



# Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



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## May Program:

Our speaker will be KU Professor of Political Science Burdett A. Loomis who will speak on "Are We There Yet?"  
The Historic (and Interminable) 2008 Presidential Campaign."

★ ★ ★ ★  
**2006**  
**CHAPTER**  
Awarded 2007

## The President's Corner . . .

Dear Jayhawk MOAA Friends and Colleagues:

Like many of you, I am really looking forward to our May Dinner and Program. In addition to the camaraderie we always enjoy, Dave Darwin has lined up his fellow Distinguished KU Professor, Dr. Burdett Loomis, for the program. I have heard "Bird" several times on NPR, but never in person. Am interested in his take on the Fall National Election. Please invite a friend or friends to join you.



Speaking of joining, I hope each of you will make an effort to recruit one new member for our chapter this year. We picked up seven new members in 2007 and would like to add ten more in 2008. John Halladay and I are ready to assist you with the applications if you have someone in mind. Just call me at 864-0703 or John at 843-6184. Why not invite a prospective member to our May meeting?

Our stellar Marine, Erv Hodges, has done an unbelievable job in building up our General Clay Comfort Scholarship Fund. We would respectfully ask that you consider giving \$100 per year for this wonderful endeavor. You can space out your payments just like a donation pledge to any organization. Send your checks – made out to "KU Endowment" – to Jim Cooper.

One last item. Gary LaGrange, from our Flint Hills Chapter, has put together an admirable program called "Project, Help Us Learn, Give Us Hope." Essentially, it involves sending school supplies to US Army units in Iraq and Afghanistan for distribution to Iraqi and Afghan schools and children. I will tell you more about it at our May meeting and explain how we can help.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, thank you for your continued support of our Chapter. See you at LCC on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

*Respectfully,*

*Bernie*

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



## JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS

**Chapter Dues:** Don't forget that Chapter dues (\$20.00) were payable in January. At this writing we have 33 members who are delinquent. Please send your check to Jim Cooper, 1115 Stone Meadows Drive (66049) or call him (842-7037) if you do not intend to renew your membership.

Bonnie Ann Sheriff, granddaughter of **Don and Darlene Sheriff**, will receive a Doctorate of Physical Chemistry, June 13, from Caltech, Pasadena, CA. Bonnie was on a five year scholarship with additional financing while in attendance. She has been on loan to INTEL for the past two years. She received a BSc in Chemistry from KU, where she was a Goldwater Scholar her senior year. Bonnie has accepted a position with Grumman Aircraft in Colorado Springs.

Bonnie will wed Bryan Kean at the Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs, June 27. Bryan is a graduate of UCSB with a Masters of Electrical Engineering. He is a member of Raytheon's Airborne Laser Project team. The couple met when they were interns at IBM, San Jose, in the summer of 2002.

Don and Darlene will attend the wedding.

### From Herschel & Jacque Stroud:

Well, the news from here is all about the JAY-HAWKS, not our MOAA chapter, but the football and basketball teams. I missed the first Orange Bowl in January of 1948. I started KU in September of 1948. I knew that by playing in the KU band I would have the opportunity to go to a bowl game in the Band during my career at KU - NO, it did not happen. Twenty years later, Jacque and I went to the second Orange Bowl in January 1969. I count that as about 20 years between Orange Bowls. For that reason we went to the BCS Orange Bowl in January 2008, another 20 years. We are hoping that we live long enough, another 20 years, in order to go again!

Basketball star Clyde Lovellette was an ATO. I was a TKE. We both started KU in 1948. We had an English class together in old Fraser. We cheered and cheered for Clyde and the Hawks during the 1952 Championship. I did play in the KU marching band and in the Basketball band.

In 1986, I formed the Topeka Jayhawk Alumni Pep Band. The Band plays for the Hawks when they leave or arrive at Forbes Field. We played at Forbes for "Danny and the Miracles" in 1988. We played at Forbes for the 2008 edition of the Hawks, both football and basketball. Notice the 20 year cycle that seems to be occurring? The question really does arise, can we live that long?

### From Lawrence to San Antonio and Sicily in just Two Weeks! (From Jim Cooper)

Sandy and I have had quite a month of travel, thanks in part to our fabulous Jayhawks! In February, on faith and hope, we made reservations along with Lynn and Debbie O'Neal for flights and hotel in San Antonio for the Final Four, as the 'Hawks season seemed to be developing solidly. Our 'Hawks did indeed make it to the Final Four, and we headed on down to San Antonio on Saturday, April 5th.

