CINCINNATI MILITARY OFFICERS NEWS

VOL 54 No. 4, Nov 2026

SPECIAL CONVENTION ISSUE

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ELECTIONS ANNOUNCEMENT AND QR CODE FOR CONVENTION REGISTRATION

REPORT ON OCTOBER 23 DINING OUT

On a glorious Friday evening, MOAA Officers and Spouses gathered at Clovernook Country Club for great fellowship and an outstanding dinner, Following a welcome, an invocation, the Pledge of Allegiance and the POW/MIA Tribute, the program began. As usual, Commander Ed Zechman added military formality with his sharp bugle renditions of "Assembly,", "Ruffles and Flourishes", and the (Army) general's march in honor of our three retired Army flag officers present, BG Tom O'Brien, BG Charles O. Dillard, and MG John C. Harris, Jr. The generals were seated at the head table with their respective wives, Ann Marie O'Brien, CPT (ret.) Jeannette Larry-Dillard and Angela Harris, so this was indeed a dinner that the stars fell upon. See picture below right.

Right on schedule, the MOAA Troubadors appeared and led the guests in "The Army Song" and "America the beautiful". Following their performance, President Rick Bevington, ably assisted by Capt Lee Watson, presented a well-deserved "Outstanding Leadership Award" to CAPT Steve Drefahl for his many years of unparalled contributions to the Cincinnati Chapter of the MOAA, including his great work as Chapter President and as a consistently outstanding supporter of all Chapter activities. Following this award, and the traditional toasts, our featured speaker, MG John C. Harris, regaled the crowd with an inspirational and patriotic message. Among many bits of wisdom he imparted was this thought-provoking message: the national anthem is the only one of the many world anthems that asks a question: namely, "O say can you ...if the flag is till there?". It is a question that still should resonate in every American heart: are we still commited? Still faithful? Still serving? Following General Harris' message, the banquet ended, the guests assembled for a photograph, and all departed with a song in their hearts and a spring in their steps.



Left: MOAA Officers and spouses at the end of a fabulous night Below: (L to R) BG Tom O'Brien, Angelina Harris, Ann Marie O'Brien, CPT Jeannette Dillard, BG Charles O. Dillard





At left: President Rick Bevington presentes Steve Drefahl with an Outstanding Service award.

PLEASE NOTE: SECRETARY'S OFFICIAL NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETNG: AND ELECTIONS: CLOVERNOOK COUNTRY CLUB, 2035 W. Galbraith, Cincinnati, Ohio, December 11, 2026. For Slate of Officers by Nominating Committee, see p. 3.

TO SIGN UP FOR ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON ELECTION AND ELECTION LUNCHEON ON DEC 11, 2026:
Either **click this LINK**>>>>>> https://december-meeting-lunch-4991.cheddarup.com/ <<<<
Or scan the QR code at right with your cellphone and click the link that appears. You will be directed to the correct page to sign up and pay AND to make donations to TOYS FOR TOTS. (Note: same as last year; the Marines can do far more with a financial donations by getting new toys wholesale, so please use the link.)

2026 CHAPTER OFFICERS AND BOARD

NOTE: To contact any of the persons below, in accordance with our privacy policy, contact Newsletter Editor Robert Croskery at his public business phone: **513-232-5297.**

Executive Committee

President	COL Richard Bevington, USA
Immediate PP	CAPT Bill Heitbrink, USPHS
1st VP	CPT Dale Stalf, USA
2nd VP	Capt Lee Watson USMC
Co-Secretary	CAPT Alan Echt, USN
Co-Secretary	CAPT Hank Gurry, USN
Treasurer	CAPT Mike Glaser, USN
Chaplain	CPT Dick Swan USA
Legislative Ofc	CAPT Alan Echt, USN
Spouse/ Surviving Spouse Liaison	1LT Ken Bowman,

