

**History**  
**Southwest Oklahoma Chapter**  
**of the Military Officers Association of America**

**The following is a history of the founding and major accomplishments of the Southwest Oklahoma Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America. It was constructed from Chapter minutes and member recollections. Any errors or omissions are unintentional.**

**The Southwest Oklahoma Chapter of The Retired Officers Association was initiated in late 2000 led by a core group, spear headed by COL John J. Jordan, COL (Retired) John Anderson, COL (Retired) Bill Furtado, COL (Retired) Hardy Stone, COL (Retired) James Cunningham and others that would eventually become the first Chapter Officers and Directors. The initial group met at COL Jordan's home to discuss the need for a local Chapter and initiated start-up activities such as mailing post cards to local military retirees to gauge interest and support. Dan Mullins provided \$500 to support the initial startup costs of the Chapter. After a national membership vote in September 2002, the national association changed its name from *The Retired Officers Association (TROA)* to the *Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)*, effective January 1, 2003. The general membership of our local chapter amended its bylaws to reflect at the 31 July 2003 general membership meeting of the Chapter, 31 July 2003.**

**The first Chapter Board of Directors and Officers were:**

<b>COL Frank Hawthorne, U.S. Army (Retired)</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Colonel Stephen Glick, U.S. Army (Retired)</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</b>
<b>Lieutenant Colonel Charles Adair, U.S.M.C. (Retired)</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President</b>
<b>Major Charles Hutchinson, U.S. Army (Retired)</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Colonel John Jordan, U.S. Army</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Colonel William Furtado, U.S. Army (Retired)</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Colonel William Hamilton, U.S. Army (Retired)</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Lieutenant Colonel John Martin, U.S. Army (Retired)</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Colonel Hardy Stone, U.S. Army (Retired)</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Colonel John Anderson, U.S. Army (Retired)</b>	<b>Director</b>

**After several months of planning and conducting a membership drive in early 2001, the Chapter had its first meeting 23 March 2001 at the Patriot Club. At that meeting the Chapter officers were elected.**

**On 17 May 2001 Lieutenant General Ellis D. Parker, (Retired) Vice Chairman of the “*The Retired Officers Association*” Board presented the Chapters founding Charter to Col Frank Hawthorne, (Retired), the Chapters president at our Chapter meeting in which 67 members attended. The Chapter first fund raising occurred in the fall of 2001 to support general Chapter activities and local scholarships, with over \$2200 collected.**

**Chapter membership quickly grew to 196 by the end of May 2001 and 220 by the end of December 2001. The Chapter grew to 256 by the**

end of 2002. This achievement gave us the honor of being the largest Chapter in the state which was maintained for the next six years and the following years we were either first or second largest chapter.

### Chapter Presidents

2001: Frank Hawthorne COL (RET), USA (Founding Member)  
2002: Steve Glick, COL (RET), USA (Founding Member)  
2003-2005: Toney Stricklin, MG (RET), USA  
2006-2008: Charles Hutchinson, MAJ (RET), USA (Founding Member)  
2009-2011: Jim Cerrone, BG (RET), USA  
2012-2014: Ted Janosko, COL (RET), USA  
2015-2018: Ed Peterson, LTC (RET), USAF  
2019-2022: Dennis Clippinger, LTC (RET), USAR  
2023-Current: Don DuRant, COL (RET), USAR

Significant actions taken by the Chapter include our scholarships, legislative, and local activities.

### Scholarships

In our first year, the Chapter approved awarding three \$250 scholarships. In 2002, through COL (R) Bill Furtado, our scholarship chair efforts, we were able to award three \$1000 scholarships, through a \$500 matching funds provided by Dan Mullins Nissan. The Chapter has continued to provide local scholarship and through the years have received donations from our membership, Billingsley Ford, Dan Mullins Nissan, Young Eye Institute, Lawson Autoplex, Milo

**Gordon, Senior leaders at the Fires Center of Excellence Capabilities Development and Integration Directorate, and many others.**

**In 2007 an *“Anonymous donation honoring killed, wounded & disabled American service members”* provided significant funding to initiate four Chapter - MOAA Designated Scholarship Endowment. This required raising \$25,000 for each endowment for a total of \$100,000. MOAA National agreed to support awarding scholarships to students from southwest Oklahoma as first priority, Oklahoma second priority and the rest of the Untired States. These endowed scholarships are awarded and managed annually at MOAA national level. Other significant donors to the endowed scholarships were COL (R) Bill Furtado, CMDR (R) Frank Furtado, and Dr. Joe Young. In 2014, the Chapter was recognized by MOAA national by being named as an Eagle Society donor for contributions greater than \$100,000.**

