



**FALCONS LANDING CHAPTER  
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (MOAA)**



**The Falcon Flyer**

**Falcons Landing MOAA  
Chapter Newsletter  
December 2020**



## CHAPTER PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, December 2020

I would like to thank all of you for the outstanding support that you provided our Chapter as we journeyed together this challenging and uncertain year. Following and maintaining the COVID-19 protocols and restrictions, we were able to safely perform our mission of *actively supporting those who are serving, those who have served, and those who have survived.*

John Pustay recently indicated that: *As the founder of the chapter, it gives me a great sense of pride to extend to the officers, directors, and members my compliments on carrying out our three basic missions with great success. My original intent was to have the chapter strive to become a model chapter for MOAA National - mission accomplished.*

2020 was truly an exceptional banner year. We were awarded again the National MOAA 5 Star Levels of Excellence Award, as well as the Communications award for Newsletter and Website categories. Thanks to your financial support (the best ever), we were able to fully fund all of our programs and increase the support provided Loudoun County veterans and families in need. Unfortunately, this year's funding level is approximately 50% below last year's donations. I will send out a letter at the beginning of January updating you on our financial status.



I am pleased to announce that most of the Chapter Officers and Directors have agreed to extend their term of office through 2021, pending Chapter membership approval. Phil Walsh will be heading a recruiting/nominating committee to seek interested members to join the board, especially in the Legislative Affairs area.

I wish all of you a Happy New Year, and I look forward to serving you and our community in 2021. *Never Stop Serving!*

**Bob Manning, Chapter President**

### Mission Statement

*Our Chapter provides programs which support: those who are serving; those who have served; and those who have survived, while placing special focus on community support.*

### Support of MOAA National

MOAA is a nonprofit veterans' association 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 and their families and survivors. The Falcons Landing Chapter is one of more than 400-plus local organizations affiliated with National MOAA. We support the national organization through support of legislative priorities and are active in our community supporting two JROTC programs, helping recovering and needy veterans, and providing speakers to community service organizations.

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## Chapter and Legislative Information

### Chapter Membership Information

MOAA membership is open to those who hold, or have ever held, a warrant or commission in any component of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, NOAA, and their surviving spouses. If you know a prospective member, please contact Lowell Jones (703-444-9530) to receive information on the benefits of chapter membership. This is an opportune time to convert to a MOAA Life Membership, because MOAA is still giving a 10% discount on a membership conversion. A MOAA life Membership indicates your strong support for MOAA's goals. For more information, please call a MOAA representative at (800) 234-6622.

How to navigate through our new Chapter website. The website address is [falconsmoaa.org](http://falconsmoaa.org). Please note that a password is required to open the Documents Section/Tab and is for use by members only. Members may obtain the password from Lowell Jones at [lowsanj@verizon.net](mailto:lowsanj@verizon.net).

### Legislative Affairs Report Information

Periodically, MOAA will lobby Congress to take legislative action to preserve our retiree benefits. The probability of favorable legislative action is in direct proportion to the number of voters who register support. MOAA sometimes includes postcards and letters in its magazine (Military Officer) for us to sign and mail to our representatives (identified for us). The MOAA Newsletter may also include an online access to act. It is imperative that we do so. To access the MOAA Newsletter for source data, copy this web address <http://www.moaa.org> and paste to your browser's search bar. After on site, click on "MOAA - Home/Official Site," go to "Publications & Media/Email Newsletter," and provide your email address. This will help you register to receive the current newsletters. You can then click on the desired subject in the newsletters and get more details. If you are not registered with MOAA National for this, call the front desk (800) 234-6622, and you'll be guided on how to receive the newsletter on a desired schedule. Have your MOAA National membership number available. If you don't have email or have questions on obtaining this information, contact Clair Wylie, Legislative Liaison, at (703) 216-7549.

Our Chapter publishes a monthly Legislative Update for all members and works with MOAA to recommend to members that they support MOAA legislative initiatives by contacting their legislators. MOAA staff and Chapter members meet with members of Congress annually in a visit called "Storming the Hill," normally in April. You may review important MOAA legislative issues and activities on the MOAA website by visiting the Take Action section at <http://takeaction.moaa.org>. National MOAA and the Falcons Landing Chapter, MOAA, are politically nonpartisan but seek to remain informed on political matters of concern to veterans at both the state and local levels.