State Council

Delegate	COL Richard Bevington, USA
	Alt Delegate: CPT Dale Stalf,

Committees

Programs	CAPT Hank Gurry, USN
Membership	CAPT Ellery Savage, USPHS
ROTC/JROTC	LtCol Brad Hamant, USAF
Historian	CPT Dale Stalf, USA,
Sympathy/ Personal Affairs	1LT Ken Bowman, USA
Public Affairs	CAPT Bill Heitbrink, USPHS
TOPS	LtCol Brad Hamant, USAF
CinMoaaNews	LTC Rob Croskery, USA*
Webmaster	Lt Col Matt Wenzel, USAF
2027 Convention	LTC Rob Croskery
Charitable Fund:	CAPT Steve Drefahl

*see farewell column p. 3

Service Representatives

Army	BG Tom O'Brien, USA
Navy	CAPT Steve Drefahl, USN
USPHS	CAPT Bill Heitbrink, USPHS
USMC	Capt Lee Watson
Air Force	Lt Col Brad Hamant, USAF
Space Force	Lt Col Matt Wenzel, USAF
CG/NOAA	CAPT Steve Drefahl, USN

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS 2026

Please mark your calendars. All events this year are held at Clovernook Country Club,
Monitor www.cincymoaa.org for updates.

The final meeting of the year: special elections meeting see first and third pages:

- **December 11, 2026 11:30 a.m.**

PURPOSES OF THE GREATER CINCINNATI MOAA CHAPTER

The purposes of Military Officers Association of America as stated by national are printed on the outside of each Newsletter. The corresponding purposes of our Chapter as stated in our BYLAWS, Article II are:

(a) To promote the purposes and objectives of the Military Officers Association of America

(b) To foster fraternal relations among retired, active and former officers of the uniformed services.

(c) To protect the rights and interests of personnel of the uniformed services and their dependents and survivors.

(d) To provide useful services for members and their dependents and survivors.

(e) To serve the community and the nation.

Your officers and Board members welcome your comments and suggestions on steps that may be taken to strengthen our Chapter and its benefits to all members.

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This newsletter is published by the Greater Cincinnati Chapter, which is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). MOAA and its affiliated chapters and councils are non-partisan. Articles in this newsletter are the opinions solely of the individual authors and do not necessarily express the policy or opinions of the newsletters editor or publisher and do not reflect an endorsement by the Chapter or the National organization of MOAA, unless so indicated. Advertisements that appear in this publication do not reflect an endorsement by MOAA or this affiliate.

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TAPS

If you are aware of a MOAA member who has passed away, please inform the Membership chairman, Thank you.

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Board Meetings

Normally the 2nd Friday every month, 1200-1300 hrs, Red Cross Bldg, 2111 Dana Avenue, Cincinnati, with noted exceptions. Spouses and Members are always welcome.

CONSIDER JOINING MOAA AS A LIFE MEMBER

Life membership in Cinci MOAA chapter is quite reasonable, Dues based on age at your nearest birthday.

Up to 55 years old.....	$161.25
Age 56-70...	$127.50
Age 71-89...	$93.75
Age 90 and over...	Dues Waived

See https://chapterdues/moaa.org/Membership.aspx .
Also consider joining MOAA national as a life member.

From the Command Post: Richard Bevington (COL. Retired, U.S. Army)

Another fulfilling year nears its end. Along with several membership meetings and luncheons, the chapter embarked on two significant initiatives during the year. The first was the establishment of the Greater Cincinnati Chapter MOAA Charitable Fund, administered by the Greater Cincinnati Foundation (an Ohio nonprofit corporation) as a Donor Advised Fund. The Fund is refocusing the chapter efforts to support local veterans' organizations. The funding goal is $40,000 assembled over three years - to ensure long-term viability. Steve Drefahl and his committee of Hank Gurry, Raffel Prophett, Leslie MacDonald and Patrick Gallagher wrote the operating documents and continue to coordinate the many Fund activities.

