



The South Georgia Voice

South Georgia Chapter, Military Officers Association of America

May 2026 Edition

www.sgamoaa.org



President's Corner

I would like to recognize **Don & Sara McArthur** for the outstanding photos featured this month. Thanks to **all our members** whose continued support of time, effort, and donations sustains our mission and long-term success.

Members will vote on adopting the new chapter By-Laws during the 14 May 2026 meeting. Please review the new By-Laws before the meeting. We need members willing to serve on **Membership & Program Committees** focused on recruitment, retention, and delivering valued programs to ensure the continued vitality of the Chapter.

Operation Epic Fury (Iran Operations)

Since 27 February 2026, 15 soldiers killed, 538 military personnel wounded, and at least 17 US sites in the Middle East damaged. Please keep our deployed forces and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of chapter member **Norman F. Conant, Jr.**, 94, of Valdosta, who passed away on Friday, April 10, 2026, at his home surrounded by his family. Please pray for his wife Barabra and the rest of the family. A memorial service will be held on May 8th. www.mclanecares.com.

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of chapter member **Robert Kenneth Armstrong**, 84, of Thomasville, who passed away peacefully on Sunday, April 5, 2026, at Archibold Living Center in Cairo, Georgia. Please pray for his wife Phyliss and the rest of the family. A memorial service will be held at a later date. www.clarkfuneral.com.

Tom McCracken
President, South Georgia Chapter, MOAA

Chapter Meeting – April 09, 2026

Guest Speaker - Tim Oliver, Adult Leader, South Georgia Cadet Squadron, Civil Air Patrol (CAP)



Established in 1941, Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is a public service organization chartered by Congress that functions both as a nonprofit and the civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. Operating as a nonprofit, CAP provides an array of K-12 aerospace and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) curriculum and educational products for members and teachers; offers youth character, leadership, and career development opportunities; and provides essential community service for federal, state, and local agencies in the air and on the ground.

In its capacity as the auxiliary of the Air Force, CAP operates the world's largest fleet of single-engine aircraft. The Air Force assigns missions to the auxiliary to facilitate 90% of the inland search and rescue missions in the United States searching for missing or overdue aircraft, lost or injured hikers, stranded boaters, missing persons, and more.

Civil Air Patrol's mission statement is "Volunteers Serving America's Communities, Saving Lives, and Shaping Futures." This encompasses the organization's three major programs: emergency services, aerospace education, and cadet programs.

Tim spoke about the mission, values, squadron composition, and discussed in detail the CAP three major programs, opportunities for gaining valuable skills and roles of adults and cadets in the program.

South GA Cadet Squadron

<https://gawg.cap.gov/locations/west-south/south-georgia>

National MOAA News

<https://www.moaa.org/>

Advocacy in Action 2026

Focus is reflected in four key issues we will bring directly to Congress: **The Major Richard Star Act, the Shutdown Fairness Act, the GUARD VA Benefits Act, and the Military CARE Act.** Review all four Advocacy in Action topics on the [AiA website](#) and share these issues with your network.

MOAA Digital Membership Campaign in May

MOAA National will be holding a digital membership campaign celebrating Military Appreciation Month & Military Spouse Appreciation Day in May. This campaign will target prospects, BASIC and PREMIUM members. Incentives include membership discounts accompanied by Amazon gift cards.

Georgia Council of Chapters News

<https://www.gamoaa.org/>

Save Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center (DDEAMC)

Defense Health Service may downsize the DDEAMC on Fort Gordon, GA, which will negatively affect healthcare for several of our Georgia and South Carolina MOAA members. Please contact your Congressman and Senators and let them know that you want them to stop the actions of DHA and save DDEMAC. For more information, please reach out to Tom McCracken.

Advocacy in Action 2026

This week, CAPT Fred Boyles and CDR Keith Walters will be in Washington, D.C., representing our Georgia Council of Chapters at this year's Advocacy in Action campaign.

