



Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



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November Program:

Our guest speaker will be Major General (Ret) David A. Richwine, former Chief Information Officer and the Director of Intelligence at Hqtrs., U. S. Marine Corps

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2003/2004/2006

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2005/2007/2008

The President's Corner . . .

Dear Jayhawk MOAA Friends and Colleagues,

November is a special month for all of us who have served our great nation. A time to recall with pride cherished comrades and far away places.

So many historically significant military-related events have occurred in November. The US Marine Corps was established on November 10, 1775. President Abraham Lincoln delivered what was to become known as his Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863. The Armistice ending World War I occurred on November 11, 1918. US Forces had their baptism of fire in WW II in the European Theater with landings in North Africa on November 8, 1942. The Chinese Communist came across the Manchurian border on Thanksgiving Day in 1950, radically altering the complexion of that conflict. And, the first large scale battle of the Vietnam War – pitting US troops against North Vietnamese regulars – took place in November of 1965 in the Ia Drang Valley.

Two of those days having particular meaning to us are the Marine Corps Birthday and Veterans Day (originally Armistice Day). Both of these events are highlighted elsewhere in this Newsletter. If you can, try and attend the ceremonies at the Dole Institute of Politics plus the Air Force ROTC sponsored event at KU on November 7th. Erv Hodges, Barbara Ballard and the Air Force ROTC cadets have worked hard to make each of these an inspiring experience for veterans.

We will top off these celebrations with our Dinner Meeting on Veterans Day at the Lawrence Country Club. It will be NAVY ROTC Night with Captain Tom Arnold's young charges providing the color guard and several of his cadre and students joining us. Major General (Ret) Dave Richwine will be our guest speaker. This is most appropriate since General Richwine – a distinguished and highly decorated Marine Corps veteran – is a graduate of KU and our Navy ROTC Program.

Finally, a nice representation of veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan who are enrolled in Graduate Study at KU as part of the Wounded Warrior Program will attend our Dinner Meeting.

Thank you again for your continued help and support. We look forward to being with you on Veterans Day – Tuesday November the 11th – an evening of comradeship – on a truly special day for all of us

Very Respectfully,

Bernie



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1 November 2008

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*** Reservations should be sent to Jim Cooper by 6 November**



JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS

TAPS



Funeral services for **LTC Lewis Jerome Joler**, 88, Lawrence, were 15 September at Warren-McElwain Mortuary. Graveside services followed on 17 September in Pleasant Hill Cemetery in Concordia. LTC Joler died 11 September at Pioneer Ridge Healthcare in Lawrence.

He was born Jan. 10, 1920, in Waterville, ME, the son of Napoleon and Lumina Jolin. He graduated from Lawrence High School in Fairfield, ME, in 1937 and later attended St. Benedict's College in Atchison for two years. He moved from Concordia to Lawrence in 1985.

Mr. Joler joined the U.S. Army in 1942. He fought in the Pacific Theater during World War II and saw duty at Saipan. After the war he remained in the U.S. Army Reserves and retired as a lieutenant colonel in 1971.

He worked for Sears, Firestone and Corn Products before opening Joler Real Estate and Insurance in 1956, all in Concordia. He worked with his wife in their real estate/insurance business for almost 30 years in Concordia and Lawrence before they retired in the early 1990s. He was also a builder and developer.

He married Charlotte Joyce Carbutt on Jan. 22, 1944. She survives, of Lawrence. Other survivors include a daughter, two sons, a brother, seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

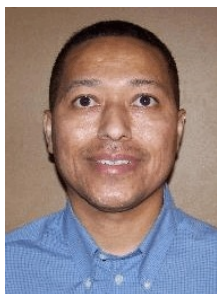
Memorial services for **Commander Michael Scott Harrington**, 45, Lawrence, were held at Fort Leavenworth Memorial Chapel on 20 September. CDR Harrington died Saturday, 13 September, in St. Louis.

