



**The Clarion**  
*The Military Officers Association of America*  
*Heritage Hunt Chapter*



Volume 07, Issue 02

April 2023

MOAA, including the Heritage Hunt Chapter, is a nonprofit nonpartisan veterans' association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and to preserving the earned entitlements of members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors. Membership is open to those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any component of the U.S. Army, USMC, USN, USAF, USSF, USCG, USPHS or NOAA and their surviving spouses.

## Thank You Heritage Hunt Chapter Members

Last year, given the favorable financial posture of the chapter at the time, the board of directors agreed to expand the chapter charitable support from \$2,000 to \$5,000. About the same time some members of the board became aware of MOAA offering community outreach grants from the MOAA Foundation to local chapters actively involved in the delivery of community services in one of 10 areas of critical family need. The board formed a committee consisting of Bernie Ellis, chairman, Carolyn Kirkland, Pete Wright, Bill Horan and Dennis Corrigan to solicit and review applications for a chapter grant. Early on, the committee decided that the Willing Warrior Retreat Center (<https://www.willingwarriors.org/>) would be worthy recipient. In conjunction with the committee activities, Dennis Corrigan assisted the WWRC to write and submit an application for a MOAA community outreach grant to support the WWRC. In April of last year, the chapter



Visiting Chef Program at WWRC.  
 Photo: WWRC Web Site.

received notice from MOAA that the grant application was approved in the amount of \$1,500. In June, the board unanimously approved adding \$3,500 to the \$1,500 MOAA grant and presenting a grant of \$5,000 to the WWRC, an amount sufficient for the WWRC to host two wounded warriors and their families for one week to provide a taste-of-home experience for the recovering warrior and family in the form of a relaxing getaway from the medical center environment. The grant was presented to Shirley Dominick of the WWRC at the chapter social on Sep. 7, 2022.

The WWRC includes a visiting chef program. The Visiting Chef Program partners with exceptional volunteer chefs who come to the Warrior Retreat at Bull Run in Haymarket and create once-in-a-lifetime extraordinary meals for our injured warriors and their families. The program takes a farm-to-table approach with the goal of educating families about the benefits of cooking with fresh vegetables and herbs.

See **Thank You** on page 3.

**2023**  
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**The Clarion**

**Bernie Ziegler, Editor**  
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## Editor's Notes

Spring is finally here – although with some of the very warm days we have had in the recent past it almost felt like summer at times.

We begin this issue with some very nice thank-you notes from some willing warriors and their families who were able to enjoy a week at the local Wound Warrior Retreat Center due to chapter members and MOAA Foundation generosity. We follow with an introduction to one of our new chapter members and then provide a short legislative update to activities in the Virginia General Assembly. Unfortunately, we then say a sad farewell to fallen comrade and chapter member Bob Castle. We finish off this issue with a look back a bit in history at the Donut Dollies who served in Vietnam.

While we all enjoy the many benefits of MOAA membership, we also have an obligation to support MOAA's efforts on our behalf. The MOAA legislative action center is an extremely easy and convenient way to stay abreast of legislative issues and to participate in influencing the issues for our benefit. Take a moment to check it out at <http://takeaction.moaa.org/?5>.

This newsletter is distributed electronically to all chapter members. If you know of a member not receiving *The Clarion*, please contact the editor.

As always, please tell your eligible neighbors and friends about MOAA membership and either pass along the membership application at the end of this newsletter or encourage them to contact Mary Jo Howarth as shown here.

### Join MOAA's Heritage Hunt Chapter

To learn more about the nationally recognized Heritage Hunt Chapter or how to join, see the last page of this newsletter or contact membership director Mary Jo Howarth, at 703-899-1582, or email her [mjhowarth4@comcast.net](mailto:mjhowarth4@comcast.net).

**Thank You** from page 1.

Saturday night is the Visiting Chef Night at the PenFed Foundation House with all dinners prepared by teams of military chefs from the Presidential Food Service at the White House. Visiting Chef Night in the Lang House is Sunday and one of 86 volunteer military, catering, personal, or restaurant chefs come. To assist the visiting chefs, a staff of 12 volunteer chefs and sous chefs routinely help.

According to WWRC personnel, the benefits to warriors and their families are overwhelming. All the combat-wounded warrior guests suffer from post-traumatic stress and their spouses report it has often been years since they have been out to a restaurant. Our volunteer chefs bring a culinary experience to the family they almost always describe as the best meal they have had. The families learn valuable cooking tips from the chefs and everyone has a wonderful time.



