



Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



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September Program:

Our guest speaker will be CPT Joshua Mantz, the Aide-de-Camp to the Deputy Commanding General of the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley

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Greetings from the President . . .

Dear Jayhawk Chapter Members and Friends,

I hope you have been enjoying your summer, despite the heat. Those of us who were able to attend the July dinner were treated to an entertaining and informative portrayal of John Brown by Kerry Altenbernd, the Director of the Douglas County Law Library and a board member of the Black Jack Battlefield Trust. He provided us with a fascinating insights into Kansas' role in the origins of the American Civil War.



I hope you will be able to join us for our upcoming dinner program on Tuesday night September 20th. That evening will be Army ROTC night and it is appropriate therefore that our guest speaker will be CPT Joshua Mantz, the Aide-de-Camp to the Deputy Commanding General of the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley. CPT Mantz was commissioned into the Infantry from West Point in May 2005. On 21 April 2007, while serving in Iraq as a Platoon Leader and Company Executive Officer in 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, CPT Mantz was shot by an enemy sniper during the search of a vehicle. The bullet severed the femoral artery in his upper right thigh.

Shortly after, CPT Mantz "flat-lined" for 15 minutes, but was revived by an Army medical team. Despite this devastating injury, he redeployed to Iraq only 5 months later to finish his tour. CPT Mantz now is a leading advocate for new approaches to treating PTSD and has spoken publicly about his experience throughout the country and on CNN, FOX News, and BBC Radio. I hope you will be able to join us for his inspirational presentation.

Please also mark your calendars to attend our November 15 dinner. Our guest speaker will be Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger. She will address health care issues, including the implementation of the new health care reform law as well as the potential impact of cuts to Medicare and TRICARE provider reimbursements that could result from the recent deficit cutting deal and from the on-going threat of a 30% cut to reimbursements that would result from implementation of a cost-cutting formula established by Congress in 1997. Although those cuts have been deferred by Congress every year since 2003, they have continued to accrue and could be fully implemented in January 2012 if Congress takes no action to defer or change them. I think we will all be very interested in hearing her thoughts on these important issues.

Tom

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Inside this issue:

September Program	1
President's Message	1
Jayhawk Chapter News	2
Army News	4
Navy News	4
Air Force News	5
MOAA Legislative Updates	6
Dinner Reservation Form	11
MOAA calendar & websites	12

*** Reservations should be sent
to Jim Cooper by
15 September**



JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS

From Andrew Bauch: Some news from our family. My wife Skyler gave birth to our second son, Samuel Andrew Bauch, on July 29th. Sam weighted in at 8 pounds 3 ounces and 20 inches long. Both mom and baby are doing great, and our 3 year old Jack is adjusting to sharing the spotlight.

Kay and Jim Henry drove to Washington, D.C. in July to see an old Navy friend and his wife. While there they saw the new USAF Memorial which is very impressive, and the WW II memorial which is on the Mall and equally impressive. The round-trip was 2800 miles. Jim drove while Kay planned interesting things to see along the way, including the General Douglas MacArthur memorial in Norfolk, Virginia; the original Old Salem township in Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and President Andrew Jackson's estate, the Hermitage, in Nashville, Tennessee.

From Herschel Stroud:

This is the 8th year Jacques and I have attended the annual Civil War Institute held at Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania. Some of you may have received copies of notes taken at this conference in past years. Noted historians, authors, and professors of Civil War history present lectures during the theme driven conference. This year the theme has been the first year of the Civil War. It has covered a wide range of subjects all pertaining to preparing for the conflict, and the prosecution of the war during that first year. Those who can spare the time to attend this yearly conference would enjoy immensely the effort to participate.

In 2006 I was asked to present on Civil War Medicine. It was challenging and rewarding to be a part of a conference devoted only to an in depth study of Medicine during the Civil War. That talk may well have been the "High Water Mark" for me, similar to the copse of trees that mark the alleged "High Water Mark of the Confederacy" at the end of Pickett's Charge on July 3, 1863.



