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| *Picture 6*  **MAC/MOAA RIVER REGION REPORT** | | | | |
| *MONTGOMERY AREA CHAPTER*  *MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA*  *5793 CARRIAGE BARN LANE*  *MONTGOMERY, AL 36116*  *WEBSITE:* [*WWW.MACMOAA.ORG*](http://WWW.MACMOAA.ORG) | | | | |
| ***VOL 58 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER for MARCH 2024 ISSUE 3*** | | | | |
| ***MAC/MOAA EXECUTIVE BOARD - 2024*** | | | | |
| *PRESIDENT COL JERRY SAILORS, USAF 328-7575 ARMY REP* | | | *COL NELSON SMITH, USA 834-9383* | |
| *1ST V.P. COL ANNE TOMS, USAF 273-8713 NAVY REP* | | | *CDR MIKE URQUHART, USN 478-4224* | |
| *2ND V.P. CAPT DOUG AULT (727)244-5801 USAF REP* | | | *LCOL LEE CONNER, USAF 315-2290* | |
| *SEC/TREA LCOL JOHN CAMP, USAF 272-8061 USMC REP* | | | *CAPT MIKE JEFFRIES, USMC (903) 918-2347* | |
| *PAST PRESIDENT MAJ RHONDA EDWARDS, USAF, 799-9474* | | | | |
| *MAMO SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION, 3066 ZELDA ROAD, PMB #392, MONTGOMERY, AL 36106* | | | | |
| ***PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE***  In March we celebrate St. Patrick’s Day, the patron saint of Ireland who brought Christianity to that pagan land. Celebrating the day (supposedly the day of his death circa 493 AD) is timely in that it prepares those of us jetting off to Dublin in May to get a taste of my favorite beer straight from the Guiness Brewery. That alone would almost be worth the trip. Almost because the planned itinerary takes us all around the entire island with its beautiful scenery and historic places. Many thanks to Anne Toms for supervising the travel group preparations. What a task!  And many thanks also to Joe Decker, who has volunteered to be the Surviving Spouse Liaison for the Chapter, an important link in helping our Chapter meet its goal of strong support for our veterans.  We welcome two new members to the Chapter: Lt Col Scott Corey and Lt Col Doug Isaacson, both USAF Retired and sponsored by Lynn Oborn. Scott served 30 years on active duty as a Biomedical Laboratory Officer, retiring in 2020 as Commander, 42nd Operational Medical Readiness Squadron at Maxwell. He is now the Golf Pro at Arrowhead Country Club. Doug’s resume includes flying 245 combat hours in KC-135A’s during Vietnam and then KC-135Q models refueling worldwide recon missions with the SR-71 Black Bird. In civilian life, he is in real estate business development. Great to have you onboard, Scott and Doug.  Veteran benefits – Alabama Council of Chapters president Colonel John Kilpatrick, (USA, Ret) is spearheading the effort to obtain state funding through legislation to address the critical need of helping veterans in crisis due to opioid use with particular attention to preventing suicides. Although the legislation has not yet been voted on, we are cautiously optimistic the Council’s push for funds will be favorable.  Chapter membership and solidifying veteran benefits are two of our goals for this year. We’ve had a good start, so, let’s keep it going!**//Jerry** | | | | ***CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS***  ***BX/COMMISSARY***  *Col Sean Cassidy, USAF 356-4220*  *Terri Cassidy 356-4220*  ***CHAMBER***  *Col John O'Connor, USAF 220-6532*  ***CHAPLAIN***  *Col(CH) Larry Layne, ANG 312-9188*  ***COMMUNITY***  *(Vacant/Need a Volunteer)*  ***GOLF***  *LCol Lynn Oborn, USAF 224-1247*  *Maj Jacques Jarry, USA 451-1240*  ***HISTORIAN***  *Capt George Cully, USAF 277-2165*  ***HEALTH***  *Col Jeff Hightaian, USAF 322-6852*  ***LEGISLATIVE***  *LCol Lew Nyman, USAF 273-9655*  ***MEMBERSHIP***  *Col Nelson Smith, USA 834-9383*  ***NEWSLETTER***  *Capt Rene Williams, USAF 322-6778*  ***PUB/COMM***  *Col Steve Linder, USAF 273-8908*  ***SCHOLARSHIP***  *Col John O’Connor, USAF 220-6532*  ***SPEC EVENTS***  *Col Anne Toms, USAF 273-8713*  ***SURVIVING SPOUSE LIAISON***  *Col Joe Decker, USAF 514-0748*  ***TRANSITION (temporary)***  *LCol John Camp, USAF 272-8061* |
| ***Calendar News and Events*** | | | | |
| 5 Mar – Board Meeting  14 Mar – Chapter Meeting | 13 Mar – Final payment due for Irish Trip  2 Apr 24 - Board Meeting | | | |
| 11 Apr – Annual Golf Tournament 18 Apr 24 (3rd Thursday) – Chapter Meeting  7 May – Board Meeting 9 May – Chapter Meeting | | | | |
| 11-26 May 24 – Trip to Ireland |  | | | |
|  | |  | | |

