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# March Meeting Ralph Pfingsten – History of Ravenna Arsenal

by LTC Mike Wisniewski

The regular luncheon meeting of the Mahoning and Shenango Valleys Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MSVC-MOAA) was held at the Consolidated Activities Center of the Youngtown Air Reserve Station in Vienna on Friday, March 22, 2019. Approximately 36 members were mesmerized by the oral and slide presentation of historian, educator, field biologist and herpetologist, Ralph Pfingsten. Coming from his home in Berea, Ohio, Ralph presented an abbreviated slide show history of the Ravenna Arsenal, formerly known as Camp Ravenna but recently renamed the James A. Garfield Joint Military Training Center (or Camp Garfield, for short). Mr. Pfingsten is the author

or co-author of least ten books, among them is a 2009 book, The History of the Ravenna Arsenal upon which the presentation was based. Ralph studied at Wittenberg University and received a Master of Arts degree from Kent State University and became a high school science teacher before joining the Cleveland Museum of Natural History as a Research Associate. He loves the outdoors and has done extensive research on salamanders, reptiles, amphibians in 84 of 88 Ohio counties. He became familiar with the Ravenna Arsenal while doing biological surveys for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources which allowed him unfettered access into a highly restricted facility. With over 900 photographs and drawings, some contemporaneously taken by the author, Ralph

## "Storming the Hill" Legislative Report, April 2019

by LTC Rod Hosler

On Wednesday, 10 April, as the President of the Ohio Council of Chapters, I was honored to have participated in the MOAA flagship program of "Storming the Hill." The Storming program places local state council members and MOAA national staff personnel with their designated state's Congressional legislators to discuss those key issues affecting military personnel across the nation. This year I was joined by Major Tom

Jenks, the Ohio Council Second Vice President and member of the Greater Cleveland Chapter to visit our legislators to discuss MOAA issues. We split the Ohio delegation each take one Senator and eight Representatives. I visited Senator Rob Portman and **Representatives Warren** Davidson, David Joyce, Jim Jordan, Michael Turner, Brad Wenstrup, Bill Johnson, Bob Gibbs, and Steve Stivers; while Tom

continue on page 3 (ou

masterfully wrote a 341 page historical documentation of this strategic bomb and artillery production and storage facility. Autographed copies of this book were available at a discount price after the meeting. All proceeds from the sales of this book go directly to The Northern Ohio Railway Museum of which Ralph served as a member of the Board Directors for 28 years.

Some of the more salient and interesting bits of information about the Ravenna Arsenal: First of all, it's an absolute myth that this site was selected by the Defense Department because it had the most cloud-covered days in the nation which acted as a deterrence against an aerial attack by the enemy. Site selection criteria for this site, as well as any other war production facility, included





Ralph Pfingsten, accepts the MSVC flag set from President, Florence Hosler

being a certain distance from coasts and borders, level and inexpensive land, plentiful water, access to highways and railroads, availability of nearby labor force and materials. The Arsenal has about 22,000 acres of land, is 4 miles long, 3.5 miles wide and is situated primarily in Portage County east of Ravenna and part of western Trumbull County just west of Newton *continue on page 2* 

Senator Rob Portman legislative director Jennifer Dean meets with LTC Rod Hosler. It is common to meet with the legislative directors or veterans directors on "Storming the Hill" day, very few senators or representatives are available.



*Rep. Bill Johnson with his legislative director as LTC Rod Hosler, USA (Ret) Ohio Council of Chapters explains MOAA's key issues.* 

## History of Ravenna Arsenal from page 1

Falls. The purchase of 290 parcels of land of varying acreage with 250 homes was initiated in the late summer of 1940 and completed by September. Having only 30 days to vacate their homes and land, the greatest permanent mass relocation program in Ohio history took place at the end of August, 1940. Massive construction started immediately and within a year the first bombs rolled off the assembly line the Ravenna Ordinance Plant. At the height of construction there were 16,000 workers continuously working three shifts seven days a week.

