

Aiken Chapter MOAA

The Courier October 2015



Board Members

PRESIDENT: Capt Barbara McKnight (315) 761-2385

1st VICE PRESIDENT: CWO2 Jerry George (803) 643-9826

2nd VICE PRESIDENT: CPT Jeanne Townes (803) 439-3303

SECRETARY/TREASURER: Capt Brent Caldwell (803) 226-0546

MEETING COORDINATOR: CPT Linda Caldwell (803) 226-0546

CHAPLAIN: CPT Edward Schneider

(703) 851-4918

LEGISLATIVE LIAISON: COL David Lobb (803) 270-8690

JROTC LIAISON: COL Lynda Mann

(703) 326-7603

SURVIVING SPOUSE LIAISON: Sharon Smoot (803) 642-1292

COURIER EDITOR: CPT Jeanne Townes (803) 439-3303

Mailing Address: 262 Eastgate Dr #239 Aiken, SC 29803

All newsletters are sent by email

IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Message

Member Spotlight:

COL Lynda Mann, USA

October Meeting

Speaker Bio:

Dr. Kent Cubbage

Upcoming Events

Veteran Events

Thank You Messages

MOAA National News

VA News

Important Contacts





From the President:

Capt. Barbara McKnight,
USAF

I had a fantastic summer with family, friends, and some amazing travel!

Our October 1st meeting is going to kick off Halloween with our speaker Kent Cubbage's "Ghosts and Goblins" of Aiken! He's a fantastic presenter, so we hope to see a huge turnout! We'll also be thrilled to have Lt. Col. Corey Murphy, USAR, as our superintendent of Aiken Count Schools in November. He'll be sharing some really informative information about the state of our schools in our County.

In December, USC Aiken will be commissioning 1 or 2 ROTC Cadets. The Aiken MOAA chapter will be there to present them with their gold bars, a challenge coin, and we're looking into the basic MOAA membership for each of them. We'll also be doing our continuing Christmas Angel Program again. This is when we collect gifts for the Military and Veteran's children at USC Aiken, and we're again looking into the needs of the Veterans attending school at Aiken Tech.

We're also setting up a Charity Committee for 2026. This will give us some great ways to give back to those organizations that serve the Veteran Community in Aiken and SC. They can be local, state, or national non-profits. Please see Jerry George, 1st VP, if you would like to serve on this committee.

We'd love for all our members to join us in Greenwood for our biennial SC State MOAA, November 8th. The topic this year is "Building Blocks for Chapter Health." If you have any questions or need information, please don't hesitate to call me or Linda Caldwell, who's the President of the SC State MOAA.

It's a real honor to serve the Aiken MOAA chapter. I want to thank our Board Members for all their hard work in keeping OUR Chapter healthy and thriving! I can't wait to see you all at our Dinner Meeting on October 1st!



Lynda Mann served in the United States Army for 26 years. Lynda, her husband, Bill Hall, and their son, Doug Hall, all retired colonels, have a combined 84 years of service.

Lynda was destined for a life of service. Her Father and 3 Uncles served in WWII. When the time came for Lynda to enlist, she met with an Air Force Recruiter who set Lynda on a path of selfless service to both her country and community. Rather than meet his monthly quota to recruit a female, he recommended that she talk to an Army Recruiter because with only 2 years of college the Army could offer her Officer Candidate School much sooner. Lynda joined the United States Army in 1972 as a Private and entered Officer Candidate School (OCS) 2 years later. Upon her retirement Lynda had finished her bachelor's and master's degrees and was All But Dissertation for her PhD.

During her military career Lynda gained the reputation of being a conflict resolution expert. A few of her most proud roles included:

1. Assigned to the National Guard Bureau Lynda served on a team tasked to create a pilot program helping youth at risk, which became the "National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program." This 20-week residential/1-year post-residential highly successful program is still in operation today with over 200,000 graduates nation-wide.
2. The Army assigned Lynda to Turkey to help resolve communication, cultural and language issues within a communications unit made up of U.S. Air Force and Turkish Army personnel. Lynda's innovative solutions included "Gateway" language programs that included technical terminology, and training to impact interactions and communications that were more respectful to the Turkish and American cultures.
3. Lynda was asked to a joint U.S. cold stores facility with German floor workers to resolve excessive spoilage of perishables food. Lynda took her German American dictionary (she spoke only basic German) to collaborate with the German workers who best understood the issues and resolutions. Together they developed a comprehensive plan resulting in a savings of \$1M in the first year.

After retiring in 1997 Lynda became a successful consultant helping commercial clients with government contracting as well as managing a successful executive coaching business.

Service is the cornerstone of who she is, be it working with children, raising money for local charities or serving on community boards and committees. Lynda has been awarded Lifetime Achievement Awards from the March of Dimes and the State of Maryland.