### MOAA Legislative Priorities

Provide force structure and funding to sustain and strengthen the all-volunteer force. Provide hard-gained benefits for active, guard/reserve, and retired community.

**Objectives:** Ensure the maintenance of end strength, along with pay increases, tied to employment cost index; maintain current TRICARE benefits and medical support structure; maintain basic housing allowances and decent housing availability; maintain privileges associated with commissary and exchange benefits; maintain veterans quality health care and backlog of disability claims.

## The Gathering, October 15, 2020

### Desert One

By Jim Mullen (slightly edited)

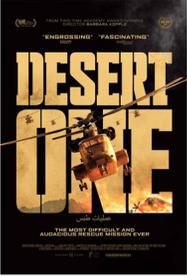
As residents of Falcons Landing, we have an opportunity to discuss world events with fellow residents who often have a unique insight into those events-- whether it might be operations in WWII, Korea, Vietnam, or elsewhere. The MOAA Gathering presentation provides a monthly meeting with that kind of insight. The recent presentation, "Desert One" by John Pustay (LTG ret., USAF) was an exceptional example of that opportunity. In 1969, John became the Assistant to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense, General David Jones. As the Deputy for the Chairman, John was a member of the

Deputies Group of the National Security Council. As such, he was involved in day-to-day operations, including meetings with the President, operations planning, and other key operations of the Deputies Group. Desert One was set in the background of the events leading up to the Iranian "student" takeover of the U.S. Embassy in November 1979, when the entire U.S. delegation was taken hostage. That action was related directly to the overthrow of the Shah of Iran in January 1979, and the fact that the United States policy of the Carter Administration at that time had provided strong support for the Shah. The most prominent opposition was developed from the Iranian Muslim Cleric Ayatollah Khomeini, who had returned from exile as "The Supreme Leader" in February of 1979. Following the hostage taking, the U.S. attempted to resolve the hostage taking by discussions with the Khomeini regime. However, that was to no avail. President Carter decided that there could not be a negotiated end to the hostage situation and that the United States would have to take a different course of action—liberation of the hostages! The National Security Council included the principals and their deputies for the office of President, State Department, Treasury, the CIA, the Advisor on National Security, and the Department of Defense. The focal point for the liberation plan was the Principals Committee which included the deputies who worked on the issue to develop a plan of action. During this planning, John Pustay was the Principal Deputy for the Joint Chiefs of Staff involved in the daily meetings with administration Principals, deputies, and with President Carter. A plan was developed to rescue the hostages from the U.S. Embassy and to get them out of Iran. It was a risky option and one that would require utmost secrecy to keep the plans from the Iranians and also from the Soviets, who had the ability to look for evidence of such plans from all intelligence sources including space spy satellites. As John recounted to the Gathering, there was also the threat of serial execution of hostages and the possibility of ambush at the embassy. There was a limitation on intelligence resources, including overreliance on technology, versus HUMINT, a lack of linguists, and a limit on some of the normal actions like an operational dress rehearsal. The OP plan, Eagle Claw, as developed, called for the use of the highly skilled and trained Delta Force led by Col. Charles Beckwith. (Continued)



# The Gathering in two parts on Ch.1970!

**Presented by LTG John Pustay,  
U.S. Air Force [Ret]**  
*John Pustay was at President Carter's side for the  
Planning, Operation, and the After Action Reviews.*



**PART ONE:** *Desert One the movie*— **WED, OCT. 14 7:00 P.M.**  
**PART TWO:** *John Pustay will be live on Ch. 1970 to discuss issues,  
some you probably never heard* — **THUR, OCT 15 7:00 P.M.**  
Q&A for Part Two— please send questions to John at [j.pustay@verizon.net](mailto:j.pustay@verizon.net), or to  
Lowell Jones at [lowsanj@verizon.net](mailto:lowsanj@verizon.net), or Bill Hilsman text 571-524-5740

