



**FALCONS LANDING CHAPTER  
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (MOAA)**



**The Falcon Flyer**

**Falcons Landing MOAA  
Chapter Newsletter  
September 2020**



## CHAPTER PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, September 2020

Despite the current turmoil in our country and the impact of COVID-19, our chapter has found creative ways to support the three major populations noted in our mission—*those who are serving, those who have served, and those who have survived.*

This quarter our chapter awarded two \$1,000 and two \$500 scholarships to cadets at both the AFROTC unit at Chantilly Academy and the NJROTC unit at Loudoun County High School. Graduation and award ceremonies were virtual due to the pandemic.

We continued to support the *Adopt-a-Platoon Program*. Of special note, we conducted three *Gatherings* this quarter and are scheduled to televise the popular Gathering titled “Are your Affairs in Order”, presented by Kathy Trossbach, Hardy Lister, and Peter Scott on July 13.

I am also pleased to announce that MOAA National has awarded our chapter two grants which will allow us to increase our support to needed veterans in the Loudoun County area in partnership with Community Lutheran Church through the *Loudoun Veterans and Family Support (LVFS) Program*.



Please stay safe and follow the CDC and Falcons Landing guidelines as our community relaxes some of the restrictions.

Remember---*Never Stop Serving*

Bob Manning, Chapter President

### Mission Statement

*Our Chapter provides programs which support: those who are serving; those who have served; and those who have survived, while placing special focus on community support.*

### Support of MOAA National

MOAA is a nonprofit veterans' association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors. The Falcons Landing Chapter is one of more than 400-plus local organizations affiliated with National MOAA. We support the national organization through support of legislative priorities and are active in our community supporting two JROTC programs, helping recovering and needy veterans, and providing speakers to community service organizations.

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## Chapter and Legislative Information

### Chapter Membership Information

MOAA membership is open to those who hold, or have ever held, a warrant or commission in any component of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, NOAA, and their surviving spouses. If you know a prospective member, please contact Lowell Jones (703-444-9530) to receive information on the benefits of chapter membership. This is an opportune time to convert to a MOAA Life Membership, because MOAA is still giving a 10% discount on a membership conversion. A MOAA life Membership indicates your strong support for MOAA's goals. For more information, please call a MOAA representative at (800) 234-6622.

How to navigate through our new Chapter website. The website address is [falconsmoaa.org](http://falconsmoaa.org). Please note that a password is required to open the Documents Section/Tab and is for use by members only. Members may obtain the password from Lowell Jones at [lowsanj@verizon.net](mailto:lowsanj@verizon.net).

### Legislative Affairs Report Information

Periodically, MOAA will lobby Congress to take legislative action to preserve our retiree benefits. The probability of favorable legislative action is in direct proportion to the number of voters who register support. MOAA sometimes includes postcards and letters in its magazine (Military Officer) for us to sign and mail to our representatives (identified for us). The MOAA Newsletter may also include an online access to act. It is imperative that we do so. To access the MOAA Newsletter for source data, copy this web address <http://www.moaa.org> and paste to your browser's search bar. After on site, click on "MOAA - Home/Official Site," go to "Publications & Media/Email Newsletter," and provide your email address. This will help you register to receive the current newsletters. You can then click on the desired subject in the newsletters and get more details. If you are not registered with MOAA National for this, call the front desk (800) 234-6622, and you'll be guided on how to receive the newsletter on a desired schedule. Have your MOAA National membership number available. If you don't have email or have questions on obtaining this information, contact Clair Wylie, Legislative Liaison, at (703) 216-7549.

Our Chapter publishes a monthly Legislative Update for all members and works with MOAA to recommend to members that they support MOAA legislative initiatives by contacting their legislators. MOAA staff and Chapter members meet with members of Congress annually in a visit called "Storming the Hill," normally in April. You may review important MOAA legislative issues and activities on the MOAA website by visiting the Take Action section at <http://takeaction.moaa.org>. National MOAA and the Falcons Landing Chapter, MOAA, are politically nonpartisan but seek to remain informed on political matters of concern to veterans at both the state and local levels.

### MOAA Legislative Priorities

Provide force structure and funding to sustain and strengthen the all-volunteer force. Provide hard-gained benefits for active, guard/reserve, and retired community.