One half of the main lecture hall at Gettysburg College



Jacque at the Stone Bridge over Bull Run

We have one more day of the Conference before coming back to Kansas. Today we had an in depth lectured bus trip (six full buses) to the National Park Service Battlefield of Manassas or Bull Run. Yes, this was the 1st Manassas, and 13 months later during the second year battles was 2nd Manassas - but no one knew there would be a second battle at the same place. McDowell was defeated at the 1st, and Pope at the 2nd. We left at 8 AM and returned at 8:30 PM. We have listened to 14 one hour lectures and two panel discussions on the theme for this year. Very inspiring. I have attached a couple of photos of sights we saw.

Should this pique your interest in attending next year take a moment and put Civil War Institute in Key Word Search and investigate the Conference. The dates next year will be June 22 evening, 23, 24, 25, 26. They are switching to a week-end full four day Conference to try to accommodate people who might more easily fit this sequence of days into their busy schedules. The Conference will start on Friday evening and end on the following Tuesday. Next year will be the 30th annual conference. Jacques and I do not buy meals at the College - breakfast, lunch, and dinner. We do much better eating at the college sandwich shop. We also do not stay in the dormitory rooms at the college. Rather we try for various "extended stay" accommodations which are available in Gettysburg. Gettysburg is a unique place, a place where people are seen all over town in period clothing, and are accepted as nothing out of the ordinary. Of course the Museums and Park are phenomenal and can be visited and revisited. We see new things on the Battlefield each time we are here.

Hope I haven't talked your arm off - oops, that would be an amputation. Oh, just wait.

David and Orea Kent spent 17 days in Germany in July, on their fourth visit to their son Peter and his family. Peter is a Lt. Col., USAF, stationed at Ramstein AFB. They live in a small German town, Wallhalben, about 20 minutes from Landstuhl, where the grandkids, Rachel, 10, and Colin, 8, attend the DoD school.

In our first week we drove with our son and grandkids to Munich, Vienna, and Salzburg. (Sandra, our daughter-in-law, was on her two weeks' active duty as a USAF JAG Reserve officer.) In Munich we toured the BMW Visitor Center and raised our steins at the Hofbrauhaus. Our first stop in Austria was Pitten, 45 km south of Vienna. We visited a retired Austrian Lt. General and his wife. Bobby, as our family knows him, was "drafted" into the Wehrmacht in WWII and was captured in North

Africa. He spent over two years in an officers' POW camp in Tennessee, where he learned English. In 1958 as a Lt. Col. he was a student at Ft. Leavenworth, where my parents sponsored him. We visited him and his wife when I was stationed in Heidelberg 1970-73. Later Bobby was the Austrian Defense Attache in London, where my parents again visited him. Bobby had lots of photos to show us from his days at CGSC and in London, as well as family portraits of his father to great-grandfather, all in full military dress.

The second week Orea and I took the grandkids to Luxembourg, where we visited the U.S. Military Cemetery at Hamm. Patton is buried there, and I had my picture taken at a large map showing invasion routes in WWII. I pointed to the arrows labeled "4th Inf Division," my father's outfit, which liberated Luxembourg. Dad was a Major then, and the Regimental S-4 for the 22nd Infantry regiment. (He retired at Ft. Leavenworth in 1960.) From there we went to Diekirch, to a huge military museum. It would take at least a day to view all the exhibits. The tableaux were very realistic, and I found some more 4th Division memorabilia on display. The rest of the time we explored "the little Switzerland of Luxembourg," a very scenic area with hilltop chateaus, deep ravines, and charming villages. And of course, food and drink were abundant and excellent, and not inexpensive. Lunch for four at McDonald's was almost \$45. Take a camera, and take money!



David and Peter in Munich



Altar in the carillon at U. S. Cemetery in Hamm



Map of WWII invasion routes



David and Orea at cemetery gate



German Enigma code machine from Diekirch museum

Ray Finch traveled to Moscow, Russia, in June to conduct research for a biography on the life of the late Soviet/Russian General, Dmitry Volkogonov. During the trip, Finch had the opportunity to meet with family and friends of Volkogonov, as well as conduct some general sightseeing.