As many of you know, San Antonio has a great downtown, which centers on the beautiful Riverwalk and the Alamo. The Riverwalk winds around the center of the city just below street level, and is lined with restaurants and stores. San Antonio has several large bases nearby, and is extremely military friendly – I was very impressed by the fact that several restaurants had signs at the door indicating "Military in Uniform Receive 50% Off!" On Saturday and Sunday there were numerous soldiers and airmen and their families mixing in with the crowds of blue-clad fans from the Final Four schools all over town – but it seemed to us that there were more Jayhawks by far! The Jayhawk Chapter was well represented, as we sat by Ed and Ann Phillips, and saw Jerry Nossaman, John Priddle, Jim and Judy Pottorff, and

Alan and Gail VanLoenen. Pretty much all of central downtown, which encompasses the Riverwalk, the Alamo, and the AlamoDome, is within walking distance, which made it easy to enjoy the weekend's activities.

The spirit in San Antonio was truly electric, and best of all was that, as far as our experience went, all the fans got along very well throughout the weekend. The entry into the AlamoDome was controlled by smiling Texas National Guardsmen, and getting in and out was orderly and pretty easy. The majority of seats, even the high ones (we were on the 3rd level) had good views of the game – we didn't need binoculars! – and it was easy to follow the action on the floor. At halftime of our game against North Carolina, Lynn and I stared at each other, dumbfounded; how could our Jayhawks, as much as we loved them, be absolutely dominating Dick Vitale's and ESPN's favored Roy's Boys? Yet, despite a bad scare when they closed to within four (4) points in the second half, the 'Hawks closed out the first game impressively, and the RiverWalk reverberated with the Rock Chalk chant far into the night.

We Old Folks left it to the students at 2 AM.

Sunday and Monday were full of excitement, and the KU and Memphis pep bands and cheerleaders led separate flotillas of boats around the River, stoking the fever pitch of the fans. The weather was great throughout the weekend, and as the title game approached, there was almost an air of unreality about it all – was this the same KU team that had lost that lackluster game to Oklahoma State?

The Title Game was the best one of the Tournament by far – I have to admit that I'd given up when our boys were down by nine points with less than two minutes to go – I was slumped in my seat, unable to watch any longer. Sandy never gave up, and she started pummeling me, yelling "Jim! Memphis is missing all their free throws! Get up!" Incredulous, I pulled myself together, and, as we all know, our Hawks pulled through in truly magical fashion, and Jayhawk Nation owned the town that night. We poured out of the AlamoDome and back down to the Riverwalk, where the various T-shirt shops were now selling (literally) hot-off-the-presses "Kansas NCAA Champion" t-shirts while advertising "All Memphis, UCLA, and UNC gear 50% off!"

We left San Antonio in great spirits with only the best of memories.

Well, long before the certainty of the Final Four had begun to develop, we'd planned a trip to Italy for mid-April. So, on Sunday, the 13th, just five days after returning from San Antonio, Sandy and I flew to Washington, D.C., met some old Navy friends whom we were stationed with in Sicily 25 years ago, and headed off for our first stop, the Cinque Terra.

The Cinque Terra is a group of five small seaside towns on the rugged northwest coast, between Genoa and La Spezia. The area is a national park, with a hiking trail between the five towns. We stayed in Rio Maggiore, the eastern-most town, and on our second day, we tackled the 11-kilometer, five-hour hike. We trained to Monterosso, at the west end of the trail, and then hiked to Vernazza – a pretty arduous two-and-a-half hour hike. After a (typically great) lunch, we did the lonely, slightly easier, two-hour trek to Corniglia. The next section was closed due to a landslide, so we trained from Corniglia to Manarola, and then finished with the easy 20-minute walk along the so-called "Lover's Trail" back to Rio Maggiore. The scenery along the hike was spectacular, and each village has its own character and feel. The Cinque Terra was new to us, but we thoroughly enjoyed our time there.

After another day exploring the individual towns, we flew off for Sicily, our old stomping grounds. We flew into Catania and rented a car – our friends bought an international GPS car navigation unit, which was VERY helpful. We found a great hotel, the Villa Paradiso, in Taormina, just

**John & Shirley Halladay** had the pleasure of attending the wedding of their Grandson, Lucas John Golden, to Julie Rebecca Clark in Little Rock, AR on 19 April.

north of the capital city of Catania, along the eastern side of the island. The hotel has great views of Mount Etna from all the rooms, and notably, from the rooftop restaurant. We were stationed at Naval Air Station Sigonella in the early 1980s, and "Sig", as the base is called, is just southwest of Catania, so we were back "home". Our houses were in separate villages up on the slopes of Mount Etna, so we had a nostalgic visit to our old houses, and revisited some old haunts. Although the area seemed more crowded (isn't that true anywhere after 25 years?) in many ways the area seemed unchanged, and that is the charm of Sicily: a rustic timeless beauty. There are some really great Greek and Roman ruins on the island, and we enjoyed revisiting the ancient Greco amphitheater in Taormina, where we enjoyed an impromptu performance by a visiting tenor.