**Objectives:** Ensure the maintenance of end strength, along with pay increases, tied to employment cost index; maintain current TRICARE benefits and medical support structure; maintain basic housing allowances and decent housing availability; maintain privileges associated with commissary and exchange benefits; maintain veterans quality health care and backlog of disability claims.

**The Gathering, August 13, 2020**  
**NASA Perseverance MARS Launch**

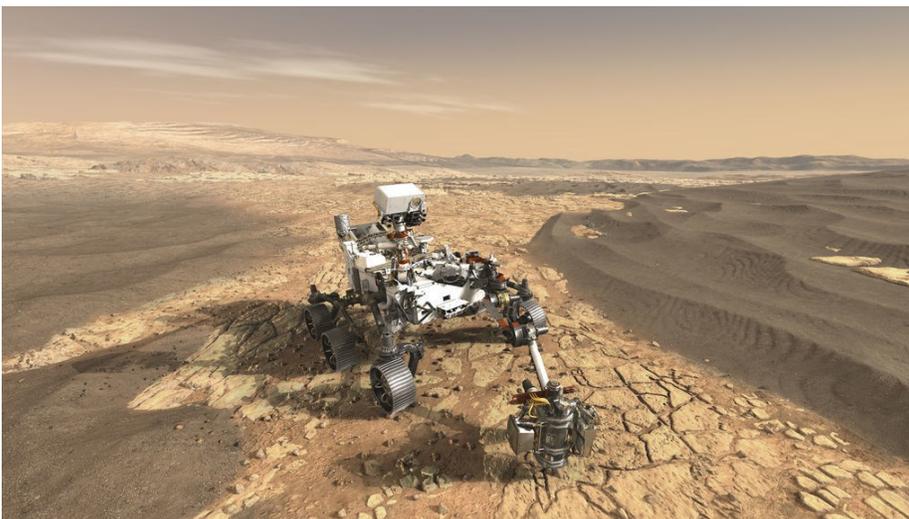
By Jim Mullen (slightly edited)

**The Gathering for August 13 (Virtual) hosted the presentation on Channel 1970 of a re-broadcast of the Perseverance Launch to Mars followed by the NASA Press Coverage after the Launch. The actual Launch of Perseverance from the NASA flight center in Florida occurred on 30 July 2020, and it will touch down in Jezero crater on Mars on 18 February 2021. Mars 2020 is a Mars rover mission by NASA's Mars Exploration Program that includes the Perseverance rover and the Ingenuity helicopter drone.**

**As Gathering host Bill Hilsman indicated, the press conference featured NASA program engineer Matt Wallace, son of Millie Wallace. We have been fortunate in the past to have Matt as a guest speaker talking to us about the development of the Mars Rover program, but in the virtual world, he was a prominent member of the press conference on the NASA broadcast following the launch.**

**Now the Rover is important, but for Falcons Landing, we need more information on Matt. Fortunately, NASA has a great web site that tells all. Matt Wallace is the Mars 2020 Deputy Project Manager. He initiated the concept work for the mission and has led the development and implementation team since 2013. Perseverance is the fifth Mars rover on which Matt has worked. He began as a power systems engineer on the Mars Pathfinder Sojourner vehicle, led the assembly and test team for the twin Spirit and Opportunity missions, which landed in 2004, and held the Flight System Manager position on the 2012 Curiosity mission. Matt graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD, with a B.S. in systems engineering, and received an M.S. in electrical engineering from Caltech. He has served in the US Navy fast attack submarine fleet.**

**Now back to the Mars program. The best way to stay current with the program it is to turn to the NASA website: [mars.nasa.gov](https://mars.nasa.gov). You will be kept busy for the day reading about the program. And best of all you can sign up for the NASA newsletter for mars ([mars.nasa.gov/newsletter](https://mars.nasa.gov/newsletter)). Now we take you back to: [mars.nasa.gov](https://mars.nasa.gov). You too can be an explorer!**