**FEBRUARY SPEAKER**

**A picture containing person, wall, indoor, person

Description automatically generated**

Capt George Yarchak with Col Jerry Sailors

**NEW MEMBERS**

**-LCOL SCOTT A. COREY** (USAF)(RET) **JEANEAN**

**-LCOL DOUG G. ISAACSON** (USAF)(RET) **MOLLIE**

# TAPS

**NONE** (Good Job/Stay Healthy)

**MARCH SPEAKER**

Our speaker for the March MOAA meeting will be Dr. Nancy Anderson.  She will bring us up to date on the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Auburn University Montgomery.  The AUM program is one of a national network of colleges and universities.  In all more than 120 institutes provide learning opportunities for more than 100,000 senior adults every year**.//Anne**

**DUES**

Chapter dues for 2024 became due on 1 January 24 and are delinquent, if not received by 1 March 24. So far, I’ve only received dues from **180** of our **243** members. That’s only **75%** of our membership. Please send your DUES CHECK for $20.00 payable to MAC/MOAA as soon as possible. You may pay as many years in advance as you want at $20.00 per year. If you are attending our March luncheon/meeting, you may include your dues in your check for that event.//**John**

**LEGISLATIVE NEWS**

**Another CR:** President Joe Biden signed legislation Jan. 19 to temporarily extend federal funding into March, averting a partial government shutdown.  The House and Senate approved the continuing resolution in bipartisan votes after congressional leaders reached a broader agreement on spending levels through September 2024. The stopgap measure buys lawmakers additional time to finalize the $1.59 trillion appropriations legislation and clear both chambers.  The continuing resolution finances federal operations at current levels through March 1 for most agencies and March 8 for others, including DoD. This marks the third short-term extension since September.

**COLA Watch:** The January 2024 Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), released Feb. 13, was 302.201, 0.3% above the FY 2024 baseline of 301.236. February 2024 figures will be announced March 12.  After three years of above-average increases in military retirement pay and Social Security benefits, falling inflation figures point to a 2025 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) far below what recipients may have come to expect. This year’s 3.2% COLA hike was well below the last two annual increases of 8.7% and 5.9%, respectively. But aside from those years, it still ranks as the highest in more than a decade, and well above a 20-year average that sits slightly north of 2.6%. But early projections put the 2025 COLA well short of this year’s adjustment – a [1.4% estimate](https://www.morningstar.com/news/marketwatch/20240120243/social-securitys-cost-of-living-adjustment-for-2025-could-be-the-lowest-in-five-years) would be the lowest since the 1.3% increase from 2021.

**VA Services for Migrants:** President Biden is facing increased scrutiny over his Administration

[providing health care administrative services](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/vas-role-migrant-medical-care-draws-scrutiny-advocates-border-crisis-intensifies) to illegal migrants amid a worsening border crisis, potentially exacerbating long wait times for American veterans utilizing Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) facilities.

In a recent TV interview, Sen. Tommy Tuberville touted his recently introduced [No VA Resources for Illegal Aliens Act](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/top-republicans-roll-out-bill-bar-va-healthcare-systems-used-illegal-migrants), which he introduced alongside Rep. Mike Bost, R-Ill., that would ban such action, one of the many problems he says are facing the country as a result of the border "disaster" taking place under Biden's watch. "Biden decided, OK, we've got to feed all these 10 million people we've let come across the border, we've got to house them, and we've got to give them health care," Tuberville said. "They've opened up care from the doctors in these VA community care systems. The lines now in the VA's are getting longer. Our funds that are supposed to go to the veterans are going to these illegal immigrants that are coming across."