The wages for construction workers in 1941 ranged from \$0.65/hour for apprentices to \$1.65/hour for electricians, iron workers, and plasterers. By the time construction was finished there were 125 miles of roads, 71 miles of fences, 131 miles of railroad, 48 warehouses, 72 above ground magazine storage buildings, and 691 below ground magazine storage igloo-type bunkers. When the facility reached peak ordinance production in 1942, over 12,000 people were employed. In the past two decades, the Arsenal has been largely cleaned up of contaminants, ordinance bunkers emptied, and old structures razed. It has been transformed into an Ohio Army National Guard military base and is used extensively by the National Guard and Army Reserve units. Even the 910th Airlift Wing at YARS utilizes Camp Garfield for some of its training exercises. Today, the Arsenal remains as one of three sites in the nation that the Pentagon is considering as an intercontinental missile defense site. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the book, information can be found on the web at: www.northernohio.railway.museum.

There were two winners of the 50/50 raffle: Major Jack Russell and SFC Tom Nevin (who generously donated it back to the Chapter). Two books were donated for the raffle by LTC Larry and Mrs. Dawnle Scheetz: *American Heritage New History of World War II* by Stephen E. Amrose was won by LTC Michael Wisniewski, and *World War II, A Visual Encyclopedia* by John Keegan was won by CAPT James Swager.

Please check the MSVC-MOAA Calendar of events. There is no meeting in the month of April but there is an YSU ROTC Awards breakfast by invitation on the 25<sup>th</sup> and an East High School JROTC Awards Banquet on the 27<sup>th</sup>. **The next Dinner meeting will be at 1830 hrs, CAC, YARS on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.** Please mark your calendars to attend this particular dinner meeting as we will have seven cadets and their parents in attendance. The Chapter provides these cadets with monetary and certificate awards as well as being our guest for the dinner. Please consider sponsoring a cadet or a family member for the dinner. It would be graciously appreciated.

MSVC-MOAA 2019 Calendar				
Date	Location and Program			
April	No MSVC meeting			
4/18	YSU ROTC Awards breakfast, invitation only 8 A.M.			
4/26	East High School JROTC Awards Banquet, 6—9 P.M. Contact David Di Tallo if you wish to attend, contact info on page six.			
4/27	Council of Chapters Meeting—Columbus 10 A.M.			
5/2	Dinner Meeting, 1830 hr CAC, YARS-Cadet Night This is our showcase event plan to attend! Please consider donating to a Cadet dinner.			
6/27	Dinner Meeting 1830 hr Golden Corral Hermitage Speaker Jon Kolb			
7/25	Pistol & Rifle Shoot at Vienna			
8/22	Dinner Meeting Steak Fry & Corn Roast , 1830 hr CAC, YARS speaker from Youngstown Air Reserve Base Community Council			
9/26	Lunch/Dinner? Meeting Touring Youngstown Business Incubator			
10/25	Lunch 1300 hr, CAC, YARS- Mercer County VSC Larry Scheetz			
11/15	Lunch 1300 hr, CAC YARS			
12/8	MOAA/ROA Christmas Party			
Date, time and place subject to change, check our web site, <u>www.msvc-moaa.org</u> >Activities>Next Chatper Event YARS –Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Vienna, OH TBA –To be announced				

CAC – Community Activity Center NOC–Navy Operational Center Suggestions for programs contact: COL John Koshan 330-448-4758

## Welcome New Member

Colonel Thomas Whitten, USAR, Retired. Tom lives in New Castle, Pennsylvania

#### Mahoning and Shenango Valleys Chapter Mission Statement

MSVC will promote the objectives of the Military Officers Association of America providing a uniform lobbying platform on behalf of the active duty, Reserve, Guard, retired, and former officers of the uniformed services and their spouses and families. Conduct activities which: perpetuate traditions, educate and inform members of world, national, and local events, which affect the current and former members of the U.S. military. Provide a fraternal and supportive community for members to network, socialize and promote camaraderie.

