



Dovermoaa.org)

December 2023

MOAA is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization open to officers and former officers of the Uniformed Services.

Dinner Meeting January 18, 2024

(Donation to Airman's Attic gratefully accepted on Base)



Figure 1 State Senator Eric Buckson, 16th District

Program:

Senator Eric L. Buckson, the Republican senator for the 16th Senate District, is currently serving his first term in the Delaware General Assembly.

Senator Buckson is a lifelong resident of Kent County and the State of Delaware. He graduated from Caesar Rodney High School in 1983, the University of Delaware in 1988 and obtained a Masters in Sport Management in 1990.

He is a retired educator in the Polytech School District. Mr. Buckson is married to Jennifer and they have four children (Krisanne, Brent, Graham and Leah).

Committees:

- Education, Member
- Elections & Government Affairs, Member
- Environment, Energy, & Transportation, Member
- Finance, Member
- Health & Social Services, Member
- Housing & Land Use, Member
- **Veterans Affairs, Member**

Senator Buckson will speak on a variety of topics, focusing on Veterans Affairs. Last week, he introduced SB 201, a bill to increase tax free military retired pay to \$25,000 over the next three years, regardless of age of the military retiree.

Getting 100% tax free military retired pay AND Survivor Benefit Plan is a goal of our chapter and MOAA National. We are pleased Senator Buckson is advancing us towards this goal.

We sent the attached letter of support to the Veterans Affairs committee, Kent County Association of Realtors, the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, the Caesar Rodney Institute, A Better Delaware, the DelMarVa Association of West Point Grads, and to the Director of Office of Veterans Affairs and non-profit that supports the senior sergeants at the DAFB through its chair, Bill Hare.

Please forward to all your military and veterans groups. Let's get this one done, and continue to press for 100 percent tax free military retired pay and tax free Survivor's Benefits. Thirty three other states are already doing this, per MOAA.

Menu:

Fettuccine with Shrimp & Mushrooms in a white sauce \$32

Baked Lasagna, \$31

Grilled Chicken Salad, no sides \$22

Above meals includes salad, bread, coffee/tea and tip but not dessert or adult beverages.

Bar not extensive, wine and beer easiest. Wine by bottle, can take home what you don't consume.

Call (301) 904-0228 or email rotorhead65@aol.com to confirm your attendance and select your meal with Tom Smith by noon Jan 16th. (note 301 exchange, not 301)

Location: Franco's Dover

<https://francospizzadover.com/>

Address, directions, menu on website.

Agenda:

- 5-6 social hour
- 6-7 dinner
- 7-7:20 program
- 7:30 to 8:00 business meeting

Community News:

Our chapter was featured in the *Delaware State News*, online addition and in the paper.

DOVER MOAA CELEBRATES HOLIDAYS, SUCCESSES



Dover Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America President Col. Eugenia Thornton, (Army Ret.) accepts a donation for the JROTC Scholarship Fund from the Nobles Pond Veteran Association from former Chief Warrant Officer Rich Tortora. Also pictured, JROTC Scholarship Chair Lt. Col. Theo Dressler (USAF Ret). PHOTO COURTESY OF GENE THORNTON



Dover Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America President Eugenia Thornton presents a \$1,500 scholarship to Cadet Colonel Bethany Merrell-Ford, with her parents, at the JROTC Banquet held last May at Roma's. PHOTO COURTESY OF GENE THORNTON

DOVER — The Dover Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America celebrated the holidays and its 2023 successes on Dec. 21 at Franco's Pizza.

For a consecutive 12 years, the Chapter earned Five Stars in the Levels of Excellence. It also earned the Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Five Stars Award for both its newsletter and its website.

In May, the Chapter awarded two \$1,500 scholarships to JROTC seniors Bethany Merrell-Ford and Isabella Sosa-Reynolds.

MOAA lobbies for laws nationally and locally benefiting veterans and military, all ranks, all services, and all military components and Public Health and NOAH.

Locally, the Chapter supported increasing paid leave for members of state government who served in the reserve component and welcomed the change in leadership of the

Delaware Veterans Home.

Members donated to the Food Bank of Delaware for Thanksgiving and to Kindness 4 Kidz for Christmas.

