



Ozark Empire News

Ozark Empire Chapter, Military Officers Association of America
2131 West Republic Road, Box 164, Springfield, Missouri 65807



January, 2026

A Word from the Chapter President

Happy New Year. Here we are at the beginning of a brand-new year, 2026. 2025 was quite a year that brought natural disasters and turmoil on a world-wide scale like never before! We have a new President in office, and there have been many changes in our government. It remains our responsibility as citizens to uphold our government leaders especially in times of dissension (regardless of our personal persuasions & beliefs). We are still able to cast our vote in this country and speak out freely.

- Our December meeting was a festive time; however, attendance was down. If you could not attend, know that we missed you. The food was great and the entertainment was provided by Springfield Sound men's chorus, which was fabulous as usual. We had a nice time of fellowship among those that attended.

Based on input from some of the membership, the Board decided to hold our 2026 meetings at the DAV again. Chuck Lulemon has been very amenable to our needs and they appreciate our partnership. They have also given us the space at no cost! Additionally, we are set up with the flag, overhead screen and electronic equipment and microphone, as needed. Dean has worked with our caterer, Melissa, and she has also been flexible in offering food options and preparation. We will continue to use her services.

Some notable January holidays that impact both military and civilians include (taken from: AI Overview):

- January 1 (Thursday): New Year's Day- A federal holiday observed by all military branches.
- January 19 (Monday): Martin Luther King Jr. Day - This is a federal holiday observed on the third Monday of January, honoring Dr. King's life and legacy, and is recognized as a national day of service.
- January 25 (Sunday): Anniversary of the U.S. & Allied Victory at the Battle of the Bulge - An important date of remembrance for a decisive WWII victory.

We **strongly encourage** your attendance at our **February 20** meeting, to participate in a very important discussion regarding the future of our Chapter. We will be formulating a plan moving forward and your input is needed.

With the coming Winter weather, know that if you find yourself in need of assistance, please reach out to a Chapter Board member, and we will work with you to make sure you are safe.

- For all who are Premium or Life members of MOAA, a free Survivor's Planning Guide is available for download. It can be obtained at www.moaa.org.
- As always, our newsletter is freely available on the chapter website, www.OEMOAA.org as well as via email to all members. If anyone wishes to receive this newsletter via US Mail, please make that known to a Board Member or the Newsletter Editor, and we will be happy to accommodate.

Chapter Mission Statement: *To stimulate patriotism in our community and serve those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any of the eight uniformed services, as well as their surviving spouses. The Ozark Empire Military Officers Association of America (OEMOAA) is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). MOAA and its affiliated chapters are nonpartisan.*

IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) Telephone Center - Call DEERS at 800-538-9552, Monday through Friday, excluding U.S. federal holidays.

Defense Finance and Accounting Service - The agency that pays military retirees and annuitants can be reached at 800-321-1080, or through AskDFAS online. Visit the [retired military and annuitants webpage](#) for more information about pay matters such as tax forms, pay verification, Direct Deposit, myPay and more.

Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Program - The program provides long-term care insurance to help pay for the costs of care you need if you can no longer perform everyday tasks (activities of daily living) by yourself because of chronic illness, injury, disability or the aging process. For assistance, call 800-LTC-FEDS (800-582-3337) or TTY 800- 843-3557 to speak with a program consultant. You can also visit <https://www.ltcfeds.com>.

Identification Cards - Call 800-525-0102 for location of the nearest issuing facility, or visit the site locator.

Legal Offices - Assists members with preparing wills and powers of attorney, and answers certain legal questions. Visit the Air Force Legal Assistance website at <https://aflegalassistance.law.af.mil>.

Medicare - 800-633-4227 or visit www.medicare.gov.

Social Security Office - Call toll free 800-772-1213; commercial 410-965- 8019; or write to Social Security Administration, Office of Public Inquiries, Windsor Park Building, 6401 Security Blvd., Baltimore, MD 21235. Visit the website www.ssa.gov for more information.

TRICARE Mail-Order Pharmacy Program (Express Scripts, Inc) - In United States, call toll free 800-282-2881; or overseas, call 866-275-4732. Visit www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE/index.shtml for more information.

10 winter safety tips from the VA

(<https://news.va.gov/137131/get-ahead-of-winter-emergencies/>)

1. Stay informed. Listen to local officials for weather updates and safety guidance before, during and after storms.
2. Prepare emergency supplies. Keep essential items like food, water, and first aid kits at home and at work.
3. Use heat safely. Use heating devices according to instructions and install a carbon monoxide alarm if you rely on alternative heat sources.
4. Use generators carefully. Place generators at least 20 feet away from doors and windows and shield them from rain or flooding to prevent electrical shock.
5. Avoid unnecessary travel. Stay off the roads during and after storms unless absolutely necessary.
6. Dress in layers when outdoors. If you must go outside, wear warm layers and limit your time outdoors.
7. Watch for cold-weather injuries. Particularly when outdoors for extended time, check for frost-bite symptoms (numbness, pale skin) and hypothermia (shivering, confusion, or drowsiness).
8. Avoid overexertion. Cold weather can constrict blood vessels, which means your body will need to work even harder to shovel snow and walk in deep snow. This can put a strain on your heart and increase the risk of a heart attack. Pace yourself and take breaks as needed.
9. Maintain your car. Routine vehicle maintenance is especially important in winter to prevent breakdowns in severe weather. If possible, switch to snow tires or carry snow chains.
10. Pack a car emergency kit. Include a cell phone charger, blankets, warm clothes, a snow shovel, a flashlight with batteries, jumper cables, water and non-perishable snacks. If possible, keep a full gas tank.

