



# Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



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## September Program:

*K. U. Provost Richard Lariviere will be our speaker.*



### As I see it...



First things first. Let me congratulate each and every one of you for continuing to make our Jayhawk Chapter one of the best in the Nation. I was recently notified by Vice Admiral Norb Ryan Jr. USN (Ret), National President of MOAA, that once again our chapter has been selected for a Level of Excellence Award. That is the fourth year in a row that we have been honored at either the 4 or 5 star level of excellence. We have printed VADM Ryan's letter in this edition of the Newsletter. We'll have a brief ceremony and appropriate presentation at a future meeting. Congratulations.

We have a very special dinner speaker for the September 18 meeting. Richard Lariviere, KU's Provost, and his wife, Jan, will be our guests. Dr. Lariviere has now been KU's Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for over a year. He has had a long and distinguished career in higher education and international affairs. I'm sure you'll find his visit with us memorable. I hope you can attend.

One of the greatest services that MOAA provides to all of us is acting as our personal representative for military issues before Congress. We are fortunate in that regard because MOAA National is blessed with exceptional leaders who are acknowledged on "the Hill" as experts in active, reserve, and retiree issues. But part of our individual responsibility is to help MOAA help us. So when you receive legislative notices or alerts from MOAA, whether by letter or email, please pay attention. Take a moment to engage legislators through MOAA's help. Be active and be aware. As I see it that's the least we can do to insure that entitlements and benefits that we all were promised are not continually whittled away over time.

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**\* Reservations should be sent to Jim Cooper by 13 September.**



# ***JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS***

## ***CHAPTER NEWS***

### **Note from Nancy Boyda:**

Dear Jayhawk MOAA Chapter,

Steve and I certainly appreciated the good fellowship and dinner Tuesday evening. As military officers, you of all people understand that democracy is a contact sport. Thank you for your many years of service to our country.

I'm headed back to D.C. with my Jayhawk tucked carefully in my luggage. Please come see him in D.C.! Thanks for making my office look and feel like Kansas!

Warmly,  
Nancy

## ***4 STAR CHAPTER AWARD***

### **From VADM Norbert R. Ryan, Jr., USN (Ret), MOAA President:**

Michael P. Sullivan  
RADM USN (Ret)  
4400 Heritage Dr  
Lawrence, KS 66047-1983

Dear Admiral Sullivan:

I am writing to congratulate you on your chapter's selection for the 4 Star Levels of Excellence Award for 2006. This award reflects the exceptional performance of your chapter in promoting both the Jayhawk Chapter and National MOAA goals, and your active involvement in the community. Your chapter's actions are clearly an example of the type of servant leadership so important to the future success of our chapter system.

Through separate communications now underway, we will arrange to present a special "Streamer" to you in recognition of this award, which we hope you will proudly display with your chapter flag.

Please pass on my congratulations to your members and my best wishes for continued exceptional success!

Sincerely and all the best,  
Norb

## ***SALUTING THE FLAG***

WASHINGTON, D.C. - (25 July 2007) U.S. Senator Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) praised the passage in the Senate by unanimous consent of his bill (S.1877) clarifying U.S. law to allow veterans and servicemen not in uniform to salute the flag.

Current law (US Code Title 4, Chapter 1) states that veterans and servicemen not in uniform should place their hand over their heart without clarifying whether they can or should salute the flag.

The bill now goes to the House of Representatives.

**The newsletter is only as good as the material available,  
so each member is requested to forward news and other items of interest to the editors.**

## AID & ATTENDANCE

This came from COL Gary LaGrange, Flint Hills Chapter, MOAA. Gary mentioned this at the Council of Chapters meeting on Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> and asked that we share this with others who may qualify.

*While making nursing home arrangements for my aged father, I recently became aware of a valuable program that I wish to share with you. It is particularly helpful as you consider Long Term Care Plans and should be factored into your decision process.*

*"Aid and Attendance" is an underutilized special monthly pension benefit offered by the Veterans Administration for veterans and surviving spouses who require in-home care or live in nursing homes. To qualify, a veteran (includes the surviving spouse) must have served at least 90 days of active military service, one*

*day of which is during a period of war, and must be discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. The veteran's benefit is \$18,234 annually (paid monthly) and increases to \$21,615 if a veteran has one dependent. The surviving spouse alone is \$11,715 annually.*

