



Dovermoaa.org

June/July 2023

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

Dinner Meeting

When: Thursday, Sept 21, 2023

Program: Dr. Hilary Welliver, Kent County Librarian

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/hilary-welliver-70679a7a>

Location: Green Turtle, Dover

gt dover@thegreenturtle.com

Address: 391 N Dupont Hwy, Dover, DE 19901

You visited on Thursday

Hours:

Open · Closes 12 AM

Phone: (302) 264-9612

Menu:

TBD See Newsletter



Please call Tom Smith at 301-904-0228 or email him rotorhead65@aol.com to tell him your menu selections. Once we have menu selections, that is.

Agenda:

5:00 pm Social Time

6:00 pm Grace, Pledge, Intro guests, meal is served.

7:00 pm Program (I think we will add coffee/tea/decaf or not to the preorder process)
7:30 pm Biz meeting
8:00 pm Adjournment/pay for drinks, if required
8:01 retire to bar, if desired, continue conversation.

Our Speaker



County Librarian, Assistant Director of Community Services

[Kent County Levy Court](#)

Apr 2009 - Present 14 years 4 months

Kent County, Delaware

Shortly after accepting the post of County Librarian, tackled the challenge of retro-fitting a new 10,200 SF library facility -- without raising taxes, floating a bond, or receiving any State construction funds. When the new library opened in July 2010, it had already received an architectural award for steel beam construction.

In addition to planning and directing all administration of Kent County's Library Division, enjoys grant-writing to secure support and funding for library goals (beyond traditional budgetary sources). Successfully wrote and administered Target, WSFS, Delaware Division of Libraries, Delaware Division of Arts, Delaware Arts & Humanities Foundation grants, and others.

First library in Kent County to offer free WiFi access, and after opening in new location the community library consistently ranked in the top ten highest-circulating libraries state-wide for four years. With support from the state library, operates a free weekly Job Center service. Other note-worthy programs include the annual Winter Carnival fund raiser, If All Kent County Read the Same Book, Authors & Audiences (a regional writers showcase), installation of Little Free Libraries throughout Kent County, and the bookmobile's summer family performance series: Arts in the Park.

Collaboration and partnerships are key to ongoing success. Serves as liaison between the County and other libraries and community organizations. Customer Service trainer for the State. Users have dubbed us, "The Friendly Library on the Highway."

Chamber Events.

Reminder! MOAA is a member of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce. You may attend any event or business opening (fun and primarily FREE--and get the inside scoop on biz in our area! And let them know about us and our JROTC scholarships, etc.) Just go to the CDCC website and look at the upcoming events. Visit <https://www.cdcc.net/> for more information and to sign up to attend. To register for events, look at the calendar, then double click the event you are interested in attending. You will be taken to an order form. MOST EVENTS ARE FREE. If there is a charge, you will be informed of that when you register. Wear MOAA nametags please!

Local Advocacy:

Delaware Veterans Commission list of Legislative Items: We continue to support all DVCA initiatives. A new list is normally published each January, but I have not seen it this year so far.

Our chapter supported two issues.

VICTORY! HB 26 passed! Here are the details.

<https://legis.delaware.gov/BillDetail/129892#:~:text=Bill%20Details&text=This%20Act%20provi des%20state%20employees,reserves%20or%20Delaware%20National%20Guard.>

Many Dover MOAA members worked on this issue so WELL DONE, everyone!

HB 30. See attached. Current status of this bill is NOT PASSED

<https://legis.delaware.gov/BillDetail?LegislationId=129896>

Our Chapter on an ongoing basis is watching the Delaware Veterans Home. Much has been written about it over the past several years, but I am sad to report some setbacks. The main issue in the DVH remains: POOR MORALE among the staff. This leads to rapid turnover. Whereas when Don Jagger, my hubby and our former member, became a resident in the DVH, there was a “family” atmosphere, with many staff having served in the facility since it opened.

As you know before COVID, the Secretary of State put a contractor in charge of the facility, not a veteran. Problems began and have continued to this day. The State sent in a contractor to improve internal and external communications, he left with tail between his legs. Then the state sent in the Gibbous Group, led by a former administrator and nurse who were Whistleblowers at the veterans’ facility where they worked. We had high hopes, and indeed this group—for about \$100K—gave 37 recommendations for improvement.

At first, there were meeting to track the recommendations. Then, they stopped. In the meanwhile, the turnover did not improve and about half the staff is made up of contractors, not state employees.