The photo was taken from the pedestrian bridge over the Moscow River with the Kremlin in the background.





Army News *LTC Storm Reynolds, USA*

Greetings Jayhawk Chapter!

The KU Army ROTC Jayhawk Battalion is postured to begin the new school year on a high note. The Jayhawk Battalion hails our new Professor of Military Science, LTC Storm Reynolds; MS III and Operations NCOIC, SFC Troy Brin and Washburn University MS I and II instructor, 1LT Tyler Wamsley. But at the same time, we bid farewell to MSG John Peacock our outgoing SMI, thank you for your service to the Jayhawk Battalion.

This past summer the Jayhawk Battalion sent 16 of our Cadets to the Leader Development and Assessment Course (LDAC) also known as Operation Warrior Forge at Joint Base Lewis –McChord, Tacoma, WA. Their dedication, preparation and commitment to achieve was well recognized for their efforts. Collectively this class of MS III’s (academic juniors) achieved an average score of 288 points on the Army Physical Fitness Test out of a possible 300 points, 25% of the class was ranked in the top 5 and 31% of the class receiving an overall (E) excellent assessment for their performance. Specifically we would like to recognize Cadet John Bergman for achieving the

rank of number one Cadet in his regiment and ranking number one in his company, John was recognized with the AUSA Leadership Excellence Award, COMTek Leadership Award and the Warrior Forge Commander’s Leadership Award.

Additionally, the Jayhawk Battalion sent three (3) Cadets to the Leaders Training Course conducted at Fort Knox, KY. Cadet Sara Meyer was recognized with the AUSA Leadership Award, the third highest award presented per training cycle. Cadet Stephen Rizza was recognized with the Ironman Award and offered a 2 year scholarship for his performance.

The Jayhawk Battalion will host over 50 new Cadets prior to classes starting this semester as a result of aggressive recruiting, visibility within the community and from the support of organizations like MOAA who continually support this Battalion allowing our Cadets to achieve.

LTC Storm Reynolds



Navy News *CAPT Thomas Neal, USN*



Greetings from the Jayhawk Navy!

The new academic year has gotten off to a busy start for the KU Naval ROTC Unit. We have added 19 new students to the battalion – 16 freshmen midshipmen (12 Navy option and 4 Marine option) and 3 new Navy Seaman-to-Admiral program Officer Candidates. That brings the battalion enrollment to 72. 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 Jayhawk Battalion!



KU Naval ROTC Freshman Class

It was a busy summer for the students. Nineteen of them attended summer training: 13 went on Navy summer cruises, 4 attended USMC Mountain Warfare training in California, and 2 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 physically and mentally challenging four day Orientation and Indoctrination (O&I) course here on the KU Campus in early August and performed superbly under the instruction of 3 MCEP students and one of our newly commissioned 2LT’s. Two of our active duty staff also participated in summer training. LT Broome was a Midshipmen Liaison Officer in Yokosuka, Japan where she helped Midshipmen

connect to the ships they would be training aboard. GySgt Matthews spent his summer in Quantico, VA shaping up future 2LTs at Officer Candidate School.

We are looking forward to a great Fall semester, with the Battalion under the capable leadership of Marine SSgt D. Petrosky, the Battalion Commanding Officer, and Midshipman 1/C M. Barbula, the Battalion Executive Officer. It promises to be a busy year, but we are all eager to tackle the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

On a final note, MOAA's continued support of the KU NROTC program is even more important and vital to the

new freshman students. Once again, the KU NROTC program received only half the scholarships that are allotted to us and yet we still had young men and women join the program without the benefit of a scholarship. We fully expect that these dedicated students that joined the KU NROTC battalion without a Navy scholarship will be competitive for a scholarship in the future.

CAPT Tom Neal



Air Force News

LtCol Montague D. Samuel, USAF

First, I would like to introduce myself. I am Lt Col Montague D. Samuel, the new AFROTC Det 280 Commander. I assumed command in July and am happy to be in Lawrence and at the University of Kansas.

