

THE STAR FORT PATRIOT

"Serving Those Who Serve America"

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THE STAR FORT CHAPTER

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<https://www.facebook.com/StarFortMOAA/>

President's Message

Greetings.... I don't know about you, but for me these first two months of 2017 seem to be happening at "warp" speed. Internationally, nationally and locally significant change seems to be in the air. We all recognize that change is inevitable but it can still be scary, and at times take our breath away. As former military, we *should* be used to change: change of plans, change of mission, change of unit, change of personnel, change of orders. But even so there always seems to be a bit of accompanying uncertainty even with our previous experiences.

Nationally, we are watching as the country's biggest "Change of Command" ceremony is unfolding. I for one, am comforted to see a number of military officers assuming significant leadership roles in our government. I am pleased to hear that there are plans to augment our military capacities and make them worthy of our great nation. But it is still a season of words and promises and we have been through those seasons before. Soon it will be the time "when the tires have to leave the runway" and actions must take off.

However, whatever changes are ahead, I feel confident that we, Star Fort Chapter members, will stand ready to continue to serve our nation and our community. Together with your Board we all will be vigilant in looking for opportunities where our skills and talents can be used for local good. I look forward to the changes ahead and the challenges they present, knowing we have a strong and caring Chapter.

Carol J. Scales, LCDR, NC, USNR-Ret
President

Chapter Meeting

Date: Thursday, 23 March 2017

Time: Social Hour 1830; Dinner 1900

Location: Inn On The Square

Menu: Roasted Chicken
Rice Pilaf
Green Beans
Salad, Rolls
Chef's Dessert
Coffee, Tea, etc.

\$20.00 per person

MEETING DATES FOR 2017

Board Meetings	Chapter Meetings
3 January	26 January
28 February	23 March
2 May	25 May
27 June	27 July
5 September	28 September
7 November	30 November

A NOTE FROM TREASURER

Members, if you find a small addressed envelope in your newsletter, this is our way to remind you to please pay your membership dues for 2017. According to our by-laws, members have 60 days after the new year to pay their membership dues. If this is not possible for you right now or you think our records might be inaccurate, please get in touch with me so I can help. My phone number is 864-543-2080. Thanks. (LTC James Morgan, Treasurer)

THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

A Reminder of our Legacy

This past weekend along with others in our MOAA chapter, I had the privilege of attending the funeral services for an old soldier, Colonel Niles Clark. Colonel Clark was a past President and Board member of our chapter.

Colonel Clark served our country for thirty-two years in the United States Army as an aviator of both rotary and fixed-wing aircraft. He was both a Master Army Aviator and a test pilot. During those years, he and Ruth moved twenty-seven times as he served in Germany twice and had three combat tours in Vietnam. His awards included the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, the Bronze Star with "V" and three oak leaf clusters, the Purple Heart, a Meritorious Service Medal and he was awarded the Air Medal twenty-five times.

After his retirement from the Army, he became a successful farmer, raising beef cattle and growing timber, serving his community and church, demonstrating by all accounts, those same characteristics and values he learned and exhibited while on active duty.

From those who spoke at the funeral service and the stories they told, it was clear that Colonel Clark left a lasting legacy. He was a man of character and faith; a man of honesty and integrity. And like Niles Clark, when we leave this life, we will leave our mark on others. Some of what we are will live on those who know us best in the generations that follow. And that is way the words written by Vaughn Moore in 1951 about one soldier ring true for all of us who have worn the uniform of our country.

"Old soldiers never die. Old soldiers never die. They just fade away.

On the seventh day of December in the year of forty-one,

The free world met disaster at the hands of the Raising Sun.

From the bastions of Corregidor, Pearl Harbor and Bataan,

Came the sound of war and fury and the Death March of free man.

Then from the land of way down under, a mighty voice did say,

Our cause is just, in God we trust, I will return someday from Mindanao to Tarawa

Our battle song it grew till on Suribachi

At last Old glory flew, and a thousand isles our just cause never ceased

Until one day he did return and once more there was peace.

