



# Ozark Empire News

Ozark Empire Chapter, Military Officers Association of America

2131 West Republic Road, Box 164, Springfield,  
Missouri 65807



April, 2024

## A Word from the Chapter President

- This issue is being sent a couple of days early, due to the Easter holiday weekend. Please note the reminder about remembering to VOTE in your local elections on April 2.
  - As we have announced in the past, OEMOAA has changed all of our chapter meetings to daytime, with the lone exception at this time of our December meeting. With our April meeting, please note that we are moving to Friday Noon for our monthly chapter get-togethers. More information is found later in this newsletter about early considerations regarding a possible change of venue.
  - Frank Bridges reports that he still has 5 baseball tickets available, for the night of June 27. Game time: 7:05pm. These are open to sell to anyone, chapter membership not a requirement. In fact, this would make a great recruiting tool, or just an opportunity to make new friends with other folks. We will be enjoying the game from RedBird Roost, where all-you-care-to-eat food is available, as well as unlimited non-alcoholic beverages. Please be sure to let Frank know if you want more tickets than you may have already taken. He will be glad to hook you up. Let's all plan on a great time at the ballpark!
  - Our chapter will continue taking donations for a memorial contribution to Champion Athletes of the Ozarks, a local Special Olympics organization, in the name of David Guy, the late son of our own Chuck and Connie Guy. We will accept donations through our April meeting, after which we will forward the collected monies to Champion Athletes, a local Special Olympics organization, in the name of the Ozark Empire Chapter. See Dean Smith, chapter Secretary/Treasurer.
  - Looking ahead, there will be a Memorial Day observance and program at the Springfield National Cemetery, located at the intersection of Glenstone and Seminole. We will include an informational flyer about this event as soon as it is received.
  - For all who are Premium or Life members of MOAA, a free Survivor's Planning Guide is available for download. It can be obtained at [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org).
- 
- As always, our newsletter is freely available on the chapter website, [www.OEMOAA.org](http://www.OEMOAA.org) as well as via email to all members. If anyone wishes to receive this newsletter via US Mail, please make that known to a Board Member or the Newsletter Editor, and we will be happy to accommodate.

**Chapter Mission Statement:** *To stimulate patriotism in our community and serve those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any of the eight uniformed services, as well as their surviving spouses. The Ozark Empire Military Officers Association of America (OEMOAA) is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). MOAA and its affiliated chapters are nonpartisan.*

**Protect Veterans from “Claims Sharks”.** The Guard VA Benefits Act (HR 1139 | S. 740) will impose criminal penalties on those who seek to collect unreasonable and unauthorized fees for assisting with service-connected disability claims. A veteran should never be charged to file an initial claim, and if an appeal is necessary, they should not be charged excessive fee for that service.

**Preserve Earned Burial Benefits:** The Expanding America's National Cemetery Act ([H.R. 1413](#)) ensures our nation keeps its sacred promise to past, present, and future veterans and their families. Arlington National Cemetery eventually will run out of room, and proposed eligibility reductions will end the benefit some veterans and their families have planned on for years. The bill would authorize the transformation of a VA-run national cemetery into the next location that affords military honors as Arlington reaches capacity.

**Support Children of the Fallen and Disabled Veterans:** The CHAMPVA Children's Care Protection Act ([H.R. 2414](#) | [S. 1119](#)) would expand coverage under the VA program for children of eligible veterans so they can have health care until age 26. The goal of this legislation is to close the age parity gap for vulnerable members of our community who need support: Young adult children of veterans who are permanently and totally disabled, have died of a service-connected disability, or lost their life on active duty and did not qualify for DoD's TRICARE program.

**Improve Survivors' Benefits:** The Caring for Survivors Act ([H.R. 1083](#) | [S. 414](#)) aligns payments of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) – a monetary benefit paid to the survivors of servicemembers who die while serving on active duty, or of service-connected disabled veterans – with other federal programs. DIC is paid at a monthly rate of \$1,562.74, with additional allowances in certain circumstances. That works out to 43% of what a veteran with a 100% service-connected disability rating receives from the VA. However, federal survivor programs provide up to 55% of a civil servant's pay, computed as if the employee retired on disability at the date of death.