I entered the Air Force in 1983 as a Crew Chief on C-141 aircraft. I graduated in 1987 from the University of South Carolina (i.e. The USC) with a degree in mathematics and received my commission through AFROTC Det 775 at USC. That's right, I am a Gamecock but don't hold that against me. I am a career Missiler with numerous ICBM, nuclear, and space assignments. I am a Joint Staff Officer with my last assignment at United States Strategic Command, Offutt AFB Nebraska. Additionally, I am a life member of MOAA. I look forward to working with the Jayhawk MOAA Chapter.

Detachment update:

We had 12 cadets return from field training that was held over the summer at Maxwell AFB in Alabama and Camp Shelby in Mississippi. The Air force loves to send folks south for the summer; we must enjoy the heat and humidity. The cadets endured the heat just fine and we are happy to announce that we had two cadets recognized as distinguished graduates and another two received top mention. I'm proud to say that everyone that we sent to field training successfully completed the arduous 4-week course. While attending field training, cadets hone their leadership skills and really start to learn what it takes to be an officer in the U.S. Air Force.

The detachment held a 2-day new student orientation to welcome and get our future cadets enrolled in our program. This year we are expecting a freshman enrollment of 25 cadets, which will make our cadet wing 67 strong for this upcoming year. The challenge that we have faced, and will likely continue to face in the near future, is recruiting qualified cadets into our program with the offer of a scholarship. We currently do not have any in-college scholarships available and we were only able to award one high-school scholarship from our list of applicants last year. The shrinking of our Air Force budget and manning end-strength have directly contributed to these reductions. We are hopeful, however, that we will be able to continue to offer some very good scholarships to our most deserving candidates. It is only getting more and more competitive to gain a commission nowadays.

I would like to thank the MOAA for continuing to support our program. It was truly an honor to find out that one of our own, Cadet Cassandra Post, was awarded your MOAA scholarship, what a wonderful opportunity for such a deserving individual.

We are looking forward to what I know will be a very challenging and yet rewarding year of training our Air Force's future officers.

AIM HIGH – FLY, FIGHT, WIN!

LtCol Montague D. Samuel

Combat Infantrymen's Association (CIA)

Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment, Kansas (A11KA), is a non-profit organization representing northeast Kansas.

It is an elite organization, which is inviting **soldiers** who have earned the right to wear this prestigious **badge** to join us and assist us in placing a monument in the Gage Park Memorial area with other Military memorial monuments. We have obtained approval of the Director of Planning and Development, Parks and Recreation of Topeka in coordination with Gage Park Memorial, Inc., to dedicate a Combat Infantrymen's monument in the Gage Park Memorial.

MONUMENT DEDICATION SET TO HONOR ALL COMBAT SOLDIERS

(Come and be a part of history and the future).

This dedication is planned for November 11th, at 11:00 a.m., 2011, Veterans' Day.

For more details on a brick or contribution, call John Halladay, 785-843-6184.

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 July 1, 2011:

MOAA Partners on Spouse Employment. MOAA has joined a group of corporations and non-profits to promote hiring of military spouses.

Key Committee: Whack Commissaries

Among the bills approved by the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee this week was the "Caring for Camp Lejeune Veterans Act of 2011" (S. 277), sponsored by Sen. Burr (R-NC), the senior Republican on the Committee. The bill would authorize VA health care for former military family members and veterans and certain family members stationed at Camp Lejeune between 1957 and 1987, when the water at the base is acknowledged to have been contaminated with carcinogens.

MOAA indicated its support for the bill and other pending measures in a letter to Committee Chair Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) and Sen. Burr.

But that was before the committee voted unanimously, without notice or hearing, to fund the care by eliminating the federal subsidy for military commissaries and directing consolidation of all DoD commissaries and exchanges.

MOAA strongly opposes this sneak attack on the military benefit package.