He was born April 1, 1963, in Norman, OK, the son of W.G. and Sandra Cannon Harrington. He graduated from Lahoma High School in Lahoma, OK, in 1981 and attended Oklahoma State University. He received a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering from Kansas University, a Master of Arts in economics from the University of Oklahoma and a Master of Science in national security strategy from the National War College in 2006. He moved to Lawrence in 2006 and became a Jayhawk MOAA member earlier this year.

CDR Harrington enlisted in 1983 and was selected for the Nuclear Enlisted Commissioning Program in 1985. He was commissioned in 1988 and trained as a nuclear submarine officer aboard the USS Kentucky as a junior officer, the USS Salt Lake City as the engineering officer and the USS Chicago as the executive officer. He also served at the U. S. Strategic Command in Nebraska, and on the Pacific Fleet Nuclear Propulsion Examining Board and the Chief of Naval Operation's Deep Blue staff. In 2006, he was assigned to the teaching staff at Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth.

CDR Harrington was an avid fan of the KU Jayhawks and enjoyed restoring his home in Lawrence.

He married Brenda Bergdall on May 24, 1987, in Mena, OK. She survives, of the home. Other survivors include a daughter, a brother, a sister, his parents-in-law, four nieces, two nephews and an uncle.



LCDR Gregory Ballenger, 36, passed away in Corpus Christi, TX, on 26 September after a prolonged battle with cancer. Greg was born in Chilkok, Kyongpuk-Do, Korea, on 20 May 1972, to Harvey Masters, Jr., and Ok Kim Kun. He was a 1990 honor graduate of Ross Sterling High School in Houston, TX, and joined the Navy after graduation.

While on active duty, he was offered the opportunity in 1993 to attend Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, TX, where he received a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering with a minor in Math. In 2003, Greg's outstanding job performance allowed him to participate in a Supply Corps Internship Program in Petroleum Management at Naval Station Pearl Harbor, a program only offered to outstanding junior officers in the field.. In 2006, Greg was once again offered the opportunity by the U. S. Navy to further his education and was attending Graduate School at K.U. at the time of his death. As a result of his dedication and continued drive during his illness, Greg will be awarded a Master of Business Administration in Petroleum Management posthumously.

Greg is survived by his wife, Kimberly, and his children, Greilan and Gerainz, of Lawrence. Funeral services were held in Corpus Christi, and burial in Cuero, TX.

**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.**

Condolences to Kay and Jim Henry on the loss of Kay's mother, Margaret Swafford, who passed away 20 October, at Pioneer Ridge Retirement Community. Mrs. Swafford served as assistant dean of admissions and records at Hutchinson Community Junior College from 1961 to 1976 and assistant registrar at Sterling College from 1977 until she retired in 1980. Services will be held at the First United Methodist Church at 10:30 a.m., Monday, 27 October, followed by burial at Pioneer Cemetery.

Comfort Scholarship:

As you make your final 2008 gifts to deserving charities don't forget the Comfort Award Fund. The fund is growing slowly and we expect to award another \$1,500 this Spring to outstanding young leaders. Your contributions will make this happen.

The Board of Directors is considering a Memorial Day Golf Tournament in 2009 to support the Comfort Fund. More details will be forthcoming as the project develops. We will need your help in obtaining sponsors and helping with the tournament as well as your 2009 contribution.

Veterans Day Program - A Tribute to Veterans, USO Style:

A special invitation is extended to all Veterans and their families for An Evening with *The Moonlight Serenade Orchestra* for your listening and dancing pleasure and a salute to Veterans from KU ROTC Cadets, Sunday, November 9, 5-8 p.m., at the Dole Institute of Politics. Enjoy the WWII era music, hors d'oeuvres, beverages and friends. Admission is free, but **reservations are required**. Please RSVP by November 5th at 785-864-4900 or e-mail doleinstitute@ku.edu.

Marine Corps Birthday - Monday, November 10:

Marines, Marine Veterans and friends are invited to attend the 233rd anniversary of the founding of the U. S. Marine Corps at 10:30 a.m., Monday, November 10, at the Dole Institute of Politics, 2350 Petefish Drive. The Lawrence High School Chorale will participate by singing the National Anthem and the Marine Corps Hymn. Retired Major General David A. Richwine will be the featured speaker. General Richwine, a Kansas University graduate, retired after serving at Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps as the Corps first Chief Information Officer and the Director of Intelligence.



