

# THE METRO DETROIT METEOR



## Chapter Board Members

- President - CDR Roy Yapple, USN (Ret)
- Vice President - LTC Tom D'Alio USA (Ret)
- Treasurer - LCDR Rich Higgins, USN (Ret)
- Secretary - LTC Larry Powell, USA (Ret)
- Surviving Spouse Liaison - COL Noreen Diedo, USA (Ret)

## Chapter Address

### Chapter Digital links:

- Chapter web site, [www.semimoaa.org](http://www.semimoaa.org)
- MOAA web presence.

<https://www.moaa.org/chapter/southeasternmichigan/>

**For all non-digital** correspondence use the following address:  
4704 Mount Brighton Rd. Brighton, MI 48116

## Disclaimer

- The Southeastern Michigan Chapter of MOAA (SEMI MOAA) is affiliated with the Michigan Council MOAA and the national MOAA Organization and are all nonpartisan
- All material or other information - including links - contained in the SEMI MOAA newsletter is provided as a public service to military service members and their families.
- The contents of this publication is subject to periodic updating.
- Although every attempt is made to ensure that information is accurate and timely, the content is presented "as is" and without warranties.
- Use of the information is strictly voluntary and at the user's sole risk.

## Important Information

**Chapter Elections are coming.** The following activities will be occurring prior to the November 7 election of officers.

**Sept 23** - Board appoints Nominating Committee

**Oct 7** - Committee provides Secretary with recommended slate of officers

**Oct 17** - Slate of prospective officers published in newsletter.

## Representative Names and Districts

Click to open webpage

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 5 - Tim Walberg    | 10 - John James    |
| 6 - Debbie Dingell | 11 - Haley Stevens |
| 7 - Elissa Slotkin | 12 - Rashida Tlaib |
| 8 - Dan Kildee     | 13 - Shri Thanedar |
| 9 - Lisa McLain    |                    |

## 2024 Meetings

In 2024, the chapter will hold four separate meetings of the chapter general membership and other associated events. The Chapter officers will meet separately monthly for management and administration of the chapter (Board of Directors). Chapter members are welcome and encouraged to attend these Board of Directors meetings. If you are interested in attending a Board meeting, **please let me know and I will send you the Zoom link.**

### Board Meetings

### Chapter/Other Meetings

Board Meetings			Chapter/Other Meetings		
Jan 25	Mar 21	May 23	Apr 18, Chapter Lunch	June 20 Chapter Lunch	May 10 International Armed Forces Dining out
Jul 24	Sep 18	Oct 17	Aug 20 Chapter Lunch	Sep 21 Retiree Appreciation Day	Nov 7 Chapter Lunch/Election of Officers
			Nov 9 Veteran's Day Remembrance	Dec 14 Wreaths Across America	

# A Fireball - A Message from the President

## Personal Transition Plans-Southeastern Michigan Chapter MOAA Leadership

I have been an officer in the Southeastern Michigan Chapter of MOAA for over 20 years including serving as chapter President since at least 2010. The adverse impacts of the COVID pandemic from 2020 to 2023 have in many cases subsided and no longer provide a necessary justification for remaining as chapter President.

The chapter has a nucleus of over 25 capable and dedicated members, many of them lifetime members of national MOAA.

Members from multiple Michigan chapters have, via the Michigan Council of Chapters, participated with me in a recent assessment of the viability of the Southeastern Michigan Chapter of MOAA. The chapter remains viable and there is no desire to see the chapter close. Key among several Michigan Council recommendations for continued chapter success is that I should consider stepping down as Chapter President at an appropriate date, assume a subordinate advisory role as Immediate Chapter Past President and allow others to run for Chapter President.

To prepare for a transition to a new role with a new Chapter President, I have included expanded descriptions of the duties necessary to operate the chapter in the chapter newsletter. I am ready to support and assist anyone with questions and provide training for new officers.

I am honored and privileged to have been elected and served as a chapter officer. I have enjoyed the trust and confidence placed in me by chapter members, the Michigan Council, and national MOAA very much.