January US Military History

1814 – Congress authorizes Army of 62,773 men

1825 - Congress approved “Indian Territory” (present day Oklahoma), clearing the way for forced relocation on foot of Native Americans, known as the Trail of Tears March

1847 – Samuel Colt wins a contract to provide the U.S. government with 1,000 of his .44 caliber revolvers.

1861 – A Union merchant ship, the “Star of the West,” is fired upon as it tries to bring supplies to Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. This action would become the beginning of the American Civil War.

1862 - USS Monitor, the first ironclad vessel, was launched from Greenpoint, NY

1863 - President Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation

1863 - Second Battle of Springfield, American Civil War, Springfield, MO

1865 - House of Representatives passes the 13th amendment, abolishing slavery in the United States

1867 - African American men granted the right to vote

1889 – The Oklahoma Land Run opens 2 million acres of unused Oklahoma Territory to first come-first serve settlers. Those who left the marshalling point ahead of the appointed time, and staked claims early, became known as “Sooners”

1933 – German President Paul von Hindenburg appoints Adolph Hitler as Chancellor

1945 - General Douglas MacArthur and the US 8th Army land in the Philippine Islands, as a first step toward liberation of the Philippines from the Japanese.

1950 – US President Truman publicly announces his decision to support development of the hydrogen bomb, a weapon theorized to be hundreds of times more powerful than the nuclear devices dropped on Japan during World War II

1950 - Mary T. Sproul commissioned as first female doctor in Navy

1954 – Launching of Nautilus, first nuclear submarine, at Groton, CT.

1968 – As part of the Tet Offensive, Viet Cong soldiers attack the U.S. Embassy in Saigon.

1969 – Peace talks opened in Paris, leading to the termination of hostilities in Vietnam

1973 – A cease-fire goes into effect in Vietnam, at 8 a.m., Jan 28, Saigon time

1980 – President Carter announces US boycott of Moscow Olympics.

1986 - Space Shuttle Challenger explodes 73 seconds after liftoff.

1983 – The ARPANET officially changes to using the Internet Protocol, creating the Internet.

1988 – The U.S. accepts the immigration of 30,000 US-Vietnamese children.

1991 – Deadlines passes for withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait, leading to Operation Desert Storm

2006 - Spacecraft Stardust lands on Earth, after collecting dust samples from comet Wild 2.

2009 - Iraq holds provincial elections

December Meeting Recap



For our December meeting, we convened at DAV Hall, for dinner. Prior to our meal service, we were entertained by members of Springfield Sound, our local Barbershop chorus. They were with us last year as well, and agreed to return with some new tunes, including beginning their program with a rendition of the National Anthem. Definitely entertaining, to hear the National Anthem done with Barbershop harmonies! Their performance again was excellent!

Preview of January Speaker

Major Kavan L. Stull will be our guest presenter for January. He will be giving a historical perspective of former President Harry S Truman.



Kavan Stull graduated from Mexico Senior High School in 1970. He enrolled in the Army ROTC program at Northeast Missouri State University (Truman State). He was commissioned as a 2LT in the US Army Reserve Military Police Corps in May, 1974. He entered active duty in July 1975 at Fort Benning, Georgia. His first assignment was the MP Platoon leader, 197th Infantry Brigade. He later served in the Post Law Enforcement Command as Executive Officer for both the 988th MP Company (FORCECOM) and the 139th MP Company (TRADOC). Upon completion of the MP Advanced Officers Course at Fort McClellan, Alabama, he served as the Commander, 511th MP Company at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

In May 1980 the 511th MP Company was deployed to Fort McCoy, WI in response to the Cuban Refugee Crisis. Following this 135 day mission, the 511th MP CO was redeployed 60 days later to Fort Chaffee, Arkansas for an additional 60 days for final closure of the U.S. Army mission to support all Federal agency efforts associated with the reception, processing, security, and resettlement of refugees arriving from Cuba and Haiti.

Major Stull later served in the Army Reserve as the Staff S2 Officer with the 159th MP Battalion and as Commander, 494 MP Detachment (Confinement), both formerly part of the 102nd (ARCOM) U.S. Army Reserve. His final assessment was an instructor with the 5039th ASARF School. He is currently retired after 31 years from Liberty Utilities in Joplin, serving as an Environmental and Safety Coordinator. He is currently serving as the Treasurer/Secretary of the Four-State Chapter, Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).

Married to his wife, Lynne, he has 4 children and 4 grandchildren.