**Support Military Sexual Trauma Survivors:** The Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support (SAVES) Act ([H.R. 2441](#) | [S. 1028](#)) will improve military sexual trauma survivors' access to essential care and services in the Veterans Health Administration, and ensure greater assistance when veterans are applying for disability benefits through the Veterans Benefits Administration. A series of audits by the VA Office of Inspector General revealed the VA was falling short on its support to this group of veterans.

**Expand And Support Services For Aging And Disabled Veterans:** Two pieces of legislation, the Expanding Veterans' Options for Long Term Care Act and the Elizabeth Dole Home and Community Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act, would provide the VA with critical flexibility to support a rapidly growing population of aging veterans needing long term care services outside the home, and to improve home- and community-based services for veterans and their caregivers.

**Allow Surviving Spouses To Remarry And Retain Benefits:** The Love Lives On Act ([H.R. 3651](#) | [S. 1266](#)) would reverse penalties faced by surviving military spouses who remarry prior to age 55. These survivors lose entitlement for DIC and survivor benefit pay, forfeit access to the Fry Scholarship, and lose commissary and exchange privileges.

There are 25 active legislative campaigns on the MOAA legislative action center page. You can log in to see all of them at <https://moaa.quorum.us/>. A few which are important to all of us are:

- Ask Your Lawmakers to Avoid a Government Shutdown and Finish the Appropriations Process. Failure to do so could result in disruptions to services, furloughs for federal employees, as well as many other unintended consequences. <https://moaa.quorum.us/campaign/50794/>

- Urge Your Legislators to Support Concurrent Receipt. If passed the Major Richard Star Act, would authorize combat-injured veterans to receive their full DoD retirement pay earned for years of service and their full VA disability compensation for lifelong injury. <https://moaa.quorum.us/campaign/43784/>

- Ask Your House Member to Support the Expanding America's National Cemetery Act. A long-term legislative solution will preserve burial with military honors for countless elderly and women veterans who could lose that earned benefit – but only if MOAA members and others encourage their lawmakers to act. <https://moaa.quorum.us/campaign/43785/>

- Time for Missouri Seniors (62+) to sign up for property tax relief. Missouri Senate Bill 190 was passed, however there are still some questions about the relief being tied to social security. The bill allows counties to freeze property taxes for seniors who are eligible for social security benefits, own a home or pay property taxes on a home. Green and Christian Counties have started taking applications and there are potential deadlines for submission. You can contact your county tax collector's office for information on where to get the forms.

Green County: Email: [CollectorHelp@GreeneCountyMO.gov](mailto:CollectorHelp@GreeneCountyMO.gov) Phone: (417) 868-4036

Christian County: Email: <http://www.christiancountycollector.com> Phone Number: (417) 582-4330

**Remember that April 2 is Election Day. Numerous local elections are due to be held that day. Please be informed about your local issues and candidates, and EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE.**

## Sign Up for MOAA “Newsletter” and Legislative “Calls to Action”

We encourage all chapter members and spouses to always, please stay alert, and respond to MOAA **Calls to Action** at least monthly, preferably weekly! Yes, two votes per household are better than 1.

### Signing Up for the MOAA “Newsletter” and Legislative “Calls to Action”:

- **Newsletter:** Sign up for the MOAA Newsletter. [www.moaa.org/](http://www.moaa.org/) Check “News & Info” on Menu, then, on drop-down menu, check “Newsletters”

Or go directly to this link: [www.moaa.org/content/tmn/the-moaa-newsletter/](http://www.moaa.org/content/tmn/the-moaa-newsletter/)

- **Calls to Action:** Please stay alert for any “Calls to Action”. [www.moaa.org/](http://www.moaa.org/) Check “Advocacy” on Menu, then, on drop-down menu, check “Legislative Action Center”

Contact your Federal elected officials by using the following link: [takeaction.moaa.org/?0](http://takeaction.moaa.org/?0)

\*\*\*WHEN COMPLETING “CALLS TO ACTION” **PLEASE LOGIN TO THE MOAA WEBSITE**, WHICH WILL ALLOW YOU TO ENTER OUR **OZARK EMPIRE CHAPTER #** IN THE BLOCK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LETTER PRIOR TO SENDING. THE CHAPTER # IS: **MO05** (MO is “alpha character” and 05 is “numeric” zero 5).\*\*\*

**Phone calls matter; Emails matter; Online petitions matter; In-person meetings, when practical, matter.** We want to ensure our elected representatives receive local constituents concerns for maximum national impact. (call them via MOAA’s toll-free Capitol Switchboard: 1-866-272-6622).