The second initiative was the honor of hosting the State of Ohio MOAA 2027 convention. Rob Croskery accepted the chair, assembled a committee and developed an overall structure. The Board members responded by volunteering for subcommittees from education to marketing to entertainment. Much more membership help is needed in the coming year for the event on October 21-24, 2027, including more committee volunteers and corporate sponsors, addressed in detail later in this special convention issue. Successful execution will reflect superbly on our chapter. To join the excitement, send Rob an email: rcroskery@croskerylaw.com. Registration and sponsor information appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

I hope to see you all at the December meeting and lunch where the membership will vote for a new slate of officers. The official notification from the Secretary appears on p. 1 and on the website. Additionally, I will provide a more detailed report on 2026 events and activities. ---Still Serving, Rick Bevington

NOMINATING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2027.

The below listed slate of prospective officers have been recommended by the Nominating Committee and have agreed to serve if elected: **Prospective Elected Officers, rank, service, and date joined Board:** President, COL Rick Bevington, USA (ret.), Jan 2022; 1st VP, LTC Rob Croskery, USA (ret.), Jan., 2022; 2nd VP, Capt Lee Watson, USMC (ret.), Jan 2025; Co-Secretary CAPT Alan Echt, USPHS (ret.), Jan 2012; Co-Secretary CAPT Hank Gurry, USN (ret.) Jan 2020; Treasurer CAPT Mike Glaser, USN (ret.) Jan 2015.



MY FINAL FAREWELL AS NEWSLETTER EDITOR

by Rob Croskery LTC, Ret., USA

It has been a great honor and a pleasant duty to serve as your newsletter editor for the past four years. 132 pages of copy have sprung from my pen—err, laptop—in that timeframe, enough copy for a novellette, although most of the heavy lifting for each issue was done by able contributors. During my tenure, we have transitioned to electronic newsletters and have shared dozens of photographs, discussions of dining-outs, membership drives, golf outings, veterans' events, and many veterans' issues of national and local interest. I hope that you have enjoyed these offerings, and I know you will be pleased to learn that Immediate Past President of the Cincinnati chapter, Bill Heitbrick, has volunteered to share his talents in the forthcoming year.

My main reason for resigning as newsletter editor is discussed in this special convention issue: I have the honor of chairing next year's state of Ohio MOAA convention, and must now devote all the time and energy I have for this MOAA Chapter to helping ensure that that event is a splendid success that reflects favorably on our chapter.

I am writing my final newsletter from a cabin in the Disney Dream, a beautiful cruise ship that is currently docked at Disney's private resort known as Lookout Point in the Bahamas. I am accompanied by my gorgeous and talented wife, Melinda. As always, I am astounded by how well Disney does entertainment. During my 34 years in the Army (17 active and 17 reserve), we sometimes joked that some requirements of the army were "Mickey Mouse".

Actually, that joke is the opposite of the truth. Disney does a fabulous job of entertainment. Walt Disney had extraordinary expectations, and his team worked feverishly to meet them. Disney succeeds because of an unswerving commitment to attending to every detail, including intense planning and backup systems. I have a great admiration for "Cast Members", as Disney's employees are known, and, indeed, have represented many of them in my current capacity as an attorney. And our entertainment at the Convention Saturday Banquet has Disney-trained talent. You will thoroughly enjoy the Vocalitas doing their Andrews Sisters tribute, discussed elsewhere in this issue.

I have very much enjoyed getting to know many of you as a Board member and as newsletter editor. Next year, it will be my great pleasure to get to know each of you better as we prepare to put on a splendid convention. And, speaking of the convention, I want to make it "Mickey Mouse" in the very best sense—fun, uplifting, and educational. Hence the picture of myself, my lovely wife Melinda, and Captain Mickey. --Rob Croskery

Legislative Affairs Update by Alan Echt, CAPT, USPHS, (Ret.)

