

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2025!!!



Never stop serving!



Banner & client Eric

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Star Spangled Banner Chapter of MOAA

January 2025 Newsletter

Contents: January 2025 Annual Dinner Meeting, October 2024 paws4vets Event Recap, ROTC news, Maryland Military in the News, Future Event Dates

Annual Dinner Meeting-60th Anniversary Celebration

Pappas Restaurant, Cockeysville

Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at 6:00 pm

The Adjutant General of the Maryland National Guard



MAJOR GENERAL JANEEN L. BIRCKHEAD

Major General Janeen L. Birckhead currently serves as the 31st Adjutant General of the Maryland National Guard. In this capacity, MG Birckhead serves as an advisor to the Governor of Maryland. She is responsible for leading a force of over 6300 Soldiers, Airmen, and federal and state employees responsible for providing a relevant and capable force ready to fight, protect, defend, and prevail against all threats in a multidomain environment.

MG Birckhead most recently served as the Commander of the Maryland Army National Guard and was dual hatted as the Deputy Commandant for Reserve Affairs at the U.S. Army War College. MG Birckhead received her commission from Hampton University graduating with honors and as a distinguished military graduate through the Reserve Officers Training Corps. While at Hampton University, she earned a bachelor's degree in political science. She later earned a master's in management from the University of Maryland University College. MG Birckhead is also a graduate of the U.S. Army War College where she earned a master's in strategic studies.

Prior to the role of Adjutant General, MG Birckhead also served as the Director of Legislative Affairs for the Maryland National Guard. She has commanded at the company, battalion, and brigade level.

In 2004, she mobilized under OEF/OIF, serving as the Tiger Team Leader and Designated Military Officer for the Office of Administrative Review for the Detention of Enemy Combatants. In 2011, MG Birckhead deployed as the Deputy, Current Operations, Security Partnering, and International Security Assistance Force, Kabul, Afghanistan.

MG Birckhead's military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, NATO Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbon, and Afghanistan Campaign Medal.

In her civilian capacity, Ms. Birckhead served as a Senior Advisor for the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Trust Fund Administration. She advised the Bureau Director on a wide range of issues related to the organization's personnel and managerial policies, theory, practices and procedures and organizational culture. She began her civilian career in the U.S. Senate in Washington, DC. Her subsequent civilian career positions included State Equal Employment Opportunity Manager, Special Agent in Charge for the Defense Security Service, and Deputy Chief of Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights at the Office of Personnel Management before joining the Department of the Interior in 2010.

DINNER RESERVATIONS: **PAPPAS RESTAURANT & SPORTS BAR**. 550 Cranbrook Road, Cockeysville, MD 21030. (410) 666-0030

\$50.00 per person, including three courses, coffee, tea, non-alcoholic beverages, gratuities, and tax. Cash bar is available for cocktails, wine, and beer.

Please make your reservation today. The final count is due **20 January**.

SOCIAL TIME: 6:00 PM. DINNER: 6:30 PM. **DRESS: Class A Military Uniform or Business Suit*** (Uniform encouraged!!)**

MENU SELECTIONS (at seating)

Entrée Selections (Select 1 entrée.)

Pappas' Famous Crab Cake, eight ounces.

Orange Roughy, filet broiled in lemon butter sauce.

New York Strip Steak, eight ounces, Angus steak.

Chicken Marsala, chicken breast with sauteed mushrooms in Marsala wine sauce.

All entrees are served with garden salad, baked potato, a fresh vegetable, and dessert.

All members must register online for the meeting at:

<https://www.starspan.org/Chapter Info/Calendar/UpcomingEvents> and click on the Jan 22nd Dinner even if you plan to pay by check. (Our site is now secure, make sure you type in the https:// if you are having trouble)

Reservation Form: FOR MAIL IN ONLY

You MUST mail the reservation form below by **14 Jan**. We need a firm count by **20 January**. MAIL CHECKS TO TREASURER RITA M. KUREK at the address below. (410) 294-4913

For more information: Phone George Stakias, President. 443 707-6947; or email georgestakias@yahoo.com. Please call Rita Kurek if you have doubts about your mailed reservation arriving by 20 January.

