



**Middle Tennessee Chapter**  
**A 2021 5-Star Level of Excellence Award Chapter**  
**Military Officers Association of America**



Web: <https://www.mtcmoaa.org>

August 2023

Editor: Doug Minton

**Our Next Monthly Meeting:**

**22 August 2023; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**  
MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

***“Veterans Benefits and Assistance”***  
**Mr. Jon Foti**

Dale K. Graham Veterans Foundation  
Old Natchez Country Club,  
115 Gardengate Drive, Franklin TN 37069

Jon is the CEO of the Dale K. Graham Veterans Foundation, based out of Norman, OK. The Foundation is a nationally accredited Veterans Service Organization (VSO) and serves veterans and their families with a wide array of life-changing programs. The Foundation’s team of 100 works daily to serve the thousands of veterans a year that ask for our help, and we are proud of the \$90 million in benefits we bring to the local community every year.

Jon began his career as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army in 2012 after graduating and commissioning from the University of Tampa as a Distinguished Military Graduate. Jon was immediately sent to the United States Army’s Flight School in Ft. Rucker, Alabama where he spent the next 18 months learning to fly combat helicopters. His first assignment was the 101st Airborne Division at Ft. Campbell, KY as a flight line Platoon Leader of a Blackhawk Helicopter Air Assault Company. Jon was deployed to Afghanistan in 2015 where he served as a combat aviator in the Blackhawk helicopter and Battle Captain for the Aviation Taskforce’s Command and Control Center. After returning from Afghanistan, Captain Jon Foti was assigned as the Acting Deputy G-3 Aviation Officer for the entire 101st Airborne Division with oversight of \$3 Billion in critical air assets and thousands of hours of aviation missions.

In 2018, after a devastating diagnosis of Type 1 Diabetes, at the age of 28, Jon was medically separated from the Army and transitioned into private aviation management in Colorado while completing his Masters in Aeronautics from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.

In 2019, Jon worked as a Wounded Warrior Fellow for the U.S. House of Representatives conducting congressional inquiries into the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

Jon works tirelessly, along with his team and community partners, to grow the resources and services available to the veterans of this community. These efforts ensure that we as a Nation uphold our promise to the service members of our great military, that we will take care of you when you come home.

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**Chapter Contact Information**

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**Veterans Cemetery Legislation**

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC), which is managed by the Department of the Army, was not a component of the July presentation, but chapter members can still play a role in advocating for expanding this well-respected resting place. MOAA has joined forces with the Military Coalition, which represents over 5.5 million members to champion H.R. 1413, The Expanding America’s National Cemetery Act. Under this legislation, an existing NCA-run cemetery would be transformed to provide full military honors with in-ground interment as ANC reaches capacity and legislation to restrict burial eligibility continues to advance. Please support H.R. 1413 by contacting your legislators or accessing the MOAA Legislative Action Center (<https://moaa.quorum.us>).

**President’s Letter**

August is here and the beginning of a new school semester is just around the corner. The beginning of the school year also signals the start of our annual chapter scholarship drive. Our scholarship letter comes out this month and we hope you will generously support veterans, spouses and dependents who benefit from MOAA National and chapter scholarships funded by your donations of \$25 or more.

Thank you to all the chapter members who attended our July luncheon held at OSDTN. We had an opportunity to hear from Dr. Les’ Melnyk, USA, Retired, who serves as the Chief Historian of the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). Members learned about the impressive array of NCA services available to veterans, spouses, and dependent children at 155 national cemeteries, plus another 121 state-run veteran cemeteries, respectfully maintained by this branch of the Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA). In 2016, the NCA established a pre-need eligibility form to assist interested veterans and their family members in making critical end-of-life plans. The form can be found at <https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/pre-need/index.asp> and takes just minutes to complete. Hard copy versions of the VA Form 40-10007 were available at the meeting for members to take. The presentation also included a discussion of burial and memorial benefits available to veterans regardless of whether they are interred in a national, state-run veteran or private cemetery. Attendees also learned about the NCA’s Veterans Legacy Memorial found at <https://va.gov/remember>, an interactive, online site where 4.8 million veterans are memorialized, and you can celebrate loved ones and others who served the Nation. Finally, the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program was discussed. Under this impressive program which has awarded more than \$1 billion in grants funds since 1978, our Middle TN State Veterans Cemetery just received a grant of up to \$7,167,700 for the expansion and improvement of the site where we hold our annual Memorial Day observance.