## The Gathering, October 15, 2020

### Desert One (Continued)

By Jim Mullen (slightly edited)

This was coupled with transportation by military transport including RH53D Sea Stallion helicopters to get the Delta Force to the embassy area, Air Force transport C-130s to move over larger distances in Iran and to provide support to the Delta Force, and C-141s to move to locations outside the danger area of Iran, carrying the hostages. The RH-53D helicopter was selected because it had range, but it was not ideal for troop transport and had some mechanical reliability issues. The size of the force and the number of helicopters available was chosen based on security and operational need. The number of helicopters--later the critical spoke in the wheel-- was a final choice of the President—again with security in mind—to be, as the President told directly to John, “the long pole in the tent--the number needed for the exact number to succeed.” President Carter directed that question to John, who replied that nine helicopters were needed. However, Carter approved eight, again for security and the minimum resource for success. The initial location of Delta Force in Iran was Desert One--a desert location believed to be remote, without traffic, and secure from general observation. Six C-130s were positioned at that location. On April 24, 1980, the mission launched with eight helicopters from the Carrier Nimitz to the Desert One location. However, problems began early, with one helicopter forced to abort with technical problems before reaching Iran. On approach to Desert One a second helicopter had to be abandoned in the desert because of mechanical problems. The flight was also hampered by a dust storm obscuring vision. Now the task force size was critical and the minimum for success. At Desert One a third helicopter became faulty, and it was determined by the command group at Desert One that the mission could not proceed. Col. Beckwith contacted the United States and the President to request the need to “abort.” That was not the worst of the situation. The route through the desert was not as isolated as supposed. A bus full of Iranians and then a second vehicle came through the area on a rural road. They were stopped by the U.S. forces and held. Then as the U.S. contingent planned to leave the area, and as one helicopter was in the process of being refueled from a bladder on a C130, dust again obscured pilot vision, and the helicopter crashed into the refueling C130, which had fuel bladders and burst into flames. In the crash, the raiding party lost eight lives, including the crew of the helicopter and some of the crew of the C130. Fortunately, most of the other forces aboard the C130 escaped injury. The remaining forces were able to withdraw from Iran without further incident, but the cover was gone and in short order the situation was known to the world. John Pustay had the unenviable job of having to provide briefings to Congress and the press and spent a number of unpleasant days in working with both congressmen and the press. John provided us an insight on some of his experiences—including one case in which it is likely that the press understanding of classified information details recovered by the Iranians from the helicopter wreckage could have led to severe international incidents if the information became public. It would have, except for John’s ability to keep the compromised information quiet by providing some clarification and ameliorating notes. The Carter administration had no further opportunity to work with the Iranians, and the hostages were held at the embassy until the U.S. election in 1980, which was won by Ronald Reagan. In a final snub, the Iranians did not release the flight holding the U.S. hostages on a runway in Iran until Reagan had been sworn into office. Again, thanks to John Pustay, first for his service, and second for his highly informative presentation. John’s closing remarks are worth remembering: “Not to have tried a responsible, high risk attempt at rescue would have been unworthy of a great nation.” 5

## MOAA Chapter Board Meeting, October 16, 2020

**This meeting was a virtual presentation to Board members by Chapter President Bob Manning. Copies of the briefing charts are available by contacting Lowell Jones at (703) 444-9530. Questions or comments can be accommodated by contacting Bob Manning at (703) 543-9158.**

## Veterans Day Celebration, November 11, 2020

By Bob Manning (slightly edited)

**On behalf of the Falcons Landing Chapter of the Military Officers Association in America (MOAA), Bob Manning, President, welcomed the Falcons Landing Community on November 11 to this year's Veterans Day Celebration. Due to the COVID-19 protocols and restrictions, the program was televised on channel 970 for the benefit of the Independent Living, Johnson Center, and West Falls residents.**

**Bob Manning led the viewers in the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of the National Anthem. Chaplain Jeff Payne followed with the Invocation.**