After three great days in Sicily, our friends flew off to Spain and we flew north to Florence. It was our first time here as well, and we were very impressed by this great old Renaissance city. Florence has a beautiful architecture/Renaissance beauty/museum culture/Tuscan hillside beauty to it, far different than that of Sicily or Cinque Terra. The city sights are in close proximity, so walking is easy. We saw the great Uffizi and Accademia Galleries, and were frankly overwhelmed by the volume of art history – there is enough to see and do in Florence to keep one busy for days and weeks. The old Ponte Vecchio bridge, Michelangelo's statue of David, the Duomo cathedral, the various palaces – they all impress.

We flew in and out of Italy from the Pisa airport, so our last night we took the train from Florence to Pisa and spent the night. That proved ample time to visit Pisa's "Field of Dreams," which includes the Leaning Tower and the three other major Renaissance architectural sights in the vicinity.

The food in Italy is nothing short of superb – we never had a meal that was not excellent in taste or presentation, and the wine was all great as well. Italy is a very user-friendly country to visit, and there were lots of tourists in-country already. Most importantly, the Italians genuinely love Americans, which is as we remembered. They do go out of their way to welcome you, and they appreciate your attempts to speak Italian. The 19th was my birthday, and at lunch our friends relayed this bit of information to the owner of the Trattoria where we ate in Pedara, one of Mount Etna's hillside villages. By the end of lunch, Senora Pina was leading folks in a chorus of "Happy Birthday" to me, and she presented me with an espresso cup as a gift, as she found out I collect espresso cups. We thoroughly enjoyed our trip, and we made some great new memories to add to the great ones we have of our two years assignment there.

*[see pictures on Page 10]*

We got to meet and visit with Julie's parents and family. We also had chance to visit with our Grandson, as well as his Mother and Father, who live in Pearcy, AR.



## *Army News* *LTC John Basso*

### **Rock Chalk MOAA members,**

KU Army ROTC is rapidly concluding a busy Spring Semester. We have recently returned from our Joint Field Training Exercise (FTX) with K-State and Pitt State at Fort Riley. Our cadets did very well and clearly show significant leadership potential. One of the highlights for our cadets was their first chance to use the Close Combat Tactical Trainer which gives them a realistic view of maneuver warfare by having them man two companies worth of Bradley Fighting Vehicle and Abrams Tank simulators. Eleven of our junior cadets will use the FTX experience as their key stepping stone to the 31-day Leadership Development and Assessment Course this summer at Fort Lewis.

We are also sending seven sophomores to the Leaders Training Course at Fort Knox this summer to bring them up to the same level as those cadets who have already done two years of ROTC. The addition of these seven cadets along with a number of National Guard soldier/cadets coupled with a large Freshman class of 25-30, most of whom will be on four year scholarships, puts us in line to reach the 100 cadet mark next year and 110-120 cadet mark the following year. This kind of growth is vital for the Army and can directly be attributed to our terrific recruiting staff and to "influencers" like each of you. So please keep it up - we have plenty of scholarships and offer excellent leadership training.

The products of that leadership training will be swearing their oath to support and defend the Constitution this May. You are welcome to help us celebrate with these sixteen fine senior cadets

at our commissioning ceremony at 1000 on 19 May at the KU Union. Our soon to be 2LTs include:

Jessica Adkinson (Transportation)  
Mark Anderson (Armor/Signal)  
Virgil Barnard  
Lindsey Davis (Aviation)  
Steven Elliot (Military Intelligence)  
Daniel Flynn (Military Police)  
Matthew Fortier (Infantry)  
Sarah Fortier (Medical Service Corps)  
Jesse Hall (Field Artillery/Signal)  
Dallas Henry (Aviation)  
Peter Holmes (Transportation)  
Kristofer Johnson (Engineer)  
Jacob Keplar (Infantry)  
Ross Low (Armor)  
John Meier, and  
Kyle Sissom (Military Intelligence).

Finally, let me welcome our new cadre member, 1LT (P) Will McGreer.

**Our best to each of you,**

*LTC John Basso*



## *Navy News* *CAPT Thomas Arnold, USN*



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

The Spring semester is rapidly coming to a close and for many of our Midshipmen and Officer Candidates this means they will soon be commissioned as officers in the Navy or Marine Corps. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of May we will be commissioning eleven new officers – nine as Navy Ensigns and two as USMC Second Lieutenants. We are very proud of these young men and women and hope that some of you will be able to join us for the Joint Service Commissioning Ceremony on May 19th at 10 AM in the Kansas Union. Our guest speaker for this year's ceremony will be KU NROTC alumnus MajGen (Ret) Dave Richwine, USMC. These future officers are listed below:

Officer Candidate Cody Adams – a future Navy Pilot  
MIDN Michael Baker – a future Navy Surface Warfare Officer  
Staff Sergeant Buck Bradley – a future USMC Second Lieutenant