RESERVATION FORM (mail in)

NAME _____

Number of Guests _____

DINNER RESERVATION at \$50.00 per person..... \$ _____

DUES FOR 2025 \$30.00..... \$ _____

Donation for Army Officer's Guides (gift to ROTC Cadets) \$ _____

Donation to paws4vets (our annual fundraising cause) \$ _____

TOTAL..... \$ _____

Make Checks payable to: **Star Spangled Banner Chapter of MOAA**

Mail check to: Treasurer, Rita M. Kurek, 1231 Engleberth Rd,
Essex MD 21221

***RECAP-paws4vets Event, Columbus Gardens
26 October 2024***



The paws4vets Fundraising Event held at Columbus Gardens was a HUGE Success! We raised \$20,050.00 for the Foundation!! The Food was Fabulous, the Band was Fantastic and everyone had a blast

taking chances on the wonderful Auctions and Raffles! Client Ezra and his wife Shelley were in attendance with his service dog “Carmen”, pictured above with MD Council President Gary Palmer. We are waiting to hear about naming another service dog!!!!

The winners of our Grand Raffle were:

1st Place (Orioles 13 game package): **Mary Lou Gosser**

2nd Place (4 Club Level Ravens Tickets): **Sarah Haley**

3rd Place (Morton’s Steakhouse Gift Card): **Karla Gilman**

More paws4vets Event Photos:



Past President Mike DeHaemer and his sons Eric, Chris & Marc

Glory DeHaemer, Mike's granddaughter is proud winner of the "Just Here for the Boos" Martini Basket



MD Council President Gary Palmer, [paws4vets](#) Chairperson Rita Kurek and Susquehanna Chapter Past President Cathy Hampton



Thanks to all who attended, sold tables, obtained prizes for our auctions & raffles or made generous donations!!

ROTC News:

ROTC Chair Col Frank Hilsher, USA (Ret)

Col (Ret) Frank Hilsher attended the ***Morgan State University Commissioning Ceremony*** on 11 Dec 2024. MG (Ret) Arthur Dean presided. Three 2Lts were commissioned. Col Hilsher presented the Army Officer Guides and addressed the candidates at the ceremony.



Col Hilsher attended the **Johns Hopkins University Dining Out Ceremony** on 5 Dec 2024 on the Homewood Campus. Nine newly contracted ROTC COHORTS were sworn in and 10 MS IV Seniors received their Army Branch Assignments.



Frank Hilsher reported that there has been a big turnover in the Cadre for all the ROTC units and that scholarships are decreasing. This has led to a decrease in the number of Cadets, especially in the Morgan State University program.

MARYLAND MILITARY IN THE NEWS:

235th CES Awarded MD MOAA “Unit of the Year” for 2023



Maryland Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) presented the 2023 Maryland National Guard Unit of the Year Award to the 235th Civil Engineering Flight, of the 175th Air Wing, MD Air National Guard on 7 Dec 2024. Shown are L-R Brigadier General Dougherty (Wing Commander, Asst AG-Air), Major General Birckhead (MD Adjutant General), Col Devine [Flight Commander], Gary Palmer, Andrew Fallon (MOAA MD MC for the day and Program Manager for the award) and Cathy Hampton. Well-deserved recognition for a hard-charging unit!

DC Air Guard Fighter Squadron to transfer to MDANG

The Adjutant General of the Maryland National Guard recently announced the transfer of the DC Guard Fighter Squadron to the Maryland Air National Guard (MDANG) Base

in Middle River, MD. This will make it possible for the MDANG to keep a Flying Mission when the current A-10 close air support jets are decommissioned in the Fall 2025. Great News for Maryland!! MG Birckhead will speak about this transition at our Annual Meeting. See the official notice below.



December 23, 2024

Airmen of the Maryland Air National Guard,

We are proud to share significant news reinforcing the 175th Wing's vital role in national security. The Secretary of the Air Force has directed the transfer of the 121st Fighter Squadron of the District of Columbia Air National Guard to the Maryland Air National Guard. This decision ensures the continuation of a flying mission, a cornerstone of our legacy for more than 100 years, and our contributions to the defense of our nation.

This move reflects the trust and confidence placed in you—some of the world's most skilled and experienced Airmen. It also highlights the tireless advocacy of Maryland's leadership, including our congressional delegation, to secure this outcome in the interest of national security, Maryland jobs, and the well-being of our families.