Army News *LTC John Basso*

Rock Chalk MOAA Friends,

The start of Fall finds the Army ROTC program typically busy. The battalion recently returned from Fort Riley where we did our Fall semester 48-hour field training exercise. To some, it probably seemed like 96 hours. We packed two night land navigation courses, one day land navigation course, twenty-four evaluated squad training lanes, a ruck march, M-16 qualification, and a four-hour Bradley and Abrams Tank simulated maneuver training exercise over Fort Irwin's Mojave Desert terrain in the Close Combat Tactical Trainer into those 48 hours. The cadets performed exceptionally well.

We are hoping their academic skill matches their military skill as we collect mid-semester grade reports. For some, it clearly does. Cadet Brett Weir, with a 4.0 GPA in Nursing at the Baker School of Nursing, was recently awarded one of two national AUSA scholarships. Cadet Frances Glass, with a 3.67 GPA in Engineering, was recently awarded the national USAA scholarship and flown to Washington, D.C. to receive her award. 2LT Virgil Barnard, with a 4.0 GPA in International Relations and ranked #5 in his ROTC cohort out of over 4,000 cadets, won the Sibberson Award as Washburn

University's Valedictorian and is now competing for the Marshall Scholarship. These three cadets represent the excellence of your Jayhawk Battalion.

Our semester remains busy with plenty more training coming up, including the Ranger Challenge Competition at Camp Dodge, Iowa. You can also find us working hard to maintain the traditions of the Armed Forces. Perhaps you will see us in action doing color guard at KU, Washburn, MidAmerica Nazarene, Haskell, or Saint Mary's; if not, and if you want to help us celebrate the excellence of those who have gone before, please join us at the Military Science Building as we induct MG Steve Reeves, COL (R) Jim Thomas, COL Richard Hayes, and CPT Thomas Hewitt (KIA-Vietnam) into the Jayhawk Battalion Alumni Association Wall of Fame on Saturday, 25 October at 0900.

Our Best to All,

LTC John Basso



Navy News

CAPT Thomas Arnold, USN



Greetings from the Jayhawk Navy!

Regrettably, I must begin this entry with the sad news that one of our Navy Post-graduate students and fellow Jayhawk MOAA members, LCDR Gregory Ballenger, passed away on September 26th after a prolonged illness. Greg was a Supply Corps Officer obtaining a Petroleum Management MBA here at KU. Greg's wife Kimberly and his children, Greilan and Gerainz, can be very proud of Greg's patriotic service to the U.S. Navy and to his nation. His many accomplishments were highly respected within the Supply Corps community, and all of those who have served with him over the course of his outstanding Navy career will miss him deeply as a friend and colleague. We all feel a great personal loss at his passing. Please join me in expressing our deepest condolences to Greg's family.

The Battalion has had a busy Fall schedule. Highlights include an intensive day of leadership training at KU's Adams Campus Challenge Course near Clinton Lake, a Battalion drill competition, the annual Fall Dance, and color guard support for numerous events ranging from KU football games to Dole Institute programs to the National Navy League Convention in Kansas City. One of the highlights of the semester thus far has been the promotion of our current Battalion Commanding Officer, Shawn Ridings – a Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Program (MECEP) student – to the rank of Gunnery Sergeant. We will finish out the semester by commissioning one midshipman, future Ensign

Jonathan Weishaar, who will be designated a Navy Pilot trainee. Although we are only producing one new officer from KU NROTC this semester, I will be traveling back to Officer Candidate School in Newport, RI, in early November to commission my son, John, as an ensign in the Navy Supply Corps. As you can imagine, my wife, Francie, and I are very proud to see our son continue a family tradition by becoming the third generation to be commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Navy.