MIDN Jason Christenson – a future Navy Medical Officer  
MIDN Veronica Cooper – a future Navy Nurse  
Staff Sergeant Brian Felty – a future USMC Second Lieutenant  
MIDN Hunter Korbelik – a future Navy Pilot  
Officer Candidate Michael Lanier – a future Navy Nurse  
Officer Candidate Dustin League – a future Nuclear Submariner  
Officer Candidate Reid Mason – a future Navy Information Warfare Officer  
Officer Candidate Christopher Zeller – a future Nuclear Submariner

While our seniors have been busy preparing for graduation and their transition to active duty, the rest of the Jayhawk Battalion has been very busy this semester. Our USMC Option and Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Program students just finished a

demanding Warrior Weekend training program that is designed to prepare them for the challenges of Officer Candidate School. Five of our Navy Option Midshipmen and Officer Candidates traveled to South Bend, Indiana, to participate in the Notre Dame Leadership Conference. Over twenty students spent a recent weekend in Boulder, Colorado, participating in a grueling competition sponsored by the University of Colorado NROTC Unit that included marksmanship and endurance

sports events. This past week we assisted the KU School of Journalism in hosting a visit by CAPT John Kirby, the Public Affairs Officer for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. CAPT Kirby spent an hour and a half with students of all three ROTC Units, discussing his duties and the challenges facing the military today. We are also preparing for a number of future events,



## Air Force News

### LtCol Sandra Leiker, USAF

#### Hi, MOAA folks!

How is everyone doing? Should we skip the part where I complain about the weather and go right into a wrap-up of our recent events and activities? Sure – that sounds like a great plan. I love our training "schedule" in the spring so much – it seems to hold so much excitement and potential – for each class of cadets. Oh – before I go into that, let me mention our recent Dining In – which was a spectacular success! Our cadets met, in their uniform finery, on the evening of 12 April at the Eldridge Hotel for our traditional banquet. Col Ellsworth Tilburg, a fellow ROTC detachment commander (okay, okay – I know, he's from Mizzou, and we still welcomed him!) spoke as our guest, entertaining us with his thoughts on the traditions and future of the Air Force, and dispensing wisdom to the departing seniors. The evening wrapped up with informal "skits" from each class. Cadets, cadre and guests all seemed to have a fabulous time, despite having a "Tiger" for a guest and the taste of the "grog" (a foul beverage concoction used traditionally as a punishment for any that break the rules of the mess – I think this years' grog contained, for starters, tartar sauce, gummy worms and Campbell's Chicken and Stars soup ... you get the idea!) Most specially, this Dining In was the first one, in a number of years, to which we invited KU AFROTC alumni. The cadets made the Dining In the focal point of the "First in a While Alumni Weekend" (complete with Friday afternoon barbecue social) ... their goal was to contact as many alumni as possible and reestablish a tradition of inviting alumni back to celebrate with us and share their insights. We were joined by several fairly recent grads (one who flew a T-38 into Forbes Field on his way here!) but I should probably mention by name local Lawrencean and MOAA member – LtCol Stan Sneegas, who joined me, my staff, our guest speaker, and a cadet representative from each class, at the head table. I hope he had as much fun visiting with us as we did with him.

Break/break – note – since I arrived here, I have noticed that the cadets have been frustrated trying to keep the alumni database up to date. Since we don't really have the active duty network resources that we believe an alumni organization needs to flourish, we recently decided to try to get a few alumni officers to volunteer

including an Aviation Club Field Trip to Jacksonville, Florida, a "Dining In" Mess Night Dinner, and our annual Spring Awards Ceremony.

The Spring Awards Ceremony will be held on April 30th at 3:30 PM in the Jayhawk Room of the Kansas Union. This ceremony will recognize many of our Midshipmen and Officer Candidates for their outstanding performance this year. I cordially invite you to attend and wish to thank the Jayhawk Chapter of MOAA for their support to the Unit in the form of the Clay Comfort scholarship, which will be presented during this ceremony.

*CAPT Tom Arnold*

to take on formal roles in starting an "official" KU AF ROTC alumni organization. The cadets/detachment could effectively liaison with that organization without trying to keep tabs on everyone's information themselves. If anyone has any interest in getting involved in this, we'd love to hear from you.

Okay, back to the excitement of the spring semester ... the seniors are receiving their active duty orders, sharing news on where they are bound with family/friends/peers, and planning graduation and commissioning day celebrations. The juniors are getting ready to step into the shoes of the departing seniors...this week we held what we call "Wing Boards". Each junior cadet appears before a board of cadre instructors to share their vision for the future of the cadet wing and any improvements they wish to see implemented. They also get to express to us what leadership role they would like to hold next fall. It's really neat to see where they envision themselves and then, sometimes, encourage them to take on even more visible or challenging roles. The sophomores are ferociously preparing for summer field training camp (as is Capt Edmonds, who will return a second time as camp cadre!) They all have a mixed look of excitement and trepidation in their eyes. It's a strong class – they'll do great! Finally, the freshman are finally starting to "get it" – they are looking really sharp by now and volunteering to be a part of activities and extracurricular activities. Some are also looking forward to neat summer programs such as Space Ops Orientation, Hand-to-Hand Combative Training, and Academy Free Fall. Wow!