*For more information, call 1-800-827-1000, visit <http://www.va.gov> (type "Aid and Attendance" in the search block), or contact your local VA office. You can also apply on-line at <http://vabenfits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>; however a VA representative visited my dad in the nursing home before the benefit could be approved.*

*This is a good opportunity if you have a parent or older sibling who "fits the bill."*



## Army News LTC John Basso

### Friends,

Your Jayhawk Army ROTC program had an extremely busy and productive summer. Among the many highlights, we commissioned four more second lieutenants – Shawn Kirby, Joshua Nikes, Tycondra Swartz, and Bradley Thomas – making 19 for the year, the most in a decade plus. 2LT Nikes is taking advantage of the Army's education delay program and entering the seminary; after graduation he will enter the Army Chaplain Corps. The other three new 2LTs successfully completed the Leadership Development and Assessment Course (LDAC) at Fort Lewis this summer and are awaiting branch results from the September Accessions board. We also had 23 rising seniors complete LDAC at Fort Lewis for a 100% pass rate – quite an achievement and one that reflects the quality of Kansas Army ROTC. Most of those cadets will learn their future branches in the coming months. Several cadets completed additional Army schooling – Cadets Joshua Conser and Peter Holmes are now entitled to wear Army Air Assault wings and Cadets Casey Atkins, Virgil Barnard, Julea Clark and John Irvine earned the coveted parachute badge after

completing Airborne School. We also had several cadets complete Cadet Troop Leader Training serving as 2LTs in Army units across the US and Europe. We are not resting on our laurels.

The program has grown over the Summer and we have over 90 cadets enrolled for the fall semester. They are led by a superb cadet staff (more about them in my next note). The train (and our training) will not slow down over the course of the fall semester with numerous field labs, our 48-hour field training exercise at Fort Leavenworth, Ranger Challenge in Iowa, and countless classes, color guards, and other training events.

If you're in the area and would like to visit, we will be having an open house as part of Jayhawk Family Day at 1000 on 15 September and for Homecoming and the Jayhawk Battalion Alumni Association Wall of Fame Induction at 0900 on 3 November.

Busy is good; otherwise, we couldn't truly say . . .  
**Jayhawks Lead the Way!**

**LTC John Basso**



## *Navy News*

### *CAPT Thomas Arnold, USN*



#### **Greetings from the Jayhawk Navy!**

The new academic year has gotten off to a busy start for the Naval ROTC Unit. We have added 30 new students to the battalion – 25 freshmen midshipmen, three new Navy Seaman-to-Admiral program Officer Candidates and two new Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Program students. This brings the battalion enrollment up to 72, an 18% increase in the size of the battalion over the 61 students who began the academic year last August. The class of 25 new freshmen midshipmen represents an increase of nearly 200% over last year's nine member freshman class. We are very impressed with the quality and enthusiasm of our new students and look forward to the contributions they will make to the Unit over the next four years. Please join us in welcoming them to the battalion!

This was a busy summer for the students. Twenty-two of them attended summer training: 16 went on Navy summer cruises, three attended USMC Mountain Warfare training in California, and three successfully completed the very demanding USMC Officer Candidate School in Quantico, VA. Many other students took summer courses here at KU.

Our new freshmen went through a challenging five day Orientation and Indoctrination (O&I) course at Camp Clark, Missouri, in early August and performed superbly under the instruction of a capable group of upper classmen instructors. One member of the Unit staff, GySgt Eric Sheppard, served as an instructor for the USMC Mountain Warfare Training course this summer and joined the rest of active duty staff in participating in O&I at Camp Clark.

This summer also saw a significant personnel change on the active duty staff with the departure of Major Jeff Daniels. Jeff detached for duty as XO of the USMC training command at 29 Palms, California. He did an exceptional job as our Marine Officer Instructor and will be sorely missed by both the staff and the students. Jeff's replacement is CAPT Jose Nicholas. Jose comes to us from 29 Palms and has had extensive combat experience in Iraq. Please join me in welcoming him to the staff!

*CAPT Tom Arnold*



## *Air Force News*

### *LtCol Sandra Leiker, USAF*

#### **Greetings MOAA and happy school start to all!**

Again, summer was way too short. Campus' quiet serenity has been replaced by the hustle and bustle of pedestrian traffic that seems much crazier than in the past few years. Maybe I am just able to get out of my office a little bit more as I commence my third year with the AFROTC program. Our cadre is all back from various summer assignments and motivated to welcome a new class of freshmen (yes, even Capt Hatchel's short notice deployment to Iraq was turned off when the schoolhouse decided to go a different route with logistician training – phew! Lucky us to get to keep him for another year). So no one new to hail – we're all old-timers now.