#### Mahoning and Shenango Valleys Chapter Membership Requirements

Membership in MSVC-MOAA shall be composed of: Men and women who are or have been commissioned or warrant officers of the seven United States uniformed services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Public Health Service). Surviving spouses of deceased individuals who, if living, would be eligible for membership. Chapter specific membership for spouses of present members and honorary members. MSVC-MOAA memberships are open to all eligible people.

### "Storming the Hill" from page 1

Jenks visited with Senator Sherrod Brown and Representatives Troy Balderson, Tim Ryan, Anthony Gonzalez, Steve Chabot, Joyce Beatty, Bob Latta, Marcia Fudge and Marcy Kaptur. Representatives Balderson and Gonzalez are new to the Congress.

We prepared for the storming with a full day of briefings about how to storm, the MOAA issues and how to respond to questions on Tuesday, 9 April, conducted by the MOAA Legislative staff. We also



OHIO at "Storming the Hill" MAJ Tom Jenks, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President from Ohio Council, Lt. Col. Rojan Robotham, MOAA Board of Directors and Erica Martin, MOAA Staff, LTC Rod Hosler, President of Ohio Council

learned how to navigate Capitol Hill and what to expect at each office we visited. Tuesday evening we all gathered at the Derkson Senate Office Building where the MOAA Awards were presented to several individuals who supported MOAA and America's military community. After the Storming, everyone gathered for a formal dinner hosted by Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, the President and CEO of MOAA. Thursday, 11 April was the wrap-up day dedicated to an after-action review of the Storming, addressing lessons learned and actions for the MOAA Department of Councils and Chapters chaired by COL Terri Coles.

In most case we met with the Senator's or Representative's military staff liaison to discuss the issues. They are generally are the ones that work the issues, and prepare information to the primary for action on the Senate or House committees or floors.

This year MOAA issues that are on the front burner requiring legislation action are: Military Pay and Benefits, TRICARE and Elimination of the SBP/DIC Offset (the Widows Tax).

1.) Military Pay and Benefits. Military Pay and Benefits continues to be the number one issue because appropriate pay and benefits are directly tied to recruiting and retaining the best that America has to offer. The military must compete with the outside civilian work environment to get and retain the best personnel. This has and will always continue to be a key issue not only for the Armed Forces, but also for the overall security of the nation. For too long military pay and benefits have lagged behind the civilian sector and this issue strives to rectify that

shortcoming. MOAA is seeking every legislator's support for the 3.1 percent military pay raise, per the Employment Cost Index.

2.) Keeping TRICARE Fees Down. Military members and retirees pay more for their health care than most people think. The narrative that these beneficiaries pay little-to-nothing for **Mail Your Postcards To Congressional Leaders** Please sign, stamp, and mail the postcards that are in the **April** issue of *Military Officer* to the preaddressed key congressional leaders. Be a part of MOAA's "One Powerful Voice" and urge your legislators to oppose all proposals to make thousands of military retirees pay more for their TRICARE health beneft.

health care supports the notion of raising TRICARE fees and copayments to fund readiness and other programs not directly related to health care, which is not the case. Military beneficiaries, by the nature of their service, past or present, pay immeasurable premiums for their health care as compared to civilians who have never served. Reducing support for currently serving military and their families, and adjusting retirement benefits after the fact jeopardizes long-term retention and readiness. MOAA's position is that the government should be doing more to stabilize and improve the TRICARE program rather than disproportionately shift readiness costs onto beneficiaries.

3.) Elimination of the SBP/DIC Offset (Widow's Tax). Under current law, survivors of deceased military members must forfeit part or all of their purchased Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity when they are awarded the VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). MOAA's position is for legislators to support full repeal of the SBP-DIC offset. If Congress cannot achieve full repeal all at once, it should continue to incrementally increase SSIA above COLA adjustments to help mitigate the overall effect of the widow's tax until full repeal can be achieved.