Before I sign off, I should remind you that our Spring Awards Ceremony is approaching. MOAA – you – the Jayhawk Chapter members – are the MOST wonderfully supportive contributors to our cadets and programs. Every year you invite/sponsor us and our cadets to attend programs and hear great guest speakers; you also provide a large number of awards and scholarships that help us motivate and retain the great young folks in our programs. I cannot thank you enough – but I can ask you to come out and join us – here are the details: 6 May 08 at 4:00 p.m. in the Big 12 Room in the Kansas Union (on campus) ... as always, we will start our ceremony with a formal flag retreat at the flagpole in front of the

Kansas Union and proceed inside for the awards. If you CAN make it let us know in advance so we can assign you a cadet escort. Call the main office at 864-4676 and ask for Capt Corey Edmonds. Hope to see you there – and thanks, as always, for the incredible support.

**Rock Chalk!**

*Lt Col Sandra S. Leiker*

## MOAA LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

### MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for February 29, 2008:

#### Guard-Reserve Caucus Breakfast

VADM Norb Ryan, USN (Ret.), MOAA President and MOAA Deputy Director, COL Bob Norton, USA (Ret.) represented the association at the annual House National Guard and Reserve Caucus breakfast Wednesday. The caucus helps to broker important readiness issues affecting the reserve forces in the legislative process.

MOAA was one of six Military Coalition (TMC) partners that sponsored the event. The featured speaker, LTG Steve Blum, USA, Chief of the National Guard Bureau noted that there's controversy about the recently released Commission on the National Guard and Reserves report but said it was a "good place to start the debate" on transforming the reserve forces for their 21st century operational missions at home and abroad. (MOAA endorses many of the report's findings but has expressed deep concern over the adoption of another study-group's recommendation to scrap the active duty retirement system and replace it with a deferred age-57 retirement for all active and reserve retirees and adopt "401k'-like" vesting at 10 years' service.)

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/c7z\\_irK1IXQz/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/c7z_irK1IXQz/)

### MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for March 7, 2008:

#### Economic Stimulus Rebate Rules

Important information has surfaced indicating that even those who don't have taxable income will have to file with the IRS to get their rebate.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/Mdz\\_irK1TXPa/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Mdz_irK1TXPa/)

Disability "Overhaul" Bill Introduced. A measure aimed at reforming the DoD and VA disability systems was introduced this week. The measure closely follows the recommendations of the Dole/Shalala Commission, which was established by the president in the wake of the Walter Reed scandal.

Webb Offers New GI Bill. Sen. Jim Webb (D-VA) has re-introduced a sweeping plan to increase educational benefits for Iraq - Afghanistan veterans.

### MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for March 14, 2008:

#### COLA Watch

The Consumer Price Index for the month of February jumped 0.3 percentage points over January's value. That puts cumulative inflation at 1.8% for the first five months of the fiscal year. At this time in 2007, cumulative inflation for the year was still negative. Go to MOAA's Web site for more information.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/9dz\\_irK1FRRS/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/9dz_irK1FRRS/)

#### House, Senate Approve Budget Resolutions

The FY2009 Budget Resolution squeaked through the House by a narrow 212-207 vote on Thursday, and the Senate approved its version by a 51-44 vote.

This key document affects every American, because it lays down spending limits that Congress agrees to abide by for the year. If the President, a congressional leader, or an association like MOAA is looking for any big legislative initiative, the required budget amount

needs to be accounted for within the budget resolution ceiling. Exceptions can be authorized, but it takes a 60% vote, and that can be very hard to come by in a sharply divided Congress, especially in an election year.

The separate House and Senate versions of the new budget resolution included many things of critical interest to the military and veterans community, including:

#### Key Panel: No Health Fee Increases

On Wednesday the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel met to discuss the future of military health care. Chairwoman Susan Davis (D-CA) expressed concern that TRICARE fee increases would cause beneficiaries to forego necessary treatment, worsening underlying conditions or making them untreatable.

Ranking Member John McHugh (R-NY) said he was disappointed with DoD's budget request that included these fee hikes. He voiced his intention to oppose them. McHugh stated, "I must say that I am surprised that the task force not only recommended similar fee increases but added an enrollment fee of \$120 for TRICARE For Life beneficiaries."

He went on to say that he was particularly concerned, especially during a time of war, that the place to start fixing the cost problems is not on the backs of the beneficiaries.