NASA MARS Rover Perseverance



Deputy Project Manager Matt Wallace

## MOAA Chapter Board Meeting, August 20, 2020

**President Bob Manning:** Called meeting to order via Zoom. Led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Secretary's Report:** Genevieve Pustay. The June 2020 Board meeting minutes were distributed to Board members and subsequently approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Peter Scott - August 2020

Opening Balance (1 June): \$5,884

Income: \$7,863 (Dues - \$263, Grants - \$7,500)

Expenses: \$8,780 (Dues Refund - \$731, LVSF - \$7,500, Copying and Insurance - \$549)

Closing balance: \$4,997

**New Business.** Refund checks were distributed 1 July. Twenty-eight were outstanding 31 July. Closed the Amazon Smile account. Renewed the Errors & Omissions insurance after getting Mercer to withdraw three proposed endorsements. Submitted grant utilization reports to MOAA for month end of June and July. Balanced checkbook vs. bank statement for June and July. No discrepancy.

Drafted letter for annual solicitation for donations.

Treasurer's Report was approved.

**Membership Report:** Lowell Jones.

As of	Premium Members	Surviving Spouses*	Honorary Members	Total
December 31, 2019	132	59	0	191
August 20, 2020	124	62	0	186

\*Surviving Spouses = Auxiliary

Total National Members: 178 (95%); Total National Life Members: 125, (67%)

There are 3 prospects for non-resident membership, and 11 prospects for Chapter and Auxiliary memberships.

**Legislative Report:** Clair Wylie. The June and July Legislative Reports were published and distributed. Assisted residents in requesting absentee ballots.

**Auxiliary:** Vicki Estey. No volunteer hours recorded from April through August 2020. The Johnson Center remains in Phase 2, and there are a few small activities, video chats, and Face Time sessions. Residents are allowed to sit on the patio or eat in the Dining Room or Terrace, space available. Spouses may visit based on a case-by-case evaluation and are tested weekly. Pastor Jeff has renewed his sessions of Reflections. Only Lauren and her staff are allowed to deliver mail. There is no Physical Therapy and no Specialist physician care.

**Public Affairs:** Don McCarthy. Photograph has not yet been sent to MOAA for the article they plan to publish. We need Don Poorman (Community Church) to visit to have one taken (with Howard and Bob). MOAA feedback on grants: there is a form that recipients can sign to permit publication of photos and data.

**Speakers Program:** Max Johnson. The program is now on hold. The schools at which the programs are held are not in session. We may be able to have some Zoom presentations as conditions persist.

**JROTC:** Stan King. A recent graduate from Chantilly Academy AFJROTC wrote a letter to our Chapter thanking us for the scholarship he received. He will be attending Christopher Newport University. His father is an active duty Navy officer and lifetime member of MOAA.

**Personal Affairs:** Kathy Trossbach. Received 18 calls with questions on closing the estate. Sent 2 sympathy cards with enclosed 1st steps then followed up with telephone calls.

**Loudoun Veterans and Family Support (LVFS):** Howard Schue. In July we assisted 2 veterans for a total amount of \$1600. In August through today, we assisted 5 veterans for a total amount of \$1448.81.

**Virginia Council of Chapters (VCOC):** Bob Manning. VCOC is requesting Chapter input for their newsletter. The October meeting will probably take place via Zoom. Legislative and Member chairs are to be filled.

Summer Storming Two commenced on August 8 and is scheduled to run through September 30. The primary issue continues to be a halt to proposed military medical billet reductions. We will receive our 5-Star Level of Excellence (LOE) award in the mail. There is no award ceremony this year. As part of our ongoing VCOC homepage renovation, a chapter announcement section has been added.

**Loudoun County Community Veteran Engagement Board (LCCVEB):** Jim Mullen. Tom Grant reported that many people needed support and thanked Falcons Landing MOAA Chapter for our support of their efforts. He asked for support of the virtual job fair, for veterans in Loudoun, to meet military-friendly employers, e.g., updates on our webpage. We may be able to help. Peter Scott is a member of the committee.

**The Gathering:** Bill Hilsman. On August 13 presented a virtual briefing on the July 30 Mars launch. The September schedule has not yet been released.