**VA Claim Sharks:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has issued an alert warning veterans about the relentless work of “claim sharks.” Claim sharks are targeting veterans by seeking payment to assist with filing claims with the VA. There are some private companies that charge veterans fees for helping them with their disability claims, such as Trajector Medical and Veteran Benefits Guide. These companies are not accredited by the VA and may charge hefty fees for services that are generally free or low-cost for veterans who use VA-approved representatives. Some veterans advocates and lawmakers have criticized these companies as predatory and illegal, and have warned veterans to be careful about signing contracts with them. These claims sharks are preying on vulnerable veterans who may be struggling financially or dealing with health issues related to their service. It is important to do your research and verify the legitimacy of any organization or individual before providing any personal information or signing any documents.//**Lew**

**TRAVEL AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

For those traveling to Ireland with us the balance for the trip is due to the MOAA travel agent NLT than 13 March. His name is Mike Tyrell. If you want that charged to the credit card that you used for the deposit you can just email him at [mike@moaavac.com](mailto:mike@moaavac.com) and tell him to do that. If you want it charged to a different card, you can either send him an email asking him to do that or you can phone him (800 211-5107 ext. 2558). Please watch your email for updates regarding the trip.

We emailed a survey to all our members for whom we have addresses asking for their input regarding trips/special events for 2025. I’m not asking for a commitment of any kind; just trying to determine if there is enough interest that I should begin looking at possibilities. If we are going to have a trip next year, I need to begin working on it soon. So please let me know your thoughts. My email address is silverwings6@att.net**.//Anne**

**HEALTH NEWS**

**Tricare Ambulance Services:** I came across a good article on the Tricare Website. It explains what situations Tricare will cover ambulance services. The article covers outpatient and inpatient services, treat and release service, and air and boat evacuation. The article is located at the following website: <https://newsroom.tricare.mil/News/Tricare-News/Article/3647547/how-tricare-covers-ambulance-services>

Basically, the article states that TRICARE covers ambulance services when medically necessary, based on the condition of the beneficiary receiving the service. Bottom line. It’s good to know what TRICARE covers before you have an emergency because this can help you avoid surprise costs. Lastly, the article states that if you have [TRICARE For Life](https://www.tricare.mil/Plans/HealthPlans/TFL), you must follow [Medicare’s rules](https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/ambulance-services) for ambulance service.//**Jeff**

**SCHOLARSHIP**

Congratulations to Lt Glenn Jones for winning the 50/50 drawing at the February Luncheon, as we went “old style” with tickets. And thanks to everyone who participated.

Scholarship applications will have all been received by the time you will be reading this. As always, there was a flurry of applications received just before the deadline. The evaluation process is ongoing and once completed, the Scholarship Board will finalize the awards for this year. Just by taking a quick look at the applications received so far there are some very strong contenders. We hope you will plan to be at the June luncheon when we formally award this year’s recipients.//**John O’C**

**GOLF**

Hard to believe we are 8 weeks away from our 2024 Golf Tournament. A lot still needs to be done.  We need more sponsors, and golfers need to start putting together their teams.  If you have any leads on potential sponsors please get in touch with me or Jacques**.//Lynn**

**MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLANS**

Because we’ve had some questions concerning the differences between Medicare and alternatives called Medicare Advantage Plans, we decided to have a mini-session after the 14 March luncheon to get better informed about these offerings.  At present we’re looking to have a briefing in one corner of the Ballroom; if there is sufficient interest, we may use one of Arrowhead’s small side rooms if one is available.  The session shouldn’t last longer than thirty minutes.  The discussion will be led by Austin Peltzer, a licensed agent for Veterans Healthcare.  The purpose of the session is to understand what additional or alternative benefits are available, along with their associated costs**.** This session is optional.

**//John**

**THIS MONTH IN US MILITARY HISTORY**

**March 2, 1867** -- Jacob Zeilin, who had served as Colonel Commandant of the Marine Corps since June 30, 1864, was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General Commandant, the first time Congress authorized this rank for a Marine Corps officer.