Please take a moment to sign up and engage with the MOAA Legislative Advocacy Center, https://moaa.quorum.us/**.** Your voice matters! A few minutes can move an issue forward. MOAA's Legislative Advocacy Center makes it simple to review an issue and send a prepared message to your elected officials.

House: The House is out of session and will return November 9.
Senate: The Senate is out of session until Nov. 9.

Take Care of Veterans Act (TCAVA): On July 16, the House rejected the motion to recommit the Take Care of Veterans Act (TCAVA) on the floor by a vote of 210-211. Rep. Spartz (IN) changed her vote, and House leadership removed TCAVA from further consideration. Many meetings with the Majority and Minority staff are underway to determine a path forward when the House returns from recess on November 9. The debate centers on identifying alternatives to fund TCAVA beyond the Section 108 provisions (tinnitus and sleep apnea).

Major Richard Star Act: A House discharge petition secured the 218 signatures required to force consideration of the Major Richard Star Act, though the next procedural steps and a floor vote will not occur until the House returns on November 9. The mandatory seven legislative-day waiting period will begin on that date, after which a signer may bring the Act to the floor for a direct vote. The bill would end the dollar-for-dollar reduction in military retirement pay imposed on combat-injured Veterans with fewer than 20 years of service who receive VA disability compensation. Supporters say the legislation would affect approximately 59,000 Veterans. Although the bill has 340 House co-sponsors, it has stalled over its cost which the Congressional Budget Office projects will exceed $78 billion from 2026 through 2036. Passage by the House via the Discharge Petition process does not include a pay-for, and the pay-for will likely be an issue for the Senate to act on.

I met with Rep. Landsman for an hour on October 19 as part of a veterans' roundtable discussion held at the Hyde Park branch library in Cincinnati. The Congressman, two staffers, and five veterans (two Navy, two Air Force, and myself) were in attendance. Discussion topics included TCAVA, the Major Richard Star Act, the availability of alternative therapies for PTSD at the VA, and improving transition assistance for separating service members to ensure they can access their earned benefits. --Alan Echt

A WORD ABOUT CHEDDARUP (our new registration platform)

Thanks to the efforts of Steve Drefahl, Ellery Savage, and others, we have ushered in a new era of technology that will make our registrations far easier. The QR code/link to sign up for the December 11 meeting is in this issue on page 1; the QR code/link to register for the 2027 MOAA State convention is on Page 7. In addition, Chapter annual and lifetime dues will also be payable, in the future, through Cheddarup. Watch future newsletters for details.

NEWSLETTER LINKS FOR VETERANS AND RETIREES

Army: Army Echoes : https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Retirement/army-echoes
Navy: Shift Colors: https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Media-Center/Publications/Shift-Colors
Air Force: Afterburner: https://www.retirees.af.mil/library/afterburner
Coast Guard/NOAA/PHS: The Long Blue Line
https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Human-Resources-CG-1/Retiree-Services-Program/Newsletters
Marines: Semper Fidelis
https://www.hqmc.marines.mil/Portals/61/Docs/MMSR-6/VOL%2067%20NO%203%20JUL-SEP%202023.pdf?ver=Ff7NHwtmRHjufztGWsBOSA%3D%3D#:~:text=Semper%20Fidelis%20is%20published%20quarterly,or%20the%20Department%20of%20Defense

A WORD ABOUT THE CURRENT MOAA MONTHLY MAGAZINE

The current magazine, as usual, is packed with useful information, and I commend it for your readership. There is an article on TriCare and how to use it at all stages of your life. Another article discusses great potential gifts for veterans and service members. There is a discussion on how services are meeting the new fitness mandate, and much, much more. Remember that you have the ability to read the magazine on line by logging in to your MOAA account.

YOUR INVITATION TO JOIN AN EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCE: THE 2027 OHIO MOAA STATE CONVENTION

Still Serving for Freedom — An Ohio River Adventure

October 21–24, 2027 | Cincinnati, Ohio



The Greater Cincinnati Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America is preparing to host something unique and special: the **2027 Ohio MOAA State Convention**, a four-day celebration of military service, history, fellowship, and entertainment in one of America's great river cities.