Now somewhere there stands the man, his duty o'er and won

The world will ne'er forget him, to him we say, "Well done."

Old soldiers never die. Old soldiers never die. They just fade away.

Ed DeVos

Star Fort Chaplain

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

Lt Col Bernard Taylor and the Emerald High School Air Force Junior ROTC Program:

With retirement on the horizon, the Board has requested Lt Col Taylor address the Chapter in his own way for our program this month. He and his family arrived in Greenwood in 1997 to assume duties as head of the Junior ROTC program at Emerald High School. Hopefully, he will share with Chapter members how he developed an award-winning program and what his plans are for the future.

2017 Chapter Officers & Board Members

President	LCDR Carol Scales
Vice President	Anne Eller
Secretary	COL Steve Page
Treasurer	LTC James Morgan
Chaplain	LTC Ed DeVos
Dir, Programs	Vacant
Dir, Membership	Vacant
Dir, Legislative Affairs	COL Fred McGuire
Dir, Chapter Services	MAJ Wayne Burton
Dir, Public Relations	LTC Joe Como
Dir, Personal Affairs	LTC Ed DeVos

Legislation Introduced to Exempt Veterans From Hiring Freeze

Congressman Stephen Lynch (D-MA) has introduced legislation in the House to exempt veterans from the hiring freeze as set forth by Donald Trump's executive order. The legislation is known as the Veterans Federal Hiring Protection Act of 2017 (H.R. 1001).

The Bill dictates that notwithstanding President Trump's memorandum or any similar executive actions, federal agencies may continue to fill vacant federal civilian jobs and create new positions for veterans and veterans preference-eligible individuals. Lynch said that because veterans make up more than 30% of the federal workforce, they are disproportionately affected by the hiring freeze and that it's **unfair** to subject them to the hiring freeze because of their service to the country.

He explained in a statement: Our dedicated service men and women fought to protect our freedoms and defend our *homeland*. We are grateful for their service and thankful when veterans return home and choose to continue their public service by entering the federal workforce. President Trump's federal hiring freeze not only hurts everyday Americans seeking a prompt response from a federal agency, but also makes it difficult for veterans looking for employment in the federal government across the country. Veterans have earned their hiring preference and I am deeply concerned that the federal hiring freeze will disproportionately hurt America's veterans. Lynch also noted that hiring of veterans has been increasing. According to data from OPM, in FY 2015, federal agencies hired approximately 6,000 more veterans over the previous year for a total of 71,000 new veteran hires, and of those, 31,616 were disabled veterans.

Lynch also co-sponsored legislation introduced last month (H.R. 696) that would exempt the VA from the hiring freeze. The VA recently issued a memo which announced positions within the agency that are exempt from the hiring freeze.

Final Report on Arlington National Cemetery

An uncomfortable truth about Arlington National Cemetery is that space is going to run out, whether protocol changes or not. Congress has new impetus to take action on this longtime debate after the release of a recent report.

The Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery (ACANC) produced its final report, including options available to extend the life of the cemetery "well into the future." This long-anticipated report, requested by Congress a year ago, marks the completion of the committee's analysis of the capacity situation, and sets the stage for policymakers to act.

The report includes analysis of the impact of almost 20 variations of land expansions, eligibility changes, burial procedures and more. These options were provided in prior interim reports but now come with substantive analysis of the likelihood of implementation, necessity of legislative action, and general timelines.

Options include, but are not limited to:

- adopting the VA requirement for 24 month active duty service minimum;
- restricting eligibility to retirement from the armed services at certain lengths of service;
- changing eligibility only to those killed in action, active duty deaths, and recipients of qualifying awards;
- expanding the grounds beyond current physical boundaries; and
- establishing a new DoD national cemetery.

MOAA believes it is crucially important for decision makers to consider the interests and desires of the potential affected populations if and when policies change. Veterans who may be eligible for burial at ANC should have a voice in the process, and Congress has indicated a strong desire to prioritize their inputs.

We surveyed our members, and found participants overwhelmingly rejected the idea of restricting retirees, with the majority preferring expansion options as the initial course of action. In fact, most participants favored closing ANC to future burials before excluding retirees.