In closing, we have a couple of announcements regarding members of the NROTC Unit staff. First of all, please join me in congratulating Naval Science Instructor and fellow Jayhawk MOAA member, LT Juri Groenland, on his marriage to Sherri Hobbs on the 10th of November in Charleston, SC. We wish them all the happiness in the world! Unfortunately, we are also saying goodbye to a member of the staff. Ms. Amanda Reasoner, our front office secretary, will be leaving us for another position at KU. We will miss Amanda and can't thank her enough for all she has done for the Unit over the past two years. Please join me in welcoming Amanda's replacement Ms. Tamara Horner of Lawrence.

CAPT Tom Arnold

Air Force News

LtCol Gena Stuchbery, USAF



Greetings MOAA!

First, a hearty thank you for hosting Det 280 at AF Night. The meal was awesome, the company lively, and Coach Snyder – inspiring. The cadets and cadre enjoyed a wonderful evening! Thanks so much for your hospitality.

Well, the Fall semester is now in full swing. We've completed midterms, our PFA (Physical Fitness Assessment) and a Field Exercise. The new cadre is settling in to our detachment battle rhythm and our newest crop of senior cadet wing staff is flexing their muscles.

On 4 October, the cadets were treated to a Field Exercise at Clinton Lake, courtesy of the upper class. Fifty plus cadets were placed in two teams tasked to find, secure,

and maintain a forward operating base consisting of a helicopter landing zone (LZ), casualty collection point, and security perimeter. The primary training objectives were: Air Base Defense/Force Protection (ABD/FP), Self Aid/Buddy Care (SABC), UXO Handling, and C2. While one team was unable to secure the landing zone, all were able to practice leadership, land navigation, and basic tactical skills, translating classroom preparation into hands-on application. The weather was perfect and it was a great day to don face paint and mix it up a little!

Our Fall PFA – the first major test of our freshman class – also went well, completed in spite of the weather on

14 October (just in time for the Fall Break). Pre-assessment nerves were quickly replaced by high-fives and celebration as all completed the challenge. The stage was set among our elite fleet feet for the upcoming Warrior Challenge which will determine best athlete bragging rights. Good luck to all!

On the good news front, the det was proud to tack on TSgt Kip Gomez' new stripes, effective 1 October. His wife, Jennifer, and sons Nathan and Andrew were on hand to do the honors in front of the entire cadet wing. And on 17 Oct, the Air Force welcomed its newest second lieutenant with the commissioning of Matthew Booth. Lt Booth will be heading to Wright-Patterson AFB (by way of Maxwell) where he'll be assigned to the AF ISR Agency. Congratulations, TSgt Gomez and 2Lt Booth – way to go!

While we've achieved some high points thus far, there have also been lows. Most notably, the detachment was sad to say goodbye to SSgt Neil Hockenbarger, who passed away 2 Oct 08 as the result of injuries sustained in a vehicle accident. His wife Tiffany was with him and escaped with very minor injuries. Neil was one of those special people, selected from among his peers through a tough competitive process to attend KU to complete his undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering and receive his commission through OTS. The Airman Education and Commissioning Program selects only the best folks pursuing the technical degrees we need, and Neil garnered the highest recommendations from his chain of command at Tinker AFB, where he served as an aircraft

maintenance specialist. SSgt Hockenbarger was laid to rest in Leavenworth National Cemetery on 8 October, with full military honors. Though we only knew Neil a short time, having arrived in August, he will be missed. Please keep the Hockenbarger family in your prayers.

Det 280 will also bid farewell to Ms Tina Williams, our administrative associate, who will move on to pursue other opportunities 1 November.

Looking ahead, Det 280 is proud to host an AT-38C Talon 4-ship from Randolph AFB for this weekend's Homecoming game against Texas Tech. Capt Bryan "Jaws" Meek—KU class of 2000 – will lead his team from the 435th FTS Deadly Black Eagles in a flyover to kick off the event. AIRPOWER!

Finally, we'd like to invite the MOAA to our annual KU Joint Service ROTC Veteran's Day Ceremony and 24-hour Vigil beginning 7 November. The event will consist of a formal flag retreat at 4 pm in front of Strong Hall on campus (Jayhawk Blvd) followed by a presentation by Maj (Ret) Adrian Lewis in Budig Hall (Room 130). The community is welcome to attend; please RSVP your intention to join us to Cadet Koenig at phone 314-495-8699, email kumedgrl@ku.edu.