I am a MOAA Lifetime member. I plan to remain an active member of the chapter but believe giving others the opportunity to serve is prudent and appropriate. This change will not be easy for me. I will continue to serve as President until a newly elected chapter President assumes office on January 1, 2025. I will be happy to assist in the transition and as the new President grows accustomed to the role. I also strongly encourage chapter members to also run for office and volunteer for chapter appointed offices and committees.

Roy L. Yaple

CDR, US Navy (Retired)

President, Southeastern Michigan Chapter, MOAA

## Chapter and National Membership/Combined Join Form

To encourage chapter and MOAA membership, the Southeastern Michigan Chapter uses a Combined Chapter Join Form. This form, when completed, includes membership information (status, rank, address, etc.) and then asks the member if they are a member of MOAA. If not, MOAA provides a membership incentive by offering a free one-year MOAA BASIC Membership. At the same time, the new MOAA members also pay their annual chapter dues of \$20 to become a chapter member. Note that the BASIC membership offer is only good for new MOAA members. Members who have had their MOAA membership lapse are not eligible for a second free BASIC membership but may resume their membership in MOAA at the three-year PREMIUM level or LIFETIME level.

If you are a chapter member who is a MOAA PREMIUM Member or LIFETIME member, the form is also used to renew annual chapter dues. You will receive a reminder in December of this year for calendar year 2025 annual chapter dues of \$20 and just need to return your JOIN Form with your dues payment. Note that payment of PREMIUM dues to MOAA is separate.

If you have a new member prospect and have questions, please contact [yapler@comcast.net](mailto:yapler@comcast.net)

The JOIN Form can be found on the chapter web site under the membership menu at [www.semimoaa.org](http://www.semimoaa.org)

# Legislative Corner

More than 17,000 letters were sent to Congress this past summer through MOAA's Legislative Action Center to drive home the urgency of the three Advocacy in Action Summer Campaign issues. It's not too late to weigh in. It takes only a few minutes to log in to the Legislative Action Center and let your representatives hear from you.

## **Increasing Junior Enlisted Pay**

Both the House and Senate versions of the FY 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) include provisions addressing this issue: The House NDAA proposes a 15% pay raise for servicemembers E-1 to E-4 in addition to the 4.5% raise for all personnel, while the Senate version suggests a 1% increase for E-1 to E-3 beyond the general 4.5% raise. These measures are a step in the right direction, but continued advocacy is necessary to ensure our junior servicemembers can support themselves and their families.

## **Restoring the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)**

The House version of the NDAA proposes restoring BAH to 100% for FY 2025, moving closer to our goal of a permanent fix. Unfortunately, the Senate version does not address this issue, highlighting the need for continued advocacy to achieve a comprehensive solution.

## **Supporting Combat-Injured Veterans**

The Major Richard Star Act, which aims to eliminate the unfair offset between DoD retirement pay and VA disability compensation, has seen significant support in Congress. Despite this, neither version of the NDAA includes the bill. It remains critical that lawmakers hear from constituents on this important issue, particularly as we approach the 119th Congress.

**On the state level**, the Michigan Commanders Group web site includes legislative advocacy functionality that enables you to support state military legislation including initiatives for suicide prevention, hyperbaric oxygen treatment, and veteran treatment courts, among others.

See [www.michigancommandersgroup.org](http://www.michigancommandersgroup.org).

You can register for this web site and then you can send emails to your state legislators in support of the military issue(s) of your choice.

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## Upcoming Events

### **Next Meeting Save the Date November 7, 2024**

The next chapter general membership meeting will be held at 10AM on November 7, 2024. We will be hosted again by the Campbell-Ewald organization at their offices adjacent to Ford Field in Detroit. Parking will be validated (free). We will hold chapter elections for one-year terms for:

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Surviving Spouse Liaison

Advance registration is required by October 31. More information will be provided in the next few weeks. Spouses and guests are welcome.