As we haven't actually done anything yet this school year besides hosting New Cadet Orientation, I guess I'll take a few minutes to share with you the accomplishments of some of our cadets over this past summer. As I've mentioned before,

summer does stay very busy for AFROTC – and this summer was a real doozy, as there were a number of fantastic new summer training programs that cadets could take part in – and our cadets signed up for every opportunity possible.

First, I should mention our Field Training Camp Survivors – as this is the one summer "opportunity" that cadets do not get a choice whether or not to attend. As I've explained before, FT is a "crucible event" for our cadets – a very physically and emotionally intense and demanding 4-week experience that truly puts their blossoming leadership/followership/teamwork abilities to the test. The cadets essentially spend their first two years in the program getting ready for this leadership/officership "trial by fire" – then they return to us as upperclassman full of new confidence in their now proven abilities – and ready to take cadet corps leadership positions. We had 10 cadets graduate

camp (a smaller than usual class) – but out of this small group, two received top recognition as "distinguished graduates" and four received recognition for helping their flights win their respective camp's "warrior flight" titles. We're very proud of their efforts and look forward to their continued growth this year.

I should mention that two of our staff members, SSgt Crystal Cronley and Capt Corey Edmonds, also successfully survived THEIR summer experiences as FT camp cadre – hopefully I only need to say that they work harder and sleep fewer hours than the cadets do at camp to give you an idea of how "fun" manning a camp can be. ;-~

I want to quickly mention just a few other summer programs that our cadets attended. Six of our sophomores-to-be attended 3-week summer programs hosted by various AF bases. While on base they got to work with officers and enlisted personnel to get a feel for what real active duty life is like. All of them also got to experience JETO (jet orientation) flights in real AF trainer aircraft (like the T-6 Texan). These exciting flights give the cadets an idea

of what flying for the AF will be like and help them determine if they want to preference flying careers. Finally, in an attempt to promote cultural and regional awareness in our officers at the earliest opportunity, AF ROTC expanded the opportunities for students to travel abroad during the summer as part of cultural and language immersion programs. Five of our senior cadets (and me!) participated in these programs – touring and studying language and culture in places like Morocco, Germany, S. Africa, Japan, India, and Turkey. Wow – truly these were fantastic cultural experiences!! The cadets will be presenting trip summaries (with pictures) at one of our November leadership labs – if anyone is interested in coming as a guest just give us a call and let us know.

Till next time . . . thanks for your great support!!

Respectfully,

*Lt Col Sandra S. Leiker*

## MOAA LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

### MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for June 22, 2007:

Former Spouse Lawsuit Rejected. The Supreme Court has refused to review a lower court's dismissal of a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act, which requires division of military retired pay with certain former spouses.

### MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for June 29, 2007:

Lots of Americans have "Support our Troops" bumper stickers, but war-zone leaders say the troops' real need is for free phone cards to help them keep in contact with their families. You can make a concrete difference for those on the front lines by visiting the website below to donate one or more phone cards through the Army/Air Force Exchange Service.  
[http://moaaonline.org/ct/Ddz\\_irK1YXEr/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Ddz_irK1YXEr/)

Also, don't forget that next week we celebrate our Nation's independence and honor all who have sacrificed so much to win and maintain it.

We hope you'll fly the Flag proudly, and celebrate and travel safely.

Immigration Fences Out Defense Bill. While the Senate was diverted by immigration, the Defense Authorization Bill slipped across the border into July.

Panel Would Re-open VA to All Vets. The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee has approved a bill that, among many other initiatives, would require the VA to stop restricting enrollment of "Category 8" veterans in the VA health care system.

Water Covers 70% of Earth - MOAA Lobbyists Cover the Rest. Continuing our efforts to bring our members the direct word from the horse's mouth, MOAA Government Relations Director Steve Strobridge went online this week to field members' questions.