The ACANC document specifically abstained from making any recommendation. The tough decision going forward is in the hands of lawmakers and DoD officials. Nonetheless, the report clearly indicates changes to eligibility requirements and/or expansion of the cemetery's geographic footprint are required in order to extend ANC's capacity well into the future.

We appreciate the commitment to exploring all potential courses of action on this issue. Geographical expansion is a preferred solution, as confirmed in our member survey. One such project is currently underway, and 40 more acres of land should be available by 2022.

While restricting eligibility delays the debate far into the future, it is not a permanent solution. One way or another, space will run out, and our nation's heroes will be excluded in the end. Space limitation makes this a zero-sum game, and the clock is ticking.

“MOAA would like to see ANC remain open and active well into the future. We don't have a problem reserving a set number of plots for future Medal of Honor recipients and combat deaths. But we don't think an 80-year old retiree who's made plans for Arlington burial should lose eligibility to reserve space for an active duty member who dies in a car accident 150 or 200 years from now,” said MOAA Government Relations Vice President Col. Dan Merry, USAF (Ret).

“A lot can change over 50 or 75 years. The Pentagon hadn't been built 75 years ago, and lots of military installations have been “BRAC'ed” over the last 35. MOAA and other military and veterans' associations have told the committee we think all options for further expansion should be pursued before we start turning away vets who planned for ANC interment. We know procuring land can take a long time, so that process should start sooner rather than later.”

Next steps in the process are now out of the committee's hands. MOAA appreciates being allowed to join discussions related to ANC's capacity issues up to this point. We anticipate continuing thorough discussions on the path forward with legislative officials and DoD leadership and look forward to finding amicable solutions that preserve the dignity of the cemetery without disenfranchising servicemembers who want a place at Arlington.

MOAA recognizes how important this issue is to our members and will keep you informed as discussions continue. (moaa.org/24 February 2017)

Email Update

Email is an excellent vehicle to get updates to Chapter members quickly. However, this system can only be effective if we possess up-to-date email addresses. We are asking all Chapter members who possess an email account to please send LTC Morgan your address at morganjpl@yahoo.com. An updated email contact listing not only gets members updated information earlier, but also the possibility of receiving the newsletter using email. When updating your email address with LTC Morgan, please let him know that you are willing to receive the newsletter via email. If you need to get in contact with LTC Morgan by other means, call him at 543-2080 or by mail at The Star Fort Chapter, P.O. Box 1501, Greenwood SC 29648.

May Meeting – Think Summer!

We are preparing for our final winter meeting, March 23rd, before the weather begins to warm up. We ask that all members make plans now to attend the May 25th meeting at the Grand Harbor Cabana located on Lake Greenwood. Our meal is usually BBQ Pulled Pork, Spare Ribs, & Chicken and it is superbly catered by Grand Harbor. The program will focus, as it should, on Memorial Day. Join us in honoring collectively all service members who died in service to our country.

