



Middle Tennessee Chapter

A 2023 5-Star Level of Excellence Award Chapter

Military Officers Association of America



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

March 2025

Editor: Doug Minton

Next MTC Monthly Meeting:

25 March 2025; 11:30 AM-1:00 PM
MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting
“TN Department of Veterans Services”

MG Tommy Baker, USA Retired
Commissioner
ONCC, 115 Gardengate Drive, Franklin TN 37069

MG (Ret.) Tommy H. Baker has served as the Commissioner since December of 2020. As Commissioner, he manages the agency’s operations, coordinates mission execution, and oversees 131 state employees. General Baker’s mission is to passionately serve Veterans of all eras, their families, and dependents through advocacy, informative outreach and ensuring they have an honorable final resting place. He retired from the TN National Guard, with 41 years of service, as the Deputy Commander to the Adjutant General. He was responsible for overseeing and administering over 13,000 Soldiers and Airmen. He was also responsible for synchronizing all state and inter-agency entities within the military department to include state administrative services, family support programs, the State Guard, Tennessee Emergency Management Agency, and the Volunteer Challenge Academy. General Baker started his career as an enlisted soldier, 19D Cavalry Scout in Troop B, 230th Cavalry Troop, in December 1980. After serving four years, he entered the Tennessee Military Academy and was commissioned as an Armor officer in 1985. He has served as both a Cavalry Troop and Armor Company Commander. Additionally, he has served in various Maintenance and Logistics Officer Command and staff assignments within the TN Army National Guard. He deployed to Kuwait in 2004 as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom III, serving as the Theater Combat Service Support Automation Management Officer, and again in 2008 as the Commander of the 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion at Q-West, Iraq.

General Baker is a 1995 graduate of the University of Tennessee-Martin with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Administration. He received his Master’s in Business Administration and Military Management from Touro University in 2003. He is a 2011 graduate of the Army War College.

General Bakers interest and hobbies are centered on his family, spending time outdoors, and his faith. He is married to Camille who is a consultant for Head Start Programs in the Southeast Region.

Officers

- President**
CAPT Larry Cotton, USN (ret.)
- 1st Vice President**
Col Dale Kiser, USAF (Ret)
- 2nd Vice President** (Vacant)
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COL Doug Minton, USA Retired
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CDR Ted Edwards, USN (ret.)
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Lt Col Karon Uzzell-Baggett, USAF (Ret.)
- Surviving Spouse Liaison**
Mrs. Patricia Bergquist
- Chaplain & Legislative Liaison**
CDR Ted Edwards, USN (ret.)
- Transition Services Coordinator**
Lt Col Arlie Haddix, USAF (Ret).

Chapter Contact Information

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<https://www.mtcmoaa.org>

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TN State Museum Military Branch
The Tennessee State Museum is currently designing a new military branch of the museum which will be opening in 2027. Built in 1925 to honor those Tennesseans who served in WWI, the Military Branch Museum was initially established by the state legislature to house veteran’s collections and souvenirs, beginning with service in the Spanish-American War. The museum has expanded throughout the years to include more modern conflicts. In 2023 the Tennessee War Memorial building was closed for much needed renovations.. One of the Curators of TN Military History has contacted us to solicit feedback on what military members want to see in the new space. Follow the link below for a survey on the project:
https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/veteran_input_survey

President’s Letter

With all the turmoil in Washington and throughout the federal workforce, MOAA found a non-partisan way to offer lessons learned from past reductions while advocating for planning and action that minimize impacts on military-related people programs and veterans and spouses. We forwarded the full letter to everyone electronically and I hope it provides you with a perspective of how MOAA seeks to advocate for all military, spouses, veterans and military families even in unprecedented times.

Last month, I noted that several of our members participated in the TNVET “Veterans Day on the Hill” event locally on January 29th. TNVET is seeking support for House Bill HB0436 and Senate Bill SB0651 that seek positive changes to property tax relief for 100% disabled veterans. However, according to local news reports, the state’s Property Tax Relief fund is running dry with no current plan to rescue it. If you have connections in either house of the legislature please contact your legislator in support of these bills.

MOAA continues its planning for the April Advocacy in Action on Washington’s Capitol Hill and will be represented by Council Presidents or their delegates for each state. I am sure they will do a great job in pushing for each of MOAA’s national priorities. However, we can help by going to the MOAA’s Legislative Action Center at <https://moaa.quorum.us> . It remains the easiest way for you to support veteran-related legislative action at the national level. Many of us already use it and I hope you will, too!