**Wilmarth W.:** What is the status of eliminating the SBP insurance payments for us older retirees?

**Steve S.:** To be honest, Wilmarth, I'd have to say it's not looking great. We've been working with Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL), who will offer an amendment to add the paid-up SBP provision to the Senate defense bill next month. If that's successful, we'll have a couple of months to try to convince the House to agree. For each of the last two years, we've gotten the fix in the Senate bill, only to have it fall out during negotiations with the House. We're hoping for better luck this year, since this is really our last shot. You can help by using the alert on MOAA's web site ([http://moaaonline.org/ct/Jdz\\_irK1YXEc/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Jdz_irK1YXEc/)) to urge your senators to vote for the Nelson amendment.

**Don S.:** How about you make Congress pay social security like the rest of us!!!

**Steve S.:** Almost all members of Congress do pay Social Security, Don. The only exceptions are those who were elected before 1984, and their numbers are dwindling (and those folks have to make hefty contributions to their congressional retirement). Legislators' benefits pretty much track those of other federal employees. I suspect you probably read an e-mail somewhere that made outrageous claims about huge congressional benefits.



That e-mail has been floating around for years, and most of the information in it is bogus.

View the full chat on our Web Site.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/J7z\\_irK1YXEB/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/J7z_irK1YXEB/)

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for July 6, 2007:**

Toting Up the Numbers on Concurrent Receipt. With the Army having logged its 100,000th application for combat-related special compensation, let's add up how many disabled retirees have - and how many haven't - been granted at least some relief from the disability offset to retired pay.

Budgeteers Question Pay Raise Boost. A June report by the Congressional Budget Office questions whether there's any military "pay gap" that needs fixing.

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for July 20, 2007:**

Defense Bill Deferred. With the Senate deadlocked over Iraq redeployment timelines, consideration of any further amendments to the FY2008 Defense Authorization Bill has been suspended until September.

#### Possible TRICARE Data Compromise

SAIC announced a "security failure" today in the handling of TRICARE customer data. The company alerted MOAA that "uniformed service members, family members and others were at risk of potential compromise." The company said the situation was a "totally unacceptable failure on our part." SAIC said that "forensic analysis has not yielded any evidence that any personal information was actually compromised; however, the possibility cannot be ruled out." SAIC is notifying approximately 580,000 households (870,000 beneficiaries) of the incident.

The SAIC website contains additional information including a news release, questions and answers, and contact information.

MOAA is deeply troubled to learn of yet another potential breach of personal information of the uniformed services community. It is vital to the nation's security that the personal information of military families be protected at all costs. Additional updates will be provided through various MOAA media as information becomes available.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/3pz\\_irK1VRE-/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/3pz_irK1VRE-/)

#### VDDB Decides on Survivor and Disability Benefits

The Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission met this week in Washington, DC to tentatively decide on two highly debated topics: survivor benefits and concurrent receipt.

The commission expressed strong support for widows and widowers by endorsing an end to deduction of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation from Survivor Benefit Plan annuities, a position MOAA has pushed for years.

Yet when the discussion turned to concurrent receipt, the commission was deadlocked over extending concurrent receipt to disabled service members that had their careers cut short before reaching 20 years of service.

The Commission also validated years of MOAA and Military Coalition efforts by recommending an end to the

deduction of VA disability compensation from military retired pay, at least for members with more than 20 years of service. Specifically, the commission proposed expanding eligibility for Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) to retirees with 10- to 40-percent disability ratings and implementing full payment immediately (putting an end to the ongoing 10-year phase-in period).

But MOAA was disappointed that the Commission was deadlocked, by a 6-to-6 vote, on extending concurrent receipt rules to members forced into medical retirement before attaining 20 years of service.

Commissioner MG William Matz (USA-Ret) and Commissioner Butch Joeckel (USMC-Ret) voiced strong support for inclusion of Chapter 61 retirees, saying that failure to support this fix will give the impression that the commission has disregarded the cause of wounded servicemembers at Bethesda, Walter Reed, and other military hospitals who face premature medical retirement.

Both urged the commission to reconsider their inclusion. MOAA couldn't agree more.

#### First Things First

On July 19, MOAA sent a letter to the House of Representatives expressing concern about the relative funding priorities in legislation recently approved by the Veterans Affairs Committee.

Among other things, H.R. 760 would significantly increase U.S. veterans' benefits for Filipino veterans, including non-US citizens living in the Philippines, who fought with Allied Forces in World War II. H.R. 23 would authorize a \$1,000 monthly annuity to anyone who served any time with the Merchant Marine during World War II, or to such person's survivor if the person has since died.