### **CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS**

The Honorable (name), U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510 • Phone: (202) 224-3121

The Honorable (name), U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 • (202) 225-3121

Collectively we make a difference - **Never Stop Serving®**

Frank Bridges continues to seek volunteers to present OEMOAA Awards at this Spring’s Junior and Senior ROTC Awards days. The ceremonies will be in the April to May time frame. We have 13 different locations to present from College of the Ozarks to Rolla to Willard and points in between. You can contact Frank at 573-308-7272 or see him at the February meeting. Frank says “Please...help out!” This is a great opportunity to represent MOAA as well as our chapter, and be of service to our community.

## March Meeting Recap



Dr Brooks Blevens was our guest speaker for our March chapter meeting. He presented a rather entertaining story of an incident involving a Confederate Major who had been arrested as he led his troops through the state of Missouri, during the later stages of the Civil War. A policy of retribution had been at first informally adopted, later officially sanctioned by General Order #100. This called for equal punishment, which in many cases meant execution of an equal number and rank of Confederate soldiers as had received such treatment by the opponents. In this case, a Union Major, James Wilson, had been executed by Confederate troops in 1864. General Sterling Price, a Southern officer, who saw action at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, was on a mission with some 12,000 troops, to seize the city of St Louis. He was able to be diverted to seek other targets of opportunity, instead of heading directly toward his prime objective. This resulted in him failing to achieve his original goal, and in fact remaining on the run, eventually fleeing into Kansas. One of his officers, Major

Enoch Wolf, was arrested by Union troops, and transported to St Louis, where he was read orders which said he was to be executed three days hence. In the meantime, a message was received by his Union captors, originating from the White House, directing that this execution be delayed, followed by another message which indicated that his captors could proceed as they saw fit. In the meantime, a civilian move was started to do away with retaliatory executions. This eventually resulted in Major Wolf's being spared execution, and in fact he lived on into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and apparently enjoyed retelling that his life was spared by order of President Abraham Lincoln.

The Missouri Historical Review will be publishing Dr Blevens' story about this incident. Their website is available [here](#). Thank you, Dr Blevens, for coming and speaking to us. A very enlightening presentation about military history.

---

Following Dr Blevens' presentation, we had a brief discussion about an offer which has been presented to OEMOAA, regarding an option for our meeting facilities. This comes from the Disabled American Veterans, Orlan Smith Memorial Chapter 11, which holds their meetings at the DAV Hall, 2525 E Division, Springfield. This is located across Division from the Downtown Airport. The interior of the building has been recently renovated, and they have audio as well as video presentation equipment in place. The meeting room can easily seat up to 60 people, which exceeds the number we have had attending our meetings for at least the past 5-6 years.

Utilizing this facility would require that we engage services of a caterer, which we could easily arrange. At any rate, this would likely result in a lower cost to the chapter, and thus a lower cost to members attending. As of this writing, no proposals have been brought forth regarding any cost for us to use the facility. The building itself is not in use by the DAV on Fridays, so no conflicts are foreseen in that regard to our being able to meet there.

This idea is in the very early stages of consideration. No decisions have been made.

---

## April US Military History

**1803:** Louisiana Purchase completed

**1861:** US Civil War begins, when Major Robert Anderson refused to surrender Fort Sumter, located in Charleston Harbor, leading Brig Gen P.G.T. Beauregard to fire on the fort

**1865:** US Civil War ends, with the surrender of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia to Ulysses S. Grant, at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia. This brings to a close the devastating loss of over 620,000 American lives.