In addition to keeping a flying mission in Maryland, we expect this decision to still position us to grow in other critical areas, including the expansion of our cyber mission. As threats evolve, the Maryland Air National Guard will continue to lead the way, building on our proud tradition of excellence in the skies and cyberspace.

Many details about the timeline and the overall force management still need to be worked by the Air Force. We are committed to keeping you informed as updates become available. We also committed to a smooth transition focused on continued mission execution and taking care of Airmen.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to the mission and service. Together, we will honor this opportunity and continue to shape the future of our state and nation. We look forward to seeing all the amazing things you will accomplish in 2025 and the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Janeen L. Birckhead in black ink.

JANEEN L. BIRCKHEAD
Major General, MDARNG
The Adjutant General

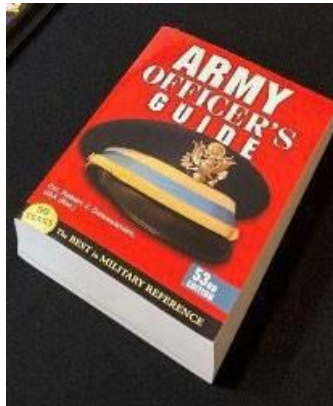
Handwritten signature of Drew E. Dougherty in black ink.

DREW E. DOUGHERTY
Brigadier General, MDANG
Assistant Adjutant General, Air

DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES!

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!

Yearly Dues are \$30.00 and can be paid online on the website at <https://www.starspan.org>, or sent in with your dinner reservation, or mailed to Treasurer, Rita M. Kurek at 1231 Engleberth Rd, Essex, MD 21221. Thank you for paying promptly!



Dues pay for the Army Officer Guides we present to newly commissioned 2nd LTs each year at our three supported ROTCs.

**New Members are always welcome!!
Recruit your colleagues!**

All of our dinner dates for the 2025 year have been set! Speakers for the April, September & November Meetings will be available as we get closer to those events but mark your calendars with the dates now! Our next paws4vets event will be 25 April 2026 to move it back to the spring timeframe. We are also looking to plan a trip in June 2025 in conjunction with the 250th Army Anniversary or staff ride to Gettysburg with the ROTC! More info to follow.

Future Chapter Events for 2025/2026:

<i>DATE</i>	<i>EVENT</i>
22 January 2025 6pm	Annual Dinner Meeting/60th Anniversary Celebration Speaker: MG Janeen L. Birckhead, Adjutant General, MD National Guard Color Guard: Loyola ROTC Venue-Pappas Restaurant & Sports Bar, Cockeysville MD 21030 POC: George Stakias (410) 707-6947
16 April 2025 6pm	Dinner Meeting Speaker: TBD Venue: Pappas Restaurant & Sports Bar, Cockeysville MD 21030 POC: George Stakias (410) 707-6947
10 September 2025 6pm	Dinner Meeting Speaker: TBD Venue: Pappas Restaurant & Sports Bar, Cockeysville, MD 21030 POC: George Stakias (420) 707-6947
12 November 2025 6pm	Annual Dinner Meeting Speaker: TBD Venue: Pappas Restaurant & Sports Bar, Cockeysville, MD 21030 POC: George Stakias (410) 707-6947
25 April 2026 4-8pm	Paws4vets Fundraiser Venue: Columbus Gardens, Perry Hall, MD 21128 Band: Double Play POC: Rita Kurek (410) 294-4913

This letter is published by the Star Spangled Banner Chapter. It is a 501(c)19 nonprofit affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). The Star Spangled Banner Chapter is one of more than 400-plus chapters affiliated with National MOAA. Our chapter is a non-partisan veterans' organization. MOAA and its affiliates are dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired and former members of the uniformed services, their families, and survivors. Our chapter supports national MOAA's federal legislative actions and MD Council's State legislative priorities.



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The Star Spangled Banner Chapter of the **Military Officers Association of America** is the oldest, continuously operating MOAA chapter in Maryland. Founded in 1964, we provide camaraderie with purpose and align with MOAA's national mission: a strong national defense, taking care of our country's veterans, and protecting the benefits of all who have served and currently serve. Our chapter membership is open to commission and warrant officers of all eight services.

**WE'RE CELEBRATING 60 YEARS
AS A MARYLAND MOAA
CHAPTER ON JANUARY 22ND,
2025! DON'T MISS IT!**