October Meeting: October 1, 2025

Place and time: Newberry Hall at 1800 hours (6:00 PM) ;

Speaker: Kent Cabbage ; speaking on the Ghosts of Aiken (see bio next page)


Menu: Main Entrée is Bone-in Buttermilk Fried Chicken w/ all the usual salad, sides and dessert (\$30/person)

Happy Half Hour: 1800-1830 (6:00-6:30 PM); Cash Bar

To make a reservation: CPT Linda Caldwell, USA (fmr) at lscaldwell@gmail.com or (803) 226-0546 [leave a message]

DEADLINE: Thursday, September 25, 2025

Additional Information: Business Casual Attire and Assigned Seating



Presenting our Guest Speaker:

Dr. Kent Cabbage

Dr. Kent Cabbage is a professional writer and communicator in the nuclear industry. A 30-year resident of Aiken, he was previously a biology professor and science department chair at Aiken Technical College. In his more than 20 years at ATC he touched the lives of 3,500 students in the community. Prior to that, Kent was an environmental consultant at a firm in Aiken. He has authored several books and been a script writer for several popular YouTube channels.

Kent has dedicated decades of service to the Aiken community, having served on both the City of Aiken Planning Commission and Energy and Environment Committee. In addition, he served on the boards of the Hitchcock Woods Foundation and Aiken Land Conservancy. Kent is an active supporter of and donor to the Aiken County Animal Shelter.

He holds a Ph.D. in educational leadership from the University of South Carolina, an M.S. in zoology from Southern Illinois University and a B.S. in ecology from the University of Illinois.

An aficionado of Aiken's rich history, Kent has owned and operated Aiken Ghost Tours for 20 years and is a guide on the City of Aiken trolley historical tour.

In his free time, Kent enjoys travelling, playing the drums, woodworking and spending time with his daughter, Lucy. Finally, he is a candidate for Aiken City Council District 5 in the upcoming November 4 election.



NOVEMBER 5, 2025

CHAPTER MEETING WITH DR. COREY MURPHY, LTC, USAR SUPERINTENDENT FOR AIKEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL .

NOMINATION AND PRESENTATION OF BOARD CANDIDATES FOR THE 2026-2028 TERM.

DISTRIBUTION OF CHRISTMAS ANGEL ORNAMENTS

NOVEMBER 11, 2025:

VETERANS DAY SERVICE AT THE AIKEN COUNTY VETERANS PARK 11:00 AM 1435 RICHLAND AVE. EAST AIKEN



DECEMBER DATE: TBA

MILITARY ACADEMY INTERVIEWS ; CONTACT DAVID LOBB, COL, USA

DECEMBER 3, 2025

CHAPTER MEETING WITH MAKIN MUSIC AS OUR ENTERTAINMENT.

ELECTION OF THE BOARD CANDIDATES FOR THE 2026-2028 TERM

CHRISTMAS ANGEL GIFTING FOR THE CHILDREN OF USCA VETERAN AND MILITARY FAMILIES

JANUARY 7, 2026 HAPPY NEW YEAR!

FIRST CHAPTER MEETING OF THE NEW YEAR; SPEAKER TBA

INDUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2026-2028 TERM



VETERAN EVENTS

E-Bike Raffle



Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 1145

Mi Pueblo Mexican Restaurant
3607 Richland Ave W, Aiken, SC 29801

Raffle Ticket Sales Start at 4pm
\$5/Ticket or \$20/For 5 tickets

See VVA Chapter
Members for
details



Atlas Pro
Folding Fat
Tire E-Bike

The president of VVA Chapter 1145, President Ole, and Don Jenkins will be at Mi Pueblo 3607 Richland Ave W Aiken, on WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2025 selling chances for the E-Bike. The bike will be there to review

Our own member, Linda Caldwell, CPT, USA is speaking at the

RICHLAND LIBRARY

Located at 763 Fashion Dr,
Columbia, SC



NOON DEBRIEF

An Army Nurse in Vietnam

Friday, September 26

Richland Library - Main, Theater
12-1 pm

SPEAKER



**Linda Sharp
Caldwell**



**SOUTH CAROLINA
CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM &
MILITARY MUSEUM**



Thank
you

During the month of April, the Aiken County Public School District celebrates the Month of the Military Child. Recognizing the children of active duty military. The Aiken Chapter MOAA sponsored 2 schools Aiken Elementary and Chukker Creek Elementary. We provided tee shirts for the children at Aiken El (shared in a previous edition) and a breakfast for the military children and families at chukker Creek. We'd like to share this with the membership as your generosity contributes to our ability to support veterans and military in our community.



4/15/2025

J. McKnight,

Thank you, on behalf of Chukker Creek elementary, for sponsoring our breakfast for our Month of the Military Child. Our families and children enjoyed it very much!