**President's Updates:** Bob Manning. **Veterans Day:** Will be similar to last year with live broadcast, versus on tape, on November 11. To include recognition of World War II veterans in residence. **The Auxiliary:** Bylaws were approved. Per the new bylaws, spouses of deceased members (Surviving Spouses), spouses of living Chapter members, and others must formally apply for membership in the Auxiliary. A committee will define the procedure to become an Auxiliary member. **Nominating Committee:** Per our bylaws, a Nominating Committee shall be appointed in September of the year in which an election occurs. Our President plans to become Immediate Past President and Webmaster. The Nominating Committee Chair should be a Board officer-member.

## The Gold Star Families Memorial, September 11, 2020

By Jim Mullen (slightly edited)

On Sept. 11, a Gold Star Families Memorial, honoring local Gold Star families, was unveiled in Lovettsville, VA. A Gold Star family refers to the immediate family members of a service member who died while serving in a time of conflict. Following the town's 9/11 ceremony earlier in the day in the town center, about 200 people proceeded to visit the One Family Brewing property south of town to witness the unveiling of the nation's 65th, and the region's first, Gold Star Families Memorial Monument. Attending the ceremony were representatives from the county, including Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis Randall, Ashburn Representative and Mike Turner (fellow member of our MOAA chapter), Sheriff Mike



Chapman, and a number of veterans' organizations members. Also present were representatives from the Marine Corps headed by Brigadier General David Morse, two Medal of Honor recipients, and a number of Gold Star families. Jim Mullen and Lowell Jones, representing the Loudoun County Veterans Engagement Board and our MOAA Chapter, also attended the dedication. The guest of honor was Medal of Honor recipient Woody Williams. Woody was awarded the medal for action on Iwo Jima in WWII. On the day the flag was raised on Iwo Jima's Mt. Suribachi, his unit was bogged down in a heavily fortified area. Woody, with the aid of cover fire from only four Marines, used a flamethrower to attack enemy machine gun pillboxes. After destroying several Japanese positions, he opened a gap in the Japanese defenses, which enabled the Marines to move ahead. For his actions, Williams received the Medal of Honor in 1945, from President Truman. He was also awarded the Purple Heart after being wounded on March 6. Hershel "Woody" Williams, now a former Marine (Chief Warrant Officer, retired), is the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient of 27 recognized from the Iwo Jima conflict. He is 96 years and fast moving. Several years ago, he was instrumental in setting up the Hershel Woody Williams Medal of Honor Foundation to recognize Gold Star families by installing Gold Star Memorials across the nation. He told the audience that the sacrifices of American soldiers must never be forgotten. He mentioned that out of the more than 1,000 monuments in Washington, DC, there are none that specifically honor Gold Star families. Several years ago, after speaking with a Gold Star family member at a Gold Star Memorial meeting, Woody realized the need to recognize families and formed his foundation.

Several residents of the Lovettsville area had formed a committee to have such a memorial for the town, led by the owner of One Family Brewing, Dave Keuhner. They worked with the Hershel Woody Williams Medal of Honor Foundation to get the job done and arranged for the dedication of the memorial in September. During the ceremony, Dave Keuhner told attendees that his life was spared on Sept. 11, 2001. Mr. Keuhner said he had canceled his planned flight to California four weeks prior to the terrorist attacks. That flight ended up being the flight that hit the Pentagon. "This is your memorial," Dave told the Gold Star families in attendance.

To pay for the memorial, more than \$52,000 was raised through individual donations, beer sales, and events throughout the last 14 months. Some costs were offset by donations from area companies including donation of rock to distribute around the Memorial, donation of concrete for the base, and support from contractors for the construction. Among those speaking at the event was Mike Ryan, whose father, U.S. Marine Corps 1st Lt. William Ryan, was shot down and killed in Vietnam at the age of 25 in 1969 when Mike was one day shy of his first birthday. He said U.S. service members have "hero blood." "Many of you here today have that blood," he told the Gold Star families. "Nothing can adequately prepare families for this," he said. "That's what this memorial is really all about—is never forgetting." Former U.S. Army Staff Sgt. and Medal of Honor holder Clint Romesha—who fought alongside U.S. Army Spc. Stephan Mace, a former Purcellville resident who was killed in Afghanistan in 2009 and was awarded the Medal of Honor in February 2013, told the families there is no replacing their loved ones. "They wrote that blank check for the country, and they paid in full," he said. "We will always remember, and we will do it together."