**Phil Walsh was the first speaker and summarized the History of Veterans Day, formerly known as Armistice Day, and the Presidential Proclamation on National Veterans and Military Families Month, 2020. Bob Manning continued the program by showing an emotional and yet uplifting video entitled "Today's Veteran". Following tradition, he then asked the veterans at home to stand and be recognized as their service song (Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard) was played. Of special note this year, the temporary service song of the newly established Space Force was played. The highlight of this year's program was the Tribute to our WWII Veterans residing at Falcons Landing. The veterans honored included Merle Allen, Henry Bodson, Lyle Bowman, Lewis Clement, Steacy Hicks, Jack McQuillen, Fred Moore, Dale Reed, John (Jack) Scharfen, and Herb Stern.**

**Max Johnson provided a heartfelt Benediction followed by a moment of silence during the playing of Taps.**

**The Veterans Day program concluded with a wonderfully produced music video of *God Bless the USA* performed by Lee Greenwood, Home Free, and The US Air Force Singing Sergeants.**



Honored at the Veteran's Day program were WWII veterans, shown from left to right: Steacy Hicks, Fred Moore, Lyle Bowman, Herb Stern, Dale Reed, and Jack McQuillen. Absent were Lewis Clement and Henry Bodson.

## MOAA Chapter Annual Meeting, November 16, 2020

By Bob Manning

**Bob Manning, President of the award-winning Falcons Landing Chapter of MOAA, welcomed its members to the 2020 Annual Chapter Meeting via the Falcons Landing Network, Channel 970, on November 16, 2020. After the opening introduction and the traditional recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, he summarized the agenda for the Annual Meeting.**

**Highlights of the meeting included the following:**

***MOAA 2020 Priorities Review video (recently released).***

**State of the Chapter presented by the Chapter President.**

**187 Chapter Members (123 premium, 64 Surviving Spouses).**

**\$23,870 Budget Expenditure: 50% Veterans Assistance; 25% JROTC Scholarship; 16% Adopt-A-Platoon; 9% Administrative.**

**Current status of donations for 2020 well below 2019 contributions (\$7,555 versus \$16,700).**

**Chapter received 5 Star Level of Excellence Award and Communications Award.**

**Summary of the various programs that are actively supported by our mission, to include:**

**JROTC Scholarships and Awards, Speakers Bureau, Adopt-a-Platoon, Memorial and Veterans Day, the Gathering, Personal Affairs, Auxiliary Affairs, the Loudoun Veterans and Family Support (LVFS) partnership, and the Loudoun County Veterans Engagement Board.**

- **LVFS status by Howard Schue • Veteran Assistance: 26 year old Army veteran having seizures (PTSD) - rent, utilities. • 75 year old disabled Navy Vietnam veteran - cell and electric bill. • 73 year old double amputee Vietnam veteran—mortgage.**

**Summary of activities of the Virginia Council of Chapters (VCOC).**

- **2020 SCHEDULE FOR VCOC • Thursday, October 8: fourth quarter meeting, 10:00 AM via ZOOM. • Legislative meeting prior to regular Board meeting. • Membership and Legislative Chairs are still vacant. • Cdr. Linc Smith, VCOC 1st VP, demonstrated the new website. • Next quarterly meeting, January, 2020 will be ZOOM format.**

**Legislative update at the National, State, and Local level presented by Claire Wylie, Director of Legislative Affairs.**

**Chapter Website Update.**

**The meeting concluded with Phil Walsh, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, introducing the slate of officers and board members for 2021. He explained the voting process and timeframe that will be used. Due to COVID-19 protocols, voting will be conducted electronically or by paper ballot for members who do not have email.**

**The Gathering, November 19, 2020**  
**The Battery-Electric Technology Revolutions**  
By Jim Mullen (slightly edited)

For the November Gathering, Rod Wright presented an interesting discussion featuring electric vehicles and emerging battery technology among the preeminent changes occurring in the 21st century. My question to the reader: “Are you willing to take a test drive in a driverless car down Route 7? During rush hour?” Rod opened his presentation with a discussion on changes in our lives pointing out earlier changes in the early 20th century as we went from horse-drawn to horseless carriages. At first, society indicated that nothing could replace our trusty horse, but within a relatively short time, it was difficult to find a horse-drawn carriage on city streets. And so it has gone from radio to television to computers and the Internet, and from mail to email to Zoom. We are now witnessing such similar rapid changes as transportation evolves from internal combustion engines (ICE) to electric vehicles (EV). But we are facing Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt (FUD) as factors that oppose and slow the revolutionary change from ICE vehicles to EVs? These FUD factors include:

- The cost of EVs and their batteries
- The fear of being stranded away from a power source
- Concerns about the limited range of driving
- Effects on pollution
- The total cost of ownership for driving for EVs.