While we honor those individuals' wartime service, MOAA believes there are much greater inequities that should be addressed first. If approved, compensation for a single month of Merchant Marine service in World War II would exceed that of many wounded, disabled, and career military World War II combat veterans and their survivors:

- \* A 20-year veteran who retired as an E-5 in 1955 receives \$900 in retired pay.
- \* The military pays a "Forgotten Widows" annuity of only \$212 per month to widows of World War II vets who served 20-30 years and died before 1974.
- \* The VA pays only \$901 a month to vets with a 60% service-caused disability.
- \* The House of Representatives, in the FY2008 Defense Authorization Bill, acknowledged the inequity of current law that deducts more than \$1,000 a month from SBP payments to survivors of members who died of service-connected causes, but indicated it could afford only a \$40 monthly payment to such widows as a first step toward reversing that penalty.

MOAA believes strongly that Congress has a fundamental responsibility to establish relative priorities, put first things first, and ensure that there is better proportionality between compensation and service and sacrifice rendered.

#### VA Secretary Resigns.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs James R. Nicholson announced Tuesday he had tendered his resignation to

President Bush with an effective date of no later than October 1. In making the announcement Nicholson said that he would turn 70 years old next February and "I feel it is time for me to get back into business, while I still can."

Nicholson assumed the job in February 2005. His early tenure was marked by controversy over exposure of veterans' personal data on a stolen laptop computer and the failure of the VA to anticipate and budget for large numbers of returning war veterans.

Subsequently, Nicholson sought a \$3 billion increase for VA care over the previous year, which Congress endorsed and increased even more.

Most recently, Nicholson chaired an interagency group to review care needs and delivery for wounded warriors, and has joined with the Secretary of Defense in forming top-level working groups to aggressively upgrade assistance to wounded members and families and ensure seamless transition of DoD and VA care.

### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for August 3, 2007:**

#### Medicare/TRICARE Fix Clears Key Hurdle

If you were among the more than 11,000 people who responded to MOAA's special legislative alert on Tuesday, you helped carry the day in the House of Representatives.

The good news is that the House passed legislation (H.R. 3162) on Wednesday, August 1, that would stop the 9.9% cut in Medicare and TRICARE payments to doctors that are scheduled to take place in January 2008 under current law.

Instead of this dramatic cut, the legislation would authorize modest increases in those doctor payments for 2008 and 2009. MOAA thinks these increases are essential if we want to prevent more doctors from refusing to see elderly and/or military patients.

The downside is that the House included the Medicare/TRICARE payment provision in a huge omnibus health care bill that would increase coverage of lower-income children under Medicaid, reduce payments to Medicare HMO plans, and a variety of other changes, some of which are controversial and have drawn a presidential veto threat.

The Senate version of the children's health care bill doesn't include the Medicare/TRICARE payment change, so there's no telling whether those provisions will stay in the final version of the bill that House and Senate leaders will be hammering out in September.

Some other issues of interest to MOAA members that were included in H.R. 3126:

- \* A gradual reduction in Medicare copayments for outpatient mental health services (from 50% to 20%);
- \* Elimination of Medicare copayments for most preventive care; and
- \* A two-year extension of current rules that allow increased Medicare coverage for "medically necessary" outpatient physical and speech therapy.

#### Commission Clarifies Disability Recommendations

Representatives from MOAA and other military and veterans' organizations met this week with executive staff members of the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors, who provided further

clarification of the Commission's proposals on benefit adjustments for combat-disabled personnel.

Of particular interest to the associations were the far-reaching recommendations that call for extensive restructuring of the Defense Department's disability evaluation system and VA disability compensation.

Service and family members have lodged several complaints over DoD's disability evaluation system as being overly complex and bureaucratic. The Commission's staff reiterated that their sweeping changes are intended to simplify the disability system. In particular, the commission proposes that DoD should get out of the disability rating process and only determine fitness to continue in service. Once that determination was made, it would be up to the VA to establish the disability ratings that would be used by both the services and the VA.

We reported last week that MOAA generally supported the report's recommendations; but had reservations about commission recommendations that would appear to base a disabled retiree's TRICARE eligibility on whether the disability was combat-related.

The commission staff clarified that that was not the Commission's intent. All of the recommendations were based on the Commission's charter, which was limited to the care of combat-wounded from Iraq and Afghanistan. The staff said commissioners support providing the same benefits to non-combat related disabled members and family members, but didn't address that explicitly because it wasn't part of their charter.