Have a great fall!

Lt Col Genia Stuchbery

MOAA LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

This is a summary of the many items MOAA produces each week on legislative activities. Those who have e-mail receive the full Legislative Updates each week.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for August 29, 2008:

Carter Pushes Spouse Bill. Military spouses who are tired of changing their voting residence, driver's license and income tax payments after every military-directed move have a champion in Rep. John Carter (R-TX).

Carter's new bill, H.R. 6070, is intended to solve these problems by extending Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act coverage to include military spouses along with servicemembers. If enacted, it would let spouses select the same domicile as their servicemember, consistent with the state's domicile eligibility requirements.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for September 5, 2008:

MOAA Federal Charter Update. Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL) plans to attach his bill (S. 2504) to authorize a federal charter for MOAA when the full Senate takes up its version of the FY2009 Defense Authorization Act over the next few weeks. But House endorsement of any Senate action is uncertain and we need MOAA members to weigh in.

MOAA Federal Charter Update

MOAA members are often surprised to learn that unlike almost every other military and veterans' organization, MOAA does not have a federal charter. A charter essentially is public acknowledgement that a particular group - in this case, MOAA - serves the public interest. MOAA is seeking a charter to recognize our members' service to the nation and to the community. In addition, a federal charter is needed by some MOAA councils for admission to state-level veterans' advisory panels.

S. 2504 has attracted 40 bipartisan cosponsors and the bill easily cleared the Senate Judiciary Committee earlier this year. Sen. Bill Nelson now plans to offer his bill as an amendment to the FY2009 Defense Authorization Act when the Senate takes it up in the coming weeks.

MOAA is also grateful for the strong endorsement of the House companion bill (H.R. 5854) by House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Bob Filner (D-CA) and Ranking Member Steve Buyer (R-IN).

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MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for Sept. 12, 2008:

Military Coalition Honors Hill Champions. On September 9, The Military Coalition honored four legislators and two congressional staff members for their efforts in improving the quality of life for the military community.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for Sept. 19, 2008:

Senate Passes Stripped-Down Defense Bill. A flap over porkbarrel spending forced Senate leaders to drop almost all amendments to the FY2009 Defense Authorization Bill in order to get it passed. That's disappointing news for disabled retirees, Guard/Reserve members and more. Check out what it might mean for you and yours.

New Autism Bill. A bill introduced this week by Reps. Jim Moran (D-VA) and Jeff Miller (R-FL) would extend financial assistance for autistic children of military retirees.

The bipartisan bill would extend financial assistance to military retirees for care of autistic dependents through TRICARE's Extended Health Care Option (ECHO). Currently, only active duty servicemembers are eligible for the assistance. Retirees enrolled in Medicare Part B would not be eligible.

When active duty members who have autistic children in the ECHO program retire, they lose ECHO eligibility. This often means the family is left with an abrupt end in treatment, or expensive out of pocket costs.

H.R. 6930 would allow assistance of up to \$2,500 per month for dependents of military retirees who qualify for the program.

"This legislation, thanks to Congressmen Moran and Miller, sends the message to our servicemembers that their long-term commitment is valued, and that our country cares enough to take care of their children," Dunlap said.

Please send a MOAA-suggested message to your representative urging they become a cosponsor of this important bill.

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MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for Sept. 26, 2008:

Congress OKs Short-Cut Funding Bill. Under pressure to act on the broader national financial crisis and with the new fiscal year about to start, Congress kicked the can until next March on most FY2009 spending bills. But Pentagon and VA funding got taken care of.

House and Senate leaders finished work on the FY2009 Defense Appropriations Act to ensure Pentagon needs are fully funded. In an unusual move, the bill also includes language that would require paying an extra \$500 per month to servicemembers who are involuntarily extended past their service commitments by service "stop-loss" policies, starting Oct. 1, 2009. Legislators also agreed to plus up VA and Homeland Security appropriations to meet the new fiscal year needs. Then they wrapped all three of those initiatives with a broader "continuing resolution" (H.R. 2638) that would keep the rest of the government operating at FY2008 funding levels until

next March, when Congress envisions working with the new president to address funding needs for the rest of FY2009.