**"My Daddy, My Hero" special dessert for Visiting Chef Night.  
Photo: WWRC Web Site**

The board received the following thank-you notes from the two families who benefited from that grant and from the executive director of the WWRC. The board wanted to make sure chapter members are aware of the impact of their charitable giving in support of the chapter's charitable activities.

*"Mr. Corrigan and the Heritage Hunt Chapter Members,*

*We wanted to take a moment to thank you for your generosity in feeding our family a truly delicious and wonderful meal! We had a wonderful time enjoying a local gem of a place. Your kindness allowed us an opportunity to relax and not worry about cooking and cleaning up a meal – especially appreciated given it was our 10<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.*

*With thanks, The XXX Family"*

*"This retreat has been a great blessing to our family. I have never been so relaxed and at peace in a long time. From the moment we stepped out of the car, we have been treated with so much love. Your gift to our family will be a lifelong memory of happiness. My anxiety is at a very manageable place here in this environment. We wholeheartedly believe you've given us the volunteers and the effort to make this perfect. The attention to detail was amazing. Your generosity allowed us to realign and reconnect with each other. We want to pay it forward. We plan to do so. We pray God bless you exceedingly and abundantly in all your future efforts.*

*Respectfully, The XXX Family (SFC, USA)"*

*"Dear Heritage Hunt Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)*

*I want to thank you for your \$5,000 grant contribution dated September 7, 2022. Every act of generosity helps us further our mission of providing cost-free retreat stays and other programs that positively impact the lives of wounded, ill, and injured military service members and disabled Veterans. Your support means so much to us and we hope to see you at the Retreat at one of our upcoming events.*

*We are grateful for your support of the Warrior Retreat Center at Bull Run mission and for providing encouragement and support to our nation's Warriors and their families during their recovery process by providing them a peaceful retreat.*

*We at WW work hard to make your contribution to benefit our guests in an impactful way, and we appreciate your generosity in supporting our cause. To keep up-to-date on our organization and mission, please visit our website at [www.willingwarriors.org](http://www.willingwarriors.org).*

*Thank you for this outstanding support. This donation will fully fund two Warrior family stays at the Retreat!*

*Sarah Ford  
Executive Director  
Willing Warriors"*

Thank you, chapter members, once again for graciously supporting the chapter's charitable activities!

## Chapter Welcomes New Member

**Capt. Michael Wrinkle, USN (Ret.) and Christine Wrinkle.** Mike was born in Berkeley, Calif., and at age five moved with his family to Hayward, Calif., where his father, a WWII veteran of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, used his Veterans Affairs benefits to purchase one of the first homes to be built in Hayward. He graduated from Tennyson High School in Hayward where he played varsity baseball and basketball. He received an associate degree in aeronautics from San Mateo Junior College in 1972 and a bachelor's degree in aeronautical operations from San Jose State University in October 1974. He also obtained a commercial pilot's license as a part of his college courses and was commissioned an Ensign in the Aviation Reserve Officer Corps.

Mike likes to tell people he had three careers in the Navy. The first phase of his career was operational. In his first 16 years, he served five consecutive squadron tours. Four of these tours were in patrol and reconnaissance as a P-3 Orion plane commander, mission commander and instructor pilot. The fifth tour was as an instructor pilot in the Navy Service Support Advanced Training Command where he instructed with the T-44 "Pegasus" Beach King Air aircraft.

From 1989 to 1991, Mike attended the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School where he earned a master's degree in financial management. This prepared him for the financial phase of his career during which he served tours at the Pentagon, Crystal City, Navy Yard and Andrews Air Force Base.

During his final six years in the Navy, Mike served the financial phase of his career as the director of financial management and as the director of legislation in the office of the Director of Navy Reserve on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations. (N095).

Mike says the high points of his career were earning his Navy Wings of Gold in October 1975, earning his master's degree and making it to the top of the Navy Reserve "finance ladder."

Mike became a licensed residential real estate agent in 1980 in Corpus Christi, Texas, while on shore duty as a Navy flight instructor in the Advanced Training Command and still holds an active license. Following retirement in 2003, he became active once again in real estate. He now works at Samson Properties and teams up with his daughter Shandra who lives in the Piedmont subdivision in Gainesville.



Mike is a real sports fan with special interest in baseball, football and hockey. He's a sports enthusiast and likes to play tennis and swim on a regular basis. He collects coins and sports cards and enjoys reading WWII history – particularly aviation related stories. He loves to drive his 2004 Corvette convertible on dry days and has joined the Heritage Hunt car club. His real passion is the National Air Races in Reno which he's attended for the last 60 years and where he picked up his love of aviation.