Rod provided detailed information on new developments in battery technology and increased mileage range for electric cars; the fact that EVs have much lower maintenance costs because of very few moving parts; the rapid increase in availability of charging power sources (including at or near Falcons Landing); extended life-cycles for electric cars; and their dramatically improved safety. There is a curve for adoption of new technologies (the S curve) and it would appear clear from Rod’s presentation that the world is well along on the S curve for EVs. Or as Rod would tell you: “the time has come to stop buying internal combustion cars and to make your next car an electric vehicle—certainly considering cost but there are a number of other factors to consider including safety and the quality of the environment for your family”.

So that brings us to the driverless vehicle. This was a total look at technology, not just the electric vehicle. We are in the world of rapid developments in artificial intelligence (AI), in computing, and in communications, which together allow a more universal understanding and ability to present a digital picture of our environment. If you wonder about that, consider that your new EV of today has the ability to scan for other vehicles, to brake for traffic and emergencies, and sense the road ahead with radar, multiple cameras and other sensors. Integrate all of these with advanced AI software, and we are able to make safer lane changes to find our way from home to our destination and back using built-in digital maps. A further conclusion was that the combination of EVs and driverless vehicles may make it possible for networks of driverless low-cost “Robotaxis” that allow us to travel without needing to even own a car. If that does not convince us, then consider that businesses are considering the savings from EV’s low cost of operations and from driverless commercial vehicles. Meanwhile, the industry is moving forward day-by-day with continuous improvements in EVs and the factories that make them. These changes impact costs, reliability, safety, and changes in the road environment. It appears that these changes are accelerating the change to driverless EVs and may make self-driving inevitable. So you may not yet be ready to drive the highway in a driverless car yet, but somehow you sense that day is coming. We would be well-served to get periodic updates from Rod Wright, and we thank him for a stimulating discussion.



Rodney Wright and Bill Hilsman

**Falcons Landing Chapter Assists Veterans in Need Through Partnership**  
**December 29, 2020**

For more than three years, the Falcons Landing Chapter has been working with a local church to provide support to veterans in need. Called Loudoun Veterans and Family Support (LVFS), this partnership between the chapter and Community Lutheran Church in Sterling, Va., provides financial assistance to veterans and their families for rent, medical bills, home repairs, transportation, and other needs.

When LVFS first started, initial funds came from generous members of the chapter and church and were used to help a handful of veterans identified by Loudoun County Family Services who were facing problems not necessarily covered by formal veterans assistance programs.

However, the needs of veterans in the county began to increase in volume and complexity, so the organization looked for additional sources of funds.

In 2017, the Falcons Landing Chapter received a Community Outreach Grant from The MOAA Foundation to support LVFS.

To date, the chapter has provided LVFS with over \$44,000 (\$37,800 from donations and \$6,200 in grants). In 2019, LVFS assisted more than 30 veterans with over \$17,000.

“What started as a small activity to help veterans has since become a significant contributor to the needs of veterans in Loudoun County,” said Col. Howard Schue, USAF (Ret), Chapter LVFS coordinator.

LVFS receives support from other veterans’ organizations such as the VFW and American Legion.

“This collaboration of veteran support organizations is skillfully orchestrated by the veterans services coordinator in the Loudoun County Family Services Office in Leesburg,” said Schue.

He shared the thank-you the organization received from a medically retired Army staff sergeant who LVFS helped when she was six months pregnant and in need of a winter coat. LVFS not only worked with a local maternity shop to get the veteran a coat but also used additional funds to purchase clothing to get the veteran and her newborn through the winter months.