In September, library month, the Chapter heard from Dr. Hillary Weliver, Kent County librarian. In October, Dr. Reba Hollingsworth taught how to research family history. In November, Lt. Gen. Welsler, USAF (Ret.) discussed plans for an expanded AMC Museum.

January 2024 will feature Sen. Eric Buckson, R-Camden, a member of the Veterans Committee.

The Chapter meets at Franco's Pizza and Pasta on the third Thursday September to May.

For more information, visit dovermoaa.org or visit Dover MOAA Chapter on Facebook.



Dover Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America Assistant Treasurer and Navy spouse Cathie Smith and Santa, played by Dee Panzig (USMC Vietnam conflict veteran). PHOTO COURTESY OF GENE THORNTON



Delaware Veterans Affairs Commissioner Doug Hudson (former Army Captain) and Lt. Gen. Bill Welsler, USAF (Ret). PHOTO COURTESY OF GENE THORNTON



Dover Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America Toy Drive Chair the Rev. Dr. John Riley (Major USAF - Ret) shows toys the chapter donated to Kindness 4 Kidz. PHOTO COURTESY OF GENE THORNTON



The Rev. In Kyung Park sings "Silent Night" in Korean at the Dover Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America holiday celebration. PHOTO COURTESY OF GENE THORNTON



Dr. Reba Hollingsworth and Santa, played by Dee Panzig (USMC Vietnam conflict veteran). PHOTO COURTESY OF CATHIE SMITH

In addition, MOAA featured when President Gene Thornton was selected as the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce member of the month for Dec 2023.

22 DECEMBER 2023 * Chamber Connections

Member of the Month



NAME: Hon./Colonel Eugenia Thornton
TITLE: Recorder of Deeds/President, Dover Chapter MOAA
BUSINESS: Kent County Administration Office
ADDRESS: 555 S. Bay Road, Dover, DE 19901

HOURS: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
PHONE: 302-744-2814
WEBSITE: uslandrecords.com/dovermoaa.org
EMAIL: recorder@kentcountytde.gov and genethornton@comcast.net

Tell us a little about how you came to join the Chamber.
 I belong to the CDCC through the Kent County government and the Dover Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), a 501c11 veterans' organization.

Tell us about your role in the business/organization.
 I was sworn into the elected position of Kent County Recorder of Deeds on Jan 3, 2023, for a four-year term. I became the president of the Dover Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) in Jan 2019.

Tell us something that makes the Recorder's office and MOAA unique.
 The Kent County Recorder of Deeds is a job that has been around since before Delaware was a state. Paper records exist in my office dating back to 1646. The Recorder's signature on property documents makes them binding to third parties. Property documents include Deeds, mortgages, liens, UCC, etc. View property records back to 1874 and register for the Property Fraud Alerts at the US Land Records website listed above.

Per The Hill, MOAA National is the premier lobby organization for military and veterans, working for all components and all ranks. We support national and local issues. One issue of interest to chamber members is our goal to have

military retired pay be tax-free in order to retain talent already in Delaware and attract talent from DC, Virginia, and MD. The average military retiree is a drug-free, physically fit, married 38-year old Sergeant with 20 years of successful honorable service to our nation.

Jobs in the military are the kind Delaware needs—everything from stevedores, truck drivers, logisticians, police, medical, legal, and administrative. Salaries earned in the Delaware career would remain fully taxable. Almost 40 states do not tax military retired pay, leaving Delaware an undesirable military retired location despite our general favorable tax situation, shortchanging our tax base and employers. The CDCC supports this initiative as it will be good for business.

What do you see for the future of the Recorder of Deeds?
 In June 2023, I announced a new program where property owners register for free to be alerted whenever we record any document in their names. Not only is this total transparency in public records, but it is also a great way to determine if fraud has occurred fast enough to minimize damage. So far, 1500 people have registered at pfa.uslandrecords.com or through the website listed above. This program is very

popular with the lending community, KCAR, and the Delaware Real Estate Bar.

In January 2024, I will ask Levy Court to stop charging HOAs recording fees once residents take over the HOA from the developer approximately at Final Plan approval. Delaware law requires certain documents be recorded, but once the residents take over, the documents are not kept up to date. By not charging for this service, I hope to increase the currency of HOA recorded documents. I am working with KCAR, BRAD, and DOJ on this issue.