Most Medicare Premiums Frozen

The good news: Medicare announced this week that the January 2009 Part B premiums and annual deductible (\$135) will remain at the current 2008 rates. This one-time relief from annual premium increases was possible because of an accounting change that shifted a piece of the Medicare budget from Part B (doctor visits) to Part A (hospital treatment).

The mixed news: Income thresholds for imposing higher, means-tested premiums will rise about 3.7% (from \$82,000 to \$85,000 for an individual). That will ease the impact of the continuing phase-in of means-tested premium increases for certain higher-income Medicare-eligibles. But individuals with adjusted gross incomes above \$85,000 (\$170,000 for a married couple) will still see a Part B premium increase in 2009.

The bad news: The Part A (hospital care) annual deductible will be \$1,068, an increase of \$44. That covers beneficiaries' costs for the first 60 days of a Medicare-covered hospital stay, with patients facing daily co-pays beyond that point.

MOAA's Web site has a handy chart for 2009 Part B premiums, including all of the new income levels that the higher, means-tested premiums will apply to.

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VA Raises TBI Benefits

The Dept. of Veterans Affairs announced this week changes to its schedule for rating disabilities for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), the "signature wound" of Iraq and Afghanistan.

A VA press release noted, "Traumatic brain injuries result in immediate effects such as loss or alteration of consciousness, amnesia and sometimes neurological impairments." In some cases "prolonged or even permanent problems with a wide range of impairment in such areas as physical, mental and emotional/behavioral functioning may occur." People with TBI may experience headache, sleep difficulties, decreased memory and attention, slower thinking, irritability, and depression.

22,000 veterans presently are being compensated for TBI, including 5,800 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. Those already receiving compensation for TBI injuries can be reevaluated under the new rating schedule criteria. The VA stressed, however, that veterans with the "most severe" forms of TBI would not receive much, if any, extra compensation because the current rating schedule provides adequate compensation in such cases. The rating schedule change mainly has the potential to affect those with mild or relatively moderate TBI who may have been assigned low or modest ratings in the past.

Under the new rules, TBI ratings will be based on the degree of "cognitive impairment" and other "residuals" of TBI. These may include mild to severe loss of memory, attention, concentration, judgment, motor activity, visual spatial orientation, ability to communicate and other

functions. The rating schedule goes into effect in late October. Because of the complexity of each individual evaluation, it's not possible to assert that a particular person or particular condition would receive a particular rating increase.

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More \$22 Drugs

On September 17, a DoD pharmacy panel proposed moving certain blood glucose test strips and overactive bladder medications to the third tier, or \$22 copay level.

Those include 24 name-brand blood glucose test strips, including One Touch, True Track, Accu-Check Comfort Curve and a number of private label strips. But Accu-Check Aviva, Ascencia Contour, Freestyle Lite, and Precision Xtra, which account for about 75% of users, will still be available at the lower copay. DoD is working with the manufacturers to provide new matching meters at no cost for beneficiaries who need to switch.

Overactive bladder medications Detrol and Trosipium IR will be moved to the higher \$22 copay. Enablex, Ditropan, Ditropan XL, Oxytrol, Vesicare, Detrol LA, and Sanctura XR will continue to be available at the normal copays.

In addition, the antidepressant drug Pristiq will move to the third tier, along with Sular Geomatrix, used to treat hypertension. These medications were only recently introduced, so relatively few beneficiaries are taking them.

The recommendations will be submitted to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) for final decision. DoD will notify all beneficiaries currently taking the medications being moved to the third tier so they and their doctors can consider alternative medications available at the lower copay. Information on alternative medications can be found via TRICARE's Formulary Search Tool. A doctor who believes it is important for a patient to take the third-tier medication can provide "medical necessity" justification to TRICARE. If approved, the patient will continue receiving the medication at the lower copay.