2025 MOAA Levels of Excellence and Col. Marvin J Harris Communication Award winners:

Levels of Excellence Awards:

<https://www.moaa.org/loe2025>

Harris Communications Awards:

<https://www.moaa.org/harris2025>

- Georgia MOAA, Inc. — 5-Star Website
- Georgia Mountain Chapter — 5-Star Newsletter; 5-Star Website
- Kings Bay Chapter — 4-Star Newsletter
- Old Capitol Area MOAA — 4-Star Newsletter
- South Georgia Chapter — 4-Star Newsletter; 5-Star Website

GA Department of Veterans Service

<https://veterans.georgia.gov/newsletter>

Valdosta Veterans Field Service Office

348 Enterprise Drive, Valdosta, GA 31601

<https://veterans.georgia.gov/locations/valdosta>

Veterans Service Officer and Manager Jason Lane

jason.lane@vs.ga.gov or 229-316-2970

Veterans Service Officer Tisha Hardy

tisha.hardy1@vs.ga.gov or 229-316-2970

Memorial Day at Sunset Hill Cemetery

Over 2,000 American flags are placed on veterans' graves at Sunset Hill Cemetery in Valdosta, GA, for Memorial Day. These flags honor fallen soldiers, spanning multiple war periods and ensuring each veteran's grave is recognized. American Legion Post 13 will conduct their annual Memorial Day Ceremony at Sunset Hills Cemetery on Oak Street in Valdosta, Georgia on Monday, May 27 starting at 10:00 a.m. American Flag placement on Veterans' graves will start on Sunday, May 26th beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Location of both events will be, upon entering the Main Gate to the Cemetery on Oak St. then go around to the left at the Flagpole roundabout. All are welcome as several groups such as Scouting Clubs, Riding and other Community Groups have participated in these events each year in respect of our Country's Fallen Warriors.

Don McArthur will serve as bugler to play Taps at the ceremony on Monday, 27 May 2026 and all members of the chapter are welcome to volunteer and attend the ceremony.

Military Related News Articles

MOAA Digital Edition

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/military-officer-magazine/military-officer-magazine-digital-edition>

MOAA Legislative Action Center:

www.moaa.org/takeaction

Military Times:

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news>

Defense News:

<https://www.defensenews.com>

Early Bird Brief:

<https://www.defensenews.com/ebb>

Upcoming Chapter Events

23 April 2026	Lowndes HS AFJROTC Awards
02 May 2026	VSU AFROTC Awards
05 May 2026	Chapter Board Meeting
09 May 2026	Valdosta HS NJROTC Awards
14 May 2026	Chapter Meeting
26-28 May 2026	Memorial Day Activities
7-13 Jun 2026	Boys & Girls State
25 Aug 2026	Chapter Board Meeting
10 Sep 2026	Chapter Meeting
08 Oct 2026	Chapter Meeting
12 Nov 2026	Chapter Meeting

Upcoming Chapter Meeting

Meeting Reminder

The next chapter meeting will be held on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at Mama June's on Perimeter Road, beginning at 6:00 p.m. A meet-and-greet will take place from 6:00–6:15 p.m., followed by the Pledge and Blessing. Please take a moment to welcome guests and introduce yourself to members you may not know. Please reply to Secretary Don McArthur at 229-244-7498 or sararmcarthur@gmail.com

Guest Speaker

Our May 2026 guest speaker will be **1st Lt. Lexi DeLapp, Moody AFB, 23d Wing, Information Operations Division Chief and President, Company Grade Officers Council (CGOC)**. The Department of the Air Force CGOC is an organization representing the more than 47,000 junior military officers of the US Air Force, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, and Space Force. Through local councils on nearly 100 bases and military installations across four regions including Europe and the Pacific, CGOs (captains and lieutenants) promote professional development and community service through volunteer projects and networking events.

Newsletter Submissions

Send items for the newsletter as early as possible to allow for printing time to Tom McCracken at thomas.d.mccracken@gmail.com

About Our Chapter

The South Georgia Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a non-profit, politically **non-partisan organization** affiliated with National MOAA, which is also **non-partisan**. To **join the chapter**, visit <http://www.sgamoaa.org> and select "Become a member." For written correspondence or donations, please use: **South GA MOAA, PO Box 5941, Valdosta, GA 31603**

Chapter Officers

<http://www.sgamoaa.org/officers-directors>

Chapter Members in Action



Tom & Jill McCracken; Newest Member Kenny Ott



Roger Pace



Melissa & Derrick Weyand, Tim Oliver & Don McArthur



Derrick & Melissa Weyand



Steve Coyne & Jack Scoggins



Scoggins and Piper Families