I am also working with Leg Hall on a new bill called Transfer on Death Deeds, an inexpensive and transparent way for people to leave their property to others while bypassing probate. The target audience are people whose assets consist primarily of property but do not otherwise have the means for Wills and Trusts.

How has the Chamber helped MOAA grow?
 MOAA Chamber membership is a big draw for young officers, especially those about to retire. In addition, we give several scholarships per year to graduating JROTC cadets, and members of the Chamber have been generous donors. To donate please visit <https://dovermoaa.org/>

Figure 2 chamber connection, Dec 2023

Chamber of Commerce Upcoming Events:

- **Economic Forecast Breakfast: Register Today! (Register by Jan. 4th)**
- **Member 2 Member Expo, CDCC Showcase, & Mixer! (Jan. 31)**
- **Save the Date - Home & Garden Expo! (Feb. 23 & 24)**
- **Executive Office for Rent - Contact the CDCC today**
- **Upcoming Ribbon Cuttings: Adecco Staffing (Dec. 18), Dover Jazzercise (Jan. 3)**

Remember we belong to the Chamber! Register for events via Chamber Website.

Chapter News:

DUES! It's PAST that time of year again....We are holding our rate to \$15.00

Make your tax deductible donation to our general fund or to the JRTOC Fund (or both!) by Dec 31.

While you are in a giving mood, don't forget to [click this link](#) to donate to Wreaths Across America. The chapter receives \$5 for every wreath you buy if you use this link. Consider donations of Wreaths for Christmas gifts for folks who don't want any more "stuff" in their homes!

Member Hon. **Eugenia Thornton**, Kent County Recorder of Deeds reports more than 1500 folks have signed up for the Property Fraud Alert program offered by Kent County. She will brief the program at the Modern Maturity Center on **January 17, 2024** starting about noon, after lunch. You are welcome to attend. She is available to do a presentation at your civic, social, or church group.

Advocacy:

Click [HERE](#) to learn about MOAA's top 7 priorities with "how to help" links embedded.

Click [HERE](#) to see what is in the National Defense Authorization Budget...including the largest pay raise in two decades.

Please see attached "support for SB 201 and beyond" for more details about the benefits of tax free retired military pay.

Future Meetings:

Feb 15 (JROTC Fundraiser) – no program, order from menu, INVITE GUESTS!!!! Franco's. Will need to show proof you are there for fundraiser, not just word of mouth.

March 21: Cdr. **Pat Cerchio** "History of Women in the US Military and Accomplishments of Delaware Women"

Baked Ravioli topped with Mozzarella \$30

Meat Tortellini w/ prosciutto & mushrooms in cream sauce \$32

Chicken Piccate in white sauce with yellow sweet peppers, jalapeño peppers, banana peppers, pepperoncini (hot spicy) - \$35

April 18 – Gene Thornton and **Dolly** will present "The Magic of a Therapy Dog"

Fettuccine with Chicken and Vegetables in white sauce \$33

Ziti alla Vodka sauce \$33

Veal Parmigiana with Spaghetti (red sauce) \$34

May 16 – JROTC Awards Banquet

Personal Pizza, Veggie Deluxe Broccoli, mushroom, zucchini, onion, green pepper, tomato, ricotta cheese, mozzarella cheese, touch of garlic \$23
Grilled Shrimp Salad \$25
Spaghetti with Meat Sauce \$29

Photos of our last meeting:

Please the photos in the Delaware State News.

Help us Grow & Stay Informed!

Why not share the news of membership in our great chapter with your friends and with any eligible military folks with whom you come into contact? Here’s the link to our membership form: <https://dovermoaa.org/chapter-membership> .

To keep up to date between monthly newsletters and meetings, don’t forget to check out our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/850935569172190>

I hope everyone had a chance to see friends and family over the Holidays. Our Newsletter Editor certainly enjoyed New Year’s Eve!

It is a wonder he manages to have his Newsletter ranked among MOAA’s finest with our 5 Star Communications Award.



Figure 3 JB celebrates 2024

Never Stop Serving,

Gene

Eugenia "Gene" Thornton
Dover Chapter President

Respectfully submitted,

JB

Newsletter Editor