Enjoy Cincinnati as we explore its military heritage. The river itself has been a vital transportation route, a strategic boundary, and a witness to generations of Americans who served their country. The city has pioneered breakthroughs in public health, such as Dr. Sabin's oral polio vaccine and the Heimlich maneuver. This heritage and history will be a key part of our convention experience.

Following the Opening Ceremony at the newly opened USS Cincinnati Exhibit in the Voice of America Park in Mason, early registrants (and even nonconvention-goers) can enjoy a golf outing at the fabulous Four Bridges Country Club on Thursday. For Friday and Saturday, our principal convention venue will be the **Irish Heritage Center of Greater Cincinnati**, a remarkable facility with classrooms for educational presentation, and a great stage and performance space. For the convention, the Center will feature a special military history room emphasizing the contributions of Irish Americans to our nation's wars, and presentations on vital issues to veterans. The Center will also host our convention banquet, highlighted by a fabulous performance by **Vocalitas**, performing an Andrews Sisters tribute that brings the music, spirit, and memories of the World War II greatest generation vividly to life.



Left:The Banquet Room at the Irish Heritage Center

But the convention will extend well beyond the meeting rooms!

On Friday evening, we gather for dinner at Cincinnati's famous **Montgomery Inn Boathouse**, overlooking Kentucky and the Ohio River. We'll also take to the water aboard **BB Riverboats** for a special Military History Cruise, combining the beauty of the river with stories about the people and events that shaped our nation's military past and contributions to public health..

We've arranged accommodations at nearby **Marriott's SpringHill Suites offering exceptionally affordable convention rates**, making this event a great bargain.

Whether you are a retired officer, a veteran, a military spouse, or simply someone who appreciates our nation's military heritage, **we want you to be part of this special occasion.**

Over the next two pages, we'll introduce you to the activities we're planning and explain how you can join us—either as a convention attendee or as a volunteer helping make this ambitious event a success.

Mark your calendars for October 21–24, 2027. The Cincinnati Chapter of MOAA is preparing something special, and we would love you to be part of this great experience!

---LTC Robert F. Croskery, USA (Ret.)
Chairman, 2027 Ohio MOAA State Convention
rcroskery@croskerylaw.com
(813)244-5580

FOUR DAYS OF HERITAGE, HISTORY, AND FELLOWSHIP: YOUR OHIO RIVER CONVENTION ADVENTURE AWAITS!

Thursday, October 21st: USS Cincinnati Ceremony; Golf at Four Bridges Country Club



An inspirational Opening Ceremony at the brand new USS Cincinnati Exhibit the presentation of colors, the National Anthem, and a short welcome from a special guest star starts things off with a BANG. Those not participating in golf may wish to stay for guided tours.



Next: the optional golf outing! Lunch with Cincinnati favorite dishes, and a golf scramble to enjoy the course a few minutes away, followed by an awards dinner to kick start the 2027 State MOAA convention. Registration will be available, first at the Opening Ceremony and then at Four Bridges Country Club.

Convention Hotel: Marriott SpringHill Suites at the foot of Mt. Adams



Our convention hotel is ideally located at the foot of Mt. Adams, 601 Eden Park Drive, two blocks south of the Art Museum. Mt. Adams is a cultural hub with great restaurants, spectacular views of downtown and the river, and is a mere seven minute drive from our Convention Venue, the Irish Heritage Center. Ride-sharing is planned. The $109 special convention rate includes a daily buffet breakfast. Note: Council of Chapter meetings are scheduled for Sunday morning, October 24th. Churches nearby.

Friday and Saturday Mornings, October 22nd and 23rd: Programs at the Irish Heritage Center



The Irish Heritage Center is a perfect self-contained Convention venue, with room for four simultaneous programs. Potential programs will focus on history, education, and information useful for veterans and retirees. Possible programs are being rated based on interest from convention registrants, and suitability for terrific and experienced presenters. There is also a great banquet room with stage.