Dr. S. Ward Casscells, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, agreed that the goal should not be focused on beneficiaries leaving the TRICARE system because of fee hikes.

#### Veterans Panel Gets Earful from Families of Wounded

MOAA was present at a Senate Veterans Affairs Committee hearing, Tuesday, in which family members of wounded personnel testified about inefficiencies and inadequate communications, and an overall lack of coordination and assistance between DoD and VA. Agency experts then discussed their new joint programs designed to improve the process.

"I am educated, resourceful and tenacious, but I was totally lost," said N Carolina National Guard spouse Jackie McMichael, who has a masters degree in counseling. McMichael says her husband's physical and psychological injuries resulted in breakdowns, job losses, financial hardships, and family estrangement.

Spouses and parents need to know who to call and what signs to look for that might indicate problems in the post-deployment months, she said. "You cannot take one player off the team and train them and expect to win the championship," said McMichael. "You must train the entire team."

Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) agreed that problems still exist with inadequate services, deficiencies in coordination, and lack of early intervention.

"The VA doesn't see the human face behind the patients they are treating," said Senator Burr.

"Their idea of help was to send me the link to a brain injury website," said Robert Verbeke whose son Daniel Verbeke is still unable to eat or drink, but now speaks a few words. Verbeke says the system needs to focus more on care than cost.

Change and collaborative efforts are underway, said Dr. Lynda Davis, the Navy's deputy assistant secretary for military personnel and Kristin Day, the VA's chief consultant for case management and social work who lead a joint DoD/VA task force on recovery management.

In addition to improved tracking through treatment, recovery, rehabilitation and community reintegration, a web-based National Resource Directory outlining medical and non-medical services and a joint VA/DoD handbook for families are in the works, as well as a website entitled "My e-Benefits."

Committee Chairman Daniel Akaka (D-HI) said, "We need to adapt to meet the needs of the newest veterans."

MOAA agrees. While we applaud the progress made by the VA and DoD, MOAA believes that a permanent agency transition office is essential to true transformation and integration in DoD and VA.

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for March 21, 2008:**

##### Reducing Copays Saves Everyone Money

On March 19, DoD hosted a panel to discuss ways to reduce the overall cost of providing military medical benefits by removing financial and other barriers for preventive care of chronic conditions and by promoting healthy lifestyles. MOAA Deputy Director for Government Relations CDR John Class (USN-Ret) sat on the panel along with Congressional, defense, and health industry experts.

##### As I See It: Dreaming Of Unfunded Military Personnel Requirements By Col. Steve Stobridge (USAF-Ret), Director, MOAA Government Relations

It's more than gratifying that Air Force leaders are now letting the Administration and Congress know that the Air Force needs more manpower than is called for in the FY2009 budget.

The only question is, "What took so long?"

Every year, Congress solicits from the services a list of unfunded requirements that the Administration couldn't or wouldn't let them squeeze into the official defense budget submission.

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for March 28, 2008.**

Frequent military moves often pose significant problems for children of military families in completing school requirements on time.

To help, some states have passed an interstate compact to promote cooperative policies in eligibility, enrollment, placement and graduation for military children. We're asking MOAA councils, chapters, and individual members to press their state governments to address this need.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/zdz\\_irK1azGJ/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/zdz_irK1azGJ/)

Top Five Member Questions. This week, we asked MOAA's member service representatives what kinds of questions our members are asking them most frequently. Check out the answers to the top five questions on MOAA members' minds.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/zpz\\_irK1azGK/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/zpz_irK1azGK/)

Has the Shingles vaccination SNAFU been fixed yet? I'm being required to pay for almost the whole thing out of pocket!

TRICARE does cover the vaccine, but TRICARE deductibles and copays will apply for TFL users. That means that retirees who get the vaccine early in the year, before they've met their annual deductible will pay some or all of the cost of the benefit. MOAA believes preventive care such as this vaccine should be exempt from any deductible or copay, and has recommended that to both the Defense Department and Congress. At the very least, it should be covered as a pharmacy issue rather than a health care service, so that it would only have a \$3 or \$9 copay and be exempt from the deductible.

##### Age-62 Widow's Tax Is History

The infamous Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) age-62 "widow's tax" will finally be eliminated as of April 1, 2008.

April 1 marks the end of the Social Security offset and a significant improvement to a critical benefit. SBP annuitants who are drawing

Social Security benefits should see an increase in their May 1 SBP checks (which is payment for April) to reflect 55% of the deceased retiree's covered retired pay.

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for April 4, 2008:**

##### Military Will Remove Social Security Numbers from Military IDs

The Department of Defense announced this week that it plans to remove Social Security Account Numbers (SSAN) from military identification cards by the end of 2010. Instead, the cards will display only the last four digits of the SSAN.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/Tdz\\_irK1SRHG/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Tdz_irK1SRHG/)

##### MOAA Storms Hill for Troops, Survivors, Retirees

MOAA Council and Chapter Presidents from the 50 states and Puerto Rico, accompanied by members of the national Board of Directors and headquarters staff, swarmed Capitol Hill on April 2 to visit representatives' and senators' offices on key MOAA legislative initiatives.