First, the Veterans Affairs Committee has no jurisdiction over and no knowledge of DoD commissary and exchange systems, which are under the purview of the Armed Services Committee.

Second, they propose virtually dismantling the commissary system without any hearings or other effort to assess the adverse impact of such a dramatic cut to a core military benefit. There are good reasons why the Armed Services Committees, who actually understand the commissary and exchange programs, have ardently rejected similar proposals for the last four decades.

Third, they seek to poach DoD funds to pay for VA health care at a time when DoD personnel budgets already are under threat.

<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/12069716:14582337460:m:3:230981068:A002884CE9281D5D19C1FBD3FA6454D7>

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for July 8, 2011:

New SecDef Knows Budget-Cutting.

On July 1, Leon Panetta was sworn in as the 23rd Secretary of Defense, succeeding Robert Gates's 4 ½-year term. Panetta's previous job was Director of the Central Intelligence Agency for the Obama Administration, which is being filled by Gen David Petraeus (USA). Panetta's budget-cutting history may be one reason why he got the job.

Mr. Panetta began his political career as a Congressional staffer in 1966. He was elected to Congress in 1976, where he served as a member of the House until 1993.

As Chairman of the House Budget Committee, he helped broker a deal to slash the federal budget in the early 1990s.

In the Clinton Administration, Panetta served as both Director of the Office of Management and Budget and as White House Chief of Staff. He was a key player in Clinton Administration negotiations with Congress aimed at balancing the budget.

All of that executive and legislative branch experience in brokering tough budget deals will be needed in his new job. Unprecedented deficits and the waning popularity of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq will dramatically increase pressures on the defense budget in the next several years.

Already, Panetta has echoed comments of his predecessor concerning possible cutbacks in force levels, healthcare funding, and military pay and retirement.

MOAA will continue to remind Administration leaders and Congress that the defense budget and military personnel and compensation programs cannot be mere chips in political budget games.

As proven by unwise, budget-driven manpower, pay, retirement and healthcare cutbacks of the past, those initiatives entail substantial retention and readiness consequences that too often have ended up costing the country far more than their architects had hoped to save.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for July 15, 2011:Defense Spending Bill Clears House

On July 8th, the House approved the FY 2012 defense appropriations bill (HR 2219) by a vote 336 to 87. Its \$530.5 billion price tag is an increase of \$17 billion over last year's level, but \$8.5 billion less than the Pentagon requested.

The bill would fund a 1.6 percent military pay raise for military personnel and \$32.2 billion for the Defense Health Program, some \$118M less than requested.

It would fund active military forces of 1,408,000, a reduction of 2400 from FY2011.

Army 547,400

Navy 325,700 (-3,000)

Marine Corps 202,100

Air Force 332,800 (+ 600)

The bill was referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee on July 11.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for July 22, 2011:Could You Handle a 5%-20% Retired Pay Cut?

Congress and Administration leaders are considering a wide variety of legislation that would put strict limits on government funding. If such initiatives become law, do you understand how they would affect military retired pay, SBP, TRICARE For Life, and other military and federal civilian programs?

If you're following the ongoing debt ceiling/budget negotiations (and you should be), you know multiple plans have been offered by various individuals or groups to cap federal spending or require a balanced budget.

Those sound reasonable in concept (how can a balanced budget not be a good thing?). But how much do you understand about how they would affect you?

In many cases, the specifics are vague...either because they have yet to be worked out, or because it's inconvenient to have constituents understand exactly what kind of pain would be involved before there's a vote.

In some cases, proposals have been pretty specific. In others, impacts have to be inferred by doing some math.

To start, let's look at the "Cut, Cap and Balance" legislation (H.R. 2560) that was passed by the House of Representatives on Tuesday by a vote of 234 to 190 - and then blocked in the Senate this morning by a 51 to 46 vote.

Among other things, that legislation envisioned capping federal outlays below 20 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by FY2017. For comparison, federal spending currently represents about 24% of GDP.