The thank-you read: “I am a wounded warrior and served with the Army for over 10 years. I recently moved to Virginia due to personal hardships and did not have the resources to purchase a coat. I was fortunate to be introduced to [LVFS staff] by [the case officer] when I was in a time of need, and the kindness I have been showed has been both humbling and an honor to receive.”

For the Falcons Landing Chapter and its LVFS partnership, “this was validation of our work with the Loudoun County, Va., veterans population,” Schue said.



From left, Don Poorman, from Community Lutheran Church; Col. Howard Schue, USAF (Ret), Chapter LVFS coordinator; and Col. Robert Manning, USA (Ret), Falcons Landing Chapter President, work together through LVFS to assist veterans and their families in need in the county.

## Important Chapter Events, Officers & Directors, Member Status

### **General Membership Meets Quarterly.**

**The Gathering - special briefings (sponsored by the MOAA Chapter) open to all Chapter members and Falcons Landing residents. Nominally, one event per month in the Falcons Landing Ballroom.**

**Board of Directors (BOD) meets monthly, as required.**

**Chapter Executive Committee (President, 1st VP; 2nd VP, Secretary, Treasurer) meets as required; acts on behalf of Board on immediate issues.**

**Committees meet at discretion of Committee Chairs.**

**2021 Meeting Schedule: Locations will vary among Zoom, TV Channel 970, or Ballroom  
BOD nominally 10:00 A.M. on third Thursday of scheduled month  
Quarterly Membership Meetings at 2:30 or 7:30 PM**

**January 21 - 2021 - Board Meeting**

**February 18 - Board Meeting**

**March 18 - Quarterly Chapter Meeting**

**April 15 - Board Meeting**

**May 20 - Board Meeting**

**May 31 - Memorial Day**

**June 17 - Quarterly Chapter Meeting**

**July - No Board Meeting**

**August 19 - Board Meeting**

**September 16 - Board Meeting**

**October 21 - Quarterly Chapter Meeting**

**November 11 - Veterans Day**

**November 23 - Annual Chapter Meeting**

**December - No Meeting**

### 2021 Officers and Directors

**President/Director/Programs: Bob Manning, Col, USA, Ret. (703) 543-9158**

**First Vice President: Phil Walsh, Col, USMC, Ret. (703) 978-4328**

**2nd Vice President/Director/Legislative Affairs: To be determined**

**Secretary: Mrs. Genevieve Pustay, (703) 444-5284**

**Treasurer: Peter Scott, Col, USA, Ret. (703) 715-7396**

**Director Membership: Lowell Jones, Col, USAF, Ret. (703) 444-9530**

**Director/Surviving Spouse/Auxiliary Affairs: Mrs. Vicki Estey, (512) 749-2810**

**Director/Personal Affairs: Mrs. Kathy Trossbach, (703) 430-1342**

**Director/Public Affairs: Don McCarthy, Capt, USN, Ret. (703) 430-5608**

**Director/LVFS: Howard Schue, Col, USAF, Ret. (703) 433-2220**

**Director/The Gathering Coordinator: Bill Hilsman, Lt Gen, USA, Ret. (703) 433-1284**

**Director/JROTC/Scholarships: Stanley King, Col, USA, Ret. (703) 281-0825**

**Director/Speakers Bureau: Max Johnson, Col, USA, Ret. (703) 508-3788**

**Member at Large: Bill Suter, Maj Gen, USA, Ret. (703) 909-9810**

**Founder, Past President: John Pustay, Lt Gen, USAF, Ret. (703) 444-5284**

**Past President: Glenn Carus, Col, USAF, Ret. (703) 444-3269**

**Past President: Leo Childs, Maj Gen, USA, Ret. (703) 430-2884**

**Past President: Howard Schue, Col, USAF, Ret. (703) 433-2220**

**Past President: James Mullen, Lt Col, USA, Ret. (703) 444-4741**

### Members Deceased (4th Quarter, 2020)

**Elmer Brooks (11/15/2020)**

**Jane Estep (11/15/2020)**

**Joy Arant (11/19/2020)**

### Welcome New Members (4th Quarter, 2020)