### **Local Activities and Accomplishments**

**The Chapter holds luncheon meetings in the second Wednesday of January, March, May, and September at various locations. The annual meeting is a dinner meeting held in November at the Patriot Club, Fort Sill, OK. Over the years we have had a variety of distinguished guest speakers. These include the Oklahoma Secretary of Veteran Affairs, Oklahoma Speaker of the House, Commanding General of the Fires Center of Excellence, Commandant of the Field Artillery School, Commandant of the Air Defense School, Director of the Veterans Affairs in Muskogee, Fort Sill Garrison Commander, Commander of Reynolds Army Hospital, National President of MOAA, Director Fort Sill Museum, Mayor of Lawton, Lawton Chief of Police, and many other distinguished speakers.**

**Chapter supports the three JROTC programs at Eisenhower High School, Lawton High School, MacArthur High School, and Altus High School by providing the outstanding senior cadet an achievement medal. Chapter also supports the ROTC program at Cameron University by providing achievement medals and “Gold Bars” for newly commissioned second lieutenants.**

**The Chapter has supported organizations with monetary donations, sundry drives for the Veterans Center, and thousands of volunteer hours. These organizations include the Oklahoma Veterans Center, Armed Services YMCA, Military Welcome Center, Comanche County Veterans Center, AUSA Retiree program, Fort Sill Children’s Fishing Program and others.**

**In 2003, the Chapter received from the IRS a certification as a tax exempt organization. We have also received our Articles of Incorporation from the State of Oklahoma. The Chapter initiated discussions with State legislators to investigate the likelihood of getting Armed Forces retired pay 100% exempt from state taxes. At that time, the state had budget issues and the recommendation was to wait. The Chapter Board participated in Lawton, OK Veterans Center Dedication on 5 September 2003. Our Chapter provided the American flag that was raised on opening day which flew for 24 hours over the US Capital. It was then taken down and put in a flag display case which is displayed in the Veterans Center.**

**In 2004 the Chapter co-sponsored a Gubernatorial Candidates Forum with the Lawton Chamber of Commerce, Legislative Affairs Committee at Cameron University. In the late fall of 2004, State Representative Ann Coody and Senator Randy Bass agreed to sponsor a bill (HB 1476) to exempt retirement in the 2005 session. During the legislative process, the exemption went to 50%.**

**“For taxable years beginning after December 31, 2005, retirement benefits received by an individual from any component of the Armed Forces of the United States in an amount not to exceed the greater of fifty percent (50%) of such benefits or Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) shall be exempt from taxable income but in no case less than the amount of the exemption provided by paragraph 15 of this subsection”**

**In 2005 the Chapter raised funds for a Southwest Oklahoma MOAA monument for the Fort Sill National Cemetery. The dedication took place at the Veterans Day ceremony, 10 November 2005. Our monument joined others from other veteran and civic organizations. Our monument is made of granite to show our deep and abiding respect and love for those who have answered the call of their country and served to keep America free and to show our great support for the Fort Sill National Cemetery. The Chapter also supported the War Memorial Monument at Elmer Thomas Park, the Aquarium at the State Veterans Center on Flower Mound, and numerous other community projects such as Stand Down where homeless Veterans are identified and assisted.**

**In 2006 the HB 1476 was amended to exempt seventy-five percent (75%), of retirement pay, which is the current law. In 2007, an unsuccessful attempt to change to 100 percent (100%) was made.**

**Our Chapter has an active Auxiliary. In 2012, the Auxiliary and the Armed Services YMCA partnered to obtain approval and funding for the establishment of a Military Welcome Center to serve our military members and their families as they arrive and depart the Lawton-Fort Sill Airport. The Military Welcome Center typically serves 650-700 persons each month. The MWC is manned by volunteers.**

**In 2013, the Chapter began publishing a bi-monthly newsletter to better inform its members of ongoing activities. That newsletter continues and has evolved to better meet the Chapter's needs.**

**In 2014, the Chapter expanded its focus for the Area Scholarship Program by expanding the sending of applications to 20 area high schools. It also created a Century Club to recognize those donors contributing \$100 or more and the Platinum Club to recognize those donors contributing \$500 or more to the Area Scholarship program.**

**In 2014, the Chapter Board recognized the need to change its composition and created a Director for Public Affairs with Larry Kindt being the first director. With the successful conclusion of the Endowed Scholarship campaign, the position of Director of National Scholarships was abolished.**

**In April 2015, after much debate, the Chapter debuted its own website to allow for greater interaction with its members and the restrictions inherent in being only available as a client of the National MOAA website.**

**In 2022 the Chapters efforts to exempt 100% of Armed Forces retirement was successful. SB 401 was signed by Governor Stitt on 26 May 2022. ENR. S.B. NO. 401, Page 34:**

**"For tax year 2022 and subsequent tax years, retirement benefits received by an individual from any component of the Armed Forces of the United States shall be exempt from taxable income"**