# Opportunities to Serve

## **Awards-ROTC and JROTC Season Starting Up for MOAA Medals.**

Like many other MOAA chapters, our chapter works with local high schools and universities to recognize outstanding student leaders in JROTC and ROTC units. Recognition is normally supported by awarding of the MOAA medal and certificate. JROTC and ROTC programs make a big difference in the lives of these students, their families, and educators within those schools. It is not only a significant achievement, but also gives those of us privileged to participate in these ceremonies to have a glimpse of the leaders of the future "on their way forward". MOAA medal season is normally in the spring in the March-May timeframe. We normally restock our medals from the MOAA store and coordinate presentations during the spring. If you are interested in participating, please contact Roy Yaple. Presentations are a very positive experience and program administration is relatively straight forward.

## **Wreaths Across America, Saturday Dec 14, 2024.**

Over nine thousand veterans are buried at Resurrection Cemetery in Clinton Township. The WAA program at Resurrection Cemetery is the second largest in Michigan. This year's program will again include a formal ceremony followed by the wreath-laying event. WAA's yearlong mission is to Remember the fallen, Honor those that serve, and Teach the next generation the value of freedom. You can sponsor one or more wreaths at this link: <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org> **Members from our Chapter** will meet at the cemetery to attend the ceremony and participate in the wreath laying. [More details will be provided in next month's newsletter.](#)

## **Retired Activities Office (RAO) Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mount Clemens, MI Seeks Volunteers**

The Retired Activities Office (RAO) is looking for at least two volunteers to support the office at Selfridge Air National Guard Base. Volunteers work to answer phone calls and serve clients walking into the office. Shifts are normally one day per week with three hours in the office and one hour travel time per shift. Shift days are Tuesday through Friday and shift hours are 9-12 or 12-3. The work is normally not too physical but does become more physical closer to the Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) date. RAD support involves setting up and tear down of tables and chairs, vacuuming, and bringing food and beverages into the RAD location (Wagner Enlisted Dining Facility at Selfridge) on the base in Mount Clemens. Knowledge in military personnel matters is a plus but not a requirement. Spouses of chapter members can also volunteer. If you are interested, please contact the office at (586) 239-5580

## **Community Support**

The chapter is exploring working in community service opportunities with MISIDE, a metro Detroit area social service support organization. MISIDE was formed following incorporation of Southwest Solutions, parent agency for Piquette Square, a 150 bed veterans housing facility on Brush Street in Detroit. Several years ago, our chapter had been active in supporting this facility which seeks to address the problem of veterans homelessness in metro Detroit. MISIDE will host an afternoon Trunk or Treat event on 24 October in association with Halloween; more information on chapter support of this event is expected in the next few weeks.

# Items of Interest

## How Much do You Value Your Commissary?

FORT GREGG-ADAMS, Va. – One year into his tenure as director and CEO of the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA), John Hall is overseeing a massive effort to improve how the agency delivers the benefit.

Part of that improvement includes promoting the value of the commissary benefit and convincing more eligible patrons to use it, Hall said.

“We all need to do a better job of communicating the value of the commissaries’ 25 percent patron savings, where a family of four can save up to \$4,000 a year if they routinely use their benefit,” he said. “I always say we deliver the highest possible quality of all our products at the lowest possible price.”

Out of 3.5 million eligible households living within 20 miles of a commissary, some 1.7 million routinely shop. “We have to elevate the pace and get more eligible patrons to use their benefit,” Hall said. “We have a number of initiatives to drive that number up, and it’s been rising.”

DeCA’s efforts to improve benefit awareness include a concerted effort led by its marketing directorate and the senior enlisted advisor to the DeCA director, Navy Command Master Chief Mario Rivers, to engage installation leaders and potential shoppers at military and veteran support events.

“Through our outreach program, we want to provide education on savings, convenience, and support, empowering service members, veterans, and their families to make informed grocery shopping decisions,” Rivers said.