“Rally For Our Veterans”. The South Carolina Veteran’s Advocacy Council has once again organized a “Rally For Our Veterans” to be held on the North End State House Steps on Tuesday, 25 April 2017, 10:00 am. to 2:00 pm. Keynote Speaker is Commander Alfred H. Agnew, United States Navy Retired and POW from the Vietnam War. All military veterans are encouraged to attend and support this rally. Your visibility and voice is needed in advocating for veterans benefits and services. You might want to bring a blanket and/or put a chair in the trunk. **WHO IS ALFRED H. AGNEW?** Al Agnew was born in 1940 in Mullins, South Carolina. He entered the Naval Aviation Cadet program on March 3, 1961, and was designated a Naval Aviator in October 1962. Agnew then completed WC-121N Super Constellation replacement pilot training before joining Airborne Early Warning Squadron Four (VW-4), where he served from February 1963 to July 1965. LT Agnew then completed Justice School before joining the S-2E Tracker replacement pilot training squadron in August 1965. He then joined Air Anti-Submarine Squadron Thirty-Eight (VS-38), where he served from February 1966 to December 1967, followed by service as a flight instructor with Training Squadron Seven (VT-7) from December 1967 to December 1969. CDR Agnew then served briefly with VT-23 and VA-45 and attended Photo School before joining Reconnaissance Attack Squadron Three (RVAH-3), the RA-5C Vigilante replacement pilot training squadron, in June 1970. He then served with RVAH-13 from May 1971 until he was forced to eject over North Vietnam and was taken as a Prisoner of War on December 28, 1972. After being held in captivity for 91 days, he was released during Operation Homecoming on March 29, 1973. After being briefly hospitalized to recover from his injuries, CDR Agnew attended the Navy Post-Graduate School at Monterey, California, from July 1973 to April 1975, and then joined RVAH-3 as an RA-5C replacement pilot from April 1975 to April 1976. He next served as Operations Officer for RVAH-9 from April to July 1976, followed by Executive Assistant for CRAW-1 from July 1976 to January 1977. Agnew attended the Attache Course at the Defense Intelligence Agency from January to April 1977, and then served as an Area Officer with that Agency until April 1978. From May 1978 to July 1980, CDR Agnew served as a Defense and Naval Attache to Sri Lanka. His next assignment was as Officer in Charge of the Mechanical Schools with the Naval Air Technical Training Command in Memphis, Tennessee, from July 1980 to June 1983, followed by service as Executive Officer of the Naval Air Maintenance Training Group at Millington, Tennessee, from June 1983 until his retirement from the Navy on May 31, 1986. Al and his wife Rena have two children, Howard and Krista Lee. He is currently the President of NAM-POWs.



Surviving Spouse Advisory Liaison

Jean Remly, the State of South Carolina Council of Chapters Liaison, has been asked by the national MOAA Surviving Spouse Advisory Council (SSAC) to locate the spouses of retirees whose husband or wife died of a service-connected illness or injury. Some examples of service connected injury/illnesses are Agent Orange related leukemia, heart disease, Parkinson's, AL Amyloidosis, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, prostate cancer, respiratory cancers and soft tissue sarcomas. She can be reached at jarnlp@aol.com or 803-794-7761. Help to spread the word about this resource with the survivor friends and family.

CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE

Thanks to Anne Eller, there is a facebook page for Star Fort Chapter MOAA. The address is <https://www.facebook.com/StarFortMOAA/>. Once you open the page, look to the top, like the page, and you will get notifications when things are posted in the future.

Veterans Memorial Plaza Dedication



Have you been by the Greenwood Veterans Center in the last couple months? Extensive work has been done on the Veterans Memorial Plaza with the installation of the beautiful Eagle and the first batch of pavers. It is really looking good!

If you have not purchased a paver, it's not too late. Stop by the Veterans Center and make your purchase today.

Plans are coming together for the dedication of the Plaza, which is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on May 24, 2017. Place on your calendar and plan to be there. Keep an eye on the Star Fort Chapter MOAA Facebook page for more details as they become available.

OUR CHAPTER PRESIDENTS SINCE 1987

1987	LtCol William L. Dodge, USAF	2003	LTC James S. Hull, USA
1988	LtCol William L. Dodge, USAF	2004	LTC James S. Hull, USA
1989	CDR Robert A. Walters, USN	2005	LTC James S. Klauber, USA
1990	CDR Robert A. Walters, USN	2006	LTC Jerry W. Peace, USA
1991		2007	COL Niles C. Clark, USA
1992	LTC Charles E. Drake, USA	2008	COL Willis H. Burroughs, USA
1993	COL Niles C. Clark, USA	2009	LTC Charles E. Drake, USA
1994	Maj John E. Griffin, USAF	2010	LCDR Carol Scales, USN
1995	LtCol Jimmie L. Spencer, USAF	2011	LCDR Carol Scales, USN
1996	LtCol Jimmie L. Spencer, USAF	2012	COL Fred Bosarge, USA
1997	CH (LTC) Theodore R. Morton, Jr., USA	2013	COL Fred Bosarge, USA
1998	CH (LTC) Theordore R. Morton, JR., USA	2014	COL James Wheeler, USA
1999	LTC Charles E. Drake, USA	2015	COL James Wheeler, USA
2000	LTC Lewie E. Amick, USA	2016	COL James Wheeler, USA
2001	BG Joseph O. Lax, Jr., USA	2017	LCDR Carol Scales, USN
2002	BG Joseph O. Lax, Jr, USA		