There are about 50 residents in this 148 bed facility which we are paying for with our tax dollars. They cannot take in more residents due to Eagle’s Law, which specifies how many staff

are required per resident. YES, the staff morale and turnover means veterans cannot enter the facility due to this ratio. During COVID, this ratio was relaxed somewhat, and in the last Legislative Session, at the 11th hour, our legislators slipped a line into the budget that said they did not need to restore the Eagle’s Law ratios.

Take Action: Please call or email your elected officials to thank them for passing HB 26, and urge them to fix the Veterans Home. Enough is enough!

<https://legis.delaware.gov/FindMyLegislator>

National MOAA News:

The PACT Act which MOAA supported—and was signed by all three of our federal legislators—passed last year and is ready for implementation. Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester highlighted this in her most recent “Let me be Blunt” newsletter.


In the previous newsletter she explained why she voted against the NDAA, because of reproductive rights and some transgender issues. Both Democrats and Republicans are accusing each other of “weaponizing” the NDAA to get their views of these topics into our military bloodstream. Both are right. The Democrats put it in, where it never was, then the Republicans took it out and put the NDAA “back” to what it was before. The battle continues. Meanwhile recruiting is way down.

Chapter News:

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Obituaries

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**Kenneth H. Smith,
Lt. Col. USAF, SS**
DOVER, DE.—Kenneth H. Smith, Lt. Col. USAF, joined the Lord on July 25th, 2023. He was born in 1934 in Queens, NY; the fifth of six children of Leonard & Mary Smith. Ken was passionate about family, faith, country, and charity. Ken was preceded in death by his loving wife, Lida; and daughter, Kathleen. He is survived by his sister, Lor-

raine Strong; daughter, Beth Ann Knight (Patrick & son Matthew); sons, Kenneth (Pei & son Vincent), Michael, Andrew (Denise), and Mark.

Passion for aviation led Ken to one of the country's premiere high schools, Brooklyn Tech, and then to flying for the U.S. Air Force as a Navigator. Through a fellow aviator, Ken met and married Lida Mikos; the love his life for 63 years. During a 20-yr career, Ken logged over 13,000 flight hours conducting early warning, photo mapping, and transport missions (EC-121, RB-50, C-141, C-5A, etc), visiting 51 countries. Ken was in the initial cadre of C-5A aircrew. Career highlights included Operation Dominic, Operation Nickel Grass, and locating the 15-man crew of a sunken naval vessel 100 miles from British Guiana. Ken's second career, as a rural postal carrier, kept him close to home, his wife & their five kids. During this time, Ken launched into many volunteer activities. He did so much and impacted so many, and most of what he did, he did for decades...donating about 40,000 hours...primarily at Holy Cross Catholic Church,


the Knights of Columbus, and Dover AFB. Always at his side, or supporting from the shadows, was his loving wife Lida. They were a dynamic duo. Ken held dozens of positions in the Knights of Columbus; including the #1 position in the State. He was passionately involved in the Religious Vocational program and in many Pro Life activities; notably organizing buses to the March for Life, for over 40 years.

Ken led the Dover AFB Retiree Activities Office for 11 years; the office consistently ranked one of the Air Force's best. He logged 12 years as docent at the AMC Air Museum. He raised over \$20,000 in a dozen Polar Bear Plunges for the Special Olympics. Other activities included the Military Officers Association of America, the Kent County Amateur Radio Club, Malvern Catholic Retreats, the Air Force Navigator Observer Association, and the Modern Maturity Center.

Visitation is July 30, 5pm to 8pm, at the Funeral Home of Michael J. Ambruso, 1175 S. State St., Dover, DE. Mass of Christian Burial is Monday, July 31st, 10am, at Holy Cross Church in Dover.


Memorial donations may be made to the Delaware Special Olympics at 619 S. College Ave., Newark, DE 19716.

To share a fond memory of Ken or to offer a condolence to his family, please visit ambruso.com.



EVAN W. SMITH
Funeral Services

Delivering Superior Service, Elegance and Matchless Quality.



Find tips on how

Ken Smith. I have just been notified of his passing and that a Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated for him on 1000 on Monday 31 July, at Holy Cross Church in Dover. Here is a link to additional

Information: <https://www.echovita.com/us/obituaries/de/dover/kenneth-smith-16709595> There is a viewing tonight which Tom and Cat Smith will attend. He will be missed.

