many contractors for veterans’ care. Before the first contractor was hired as the administrator, morale was high, workers stayed, and after the move to put a contractor in charge, things rapidly fell apart.

As to the cost, there is

already a building. There is already some staff. The Secretary of State has taken positions that were originally authorized in the DVH and put them into his own office, and assigned them more duties. These positions need to be carved back out of the Secretary of State’s office and applied to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs office. That would leave the Secretary himself or herself, and perhaps a Deputy for Benefits, a Deputy for DVH, and a Deputy for Cemeteries and admin.

In summary, these enhancements would clarify service eligibility, secure funding, strengthen accountability, improve outreach, and modernize data management, making the bill a more robust and veteran-centered piece of legislation.

Delaware Legislative Updates

The legislative “pulse” in Delaware, per Dover MOAA member Russ Hall—

- A few legislators have expressed concerns about the State budget. Therefore, we are unlikely

to see any State benefit increases for veterans.

- Rep. Hilovsky resubmitted the Claim Shark bill, (HB 272) and is seeking additional cosponsors
- Rep Carson has been

working on the bill to create a Secretary of Veterans Affairs. One of the reasons it stalled last year was cost.

The General Assembly returns on January 14, 2025.

Meeting # 125



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For the 125th time, prospective Navy and Marine Corps officers collide on the gridiron against prospective Army officers, as USNA Midshipmen face USMA Cadets in this time-honored classic!

Here are the details—

Date: Sat., December 14th

Time: 1500 hrs. (3pm)

Location: Northwest Stadium, Landover MD

TV: CBS and Paramount+

Each year's uniforms are themed for this esteemed event. This year, Army's all-black apparel honors the 101st Airborne Division's "Rendezvous with Destiny" at Bastogne in 1944, and Navy's white uniforms take to the skies in tribute to the "Jolly Rogers" aviation unit.

Although a hard-fought game on the field, the unity among services immediately returns when the final whistle blows. Nobody ever loses this game. All are winners.

Delaware Veterans Trust Fund "Thank You"

(Dover MOAA received the following letter):

Dear Veteran Supporter,

Thank you for supporting the Delaware Veterans Trust Fund Dinner held on Thursday, November 7, 2024 at the Modern Maturity Center, Dover with a \$1,000.00 table sponsorship.

Your donation is very much appreciated, and we hope you continue to support veterans in need in the future.

The Friends of Delaware Veterans was established to support the Delaware

Veterans Trust Fund, which operates under the auspices of the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs.

One hundred percent of contributions are dedicated to Delaware veterans in need and are tax deductible.

Very best regards,

David Skocik
President,
Friends of Delaware Veterans Inc.



Dover MOAA Captured Moments



JROTC donation check presented by Nobles Pond military group.



Above, right and below: Table-talk at November's meeting.



Our November guest speaker, sporting her new mug.



“State of the Base” 2024



Local and National Topics of Concern

From the MOAA Chairman: Moving MOAA Forward

From MOAA:

https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2024-news-articles/recommended-reads/from-our-chairman-key-steps-to-move-moaa-forward/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=TMNsend&utm_content=ji5pOlfKmqMAMHJh1eJHNA==+DE+ATFHSMR+1+ERet+P+CC

VA Secure Sign-in Changes Coming Soon

From the U.S. Dept. of
Veterans Affairs (video):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQLJ9PMQ2jQ>

More Veterans Added to U.S. Congress

From MOAA:

https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2024-news-articles/recommended-reads/congress-will-open-next-session-with-more-veterans-than-2-years-ago/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=TMNsend&utm_content=ji5pOlfKmqMAMHJh1eJHNA==+DE+ATFHSMR+1+ERet+P+CC

Resources for Managing an Injury

From the U.S. Dept. of
Veterans Affairs:

https://www.maketheconnection.net/events/injury/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Inks.gd&utm_campaign=vetresource_weekly_12_04_24&utm_term=text

FREE Military Service Recognition Plaque

From Together We Served:

<https://togetherweserved.com/formalplaque>

DoD Installation Access for Veterans and Caregivers

From the U.S. Dept. of
Veterans Affairs:

<https://news.va.gov/136468/dod-installation-access/>

VA Studies Psychedelic- Assisted Therapy

From The American Legion:

https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/veterans-healthcare/2024/december/va-funds-first-study-on-psychedelic-assisted-therapy-for-veterans?utm_campaign=Source+Code+Here&utm_content=HEALTH&utm_term=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Adestra



Medicare Premiums Advice

From MOAA.org:

https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/finance/what-is-irmaa-and-what-does-it-mean-for-my-medicare-premium/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=TMNsend&utm_content=ji5pOlfKmqMAMHJh1eJHNA==+DE+ATFHSMR+1+ERet+P+CC

From NOAA's New Operations Leader

From the U.S. Dept. of
Veterans Affairs:

https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2024-news-articles/member-spotlight/qa-meet-the-3-star-leading-noaa-operations/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=TMNsend&utm_content=ji5pOlfKmqMAMHJh1eJHNA==+DE+ATFHSMR+1+ERet+P+CC

Chapter President's Corner

Famous Military Activities On Christmas

In the winter of 1776, Gen. George Washington knew the Hessians (troops hired by the British) would be groggy and not ready for a fight after too much Christmas celebration. So, on Christmas night, Washington and his troops boarded boats and rowed across the Delaware River. His 2,400 soldiers surprised the enemy, who surrendered in an hour.

After months of fighting during the First World War, something amazing happened on Dec. 24, 1914. Soldiers put down their guns on both sides and walked out of their trenches. For a few hours, there was peace, singing, and even gift exchanges.

On Christmas Day 1896, while crossing the Atlantic, the director of the Marine band (John Philip Sousa) had the idea for the melody of his most famous song- "Stars and Stripes Forever."

Christmas 1944 marks one of the most heroic battles in military history- the Battle of the Bulge.



Please take a moment from your celebrations to remember the military events that occurred at Christmas throughout the history of our country.

And remember, too, those deployed and the families who are observing the holiday without their loved ones.

Never Stop Serving,
Gene



Upcoming Dover MOAA Meetings

(Third Thursday of each
month: SEP thru MAY)

19 December

16 January

20 February



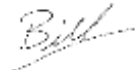
Newsletter Submissions

The *Dover MOAA Newsletter* is slated for publication on the Friday prior to each monthly meeting, and is disseminated electronically via email to all members. Input is welcomed from Chapter members, as well as relevant information from members of the community.

We will also accept the submission of opinion articles, with the understanding that the eventual publication of any items is subject to the discretion of the Chapter Newsletter Editor, and Chapter President.

Please submit all items via email to me directly at: colwjalexander@gmail.com. You can also contact me via cell phone (voice or text) at: 302-521-4781.

Thank you for your support in helping make our newsletter a distinguished channel of information for our MOAA members!



Bill Alexander

Help Us Grow & Stay Informed!

Please share the news of membership in our great chapter with any eligible uniformed services members and veterans with whom you come into contact. Here's the link to our membership form: <https://dovermoaa.org/chapter-membership>

And, check out our Facebook page for the latest news and info:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/8509355691721>

Never Stop Serving...