**1865:** Abraham Lincoln assassinated

**1923:** Colonel Jacob Schick receives a patent for Schick razors

**1942:** Following surrender of Luzon to the Japanese, 75,000 Filipino and American troops begin a forced march to a prison camp near Cabanatuan.

**1944:** While vacationing in Warm Springs, GA, President Roosevelt suffers a stroke and dies

**1948:** Berlin Airlift commences to provide relief to the surrounded city. At the height of the operation, one aircraft was landing at Tempelhof Airport every 45 seconds. The Russian government finally lifted the blockade of Berlin on May 11, 1949

**1960:** USS Triton, a nuclear-powered submarine, completes the first submerged circumnavigation of the globe. This took place between February 24, and April 25, covering 26,723 miles

**1961:** Bay of Pigs invasion

**1963:** USS Thresher, nuclear-powered submarine fails to surface 230 miles east of Boston, claiming 129 lives

**1970:** Apollo 13 suffers a severe malfunction on its journey to the moon on April 13, returns safely to Earth on April 17.

**1973:** C141 Starlifter dubbed the Hanoi Taxi, makes the first flight of Operation Homecoming. A total of 54 such missions flew out of Hanoi. Each plane carried 40 former POWs. To this day, there continue to be over 1,000 individuals still unaccounted for.

**1983:** Space Shuttle Challenger made its maiden voyage, carrying the first US female astronaut, Sally Ride

**1989:** Battleship USS Iowa's Number 2 gun turret explodes while on maneuvers northeast of Puerto Rico

**1990:** Space Shuttle Discovery places Hubble telescope into orbit, with an orbital period of 97 minutes

**1995:** A massive explosion at the Alfred P Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City kills 168

**2001:** US Pentagon destroys its last canister of napalm

**2003:** Baghdad falls.

**2009:** Captain Richard Phillips of the MV Maersk Alabama, who was abducted by Somali pirates, is rescued the US Navy

**2014:** A shooting spree at Fort Hood, Texas, leaves four dead, including the gunman, and 16 others injured.





## Chaplain's Corner

By Becky Hutchings

How can it be that April is upon us? Just yesterday we celebrated Christmas! Before sharing some words about the 4th month on the calendar-“Sweet April showers do spring May flowers (credit England’s poet Thomas Tusser [1500s]), it would be remiss to skip over Easter and the Resurrection.

As I write this article we are at the beginning of Holy Week. Each day of this week commemorates a significant occurrence in Jesus’ earthly ministry leading up to the cross and His ultimate resurrection.

Palm Sunday, Day 1 Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Zachariah 9:9)

Monday, Day 2 Jesus clears the temple (referenced in the 4 gospels; Luke 19:46)

Tuesday, Day 3 Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26:14-16; May have been the day Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus to the Sanhedrin)

Holy Wednesday, Day 4 scholars speculate that Jesus and His disciples rested in Bethany in preparation for Passover (taken from learnreligions.com)

Maundy Thursday, Day 5 Passover and Last Supper (Luke 22:15-16)

Good Friday, Day 6 Trial, crucifixion, death, and burial (referenced in 4 gospels; Luke 23:34, 46)

Saturday, Day 7-Jesus body lay in the tomb. Nicodemus brought spices to prepare the body according to Jewish custom (John 19:39-40)

Resurrection Sunday, Day 8 Jesus rose from the dead (referenced in the 4 gospels; Matthew 28:5-6)

Because of the Resurrection, we are offered eternal life, if we accept it. I’m reminded of the resurrection during spring. Those things that died during the winter months, manage to sprout, bloom, and grow again.

This time of year brings a sense of renewal as we look around and take in our natural world. The birds are singing, the weather is nicer (most days), and the colors of spring are vivid and beautiful. May we take time to renew our own spirits this spring.

Be encouraged.

PS Don’t forget to participate in the total eclipse occurring on April 8.