This year, the "Hill-stormers" focused on three main issues, supporting efforts to:

- Oppose disproportional TRICARE fee increases proposed by Defense leaders
- Eliminate unfair compensation penalties imposed on thousands of disabled retirees and military survivors
- Increase the 2009 military pay raise above the 3.4% proposed in the President's budget.

MOAA representatives carried a wealth of information supporting those goals, including two information brochures on why it's unfair to double or triple military retiree health care fees and illustrating the fixes needed to eliminate survivor benefits and concurrent receipt inequities.

MOAA Hill-stormers received very positive feedback from most legislators, and we've already seen a jump in the number of cosponsors for MOAA-supported bills on these topics. Check your representatives' and senators' cosponsorship status for the bills listed below:

- \* H.R. 579 and S. 604 - Protect against disproportionate health fee increases
- \* H.R. 1589, H.R. 1927, and S. 935 - Repeal the SBP-DIC offset
- \* H.R. 333, H.R. 303, and S. 439 - Eliminate remaining offsets of retired pay

You can enhance MOAA's Hill-storming results by entering your ZIP code in the applicable box for each bill to send your legislator a MOAA-suggested "please cosponsor" or "thank you for cosponsoring" letter, as applicable.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/Qpz\\_irK1SRHo/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Qpz_irK1SRHo/)

##### MOAA and AMA Join Forces

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/Tpz\\_irK1SRH-/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/Tpz_irK1SRH-/)

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for April 11, 2008:**

##### TRICARE Supplement Law Clarified

On March 28, DoD published a proposed regulation establishing rules on what employers can and can't do for employees who choose to use TRICARE rather than employer-sponsored health plan(s).

The new law bars such practices.

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for April 18, 2008:**

Mental Health: Not Just a DoD/VA Issue. Two events this week highlighted the challenges surrounding mental health for military members and their families and for DoD and the VA. A U.S. Medicine Institute for Health Studies roundtable and a RAND report both acknowledged the most critical issue facing DoD and the VA is the nation-wide shortage of mental health providers.

Chambliss Champions Reserve Retirement Fix. Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), who last year brokered the first upgrade to the reserve retirement system in over 60 years, has introduced a measure to credit reservists' active duty time served after September 11, 2001 for purposes of reducing their retirement eligibility age.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/ddz\\_irK1wmYM/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/ddz_irK1wmYM/)

#### The Military Coalition (TMC) Gets Attention of Senate Personnel Panel

On April 16, MOAA's Col. Steve Strobbridge (USAF-Ret) and several other representatives of The Military Coalition were invited to testify before the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee on legislative priorities for FY2009. The association representatives were the only witnesses at this special quality-of-life hearing.

Chairman Ben Nelson (D-NE) offered a positive initial statement, indicating the subcommittee's great sensitivity to the tremendous stresses imposed on currently serving members and families and the need to ensure fair treatment for those who have completed careers. He indicated the subcommittee is not sympathetic to the large TRICARE fee increases proposed by the Administration.

Strobbridge's portion of the Coalition testimony focused on health care issues, highlighting that DoD-proposed retail pharmacy increases would make military pharmacy benefits worse than most civilian plans -- charging military beneficiaries \$15 for medications any civilian can get at Wal-Mart for \$4.

For Guard and Reserve members, he proposed authorizing an option to have the government subsidize continuation of the civilian employer's family health insurance coverage during periods of active duty.

When Sen. Nelson asked Strobbridge what the Coalition would do to address TRICARE fees, Strobbridge urged the committee to adopt Sens. Lautenberg's (D-NJ) and Hagel's (R-NE) bipartisan S. 604, which would specify in law that military health and retirement benefits are the primary offset to the arduous conditions of a service career, recognize that military people pay very large in-kind premiums for their health care through extended service and sacrifice, and specify that the percentage fee increase in any year should not exceed the percentage increase in military compensation.

#### MOAA Testifies on GI Bill, Warrior Protections

The House Subcommittee that oversees veterans benefits, reemployment rights for reservists, and financial protections for deploying troops received testimony on a number of legislative proposals at an April 16 hearing. MOAA's COL Bob Norton (USA-Ret) testified.

A highlight of the hearing was the discussion on subcommittee Chairwoman Rep. Stephanie Herseth-Sandlin's (D-SD) bill, H.R. 5684, to hike Montgomery GI Bill benefits. MOAA described the bill in last week's Legislative Update.

COL Norton expressed MOAA's endorsement of H.R. 5684, which would raise monthly GI Bill rates for full-time study from \$1,101 per month to \$1,450 and create a \$500 living expenses stipend.