For FY2014 and subsequent years, H.R. 2560 would explicitly exempt military personnel accounts, military (but not federal civilian) retired pay, TRICARE For Life, Medicare, Social Security and veterans' benefits from cuts.

But a separate section citing exemptions for FY2012 lists only Social Security, Medicare, veterans' benefits, and net interest. Spending on non-exempt "mandatory spending" programs for FY12 would be capped at \$680.7 billion - an apparent 21.7% cut below the \$828.6 billion requested in the Administration's FY2012 budget for those programs.

While the Senate's blocking vote rendered the issue moot, the potential for large one-time program cuts in FY2012 is still disturbing.

One of the most modest plans is the Corker-McCaskill budget cap bill (S. 245) that would phase in reductions at a more

moderate pace, limiting FY2013 spending to 25% of the FY09-11 average GDP, with further reduction in later years. It would allow no exemptions.

That would require a 5% cut in FY 2013 outlays for retired pay, TRICARE For Life, and SBP, for example, with cuts escalating each year - to 19% by FY2021. Giving up COLAs for five years would be a head start to meet those goals, but more would be needed - perhaps rolling back some concurrent receipt payments. A 5% cut in TFL would require something on the order of a \$350 per person annual TFL deductible. For SBP, it would require several years of COLA forfeitures, plus maybe rolling back recent payments to SBP-DIC widows or reinstating some level of benefit reduction upon receipt of Social Security.

Initiatives that would cap spending at lower percentages of GDP would impose far more severe cuts.

For example, the balanced budget amendment (H.J. Res 1) introduced in the House would cap federal outlays at 20% of GDP. The Judiciary Committee subsequently amended it to reduce that to 18%.

Neither version would exempt any spending category, allowing the ceilings to be waived only in years when war is formally declared, or Congress passes a joint resolution if the country is engaged in armed conflict that causes "an imminent and serious military threat to national security."

Another proposal endorsed by a group of senators calling themselves the "Gang of 6" includes initiatives similar to those proposed by last year's deficit commission. They would dramatically reduce military retirement value for new entrants, require holders of Medicare supplement policies (including TFL) to absorb an extra \$3,000 per year (\$6,000 per couple), and raise TRICARE fees for retired military families under 65 by up to \$2,000 a year or more, and freeze military pay raises, among other things.

MOAA President VADM Norb Ryan, Jr. has written a letter to House Armed Services Committee Chairman Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-CA) thanking the Chairman for expressing strong objections to the "Gang of 6" plan.

You can add your voice to protect the interests of the military and veterans community by sending a MOAA-suggested message to your elected officials.

<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/12300651:14834522520:m:3:230981068:2FE52A683C3DCC1285AF355B82C41BBF>

Summit Takes on Women Vets' Issues

On July 15-17, more than 700 women veterans, currently serving servicewomen, VA employees, veterans/military service organizations, and advocates from across the country participated in the 2011 VA Women Veterans National Training Summit here in the nation's capital to discuss issues important to women veterans.

Key summit themes included:

- * VA and DoD need better outreach and communication with the new generation of servicemembers and veterans, especially women, and translate these efforts to being a more agile, responsive and flexible system for all veterans
- * Unemployment and homelessness continue to be the biggest challenges facing VA, and women are a particularly high-risk population
- * VA must transform its culture more quickly to better integrate the rapidly growing female vet population, as women still experience a lack of privacy, safety, and

respect by many VA staff members and male veterans in the system

- * Today, women make up 14% of the active duty population and 18% of the Guard/Reserves, compared to only 2% in the 1950s. Women are the fastest-growing segment of veteran population and will comprise 10% of vets by 2020 (vs. the current 6%).

Many active duty and veterans who participated in the summit spoke about the challenges they faced coming home. For some, combat was by far easier because they had the support of their unit. But once home, they lacked the needed support, resources and understanding from their community and family to make the transition easier, especially for women in the Reserve component and those who were mothers and grandmothers.

Remaining problems notwithstanding, the VA has made commendable progress in the last decade and continues to aggressively work these challenges. MOAA will do our part to monitor and stimulate continued improvements.