Our second major concern was with the Commission's proposed two-tiered VA disability compensation system, with one payment for reduced quality of life and another intended to offset lost earning potential. The commission staff said the quality of life payments would be provided for a lifetime without subject to deduction from military retired pay. But the earnings-replacement payments would cease at retirement age and be replaced by Social Security payments. In essence, the earnings-replacement payment would be means-tested.

On the one hand, MOAA recognizes that payment explicitly represents compensation for lost income may not be needed if no income is actually lost. The real issues would be who sets the income standard being compensated, how much that should be, whether there should be differentials for people at different stages of life, etc.

### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for August 10, 2007:**

More \$22 Drugs. DoD recently approved moving several cholesterol, prostate, blood pressure and acid reflux medications to the third tier, or \$22 copay.

#### Commission Breaks Deadlock Vote on Concurrent Receipt

Last month, the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission deadlocked on a vote to extend concurrent receipt eligibility to members forced into medical retirement with less than 20 years of service.

After considering additional information in this week's meeting, including strong arguments by commissioners MG William Matz, USA (Ret) and Butch Joeckel (USMC), the

commission reversed course, voting 12 to 1 that "Congress should eliminate the ban on concurrent receipt for all retirees and disability separations. Future priority should be given to Chapter 61s [medical retirees] with less than 20 years of service and greater than 50% service-connected disability and all combat disabled Chapter 61s."

MOAA couldn't agree more. This is a giant step toward resolving a major inequity in the current disability compensation structure and validates years of effort by MOAA and The Military Coalition to repeal the ban on concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation.

#### Bill Would Memorialize Military Spouses

When it comes to honoring the sacrifices and contributions that military spouses have made to national defense and our country, Rep. Thelma Drake (R-VA) intends to make sure there is no generation gap and that no spouse is left behind.

Last month, Rep. Drake introduced H.R. 3026, the Military Spouses Memorial Act of 2007, which would "establish in our nation's Capitol a memorial commemorating the selfless sacrifice of military spouses from 1776 to the present day."

The monument will be intended to recognize the strength and courage of all military spouses, including survivors, and tell their story to all generations.

MOAA and The Military Coalition are proud to support this important initiative. Please send a MOAA suggested message to urge your U.S. Representative to cosponsor Rep. Drake's bill. ([http://moaaonline.org/ct/6pz\\_irK12X8a/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/6pz_irK12X8a/))

#### TRICARE Physician Tax Breaks

Stagnant physician reimbursement rates paid by TRICARE over the past few years have made finding a physician who will accept TRICARE more difficult in many locations.

The State of Oregon has taken a novel approach to improve that situation for TRICARE patients. Governor Ted Kulongoski recently signed a new Oregon state law that will provide tax credits for doctors that see TRICARE patients.

Current TRICARE reimbursement rates are among the lowest paid by any insurer in the country. According to physician groups, current rates don't even cover their practice costs. One big problem is that TRICARE payment rates are tied to Medicare's, which will be reduced even further in coming years if the current Medicare rate-setting law isn't changed.

MOAA is grateful to the Oregon legislature and governor for taking this innovative initiative to support for the military community. We hope other states will follow suit, and we encourage MOAA chapters and councils to approach their state legislators about enacting similar initiatives.

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for August 17, 2007:**

##### Chat with MOAA's President

MOAA President, VADM Norb Ryan, Jr., USN (Ret), visited Iraq on August 2-4

([http://moaaonline.org/ct/Kpz\\_irK1sRiF/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Kpz_irK1sRiF/)) to talk with U.S.

military personnel at numerous locations, including traveling with a Stryker battalion in Baghdad, visiting an operations center, going to neighborhood markets, visiting wounded in a hospital, and talking to Iraqi citizens.

VADM Ryan will be online on Wednesday, August 22 from 12-1 pm EST to chat live with MOAA members about his trip. Please send your questions about his trip to [legischat@moaa.org](mailto:legischat@moaa.org) ahead of time, or log onto [http://moaaonline.org/ct/Zpz\\_irK1sRiK/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Zpz_irK1sRiK/) at the time and date above to view the chat.

#### Inflation Edges Down

A surprising mid-summer decrease in energy prices drove a downturn in the July Consumer Price Index (CPI), the measure used to determine the annual cost of living adjustments (COLAs) for military retired pay, Social Security, and other federal annuities.