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### Legislative Contacts MOAA Legislative Update moaa.org/takeaction or

1-800-234-6622 ext. 215

Pres. Donald Trump (R) The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Washington DC 20500 Switchboard: 202-456-1414 www.whitehouse.gov

## OHIO

Senator Sherrod Brown (D) United States Senate 713 Hart Senate Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20510 Phone: (202) 224-2315 Fax (202) 228-6321 www.brown.senate.gov

Senator Rob Portman (R) United States Senate 448 Russell Senate Office Bld.

448 Russell Senate Office Bld Washington, DC 20510 Phone: (202) 224-3353 www.portman.senate.gov

Representative District 6 Bill Johnson (R) 192 East State St. Salem, OH 44460 Phone (330) 337-6951 Fax (330) 337-7125 http://billiohncon.house

http://billjohnson.house.gov

Representative District 13 **Tim Ryan (D)** 241 West Federal St. Youngstown, OH 44503 Phone: (330) 740-0193 Fax: (330) 740-0182 http://timryan.house.gov

## PENNSYLVANIA

Senator Robert Casey Jr. (D) 393 Russell Senate Office Bld. Washington, D.C. 20510 Phone: (202) 224-6324 Fax: (202) 228-0604 www.casey.senate.gov

Senator Patrick Toomey (R) 248 Russell Senate Office Bld. Washington, D.C. 20510 Phone: (202) 224-4254 Fax: (202) 228-0284

#### www.toomey.senate.gov

Representative District 3 Mike Kelly (R) 33 Chestnut Avenue Sharon, PA 16146 Phone: (724) 342-7170 Fax: (724) 342-7242 http://kelly.house.gov

### Surviving Spouse Corner Writing Your Life Story

# Find a way to create a record of your life so your loved ones can know about and celebrate the road you've traveled

*By Micki Vonnegut Costello, Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee member* 

Often, as we enter the "winter of life," there is a greater interest in ancestry and finding the "roots" of your family tree. Options abound with available ways to do this. In addition to DNA testing, there are workbooks that contain space for recording musings, drawings, favorite things, places one has been, or dreams of things done or waiting to happen. And with technology, it is even easier to provide a record of a family's history — and do it earlier in life.

Members of my family decided to create a written history of our grandparents' branch of the family tree as a way to honor their remarkable lives and preserve the story for future generations.

The project was divided into sections: The first would be about our grandparents' lives. The second section about the lives of each of their eight children, written by a member of that family, including childhood memories, relationships, places lived, military service, significant events, and the like. The third section an overview of the individual lives of each of the grandchildren, also written by a member of the family. Plus, space would be provided to include family pictures.

Instructions and a deadline were sent out to each of the family members. All the stories were collated and then put together into a hardcover book, copies of which were distributed at a family reunion. Though the project took several years to complete, everyone in our rather large family agreed the effort was well worth the time invested. It is indeed a gift to be treasured today and handed down to subsequent generations.

This newsletter is published for the benefit of the members of the Mahoning and Shenango Valleys Chapter, which is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). MOAA and its affiliated chapters and councils are non-partisan. Articles in this newsletter are the opinions solely of the individual authors and do not necessarily express the policy or opinions of the newsletter's editor or publisher. Also, the individual opinions do not reflect an endorsement by the Mahoning Shenango Valleys Chapter or the national organization of the Military Officers Association of America, unless so indicated [Copyright 2016 Military Officers Association of American All rights reserved.] Questions or comments should be directed to: Former LT Florence Hosler, USN email: hoslerfm@zoominternet.net



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# **MSVC Board of Directors for 2019**

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Newsletter & Surviving Spouses	Mrs. Janet Oglesby
ILO52800@NEO.RR.COM	

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USO Northern Ohio Executive Director ...... Bruce Bille

MOAA Ohio Council President ...... Rod Hosler

Ohio Veterans Affairs Web Page http://dvs.ohio.gov/

Pennsylvania Veterans Affairs Web Page http://www.dmva.pa.gov/veteransaffairs



5-star newsletter

Congratulations to Bruce Bille and Janet Oglesby their monthly efforts provided the chapter with recognition of a 5-star website and newsletter for 2018. MOAA has criteria that must be included on the web site and newsletter. A issue of the newseltter the URL, of the web page and URL of Facebook is sent to MOAA for judging.