---

**Our host, Twin Oaks Country Club, continues to provide service via Plated Meals. With across-the-board price increases that have occurred over the past year, this has resulted in significant price increases for our service at Twin Oaks. Accordingly, the cost for our meals is as shown below.**

**Our options for our March luncheon meeting are: Chicken Piccata, with chef’s choice starch and vegetables -or- Pastrami Sandwich with Fries, both served with salad, table rolls, and beverage**

**Cost: \$30 per plate which as always includes gratuity.**

## April 2024 Meeting

**DATE:** Friday Noon, 19 April 24

**PLACE:** Twin Oaks Country Club (Oak Room)  
1020 East Republic Road  
Springfield, Missouri 65807

**TIME:** 1115 – Social Hour (Drinks may be purchased from the bar). 50/50 voluntary donations, to support Honor Flight of the Ozarks. Drawing at the close of the presentation.  
1200 – Meal, with program to follow

**MENU:** Luncheon Meal, options as outlined on page 7.

**Cost:** As noted on previous page. (NOTE: 50/50 Drawing, and Donations for Honor Flight of the Ozarks will also be accepted)

**Program:** Jerome Thinner, TRICARE Update

**RSVP:** By Monday, 15 April 2024, with meal choice  
To: LtCol Dean Smith, USMC, Retired  
LtCol Smith will acknowledge ALL reservations received. If you do NOT receive a confirmation, please contact him directly.

## ELECTED CHAPTER BOARD OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT:** Ron McCall, Capt, USAF, Retired

**1ST VICE PRESIDENT:** Becky Hutchings

**2ND VICE PRESIDENT:** (Open)

**SECRETARY/TREASURER:** Dean Smith, LtCol, USMC, Retired

**IMMED PAST PRESIDENT:** Chuck Guy, Colonel, USA, Retired

## APPOINTED CHAPTER OFFICERS

**CHAPLAIN:** Becky Hutchings

**LEGISLATIVE CHAIR:** Anthony Willis, COL, USAF, Retired

**AWARDS COORDINATOR:** Frank Bridges, LtCol, USA, Retired

**TRUE AMERICAN HERO CHAIR:** John Hathcock, COL, USA, Retired

**SURVIVING SPOUSE LIAISON:** Becky Hutchings

**AMBASSADOR:** Chuck Guy, COL, USA, Retired

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIR:** Chuck Guy, Colonel, USA, Retired

**WEBMASTER:** Keith Oxby, W/O British Royal Navy

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Ron McCall, Capt, USAF, Retired

## 2024 OEMOAA Monthly Schedule

Chapter monthly meetings will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday, unless otherwise noted.

### 2024 Dates (Subject to change)

Apr 19 (Fri Noon). Jerome Thinner, TRICARE Update

May 17 (Fri Noon). "Keeping Your Keys"

Jun 21 (Fri Noon). Chuck Lunnemon, DAV

June 27: **Springfield Cardinals (See Frank for Your Tickets!)**

Sep 20: Sonya Anderson: Update from Cong Burlison's office

Oct 18: Ethan Forhertz: Convoy of Hope

Nov 15: Chapter Business Meeting, Election of Officers

Dec 13, 1800hrs: Christmas Music

Quotes from Groucho Marx:

I, not events, have the power to make me happy or unhappy today. I can choose which it shall be. Yesterday is dead, Tomorrow hasn't arrived yet. I have just one day, today, and I'm going to be happy in it.

Getting older is no problem. You just have to live long enough.

We encourage all eligible members to also join our National organization, Military Officers Association of America. Information regarding membership options can be accessed at [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org)

Our chapter maintains a presence on Facebook. We strive to keep this page current with information about chapter activities and opportunities. Members can access that page by following this link: [www.facebook.com/groups/712416736284579](https://www.facebook.com/groups/712416736284579)

## OEMOAA NAME TAGS

Some members and their spouses prefer a solid plastic name badge with a magnetic clasp. The member cost is \$10 per badge, payable in advance. Order forms will be available at the next two meetings. You can also email Dean Smith (anytime and he will send you the form by return email. Please return completed forms to Dean at a meeting with the \$10 per badge fee. Nametags will be ready at the next regular dinner meeting. Yes, the name tags with the pin clasp will continue to be provided at no cost.