But Norton pointed out that the bill should also include language to permit reservists to aggregate credit for each tour of active duty served in the war on terror. Currently, reservists only accrue GI Bill credit for their single longest tour of duty, unless they serve a full 36 months of active service. Even in that case, they are limited to just 80% of the benefit level authorized for active duty troops.

House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Bob Filner (D-CA) spoke at the hearing in support of his own bill to integrate reserve and active duty GI Bill benefits under the same law. Currently, active duty benefits are under the purview of the Veterans Affairs Committee and reserve benefits come under the Armed Services Committee. While active duty benefits have risen in recent years, reserve benefits have stagnated.

Full committee Ranking Member Steve Buyer (R-IN) said he wanted to work with Herseth-Sandlin and Filner to find an "equity fix" for activated reservists. Herseth-Sandlin acknowledged that there are "lots of options on the table" for the GI Bill, including Rep Harry Mitchell's (D-AZ) H.R. 5740, which is similar to Sen. Webb's Senate bill and has captured 209 cosponsors in just a week. MOAA supports that legislation as well.

Norton also gave MOAA's endorsement to proposals to shore up financial and reemployment rights for service men and women, including:

- \* H.R. 3298 (Rep. Murphy, D-PA), which would allow a member on deployment or PCS orders to cancel a cell phone or similar "personal services" contract without financial penalty.
- \* H.R. 4883 (Rep. Filner, D-CA), that would protect a returning servicemember for one year from a mortgage foreclosure or property seizure action.
- \* H.R. 3393 (Rep. Davis, D-AL) would strengthen reemployment rights protections
- \* H.R. 3798, (Rep. Hayes, R-NC) would authorize reemployment rights to National Guard members performing federally funded missions on state active duty orders (Title 32).
- \* H.R. 4539 (Rep. Steve Buyer, R-IN) would increase the maximum VA mortgage loan guarantee amount, among other things.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/ddz\\_irK1wmYM/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/ddz_irK1wmYM/)

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for April 25, 2008:**

##### MOAA Congressional Charter

Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) and Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) have sponsored companion bills that would establish a Congressional charter for MOAA in public law. Please send a message to your legislators asking them to cosponsor this important initiative.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/vpz\\_irK1cXYe/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/vpz_irK1cXYe/)

Find out more information about what a Congressional charter means for MOAA.

[http://moaaonline.org/ct/51z\\_irK1cXYd/](http://moaaonline.org/ct/51z_irK1cXYd/)

##### Retro Payments Progress Continues.

DFAS and the VA are making progress in eliminating the backlog of retirees' accounts that qualify for CRSC or CRDP and are due retroactive compensation. But it's not an easy process.

##### Senate Clears Vets' Benefits Bill

A contentious debate that reached back to World War II was resolved for one chamber, at least, on Thursday. The Senate passed S. 1315, the Veterans' Benefits Enhancement Act of 2007, a bill that includes a number of important upgrades to veterans' insurance, compensation, and other benefits.

The only hot-button issue was a provision that would authorize \$220 million to increase and expand VA benefits for Philippine Scouts who reside in the Philippines and served alongside American troops in WWII. The change deems their service to be service on active duty in the US armed forces for VA benefits purposes. Many military and veterans' groups, including MOAA, objected to this provision, arguing that US veterans and their survivors who suffer significant inequities should have greater priority for these funds than foreign nationals residing outside the country, however meritorious their actions in WWII.

The House has not yet completed action on a similar bill, HR 760, which contains even more generous benefits for Filipino veterans of WWII.

***Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.***





# JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 20 May 2008**, at the Lawrence Country Club.  
Dinner cost is **\$20.00** per meal.

**The Program:**

Our speaker will be KU Professor of Political Science Burdett A. Loomis who will speak on "Are We There Yet?" The Historic (and Interminable) 2008 Presidential Campaign".

**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 **13 May 2008**, 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).

**2008 Dues (\$20.00)** \$\_\_\_\_\_

Clayton L. Comfort Award program contribution \$\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Separate check 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 are still looking for members who can/will receive the Newsletter via e-mail.

Some of you may have changed carriers and are now able where you were not before.

If you can handle it via e-mail, please let us know at

[jwhalladay@sunflower.com](mailto:jwhalladay@sunflower.com)

## 2008 Jayhawk MOAA Calendar:

### 2008

Tuesday	20 May	MOAA meeting	Tuesday	16 September	MOAA meeting
Tuesday	15 July	MOAA meeting	Tuesday	18 November	MOAA meeting

### *Pictures from the Coopers' San Antonio/Sicily/Italy escapades*



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***One Powerful Voice.®***

*For every officer at every stage of life and career.*

*We wish each of you*  
*safe travels on Memorial*  
*Weekend.*