**March 5, 1770** -- A protest by American colonists against British taxation led to the Boston Massacre. Colonial protesters calling themselves Patriots began taunting British soldiers guarding the Boston Customs House. The protest became a riot, and soon shots were fired. One of the protesters, a Black man named Crispus Attucks, became the first colonist to die in the fight for American Independence.

**March 9, 1864** – President Abraham Lincoln promoted Ulysses S. Grant to the rank of Lieutenant General and made him commander of all Union armies in the field. When presented with gossip that Grant was sometimes taken to drink, Lincoln shrugged and simply replied, “he fights.”

**March 10, 1966** – Major Bernard Fisher became the first USAF Medal of Honor recipient of the Vietnam War after landing his A-1E aircraft on an airfield defended by intense enemy fire to rescue Major Wayne Myers, a fellow unit member who had been hit and crash-landed during their airstrike on the field.

**March 11, 1918** – The ‘Spanish’ flu first reached America as 107 soldiers became sick at Fort Riley, Kansas. One quarter of the U.S. population of 103 million eventually fell ill from the deadly virus, resulting in 500,000 dead. The death toll worldwide had approached 22 million by the end of 1920.

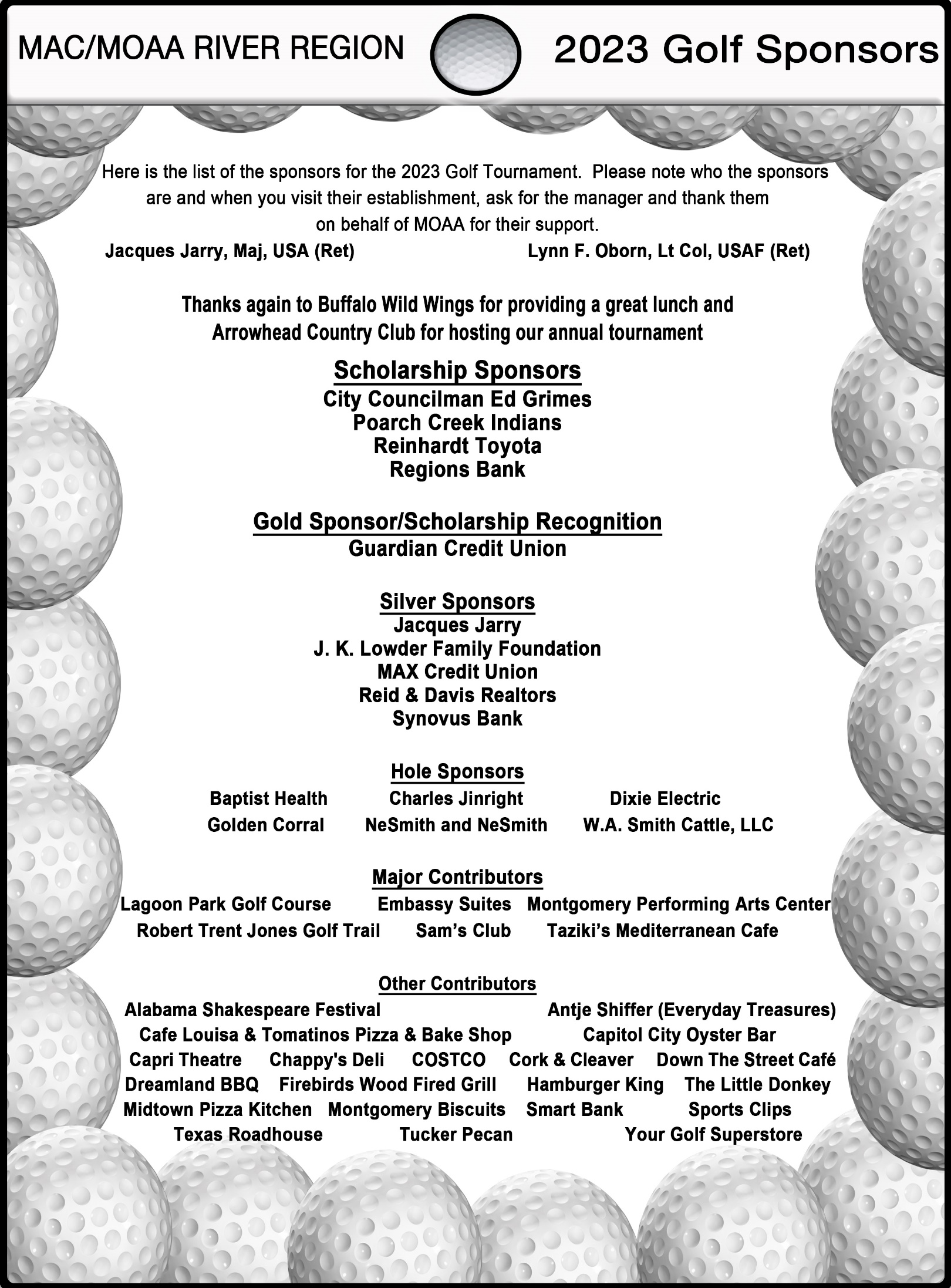
**March 16, 1802** – Congress authorized the creation of an Army Corps of Engineers and a military academy under its control to be built on a bluff overlooking the Hudson River at West Point, New York.