DeCA’s engagement strategy is already bearing fruit. For example, commissary transactions are up nearly 7 percent and sales up almost 12 percent for active-duty enlisted service members in grades E1-E3. For officers (O1-O3), transactions are up almost 14 percent and sales nearly 17 percent.

Those numbers are encouraging, but there’s still a patron demographic DeCA has to pursue more effectively, and that’s disabled veterans, Hall said.

“A few years ago, Congress passed a law that enables disabled veterans of any disability rating to shop in our commissaries,” he said. “As I travel around, I find that not many disabled veterans understand they have that privilege. So, we are working with some of our veterans and military support organizations to help us communicate better to a population that has earned this benefit.”

As Hall rolls out the welcome mat for more eligible patrons, he is also overseeing DeCA’s most aggressive campaign to raise revenue since the agency was created in 1991.

Within three months of being selected as DeCA’s director and CEO in June 2023, Hall announced a five-year plan to achieve \$8 billion in annual sales by fiscal year 2028, a significant increase from the \$4.6 billion the agency achieved in fiscal 2023.

“The purpose of reaching \$8 billion is to better serve our customers by lowering our operating costs and driving patron savings up,” Hall said.

In addition to attracting more eligible patrons, DeCA’s pathway toward reaching this sales goal includes its execution of the following initiatives:

- **Increase online sales.** DeCA is working to expand access to Commissary CLICK2GO, adding new shopping slots and marketing the service to new customers.
- **Increase product in-stock rates.** The agency is looking to improve its supply chain process to ensure product is on the shelves when patrons shop.

## commissary continued

Since fiscal 2023, the product in-stock rate has risen from 93.2 percent to 96.9 percent. “Our goal is 98 percent, so we’re not quite there yet, but we have made a lot of improvement, and it’s all about constantly improving our supply chain,” Hall said.

- **Increase access.** To be even more proactive – making commissary products available to patrons **when** and **where** they need them – DeCA has expanded shopping hours and days. The agency is preparing to roll out doorstep delivery and supporting the Army Culinary Outpost Program, where local dining facilities order products from the Commissary CLICK2GO platform to support multiple on-base outposts that contain product kiosks. DeCA is also pushing bulk deliveries to National Guard and Reserve units.
- **Added items/services to sales floor.** The agency is increasing its emphasis on improving the quality of produce and adding prepared foods and more seafood departments.
- **Working with industry.** DeCA is a government agency operating with commercial industry and works closely with its suppliers to deliver patron savings. “We continue having constant conversations with industry about how they can help us deliver a better benefit,” Hall said. “The savings result from the work we do in tandem.”

Increasing patron sales will also generate more surcharge dollars for the capital investment DeCA needs to help fund its maintenance and renovation of existing infrastructure, as well as the construction of new stores.

“We went through 10 years of declining sales from 2012 to 2021,” Hall said. “The years of declining sales greatly limited our ability to make structural repairs on facilities or replace coolers, chillers and freezers that go down frequently because they’re old.”

Beyond addressing aging infrastructure, Hall said more revenue will also reinforce DeCA’s ability to deliver the benefit in places commercial retailers don’t exist.

“A lot of commercial retail stores would not operate in many of the remote locations our troops are based because, from a business standpoint, they would lose money,” Hall said. “That’s why it’s really important for us to generate the dollars we need to deliver the same commissary benefit to all eligible patrons – no matter where they are located.”

Source: Sep 2024 Express Line

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## Selfridge Museum Unveils Restored Warplane

**On Saturday, Sept. 21, the Selfridge Military Air Museum unveiled its restored World War II-era FG-10 Corsair fighter plane. A 10-year project to satisfy a United States Marine Corps request to have the plane in presentable shape, the Corsair features a paint scheme based on ones used by a unit that fought in the Phillipines and was stationed on Grosse Ile.**

**The museum is open 6 April – 27 October 2024. Museum Hours are Saturday & Sunday, 11 am to 5 pm  
Special tours for groups of 10 or more can be arranged. For more information, please call 586-239-5035**

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### A Chapter First!