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MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for October 3, 2008:

Congress Moves to Protect Identities

A bill that will require the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to remove social security numbers from new Medicare cards has passed its first congressional hurdle. On 29 September the House passed HR 6600, The Medicare Identity Theft Prevention Act of 2008, sponsored by Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D-Texas). This act mandates the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services establish cost-effective procedures to ensure that a Social Security account number is not displayed, coded, or embedded on Medicare cards issued on or after the effective date of this legislation.

The legislation will also allow for individuals currently holding Medicare cards to receive new cards no later than 3 years after enactment of this bill.

Having Social Security numbers on Medicare cards makes our seniors very susceptible to identity theft, a

problem that has become more and more popular in recent years. Now that the House has passed H.R. 6600 the Senate must take up the measure.

Because there is no additional spending necessary for this bill to pass, MOAA hopes for positive Senate action.

Fed Jobs Faster for Military Spouses?

Military spouses who've followed a servicemember to a new location, then waited for weeks or months while a government job was competed, understand the value of a new presidential executive order that will give them (and survivors of servicemembers) the ability to receive a noncompetitive appointment in the civil service.

The order, which became effective on September 25, gives agency leaders authority to appoint a qualified military spouse without competing the job. Qualifying spouses include those who relocate with the military member to a new permanent duty station, are married to a totally disabled retired or separated military member, or are the un-remarried widow(er)s of members who died during active military service.

While the new rule doesn't guarantee a noncompetitive hiring, it could open the door for more expedient hiring of qualified spouses and survivors.

MOAA strongly supports this move. Military orders cost many spouses their jobs, and the least the government can do is try to make it easier for them to get hired at the new location.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for October 10, 2008:

2008 Bills Are Toast

When Congress adjourns at the end of each two-year session, all of the unpassed bills expire.

All of our bills on concurrent receipt, SBP, TRICARE fee protections, Guard/Reserve retirement age, etc., that didn't get wrapped into the FY2009 Defense Authorization Act officially die. And the long lists of legislator cosponsors that you helped build for them expire, too.

That means our work will start over when the new 111th Congress convenes in January.

We'll get with our House and Senate champions after the New Year to reintroduce new bills. And then you'll need to contact your legislators to rebuild longer cosponsor lists to improve the bills' chances of getting passed next year.

The reminder to all of us is that these legislative initiatives don't happen by accident.

They get passed only through strenuous, repeated collective efforts to push legislators to do the right thing by those who served and sacrificed for the rest of the country.

The lesson from history isn't to get discouraged when our bills don't pass. It's that great victories rarely come easy.

It took year after year of sustained efforts to win TRICARE For Life, elimination of the age-62 SBP annuity reduction, and achieve major inroads on concurrent receipt.

We can win on our other big issues, too, if we hang together and keep consistent heat on our legislators.

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MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for October 17, 2008:

Final COLA Announced

It's official. The 2009 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for military retired pay, SBP annuities, Social Security checks, and VA disability and survivor benefits will be 5.8%, effective December 1, 2008. It will first appear in the January checks.

Partial COLA for 2008 Retirees: Servicemembers who retired during calendar year 2008 will receive a somewhat smaller, partial COLA for this year only, because they already received a January military pay raise (which also raised their 2008 retired pay). If you retired in 2008, your COLA is calculated as follows:

- Members who entered service before Sept. 8, 1980, and who retired on or after Jan. 1, 2008, will receive a 5.0% COLA.
- Members who entered service on or after Sept. 8, 1980 (whose retired pay is calculated on their highest 36 months' basic pay rather than final basic pay), and retired between Jan. 1, 2008, and Sept. 30, 2008, will receive a partial COLA based on the calendar quarter in which they retired. Jan.-Mar. retirees will receive 5.0%; Apr.-Jun. retirees, 3.8%; and Jul.-Sept. retirees 1.2%. Those who retire after Oct. 1, 2008, will see no COLA this year.
- Members retired during 2008 will receive full-year COLAs in future years.

This is the third year in the last four that the retiree COLA has been higher than the pay raise for currently serving troops. The two are never the same because they are based on different things and have different purposes.