Mike is married to Christine Wrinkle, also raised in Hayward, and they recently celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. They have two children and five grandchildren. Daughter Shandra Richardson lives with her husband and four children in Gainesville. She founded and owns the Riptide swim team, is a swim and triathlon coach and home schools their children. Son Kurtis Wrinkle and his wife and child live in Beaufort, S.C. Kurt is a Marine major and flies the F-18 Hornet out of Marine Corps Air Station in Beaufort. He recently completed a three-year exchange tour in Australia flying with the Royal Australian Air Force and their legacy F-18s. He's about to join his next F-18 squadron for his department head tour before picking up 0-5.



Mike and Chris have lived in Heritage Hunt since 2005 with their dog Roze, cat named Tinker and an African grey parrot named Buddie. Mike is a licensed realtor working with Samson Properties and is a volunteer ambassador for the Willing Warrior Retreat Center.

## Legislative Update

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations provides advice and assistance to the governor, General Assembly and the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) on matters of concern to the veterans community. The 26 members of the JLC include the MOAA Virginia Council of Chapters.

The JLC has established a list of initiatives for the 2023 Virginia legislative session which began on Jan. 11, 2023, with the convening of the General Assembly. Those initiatives were presented in the January 2023 issue of the Clarion. Below is the status of those initiatives.

1. JLC 2023-01, Expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses of Military Service Members to also include "Died in the Line-of-Duty" *Status: SJ231 passed the Senate and House. An identical resolution must pass the 2024 General Assembly in order to be on the ballot in the November 2024 General Election.*
2. JLC 2023-02, Real Property Tax Exemption Effective Date. *Status: HB1470 passed House 99-0 and is in Senate Finance.*
3. JLC 2023-03, Removal of Age Requirement Income Tax Subtraction. *Status: HB1436 Passed by indefinitely in Senate Finance; HB1690 Left in House Finance; SB1194 Passed by indefinitely in Senate Finance.*
4. JLC 2023-04, Appropriate \$400,000 (GF) for State Veterans Cemeteries; Eliminate Spouse/Dependent and Guard/Reserve Burial Fees. *Status: HB 2362 Passed House and Senate (HB2362ER); SB924 Passed Senate and House (SB924ER).*

5. JLC 2023-05, Free Virginia National Guard State Park Admission. *Status: HB1388 Passed House and Senate (HB1388ER); SB915 Passed Senate and House (SB915ER).*
6. JLC 2022-06, Virginia National Guard Income Tax Exemption. *Status: HB2373 Passed House and Senate (HB2373ER). Increases to \$5,500 and Pay Grade O6.*

Additional details are available at <https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/dvs/joint-leadership-council-veterans-service-organizations-2>.

## In memoriam...



It is with sadness that we that we note the death of Robert J. Castle, a member of the MOAA Heritage Hunt Chapter family. Bob died peacefully on Feb. 13, 2023, surrounded by his loving family. He was the devoted husband of Dolores Siouffi and together they raised three children in Fairfax Va. He was the loving and devoted grandfather to 12 adoring grandchildren.

He was born in East Orange, N.J., in 1940. Bob graduated from St. Benedict's Preparatory School in Newark, N.J. and St. Peter's College in Jersey City. After graduation, Bob served as an officer in the Army for two years stationed in Panama and then completed a successful 35-year career in technology sales at Burroughs and Xerox Corporation. During his time after retirement, he volunteered his time in support of the House of Mercy and served as an officer of the Xerox Pioneers retirement group. He enjoyed travelling the world with his wife and spending time with his family.

He had a great sense of humor and could always light up a room with a witty quip or joke. He and Dolores were happily married for 56 years. They were best friends and partners in all things. Bob was the spiritual leader of his family and instilled a strong faith in God, love of family, and patriotism in his children and grandchildren. He had a keen business acumen and his family often consulted with him for his wisdom. He was also an avid fisherman who enjoyed everything from freshwater fishing on the Potomac to surf fishing at the Outer Banks.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Dolores Castle, and his three children: Robert Castle Jr (Joan), Lori Poole (Tom) and Brian Castle (Linda). He is also survived by 12 grandchildren: Christina, Paul, Caroline, Nicholas, Noah, Peter, Elias, Sarah, Noelle, Zachary, Abigail, and Michael

The funeral Mass was held on Feb. 25, at Holy Trinity Catholic Church. His Internment will be private at the Quantico National Cemetery. Any donations should be made to the St. Benedict's Preparatory School in Newark, N.J., or the House of Mercy in Manassas.