On August 15, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced the July CPI value, indicating that inflation decreased 0.1% from the June figure. That means inflation has risen a cumulative 2.3% for the first 10 months of FY2007.

What does that imply for the 2008 COLA? In the past 30 years, the CPI only decreased twice between June and July (in 2001 and 2004). In both of those years, inflation rose only modestly during August and September.

That's a small sample size and makes for an iffy projection, but if that experience holds true for the next two months of 2007, we're likely looking at a 2008 COLA in the range of 2.3% to 2.5%.

([http://moaaonline.org/ct/Z1z\\_irK1sRi-/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Z1z_irK1sRi-/))

#### MOAA Flip-Flops on Drugs

After hitting "send" on last week's MOAA Legislative Update, we received quite a number of member inputs letting us know that we had inadvertently reversed the conditions that some of the drugs listed in the article "More \$22 Drugs" are used to treat.

We've provided a corrected version below, just for clarification. Thanks for your eagle eyes in keeping us on our toes!

"The acid reflux medications Prevacid, Zegerid, Protonix, and Aciphex will be moved to the third tier, leaving Prilosec and Nexium at lower copays. Even though it is not generic, Nexium will be offered at the generic copay level of \$3. These changes will take effect on October 24.

The blood pressure medications Avapro, Avalide, Benicar, and Diovan will move to the third tier effective November 21."

For a complete (and correct) version of the entire article, please visit MOAA's Web site.

([http://moaaonline.org/ct/Zdz\\_irK1sRiJ/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Zdz_irK1sRiJ/))



#### **REMEMBER:**

*We're still having "summer weather",  
so be sure to drink plenty of water  
and keep hydrated.*





# JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 18 September 2007**, at the Lawrence Country Club.  
Dinner cost is **\$20.00** per meal.

**The Program:** Richard Lariviere, K.U. Provost, will be our speaker.

**Social Hour:** 1800 hours

**Dinner:** 1900 hours

**The Menu:** *Chicken, baked potato, vegetable, rolls, salad, tea or coffee and ice cream*

Send your reservation and check payable to **Jayhawk Chapter MOAA**  
to arrive no later than **Thursday, 13 September 2007**, to:  
CAPT (Ret) Jim Cooper - 1115 Stone Meadows Drive, Lawrence, KS 66049-3961

**Dinner reservations are confirmed on Monday before the dinner.  
Cancellations, if necessary, should be made prior to Monday noon;  
otherwise, the Lawrence Country Club will charge us for those meals.**

If you have any questions, you may contact Jim at 842-7037 or John Halladay at 843-6184.

*cut here*

Yes, please make \_\_\_\_\_ reservations for me and my guests. (Spouse and other guests are welcome.)

The cost is \$20.00 per meal. I am enclosing a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for meal(s).

MG Clay Comfort Scholarship program contribution \$\_\_\_\_\_  
(Checks made out to "KU Endowment")

TOTAL: \$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

**IF YOU NEED A RIDE TO MEETINGS, PLEASE LET US KNOW HERE \_\_\_\_\_  
AND GIVE US YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_**

**TEAR OFF AND RETURN THIS FORM WITH A CHECK PAYABLE TO:  
JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA  
CAPT (Ret) Jim Cooper, 1115 Stone Meadows Drive, Lawrence, KS 66049-3961**

MOAA WEBSITE: [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org)

KANSAS COUNCIL WEBSITE: [www.kansasmooa.org](http://www.kansasmooa.org)

JAYHAWK CHAPTER WEBSITE: [www.jayhawkmoaa.org](http://www.jayhawkmoaa.org)

We greatly appreciate the many members who are now receiving the newsletter via e-mail. If you want to be added to the e-mail list, please let us know at [jwhalladay@sunflower.com](mailto:jwhalladay@sunflower.com)

## 2007-08 Jayhawk MOAA Calendar:

### 2007

Tuesday 18 September MOAA meeting

Tuesday 20 November MOAA meeting

### 2008

Tuesday 15 January MOAA meeting

Tuesday 18 March MOAA meeting



*Newsletter Editor  
Jayhawk Chapter, MOAA  
2403 Manchester Road  
Lawrence, KS 66049-1646*

***Remember  
to display the flag  
on  
Labor Day***