The Southeastern Michigan Chapter of MOAA achieved a notable first when chapter volunteers worked with event concessionaires for the June 2024 Selfridge Open House and Air Show. Volunteer efforts resulted in earning \$675 for the chapter! This is the first known fundraising for the chapter's history.

## Retiree Appreciation Day After Action Report

Saturday, 21 September saw over 200 current and former servicemembers attend the Retiree Appreciation Day at the Wagner Enlisted Dining Facility at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Mount Clemens. Numerous agencies and organizations participated including chapter members Noreen Diedo, Nancy Sims, and Roy Yaple. Well done to members of the Selfridge Retired Affairs Office and all who made the event so informative and such a success.

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### MEMBERSHIP

Do you know an active, former, or retired officer or surviving spouse of a military officer who could join our chapter? Wonder what to say? Please consider reaching out to those you know and encouraging them to join our chapter.

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#### Resources for You

##### Veterans Crisis Line

**The end of a relationship. Loss of a job. Housing instability. Feeling a loss of purpose. At some point, everyone will face a challenge. Some of those challenges may develop into a crisis. Recognizing a crisis in yourself or those you care about can help you know when to find support.**

**24/7 Confidential, Crisis Support, for Veterans and Their Loved Ones**

**Dial 988 then Press 1**

**Or text 838255**

**If you are applying for VA Healthcare or considering filing a VA disability claim, and are looking for help, please consider attending the weekly 4PM Thursday Zoom coffee or the noon Sunday Zoom podcast on VA Healthcare and Disability Claim topics. Please contact chapter member Henry Storm at [ancientgrape@gmail.com](mailto:ancientgrape@gmail.com) or Roy Yaple at [yapler@comcast.net](mailto:yapler@comcast.net) for links to these weekly Zoom events. (Please note that the VA 1010EZ, the form for applying for VA Healthcare has been revised as of this month (July 2024). If you applied in the past and were denied VA Health Care, another look with the new form may be appropriate to see if you qualify for VA Healthcare).**

#### **VA Healthcare, Pension and Compensation; Weekly Zoom Calls**

If you are in the White Lake or Milford area, please feel free to contact Henry Storm or Roy Yaple ([yapler@comcast.net](mailto:yapler@comcast.net)) about the VA breakfast meetings, Monday and Friday at 7AM at Leo's Coney Island in White Lake and Wednesday at 7AM at the Americus Grill in Milford. Breakfast is pay as you go and a wonderful place to enjoy fellowship with other veterans and ask questions on VA-related topics.

# ID Card office online is open!

## Renewing Your Uniformed Services ID Card

Sponsors may request Uniformed Service ID (USID) Card renewal online, which if approved, are mailed directly to the card recipient; no in person appointments necessary. This page provides details on how to renew your USID card online.

**NEW MILITARY ID ONLINE** – To get a new Military ID, which is required by 2026, **go to the following web site.** Online Uniformed Service Identification Card Renewal Pilot (<https://www.cac.mil/Next-Generation-Uniformed-Services-ID-Card/Renewing-Online/>)

### What's Changing?

**Sponsors can request card renewals online through ID Card Office Online. Cards will be printed by the Government Publishing Office and mailed to the card recipient via U.S. mail.**

## Requirements

- Sponsor may be a Common Access Card (CAC) holder or a DoD Self-service Logon credential holder and requesting a renewal of an active USID card.
- The Sponsor and the card recipient must have email addresses listed in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) that they have authorized DoD to use for contacting them. (Authorization to use email for official contact can be made under "My Profile" on the IDCO website ID Card Office Online).
- The Sponsor's personnel status must extend at least 30 days in the future from the renewal request date.
- The card recipient has a photo saved in DEERS taken in the last 12 years.
- The card recipient's mailing address is present in DEERS and in the continental United States, Hawaii, or Alaska.
- Cannot be a Post Office (PO) Box.