JRTOC: We are back starting a new cycle. Chair Theo has a few ideas to seek donations on a regular basis. He will enlighten us in September. In the meanwhile, we have contracted with Green Turtle to host our fundraiser since we have not gotten the check from Romas, as of this writing. Green Turtle will give us 20percent of everything, but the price point for meals is lower there, so our donation will be less. On the brighter side, they are open for lunch every day, so more opportunity for people to come in.

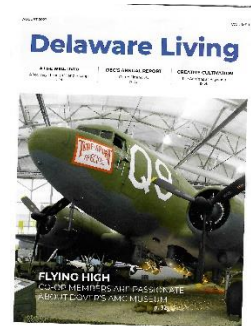
Wreaths across America. Our Chapter link is: <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/166217>

Dover MOAA has its own webpage and this is an easy way to make money for our chapter. As November approaches, let's use social media to promote OUR PAGE to our friends and family. You can use this link in your FB or in emails.



Our President in the News: See attached article from today's Del State News about situation in Kent County website. It was hacked. While I have no indication that our property record files have been touched, it is best for you to please register for our new FREE property fraud alert software to be notified of all changes to your recorded documents, legit or non-legit. Go to PFA.uslandrecords.com.

Bill Weiser featured in Delaware Living magazine, August 2023 edition. Please see attached article entitled "A Passion for Aviation: Co-op Members Keep Dover's AMC Museum Flying High."



Programs—Let us know when you hear an exciting speaker! Let us know if you would like to be the Program Chair!

DUES! It's PAST that time of year again....We are holding our rate to **\$15.00** Here is how you can pay on line from Treasurer Tom Smith. Paying Chapter Dues Online: Dover Chapter dues are \$15 per year for Regular Members and \$10 per year for Surviving Spouses. Chapter members have the option of paying their annual dues online with a credit or debit card.

Go to the MOAA website at www.moaa.org, log-in, click on "Chapters", under "FAST ACCESS->Chapter Members", click on "Pay dues online", drop down to "Join/Renew Your Local Chapter", then down to "Getting Started" and follow the prompts. (If you can't log-in, go to

www.moaa.org, click on “About MOAA”, click on “Councils and Chapters”, and then follow the directions above.) You can pay for multiple years if you like, up to three years. You can also donate, up to \$500, to the Chapter Scholarship Fund through this system.

There are a few restrictions however. You cannot pay for chapter dinners with a credit card. (Cash or check only please.) You cannot pay your national MOAA dues through this program. (National MOAA has its own credit card payment system.) Surviving spouses may not use this system. After you pay your dues through this system, you will receive an e-mail confirmation from national MOAA, and another e-mail from the Chapter Treasurer.

Remember, this is only an option! **If you prefer, you may pay your chapter dues by check through the mail (mail to: Dover MOAA, P. O. Box 122, Dover, DE 19903), or by cash or check at one of our chapter meetings.** (For your information, non-members may use this same system to join the chapter.) If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Treasurer, LCDR Tom Smith, USN-Ret at 301-904-0228 or email him rotorhead65@aol.com.

Change of Meeting Venue? As per discussion at the last meeting, I reached out to DelVets. They have a room we can rent, but they cannot cook for us. I have been all over trying to find a place that has a quiet party room where we can hear a speaker and conduct a meeting. Some that have a nice meeting setting have bad parking. Some are just too hard to get to such as Wild Quail and Maple dale (Maple dale wants us badly, but parking is a problem and they are hard to get to for most.). Personally, I would like to stay at Romas, but so far, we have not been able to work things out.

I made a command decision to go with Green Turtle for September. We are in their books for the remainder of the year, but **we are only locked in for September**. See attached for more discussion.

Future Meetings:

October 19: Tentative PAO of the Regional VA or Tentative: Chair or Vice Chair of the Delaware Senate Veterans Committee

Nov 16 (Table of Honor, Delaware Food Bank), Speaker Bill Weiser, President AMC Museum Foundation, “Be part of our Legacy! Heritage, Education, Restoration Expansion.” Please review very nice article in the *Delaware Living* magazine, August 2023 issue.

Dec 21—Holiday Party (Toys via a charity) – **what entertainer do you want this year?**

Jan 18 Back by popular demand! Dr. Reba Hollingsworth – topic: Explore your family history

Feb 15 (JROTC Fundraiser) – no program, order from menu, INVITE GUESTS!!!! Green Turtle?

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

April 18 -

May 16 – JROTC Awards Banquet

Here are some memories of our May meeting.











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>

Never Stop Serving,

Gene

Eugenia "Gene" Thornton
Dover Chapter President