Lovettsville's Gold Star Memorial is made of black granite and features one side that reads "Gold Star Families Memorial Monument," a tribute to Gold Star Families and Relatives who sacrificed a Loved One for our Freedom." The other side tells a story through four panels with themes of homeland, family, patriot, and sacrifice. A 30-foot flagpole displaying the American flag has also been installed. Once unveiled, dozens of Gold Star family members came forward and placed photos of their deceased loved ones at the base of the monument, many with tears running down their cheeks while doing so. There are now 65 Gold Star Memorials located across 48 U.S. states, with 75 more in progress. If you happen to be out for a drive, the Lovettsville memorial is open for viewing at the invitation of Dave Keuhner and would be worth the trip. P.S. Lowell and I are glad we made the trip. It was a moving experience

**MOAA Chapter Board Meeting, September 17, 2020**

## The Gathering, September 17, 2020

### An Air Attache in Latin America

By Jim Mullen (slightly edited)

Fellow resident Colonel Mark Jones (USAF Ret) was the guest speaker at the September Falcons Landing Gathering. Mark began his career in the Air Force as an intelligence officer and then, after flight training, as a KC-135 tanker pilot. Following those early assignments, he was sent to Caracas, Venezuela for three years as an assistant air attaché at the U.S. Embassy, where he also flew the Embassy C-12. He was also accredited to the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Jamaica. Later at the Pentagon, he worked on the Air Staff in Foreign Military Sales. From 1986 until 1990, he served as the Defense Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. This also included acting as the Air Attaché at several neighboring countries. Returning to Washington, he served as Director of the Air Force Office of Attaché Affairs until retirement in 1994. He then worked as an independent contractor with the CIA until 2007. In retirement, Mark is a docent at the National Air and Space Museum. He is also a member of the Defense Attaché System Hall of Fame. Mark covered his experiences in both Venezuela and Honduras.

The Defense Attaché Hall of Fame identifies the recipient's role (that's Mark): to collect and report intelligence to represent the Service Secretary in the host country, to provide the ambassador with military advice and assistance, and to serve as Defense and Air Attaché. (A note: having a C-12 is an added benefit in getting about and meeting the mission. Mark quietly leaves a few details of his time in Venezuela to the imagination).

During his time in Venezuela, Mark visited Angel Falls, at 3312 ft, the tallest waterfall in the world, and he noted that it was named for the American who discovered it—Jimmy Angel, who landed his airplane on top whereupon his wheels were stuck in the ground, and it couldn't be moved. He also had a discussion with a Venezuelan officer about possible future military aircraft for Venezuela. Mark suggested the F-16 and later was posted to the Pentagon where, in his military support assignment, he helped procure F-16s for Venezuela. Mark's second tour of duty as attaché was at the U.S. Embassy in Honduras, where he was the Defense Attaché and Air Attaché (and made good use of the C-12 from time to time). This was during the time of conflict between the socialist Sandinista forces in Nicaragua and the Contra forces—a coalition of right-wing rebel groups who were based in large part in Honduras. The Contras were the various U.S.-backed and funded right-wing rebel groups that were active from 1979 to the early 1990s in opposition to the socialist Sandinista Junta of National Reconstruction of Government in Nicaragua. Mark could have written a book on the subject of the Nicaraguan conflict, but instead presented his assignment from the perspective of the role of the Attaché with numerous examples of the various activities that faced his office. He noted that, in 1987 during the Contra situation, more than 5,000 visitors of all ranks and positions, from Secretary of State to Defense chiefs, came to Honduras creating the responsibility to have, in effect, a visitors bureau function. Of course, Ollie North was part of the scene.

Mark remembers overlooking a ravine to a meadow below that contained 6,000 Contra forces singing the Nicaraguan National Anthem, a visit from the USS Iowa, and the impact of drug traffic—including one situation of providing information leading to the capture back in the U.S. of 8,000 pounds of cocaine from a Honduran ship that had traveled to a U.S. port. Then there was the opportunity to gather intelligence on a HIND helicopter belonging to the Nicaraguan Air Force and the discovery of an unexpected capability of a radar-warning receiver.