We are making progress in our annual membership campaign and appreciate all who have already paid their 2025 dues. We have held the dues at \$25 for 2025, but we are having to do some belt-tightening to do that and expect a small increase may be needed for next year. We were able to keep the luncheon costs to \$25 for 2025 as well. If you haven’t paid your dues, please bring your payment to our March 25th luncheon, mail them to “MTC MOAA, P.O Box 50252, Nashville, TN 37205” or use the new Dues Portal on MOAA’s site at <https://www.moaa.org/content/chapters-and-councils/online-chapter-dues-payment-administration/> and be sure to scroll down to “Tennessee” for “Middle Tennessee Chapter”. We have had multiple members successfully use MOAA’s Dues Portal..

We had a great speaker at our last luncheon: Lt Gen Jason Evans, USA (ret.), the incoming CEO of OSDTN. At our next luncheon MG Tommy Baker, USA (Ret.), Commissioner of the TN Department of Veterans Services, will give us an update on all his department is doing across the state. We will meet again this month at 11:30 am on Tuesday, March 25th at Old Natchez Country Club. See you then!

Larry Cotton, CAPT, US Navy (ret.)
President

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



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Upcoming Programs & Events

25 March 2025; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

“TN Department of Veterans Services”

MG Tommy Baker, USA Retired

Commissioner

ONCC, 115 Gardengate Drive, Franklin, TN 37069

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3 April 2025; 7-8:00 AM

“MTC Monthly Board Meeting”

NGATN , 4332 Kenilwood Drive, Nashville, TN 37204

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22 April 2025; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

MTC Annual Personal Affairs Meeting

“Conservatorship in Tennessee”

Ms. Amy Bryant

Director, Office of Conservatorship Management

Metro Nashville

OSDTN, 12th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203

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1 May 2025; 7 - 8:00 AM

“MTC Monthly Board Meeting”

NGATN , 4332 Kenilwood Drive, Nashville, TN 37204

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9 May 2025; 5 - 9:00 PM

16th Annual “A Life Worth Celebrating” Banquet

A Soldier’s Child Foundation Fundraiser

MTSU Student Union Building

Murfreesboro, TN

Tickets: <https://asoldierschild.kindful.com/?campaign=1345270>

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27 May 2025; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

“Spouses/Surviving Spouses”

Mrs. Patricia Bergquist

MTC Surviving Spouse Liaison

ONCC, 115 Gardengate Drive, Franklin, TN 37069

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5 June 2025; 7 - 8:00 AM

‘MTC Monthly Board Meeting’

NGATN , 4332 Kenilwood Drive, Nashville, TN 37204

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24 June 2025; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Legislative Update

The first week of April brings the annual Advocacy-in-Action (AiA) activity of MOAA at the national level. There are four key issues that will be addressed with members of Congress when they visit key lawmakers. This is an annual activity that involves the leadership of the MOAA national office and council presidents from around the country.

Here is some brief information on the four primary issues for 2025:

Access to Family Health Care: Military families rely on a complex health care from Military Health Facilities and TRICARE. The mix of availability varies among installations. The policies sometimes lack compliance resulting in nonavailability for appointments and services.

Toxic-Exposed Veterans: MOAA will advocate for legislation cutting the time between a veteran’s exposure to toxic substances and their eligibility for VA health care and services – a gap sometimes decades long. The PACT Act does not cover every case. The intention is to allow such veterans to receive presumptive service connection for related disabilities. Examples: Agent Orange, Airborne Hazards and Burn Pits, and Atomic Radiation.

Military Spouse Hiring: MOAA aims to create a new target group under the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program (WOTC) to incentivize the hiring of military spouses. The spouses face unique challenges in finding and maintaining consistent employment due to frequent relocations, the unpredictable nature of military service, and limited opportunities near remote installations.

Unaccompanied Housing Improvements: MOAA supports a sustained effort to ensure high quality unaccompanied housing. Many UH facilities do not meet DoD standards with conditions that pose health and safety risks. DoD lacks complete funding information regarding UH maintenance and improvements. The history of UH in the services reflects ongoing challenges despite significant efforts in recent years since the FY 2006 NDAA mandated reformed standards.

This is a very opportune time to visit the MOAA Legislative Action Center (<https://moaa.quorum.us/home2/>) to pave the way for the MOAA leader visits. You can send letters to your legislators in order to prepare them for their visits so that they can be informed about the four initiatives before they receive us in April.

While the visits come in the first week of April from MOAA headquarters, board members, and council presidents, I will be attending not from our Middle Tennessee Chapter, but rather from the Chaplains Virtual Chapter – but I will be visiting with the Tennessee delegations. More when I report back in April.

CDR Ted Edwards, USN (ret.)
MTC Legislative Liaison