## Looking Back - Donut Dollies' Served Up a Boost to Morale

By Don Vaughan, *Military Officer Staff*

For American personnel serving in Vietnam, one of the most popular reminders of home was a visit from the blue-uniformed young women affectionately known as “Donut Dollies.” The 627 always-upbeat Red Cross volunteers served in Vietnam, boosting morale with a song, a board game, or often just a smile.

Donut Dollies date back to World War II, when teams of female Red Cross volunteers visited soldiers in the field with special clubmobiles that carried coffee and doughnuts. They did it again during the Korean War, at one point turning out a staggering 20,000 doughnuts a day for American soldiers arriving in Pusan.

But it was in Vietnam that Donut Dollies — officially known as Supplemental Recreational Activities Overseas (SRAO) program staff — were most visible. According to an [Armyhistory.org report](https://www.armyhistory.org/report), Donut Dollies logged more than 2 million miles by jeep, deuce-and-a-half, and helicopter, visiting troops in some of the country’s most remote and dangerous regions.

To serve in Vietnam, SRAO applicants had to be female, between 21 and 24 years old, college graduates, and single, notes Jeanne Christie, who in 1967 served as a Donut Dolly in Nha Trang, Da Nang, and Phan Rang.

Two intense weeks were spent in Washington, D.C., learning military branches and ranks, what to expect in-country, and more before shipping out. Participants volunteered for a variety of reasons. Christie, for example, came from a family steeped in community service. “It was what our family did, so it was an extension of growing up,” she said.

The job of Donut Dollies in Vietnam was to boost morale among U.S. fighting forces, and no American firebase was too far for them to visit. They brought board games, records, treats, and more in an effort to provide weary, homesick servicemembers a few minutes of respite. They also visited the wounded in base hospitals.

The one thing they didn’t do — despite their nickname — was pass out doughnuts.

“People have asked if we gave out doughnuts in Vietnam,” said Joann Puffer Kotcher, who served as a Donut Dolly in Korea and in Vietnam. “In the words of one mess sergeant: ‘No. In Vietnam, it was too damn hot to make them.’”







Donut Dollies ventured surprisingly close to the action.  
Photo: Internet.

But she knew their visits made a difference to the troops. “Veterans tell me my visits were ‘a letter from home,’” she said. “When they saw me, they knew there was someone ‘back in the world’ who cared about them.”

Danger was a constant for Donut Dollies in Vietnam. “I assured my family that I wasn’t going to be in danger; I couldn’t have been more wrong,” said Kotcher, author of [Donut Dolly: An American Red Cross Girl’s War in Vietnam](#) (University of North Texas Press). “I was almost killed at least six times. One time, a sniper shot at me and missed.

Another time, an ambush missed me.”

Three Donut Dollies died in Vietnam over the course of the program.

Understandably, a visit from the Donut Dollies was a special experience for troops, many of whom hadn’t seen an American woman in months. Army 1st Lt. Jim Roberts was serving in Dong Xoai in 1971 when the remote base received an unexpected visit from two Donut Dollies whose helicopter had experienced mechanical difficulties. Roberts wrote about their visit in a self-published book about his time in Vietnam and spent years trying to locate the women so he could thank them “for making a very bright spot in a very dark time.” Roberts reconnected with the Donut Dollies via Zoom in 2021.

“Their service is an unknown part of the war for many,” Roberts said. “The women are very proud of what they did. They were in a war zone, riding in helicopters and being shot at. They were adventuresome and very brave, and they did a very courageous thing.”

Jeff “Doc” Dentice has also spent years searching for the Donut Dollies he encountered during his service as an Army medic with the 25th Infantry Division in Cu Chi. “What they did in Vietnam went above and beyond to boost morale for the troops,” he said. “They often flew in Hueys to firebases in the boonies where the enemy was ever present. They served proudly and deserve a debt of gratitude from our Vietnam veterans.”



Donut Dollies join the 39th reunion of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, for a screening of the Donut Dollies Documentary on May 28, 2022.  
Photo: Donut Dollies Facebook page.



The Donut Dollies in Vietnam were trendsetters, said Roberts. “These women weren’t part of the Army, but they were in combat,” he said. “They were mold-breakers during a time when we didn’t realize the mold was being broken. These women are heroes.”