We appreciate all that our service members do and always enjoy any way to honor them.

Thank you again!

Best regards,
Chukker Creek
Elementary

Reminder from MOAA National



Reminders from national MOAA to remain non-partisan in everything concerning MOAA

Partisan Political Activities: As organizations exempt from federal taxation under Sec. 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code, MOAA and its affiliates must take care to avoid engaging in partisan political activities. Under IRS rules, we are prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

Divisive Social Issues: We are all aware of the divisive nature of the debate over today's leading social issues – protesting during the national anthem at sporting events, racial justice, public protests, and the conduct of law enforcement officers. These are issues over which many Americans have deeply held, but differing, personal beliefs. This is also true within the military community among the ranks of active duty and retired officers and within MOAA itself.

MOAA leaders have an obligation to keep this in mind when communicating on behalf of MOAA or its affiliates. Suggesting that MOAA only supports one side of a deeply divisive issue sends a message to those with a different belief that MOAA is not for them. **See the complete statements from MOAA: ([click this link](#)) [MOAA - MOAA Guidance on Partisan Political Activities](#)**



News from MOAA National

MOAA-Backed Change Will Preserve Improvements to the VA Experience

By: René Campos (published: September 10, 2025)

A new law will secure a stronger voice for veterans, caregivers, families, and survivors in how the VA delivers care and benefits.

The [Veterans Experience Office \(VEO\)](#), created in 2015, helps VA beneficiaries navigate the department's complex health care and benefits systems. Over the past decade, the office has improved veteran trust in VA services through better digital access, more responsive feedback channels, and more accountability across the department.

MOAA supported standalone legislation, first introduced in the [118th Congress](#), to make this office permanent. A [Senate bill signed Aug. 14 by the president](#) includes this provision, known as the [Improving Veterans' Experience Act](#).

By codifying the VEO, Congress ensures its permanence within the VA and strengthens its authority: The office is now formally housed in the VA Office of the Secretary, led by a chief veterans experience officer, with clear mandates to oversee metrics, policies, and feedback-driven improvements across the department.

You can read more by clicking this link: [MOAA](#)



News from the VA

Eligibility for burial in a VA national cemetery

Veterans, service members, and some family members may be eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery. Find out if you, or a person you're planning a burial for, can get this benefit.

Who's eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery?

Veterans, service members, spouses, and dependents may be eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery, as well as other benefits, if they meet one of these requirements.

One of these must be true:

- ♦ The person qualifying for burial benefits is a Veteran who didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, or
- ♦ The person qualifying for burial benefits is a service member who died while on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty for training, or
- ♦ The person qualifying for burial benefits is the spouse or surviving spouse of a Veteran (even if they remarried after the Veteran's death), or
- ♦ The person qualifying for burial benefits is the minor child of a Veteran (even if the Veteran died first) or, in some cases, the unmarried adult dependent child of a Veteran

To Learn more Click here: [VA Burial](#)

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



... HOW TO ACCESS THE AIKEN CHAPTER'S WEBSITE?

To access the website you must go through the SC Council's website (www.moaasc/aiken) BUT you can click on the link

here: www.moaasc.org

... HOW TO OPEN IMBEDDED LINKS IN OUR COURIER?

Many of us are challenged by many of today's technological advances. We incorporate links into our documents to make it easier to access information. By placing the cursor just under the link and pressing the ctrl button on your keyboard a hand (with a finger pointing to the link) will appear. Then just one click and you are at the imbedded website.

VETERAN ASSISTANCE

Aiken County Veterans Affairs: Major Dwight Bradham is the Aiken County Veterans Affairs Officer. He and his team can be reached at (803) 642- 1545 or dbradham@aikencountysc.gov by email. If you have any veteran issues, please contact the office.

US Congressman Joe Wilson - Veteran Assistance: The local number to Congressman Wilson's Aiken County office is (803) 642-6416. His State Senate office also regularly assists veterans with many issues. The number is (803) 212- 6000.

Veterans Legal Clinic: The USC School of Law operates the Veterans Legal Clinic. Veterans can inquire about help with a legal problem by calling (803) 777- 2278





IMPORTANT LINKS

Listed here are several links to contacts that members and friends of Aiken Chapter may find informative or helpful.

MOAA National: [MOAA](#)

Aiken Chapter MOAA: [Aiken](#)

****Please Note an application to Aiken Chapter is on the Home Page as a PDF

Department of Veteran Affairs: [DVA#](#)

Aiken County Veterans Affairs: [ACVet](#)

Aiken County Veteran's Council: [ACVC](#)

Lindsay Graham's Website: [Graham](#)

Joe Wilson's Website: [Wilson](#)