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# Membership Renewal or Application for Mahoning and Shenango Valleys Chapter

Name:	Military	Status	_Spouse Name			
Branch Rank	Years Active/Reserve/_		egular) – 🗖 Reserve*–			
seven uniformed US Serv Surviving Spouse is availa Spouse (local MOAA cha	d, Former, Active* Officer of the vices <b>Membership \$20/year</b> ) able for surviving spouse of a mili- apter only, not national, spouse is	and you mai A non milita itary officer <b>Memb</b>		membership. red.		
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	Secondary P					
Former Officers: Driver's Lic	cense Number for Air Base Acces	SS				
E-mail:		Applicant DOE	S Spouse DO	DB		
Member of MOAA National Make Check Payable to: <b>MS</b> You may pay regular and sur	ed, if you prefer postal service, cl Yes No MOAA # VC-MOAA mail to address on ri viving spouses dues (not spouse PayPal to paid, regular, spouses	ght s) with a credit ca		org/membership		
You may use credit card and PayPal to paid, regular, spouses and surviving spouse dues at <u>msvc-moaa.org/membership</u> <b>April Birthdays:</b> 3–Nick Spano, 14–US Air Force Reserve, 14–Rose Pacalo, 16–Don Allen, 16–Tyler Strohecker, 17–Margie Sweeney, 23–Jason Lassiter, 23–US Army Reserve, 27–Will Kline <b>May Birthdays:</b> 1–Adam Hoover, 14–Jack Russell, 18–Mark Andrews, 25–Janet Oglesby, 28–Audrey Chengelis						
Youngstown Air Reserve Station Supp Son of Mark and Patty Andrews, Maj Matt Andrews, USAF, McGuire Air Fo		t: (330) 333-0397 Fax: Capt Joshua Palmer, C LCDR BJ Sacramento,	(330) 617-8515 E-mail: <u>USOTrum</u> Dhio Air National Guard, Rickenback USN, (COMSUBGRU 8) NSA Capodici	bullCo@gmail.com er		
Lt Col Kevin Bishop, USAF, Kirtland AFB	n of Jim & Martha Bishop Col Kevin Bishop, USAF, Kirtland AFB Albuquerque, New Mexico n of Walt & Kathy Duzzny, Sr., BG Walter Duzzny, Deputy Commanding neral, North Fifth Army, Border Security		A, Germany ;, MC–USAFR, Youngstown Air Force JSAR, Atlanta, Georgia	Reserve Station		
Sons of Rick & Janice Morgan LTC Andre Center, Houston, TX He heads into space	USAF, Elgin AFB, Florida F35 instructor pilot. w Morgan, USA, at NASA, Johnson Space this summer. LCDR Benjamin Morgan,	2014–1LT Tyler Stroh 2014–1LT Lorin Davis	di, USA, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Armored Brigade Comba ecker, USA, Ft Drum, New York , USA, Wheeler Army Airfield, Hawa	ii		
USCG, with VTS (Vessel Traffic Service) at USCG Sector New Orleans, Louisiana Nephew of Carl & Clara Nunziato, LTC Jerald Nunziato, battalion commander of public affairs at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina		2014–1LT James Stiger, Fort Leonard Wood with the 5th EN BN, Missouri     2015–2LT Jared Hideg, USA, Florida     2016–2LT Brandi Burrows, Military Intelligence, Ft. Campbell, Kentucky				
Grandson of Tom & Marla Raseta A1C Joshua Raseta, USAF, Hill AFB, Ogden, Utah, F16 Fighter Squadron Son of Rick & Kelly Williams		2016–2LT Adam Hoover, Chemical Corps, Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri     2016–2LT Matthew McIntire, Chemical Corps, Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri				
Son of Mike and Barb Wisniewski CW2 Steven Wisniewski, is a Maintenan	FC Garrett Williams, USA, 82 <sup>nd</sup> Airborne at Fort Bragg, North Carolina on of Mike and Barb Wisniewski W2 Steven Wisniewski, is a Maintenance Test Pilot for the AH-64D Apache elicopter. He is stationed at Ft Drum, NY part of the 10 <sup>th</sup> Mountain Division		2017–2LT Lonnie Bissmeyer, Signal Corps     2017–2LT Tierney McCaster, Fort Campbell, Kentucky     2018–2LT Zachery Gibson, Field Artillery, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma (BOLC)     2018–2LT Zachary Szewczyk, Cyber Branch, Ft. Gibson, Georgia (BOLC)			
Active Duty and Reserve Chapter M		2018–2LT Zachary Szewczyk, cyber branch, n. Gibson, Georgia (Botc)				
LTC Wil Kline, USAR, Pittsburgh LT Jason Lasssiter, USCG, Cleveland						