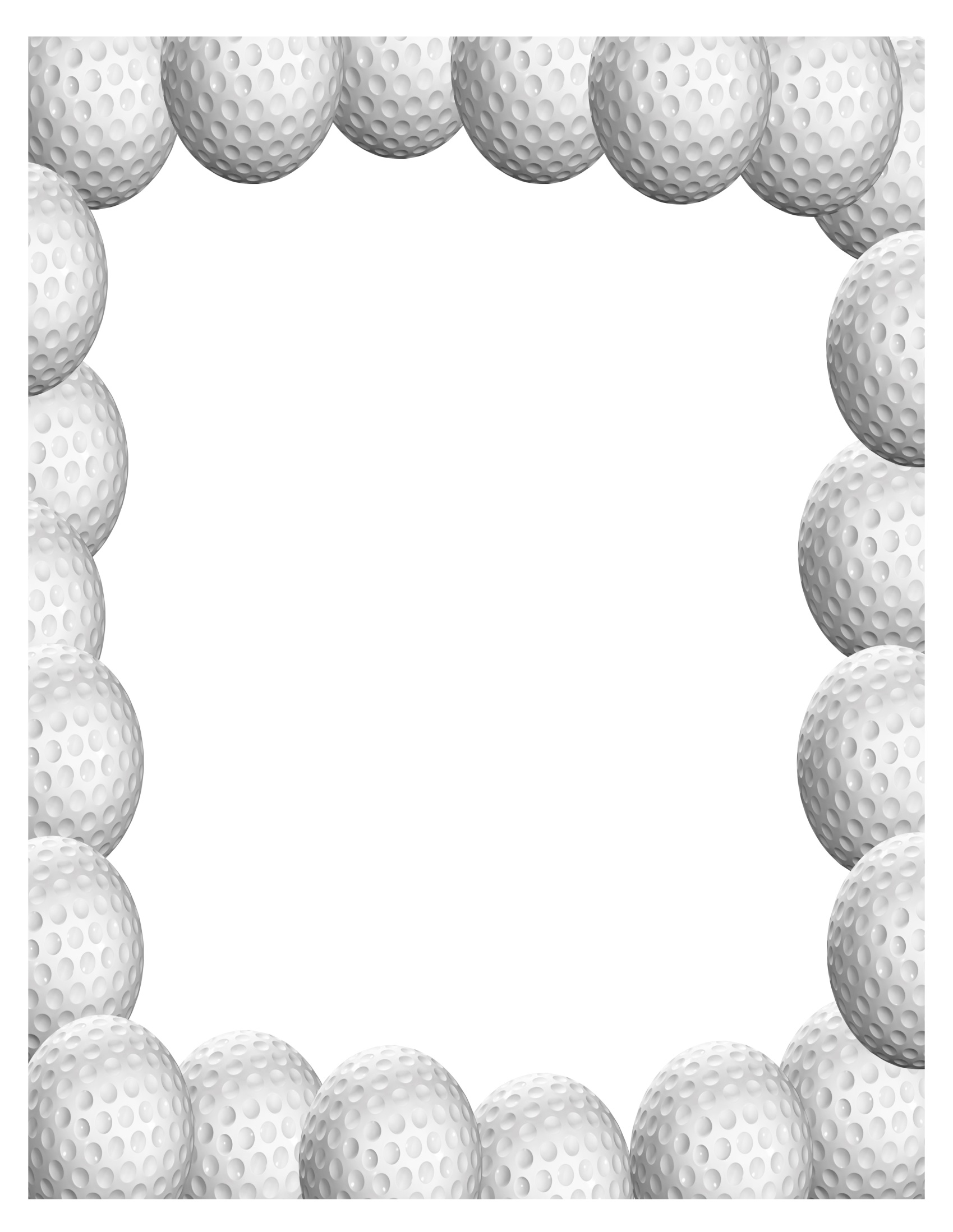
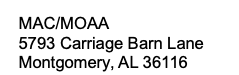
**March 19, 2003** – The U.S. and its allies launched Operation Iraqi Freedom to remove Iraqi tyrant Saddam Hussein from power. The attack began with aerial strikes against military sites, followed the next day by a ground invasion mounted by U.S. and British troops. Baghdad fell just 21 days later.