For August, we will continue our examination of the various components of the VA by exploring aspects of the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). We will hear from the Chief Executive Officer of the Dale K. Graham Veterans Foundation, who recently relocated to the Nashville, TN area. This nonprofit has helped more than 25,000 living veterans, spanning all 77 counties in Oklahoma, all 50 states and four foreign countries according to its website. We hope you will join us at the Old Natchez Trace Country Club to learn about this nonprofit and your vital VBA resources!

Karon Uzzell-Baggett, Lt Col (ret), USAF  
Chapter President

MIDDLE TENNESSEE CHAPTER  
Military Officers Association of America  
P. O. Box 50252  
Nashville, TN 37205-0252



Happy 233rd Birthday to the United States  
Coast Guard (4 August 1790)

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**Upcoming Programs & Events**

**22 August 2023; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

**"Veterans Benefits and Assistance"**

**Mr. Jon Foti**

Dale K. Graham Veterans Foundation  
Old Natchez Country Club, 115 Gardengate Drive,  
Franklin TN 37069

**7 September 2023; 7:00 AM**

**"MTC Monthly Board Meeting"**

ZOOM

**22 September 2023; 12:00 - 3:00 PM**

**"MTC Food Bag Packing Event"**

OSDTN, 1125 12th Ave South,  
Nashville, TN 37203

**26 September 2023; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

**"TN Valley Healthcare System"**

**Mr. Edward Payton**

York Campus Associate Director  
Old Natchez Country Club, 115 Gardengate Drive,  
Franklin TN 37069

**5 October 2023; 7:00 AM**

**"MTC Monthly Board Meeting"**

NGATN, 4332 Kenilwood Dr, Nashville, TN 37204

**18 October 2023; 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

**"TN Council of MOAA Chapters Meeting"**

Sammy B's Restaurant

705 Cadet Court, Lebanon, TN 37087

**24 October 2023; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

**"MOAA"**

**CAPT W.G. "Bud" Schneeweis, USCG Retired**

MOAA National Board Director

OSDTN Event Space

1125 12th Ave South, Nashville TN 37203

**2 November 2023; 7:00-8:00 AM**

**"MTC Monthly Board Meeting"**

NGATN Offices, 4332 Kenilwood Drive, Nashville

**Legislative Update**

Well, it is the Dog Days of August; and for Congress, it means it is time for the annual August Recess. Our Representatives and Senators escape the heat and humidity of Washington to come home. They are here among us measuring the minds and priorities of constituents and getting some deserved vacation. As we deserve some time off, so do they. Let them get refreshed for the high-paced days of September when the Federal Budget priorities press on them.

2023 is not an election year – which must be less pressing for them. Most of the MOAA Legislative Action items remain constant through the year, but this is a good time for us to get educated beyond the items we hear about all year: Basic Allowance for Housing for those serving now and the Tricare benefits and pharmacy availabilities. What else? A visit to the MOAA Legislative Action Center will bring other items to mind, and there are plenty more. If you receive the Military Officer Magazine, on page 13 of the August issue there is a QR code which your smart phone can scan and take you to the registration page of the MOAA Legislative Action Center. Registering will bring you text about advocacy issues and actions you can take. I did that, and it worked fine. From within the Center, you can communicate your concerns to our representatives and senators in a quick and easy way.

Another thought for August is that you may meet a representative or senator at a public event. Whatever you wish to say, it is effective to tell them that you are a member of MOAA and support MOAA initiatives for the benefit of our uniformed people and families. It is good to keep the MOAA name in their eyes and ears.

Who would know and appreciate what life is like as an elected member of Congress? Everybody wants to convince you of things that matter, and it could all become a blur. If you would begin with something like "I am a local member of MOAA, and what is important is ..." How effective it would be for them to return to Washington in September and remember that lots of MOAA members care about specific issues

As July ends, both the House and the Senate have passed the annual National Defense Appropriation (NDAA) in their individual forms. The House version H.R. 2670 passed on 14 July, and the Senate version S. 2226 passed on 27 July. Come September the struggle begins to reconcile differences and pass the NDAA by 30 September. Will they make it? They have not been on time since FY97.

I hope you met Grey Kidwell at our July MOAA Meeting. He represents Senator Marsha Blackburn's office, and hopefully has her ear. It is wonderful that he visited us for lunch and heard about many of our concerns.

Ted Edwards, USN Retired, MTC Legislative Liaison