Chaplain's Corner

By Becky Hutchings

Welcome to January! As I begin writing this article, the weather is mild and we are expecting an almost record-setting Christmas Day. Make no mistake though, cold weather will be upon us soon. As I finish this article, the temperature outside has dropped to 31 degrees with a “feels like” 19! Wow! What a difference one day can make.

By the time you read this article there will be another big change-time will have moved forward from 2025 to 2026. Once again, what a difference one day can make. It sometimes feels like time is moving faster with the passage of each year. But time is still moving at the same pace, we just feel like it is moving faster.

We want to hold onto time or make it stand still so we can extend our own mortality. What I particularly love about the human condition is that we have the capacity to process thoughts and can change our behavior. From one day to the next, we can turn around and stop negative behavior or create positive behavior (new habits) that are beneficial. This takes conscious effort.

Many will make New Year's resolutions. There is nothing wrong with this, as it is nice to have a fresh start. However, when these new commitments fail, we often just quit trying.

The Scriptures have this to say about our human connections and commitment to one another:

Make allowance for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (Colossians 3:13; NLT; taken from: biblegateway.com).

And:

May the patience and encouragement that come from God allow you to live in harmony with each other the way Christ Jesus wants. (Romans 15:5; NCV; taken from: biblia.com).

This coming year, I would like to lose weight and become more healthy. Perhaps more importantly though, I wish to emulate the type of behavior these Scriptures teach. Would you join me in seeking to extend kindness, love, and forgiveness to those that might not ask, or return the same? It's what Jesus would do.

May you be encouraged.

For our January Chapter noon meeting, we will convene at DAV Hall, Chapter 11, located at 2525 E Division St, Springfield. This is located directly across from Downtown Airport, between Glenstone and US 65.

January 2026 Meeting

DATE: Friday, 16 January 26
PLACE: **DAV Hall, Chapter 11**
2525 E Division Ave
Springfield, MO

TIME: 1100 – Social Hour
50/50 voluntary donations, to support Honor Flight of the Ozarks. Drawing at the close of the presentation.
1200 – Meal

MENU: Luncheon Meal

Cost: \$20/plate. (NOTE: 50/50 Drawing, and Donations for Honor Flight of the Ozarks will also be accepted)

Program: Kavan Stull: Harry Truman in WWI

RSVP: By Monday, 12 January
To: LtCol Dean Smith, USMC, Retired

LtCol Smith will acknowledge ALL reservations received. If you do NOT receive a confirmation, please contact him directly.

ELECTED CHAPTER BOARD OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Becky Hutchings

1ST VICE PRESIDENT: (OPEN)

2ND VICE PRESIDENT: Frank Bridges, LtCol, USA, Retired

SECRETARY/TREASURER: Dean Smith, LtCol, USMC, Retired

IMMED PAST PRESIDENT: Ron McCall, Capt, USAF, Retired

APPOINTED CHAPTER OFFICERS

CHAPLAIN: Becky Hutchings

LEGISLATIVE CHAIR: Anthony Willis, Colonel, USAF, Retired

AWARDS COORDINATOR: Frank Bridges, LtCol, USA, Retired

SURVIVING SPOUSE LIAISON: Becky Hutchings

AMBASSADOR: Chuck Guy, Colonel, USA, Retired

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR Chuck Guy, Colonel, USA, Retired

WEBMASTER: Keith Oxby, W/O British Navy

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Ron McCall, Capt, USAF, Retired

2025 OEMOAA Monthly Schedule

Chapter monthly meetings will be held on the 3rd Friday, unless otherwise noted.

2026 Dates

Jan 16, 2026:	Kavan Stull, Harry Truman in WWI
Feb 20:	OEMOAA Chapter Business Meeting
Mar 20:	Kelly McGowan, Master Gardener
April 17:	Kay Monk, State Crime Lab
May 15:	Leslie Saylor, Senator Schmitt's Office
June 19:	Elder Law
Summer:	Cardinals Baseball - TBD
Sept 18:	LTC Brennan Cook, "JROTC, Nixa HS"
Oct 16:	Missouri Veteran's Home
Nov 20:	Nutrition for Seniors

Quotes from Yogi Berra:

The Future ain't what it used to be.

If you don't know where you're going, you might end somewhere else

You can observe a lot by watching

Why buy good luggage? You only use it when you travel

We encourage all eligible members to also join our National organization, Military Officers Association of America. Information regarding membership options can be accessed at www.moaa.org

Our chapter maintains a presence on Facebook. We strive to keep this page current with information about chapter activities and opportunities. Members can access that page by following this link: www.facebook.com/groups/712416736284579

OEMOAA NAME TAGS

Some members and their spouses prefer a solid plastic name badge with a magnetic clasp. The member cost is \$10 per badge, payable in advance. Order forms will be available at the next two meetings. You can also email Dean Smith anytime and he will send you the form by return email. Please return completed forms to Dean at a meeting with the \$10 per badge fee. Nametags will be ready at the next regular dinner meeting. Yes, the name tags with the pin clasp will continue to be provided at no cost.