**March 22, 1915** – The U.S. Navy officially adopted the term “Naval Aviator” to designate those authorized to fly its aircraft; this was done to avoid confusion with the term ‘pilot’, a word long used to identify someone with the detailed local knowledge required to steer a vessel in hazardous waters.

**March 26, 1943** – Second Lieutenant Elsie S. Ott, U.S. Army Nurse Corps, became the first servicewoman to be awarded an Air Medal. The award was made in recognition of the care she had provided to five patients being air-evacuated from India back to the United States.

**March 31, 1801**-- The second Commandant of the Marine Corps, Lieutenant Colonel William W. Burrows, rode with then-President Thomas Jefferson in search of, "a proper place to fix the Marine Barracks on." The two chose a square at 8th and I streets in Southeast Washington due to its proximity to the Navy Yard and its being within marching distance of the Capitol building.**//George**

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Picture 24

**The 42nd Air Base Wing Tthhe 42nd Air Base Wing**

RESERVATIONS DUE BY:

**8 Mar 24**

**[ ] I will attend the Luncheon on Thurs, 14 Mar 2024, My guests will be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**[ ] Check enclosed for luncheon ($21/each) made out to MAC/MOAA. Mail to MAC/MOAA at address above**

**[ ] Dues check enclosed, $20/year made out to MAC/MOAA and mailed to MAC/MOAA at address above. May be included in your check for the luncheon.**

✂--CUT HERE--RETURN ENTIRE FORM ABOVE INCLUDING THE ADDRESS LABEL--CUT HERE--✂

**NEW MEMBERSHIP CHAIR NEEDED**

I’ve been chapter Membership Chair for a long time, perhaps for 10 years. It’s time now to pass the baton. I need one of you to relieve me because the chapter needs a new face, with fresh ideas and new energy. It needs a new Membership Chair to recruit members from today’s military who truly appreciates the needs and aspirations of the currently serving and the new veterans and new retirees among us. Please give this appeal your serious consideration. Call or text me at (334) 590-2865 to discuss the position or ask any questions. Thank you, **Smitty**

**NEWSLETTER SPONSORS/ADVERTISERS NEEDED**

It’s now time to start looking for newsletter sponsors for **2024**. We will need one or two major newsletter sponsors for 2024 to help defray our newsletter costs, even if we transition to a mostly electronic newsletter. A major sponsor or advertiser donates/pays $300 per year and we acknowledge their support by including a business-card-size ad for their business or a charity of their choice in our monthly newsletter for twelve months. Sponsorships for shorter periods are available at a rate of $30 per month. Please contact any business or individual you think might be interested in supporting us. We send out about 355 newsletters per month.**//John**

##### **EVENT: LUNCHEON**

## WHERE: ARROWHEAD COUNTRY CLUB BALLROOM

## WHEN: THURSDAY, 14 Mar 24, Social Time & Buffet 1100, Speaker at 1200

**MENU: Buffet (Choice of three main dishes, sides, salad bar, bread, dessert with iced tea).**

## COST: $21.00

## SPEAKER: Dr. Nancy Anderson

## TOPIC: Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Auburn University Montgomery

##### **RESERVATIONS: Must be in by Friday, 8 Mar 24**