Friday Afternoon, October 22: Optional BB Riverboats Military History Cruise and Optional Dinner at the famous Montgomery Inn Boathouse on the Ohio River





Friday afternoon offers a special treat: a Military ..History Cruise aboard BB Riverboats that explores .the mighty Ohio River and its fascinating role in .American .history. Then, Friday evening, join old .friends and make new ones over a delicious dinner at .Cincinnati's legendary Montgomery Inn Boathouse, overlooking the river and the Kentucky shore, while enjoying some great live background music. Both activities are optional, but we know you'll enjoy them!

Saturday afternoon is yours to explore Cincinnati or relax before our spectacular convention banquet. See next page for a preview of our grand finale—and information on how to join the excitement!

Saturday Evening, October 23rd: Banquet with Andrews Sisters tribute entertainment and a Flag Officer (to be announced) as Our Honored Guest Speaker





A GRAND FINALE TO REMEMBER!

Our Saturday evening banquet at the Irish Heritage Center promises to be a highlight of the convention! We'll enjoy a wonderful dinner, an inspiring address by a distinguished general officer, and a great musical journey back to the World War II era.

We have extended invitations to some truly outstanding senior military leaders to serve as our honored guest speaker. While we know we have an outstanding flag officer speaking, we cannot announce the officer's name and rank until arrangements are confirmed. However, we guarantee a superb and inspirational speaker. The featured entertainment is no less special. After the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick Glee Club leads us in, we will experience the unforgettable music of the Andrews Sisters as the Vocalitas provide beautiful harmonies, period costumes, and the energy and spirit of the Greatest Generation. Their performance, and the General's speech, promise to be a memorable conclusion to our Ohio River Adventure! Come celebrate our military heritage, renew old friendships, make new ones, and enjoy an evening worthy of this special occasion.

COME JOIN THE EXCITEMENT!!

Registration is now open for the 2027 Ohio MOAA State Convention! We welcome MOAA members, members of other military and veterans' organizations, their families, and friends. Your convention registration includes Saturday's banquet and our educational programs. Optional activities, including golf, the Military History Cruise, and Friday's Montgomery Inn dinner, offer even more ways to enjoy your Cincinnati adventure.



Scan the QR code or click the link to register today! Golfers may register separately for the Thursday outing, even if they cannot attend the full convention. See separate link once you log in to the convention registration.

https://state-convention-registration-95312.cheddarup.com

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO PUT ON THIS FABULOUS EVENT!!

We're assembling a team of volunteers to make this convention truly extraordinary! We need help with planning, hospitality, registration, publicity, sponsorships, special events, and outreach to military and veterans' organizations throughout Ohio.

You don't have to be a MOAA member to help, and you don't have to make an enormous time commitment. Every contribution matters!

Please contact me personally. I'd like to learn about your interests, experience, and availability so we can find the role where you can contribute most effectively.



LTC Robert F. Croskery, USA (Ret.) — Convention Chairman
rcroskery@croskerylaw.com | (813) 244-5580

Help us make this an Ohio River Adventure to remember!



Greater Cincinnati Chapter
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA
1071 Celestial Street (The Highland Towers) #2104
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Postmaster: Dated Material. Please Expedite

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

PURPOSES OF MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

TO inculcate and stimulate love of country and flag;
TO defend the honor, integrity, and supremacy of our National Government and the Constitution of the United States;
TO advocate military forces adequate to the defense of this Country;
TO further the education of children of service personnel;
TO foster fraternal relations between all branches of the various services from which our members are drawn;
TO aid active and retired personnel of the various services from which our members are drawn and their dependents and survivors, in every proper and legitimate manner.
TO present their rights and interests when service matters are under consideration, and
TO foster the integrity and prestige of uniformed service.
--from the Preamble to the Association's Bylaws