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# ROTC/JROTC Recognition Dinner May 2<sup>nd</sup>

# RSVP by 0900 April 29<sup>th</sup>

#### Where: Youngstown Air Force Reserve Station Community Activity Center 3976 King Graves Rd • Vienna, OH 44473

Who: Members, Spouses, Guests

Lounge and Cash bar opens at 1530 (3:30)

Social: 1745 (5:45 P.M.)

Dinner: 1830 (6:30 р.м.) Reservations Required for the Dinner

Program: 1945 (7:45 р.м.) Welcome to join the dinner guests for the program

#### Speakers: Our cadets

Attire: Request a sport coat and tie or equivalent

 Menu: Tossed Salad, stuffed chicken breast, roast pork loin, mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables, dinner roll, dessert, beverage, gratuity for \$25.00 per person.
Chapter pays for no-shows.

- *RSVP*: You can pay at the door with cash, check (preferred), credit or debit card.
- 1. Call Janet Oglesby, 330-568-4456 (leave a message if no answer).

2. Or Email Janet at djo52800@neo.rr.com

3. Or use the web site <u>www.msvc-moaa.org</u> and pay through PayPal with a credit card.



# **MSVC Gearing Up for Annual Cadet Night Dinner**

by CDR David J. Di Tallo, USN (Ret), Board Member

Mahoning and Shenango Valley Chapter - Military Officers Association of America (MSVC-MOAA) is preparing to honor Junior ROTC and ROTC students at its annual Cadet Night Dinner Thursday, May 2, at the Consolidated Activities Club, Youngstown Air Reserve Station.

In its biggest dinner yet, the chapter will host seven JROTC/ROTC students (including four prospective Army second lieutenants) from East High School (Youngstown), Trumbull Career and Technical Center (Warren), and Youngstown State University for an evening of fellowship and camaraderie.

Cadet Night begins with a No Host Reception at 1745, dinner at 1830, and program at 1945. To help defray the twenty-five dollar cost of cadet and guest dinners, chapter members can **"Buy a Cadet Dinner"** paying for the dinner for a cadet, their guest, or their military staff member. If you can assist in buying a dinner you may do so at the door. If you can't attend make checks payable to MSVC-MOAA and mailed to MSVC-MOAA, PO Box 494 Vienna, OH 44473-0494. Any surplus of donations will be put into the scholarship fund.

Cadet Night caps of a month of recognition events honoring area JROTC/ROTC students. Each April MSVC presents a MOAA Junior ROTC Medal and fifty dollar award to a deserving cadet at East High School (Army JROTC) and Trumbull Career and Technical Center (Air Force JROTC).

Additionally, the chapter awards a MOAA ROTC Medal and three hundred dollar award to a junior class Army ROTC cadet at Youngstown State University, and, jointly with the Reserve Officers Association, presents Class "A" uniform insignia and copies of The Army Officer's Guide to prospective second lieutenants.

For more information contact MSVC Student Affairs Co-Chairs David Di Tallo or Rod Hosler.







USAA financial assistance makes the CAA® cadet night possible

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