Military pay raises are based on private sector pay growth, as measured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Cost Index (ECI). Their intent is to ensure military pay is kept reasonably comparable to private sector pay, to allow the services to compete successfully for manpower over time.

Retired pay COLAs, on the other hand, are cost-of-living adjustments that track to inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Their purpose is to ensure that whatever purchasing power a member's retired pay represented on the date he or she left service isn't eroded by inflation over time.

Over time, the two tend to even out. During the 1970s, COLAs were higher in 5 years and pay raises won out for the other five. In the '80s, pay raises beat COLAs (6 - 4); in the '90s, it was 50-50 split (5 - 5). The first half of this decade, pay raises were higher, but with COLAs higher for three of the last 4 years, the pendulum seems to be swinging the other way again.

Go to MOAA's COLA Watch page for more information. <http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/3604796:4097069761:m:3:230981068:D905CA1C4E91B2F4DB88B27A8FC27068>

SBP/DIC Recoupment Victory

At long last, DFAS has implemented a single, explanatory notice to military survivors whose SBP annuities are subject to deduction of VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC).

DIC, a tax free allowance, is paid to the survivors of members who suffer a service connected death, but current

law requires that SBP must be reduced by the amount of the DIC award. MOAA thinks that's unfair and we've been striving to get it fixed. But in the meantime, widows are stuck with the deduction.

Too often, communication breakdowns between the VA and DFAS lead to horribly uncoordinated recoupment actions, subjecting some survivors to an alarming series of dunning notices - sometimes for five-figure amounts. Later, the survivors received a lump-sum refund of SBP premiums, all with little or no explanation about how the amounts were calculated or why the original recoupment couldn't have been reduced by the subsequent refund.

For three years, MOAA sought to reform this broken process to make it clearer and fairer for the affected widows, and finally convinced Congress to change the law, as of this spring, to require DFAS to provide these survivors:

- A single notice of the net amount to be recouped or refunded
- A written explanation about why the action is taking place
- A detailed accounting of how the amounts were calculated. The name and contact info for a real person at DFAS who can answer questions about their personal situations and calculations

It's a relief to know that, hopefully, the horror stories of the past won't be repeated.

But MOAA still can't believe it took three years of pestering, and ultimately a law change, to force some basic human courtesy and sensitive treatment for survivors being subjected to large and unexpected financial recoupments on top of losing their military spouses to service-caused conditions.



You all know the evening prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep..." Well, here's a new one:

The Morning Prayer

*Now I wake me up to live,
 I'll give life all I have to give.
 If today I face a test,
 I'll cope and pray and do my best.
 With each breath and step I take,
 Be with me LORD
 For heaven's sake.*

Amen

Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.



JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 11 November 2008**, at the Lawrence Country Club. Dinner cost is **\$20.00/meal**. [Note: this is one week earlier than our normal meeting date.]

The Program: Our guest speaker will be Major General (Ret) David A. Richwine, USMC.

Social Hour: 1800 hours **Dinner:** 1900 hours

The Menu: *Filet Mignon, 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, 6 November 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).

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

KANSAS COUNCIL WEBSITE: www.kansasmooa.org

JAYHAWK CHAPTER WEBSITE: www.jayhawkmoaa.org

We are still looking for members who can/will receive the Newsletter via e-mail.

*Please let us know at
jwhalladay@sunflower.com*

2008 - 09 Jayhawk MOAA Calendar:

<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Tuesday 11 November MOAA meeting (Note change of meeting date)	Tuesday 20 January MOAA meeting
	Tuesday 17 March MOAA meeting
	Tuesday 19 May MOAA meeting

JAYHAWK MOAA DIRECTORY

You may think it's way early to start thinking about the 2009 Directory, but we will only have two Newsletters/meetings after this one in which to get our message out to members . . . please take a look at your Directory . . . if your picture is not there (or if you would prefer an updated picture), please see John Halladay at one of our meetings or send us a photo by mail (we will return the original) or by e-mail.

Thanks a lot for your help in making the 2009 Directory our best ever!!



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

One Powerful Voice.®

For every officer at every stage of life and career.

***We wish everyone a
Happy Halloween
and
Joyous Thanksgiving***