IN MEMORIAM

Star Fort Chapter, MOAA mourns the loss of a long time member, **COLONEL NILES CRAIG CLARK, JR.** He departed this life on February 12, 2017. The “In the Spotlight” article from the March 2013 newsletter is reprinted in his honor.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

. . . highlights the life and military career of: **Colonel (United States Army Retired) Niles C. Clark, Jr.**

Niles was born and raised in Waterloo, SC., the oldest of four children; he attended school in Laurens and then graduated from Clemson in 1955 with a BS degree in Animal Science and received a 2nd LT Army ROTC commission. He served in Army Reserve units until 1960 when he went on active duty to attend flight school training in both fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft. After flight school he was assigned to a Reserve Direct Support Maintenance Company which was subsequently called to active duty during the Berlin Crisis. After a year on active duty, that unit was released from active duty but Niles asked, and was approved, to remain on extended active duty.

Thus began 27 years of military active service plus 5 years of Reserve time served. Upon commissioning, he received a Reserve commission but later received a Regular Army commission in the Transportation Corps on 15 April 1965. Some of the schools he attended while on active duty include: University of Tennessee for an MBA in Commercial Aviation; Industrial College of the Armed Forces (now called Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resources); US Army Command and General Staff College; Aircraft Maintenance Officer Course; etc.

Some of Niles' key duty assignments were: three tours, 1-year each, in Vietnam; Staff Officer, Strategic Mobility Division, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, HQ Dept of the Army (in the Pentagon); Commander, 34th Support Battalion, 6th Air Cavalry Combat Brigade; Deputy Commander, 6th Air Cavalry Combat Brigade; Commander, Corpus Christi Army Depot; Chief of Staff, 3rd Support Command; Deputy Commander, 3rd Support Command (Germany).

Among the awards and decorations, Niles received: the Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf Cluster; the Bronze Star Medal with “V” and 3 Oak leaf Clusters; Purple Heart; Meritorious Service Medal; Air Medal with 24 Oak Leaf Clusters; Joint Service Commendation Medal; Army Commendation medal; several foreign awards; ribbons, etc. He also received Master Army Aviator Wings and the Department of Army Staff Identification Badge. During his flying career, he accumulated over 3,100 hours of flight as pilot in command, half in fixed wing aircraft with the remainder in helicopter.

Niles is married to Ruth Amis from Newberry, SC. They met the day he graduated from Clemson when they double-dated. (Ruth was dating his roommate!) They married a year later in 1956. They have 3 married sons: N. Craig, III, who owns Great American Exteriors, a home improvement business in Greenwood; Tom, who lives in McDonough, GA, is a regional manager for a logistics center operations company. He earlier served as an Army Captain and Chinook helicopter pilot; Steve, who lives in Greer, SC, is a regional sales manager for a lighting equipment manufacturing company. Ruth and Niles have 8 granddaughters (3 are married); 2 great-grandsons; and 1 great-granddaughter.

After wearing the uniform for 32 years, and 25 family moves, Niles retired from the Army on August 31, 1987. He and Ruth returned to their 354 acre farm in Waterloo where they built a barn and a house. (Yes, the barn came first!) They raised beef cattle until a few years ago. Now Niles grows and sells hay. He serves as chairman of the Laurens County Transportation Committee which is responsible for maintenance of county and state secondary roads. He is a member of the Laurens and Greenwood Forestry Assn. and the Laurens County Cattleman Assn. He and Ruth are members of St. Mark United Methodist Church.

Niles learned about the Star Fort Chapter of MOAA shortly after it was organized. He joined and later served on the Board of Directors twice and also served as President twice.