Another event related to arranging support through the Navy and Coast Guard for the rescue of two fishermen who were lost at sea. A final story relates though to another side of the attaché's job, when he arranged to gather a treat for the embassy staff from a McDonald's—not just a little effort but about 60 Big Macs plus other portions of a McDonald's meal for the total staff—and the gift glasses that went with such a large order.

Mark ended by citing a gift to him of a souvenir AK-47 from the Contra military as he was transferring back to the United States, which unfortunately he had to leave behind. In telling us of his experiences from Venezuela to Honduras, he gave us an interesting insight to the world of the military attaché.



C-12 Aircraft

## Important Chapter Events, Officers & Directors, Member Status

**General Membership Meets Quarterly, planned for evenings in the Falcons Landing Ballroom. The Gathering - special briefings (sponsored by the MOAA Chapter) open to all Chapter members and Falcons Landing residents. Nominally, one event per month in the Falcons Landing Ballroom.**

**Board of Directors (BOD) meets monthly, as required.**

**Chapter Executive Committee (President, 1st VP; 2nd VP, Secretary, Treasurer) meets as required; acts on behalf of Board on immediate issues.**

**Committees meet at discretion of Committee Chairs.**

### **2020 Meeting Schedule:**

**BOD nominally 10:00 A.M. on third Thursday of scheduled month**

**Quarterly Membership Meetings at 2:00 or 7:30 PM**

**January 16 2020—Board Meeting**

**February 20 - Board Meeting**

**March 24 - Quarterly Mtg - Online Vote**

**April 16 - No Meeting**

**May 5 - Board Meeting**

**May 25 - Memorial Day Program**

**June 18 - Board Meeting**

**July - No Meeting**

**August 20 - Board Meeting**

**September 17 - Board Meeting**

**October 16 - Board Meeting**

**November 11 - Veterans Day Program**

**November 16 - Annual Chapter Mtg**

**December - No Meeting**

### 2020 Officers and Directors

**President/Director/Programs: Bob Manning, Col, USA, Ret. (703) 543-9158**

**First Vice President: Phil Walsh, Col, USMC, Ret. (703) 978-4328**

**2nd Vice President/Director/Legislative Affairs: Clair Wylie, Cmdr, USN, Ret. (703) 216-7549**

**Secretary: Mrs. Genevieve Pustay, (703) 444-5284**

**Treasurer: Peter Scott, Col, USA, Ret. (703) 715-7396**

**Director Membership: Lowell Jones, Col, USAF, Ret. (703) 444-9530**

**Director/Surviving Spouse/Auxiliary Affairs: Mrs. Vicki Estey, (512) 749-2810**

**Director/Personal Affairs: Mrs. Kathy Trossbach, (703) 430-1342**

**Director/Public Affairs: Don McCarthy, Capt, USN, Ret. (703) 430-5608**

**Director/LVFS: Howard Schue, Col, USAF, Ret. (703) 433-2220**

**Director/The Gathering Coordinator: Bill Hilsman, Lt Gen, USA, Ret. (703) 433-1284**

**Director/JROTC/Scholarships: Stanley King, Col, USA, Ret. (703) 281-0825**

**Director/Speakers Bureau: Max Johnson, Col, USA, Ret. (703) 508-3788**

**Member at Large: Bill Suter, Maj Gen, USA, Ret. (703) 909-9810**

**Founder, Past President: John Pustay, Lt Gen, USAF, Ret. (703) 444-5284**

**Past President: Glenn Carus, Col, USAF, Ret. (703) 444-3269**

**Past President: Leo Childs, Maj Gen, USA, Ret. (703) 430-2884**

**Past President: Howard Schue, Col, USAF, Ret. (703) 433-2220**

**Past President: James Mullen, Lt Col, USA, Ret. (703) 444-4741**

### Members Deceased (3rd Quarter, 2020)

**Frank Trent Shaver (08/16/2020)**

**John Riester (09/17/2020)**

### Welcome New Members (3rd Quarter, 2020)

**Drake Wilson (07/29/2020)**

**Paul Flynn (09/01/2020)**

**Maria Kirkland (09/10/2020)**