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MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for July 29, 2011:

Will Current Troops Be Grandfathered?

Maybe Not. A Defense Business Board task force recommends dumping the current defined-benefit military retirement system. And its "lower-cost" option would switch current servicemembers to the new system immediately - as private sector retirement conversions often do.

Retirement Reform - What Would It Do?

Earlier this month, we highlighted recent proposals to "reform" military retirement. Most originate from the 10th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation's (QRMC) recommendations to:

Convert the military to a civilian-style retirement system under which full retired pay wouldn't be paid until age 57-60 Vest retirement benefits after 10 years of service Authorize the Services to pay flexible "gate pays" and separation pay at certain points of service to encourage continued service or encourage people to leave as skills require

The verbal description is one thing, but what impact would that really have?

First and foremost, it would drastically reduce retired pay annuities.

The chart below (follow the link) compares the QRMC proposal "immediate annuity upon retirement option" with that of the current retirement plan.

<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/12373224:14913620568:m:3:230981068:CE32A3BBA495E31C6851DB9926CFD549>

MOAA to White House: Protect the Troops

On Wednesday, MOAA President VADM Norb Ryan was invited to the White House for a discussion with senior Administration officials on progress of the debt limit negotiations and the implications for the military and veterans community.

White House officials couldn't offer specifics about what pay and benefits might be sheltered from the worst-case situation of a federal default, but Ryan said, "They assured attendees they care about our communities and are aware of the challenges. They want to keep an open dialogue with us about the progress

of raising the debt ceiling and the impact of any such legislation on our communities."

Ryan took the opportunity to stress - again - that national leaders must make it a priority to protect troops, families, and veterans from any negative fallout from their political battles over the debt limit. "Our families are stressed, and they need and deserve some certainties," he said.

MOAA will continue to emphasize that, if the nation must decide which financial obligations to keep, troops, families and veterans must be protected. And if budget-cutting legislation is enacted, it must not cut defense on the backs of those who already have borne 100% of the national wartime sacrifice for the last 10 years.

You can help by sending your elected officials this MOAA-suggested message.

<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/12373225:14913620568:m:3:230981068:CE32A3BBA495E31C6851DB9926CFD549>

Budget Crisis Affects Military Readiness.

This week the Vice Chiefs talked candidly to a House Armed Services Subcommittee about their current and future state of readiness and the challenges and shortfalls they face in the areas of personnel, equipment and support services.

Army: "We can't lose the trust of our soldiers - we need to make sure, whatever we do, we never take away his ability and his belief that if in combat, he asks for it, he's going to get it."

Navy: "Sailors want to be challenged, they want to be relevant, and they want to believe we will take care of their families."

Marine Corps: "Keep the faith with our Marines by giving them what they need to do the mission and then letting them know we will support them when they come home."

Air Force: "Don't send an Airman to the fight with second-best training and equipment. We need to recognize their sacrifice and the sacrifice of their families."

MOAA couldn't agree more.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for August 5, 2011:

Debt Deal: What You Need to Know

After months of tense negotiations Congress agreed to a last minute debt reduction deal and raised the debt ceiling - a Congressional limit on government borrowing - just in time to meet the Treasury Department's August 2nd deadline to avoid a potential government default.

The agreement, signed by the President on Tuesday, sets a course for future reductions in federal spending. But the compromise is remarkably short on details and relies largely on the budget cutting recommendations of a soon to be formed Congressional "Super Committee." In many ways the deal reflects the inability of Congress to come to terms with spending cuts.

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Veterans Bills Advance

Rep. Tim Walz' (D-MN) bill (H.R. 1025) to accord veteran status to Guard and Reserve retirees who were never called to active federal service during their military careers has cleared a key House panel.

Reservists who qualify for a Reserve retirement at age 60 are entitled to a military pension, TRICARE and certain earned

veterans' benefits, but if they had not performed military duty under Title 10 active duty orders during their careers, are not "veterans of the Armed Forces" as defined in the law.

Prior to the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, many career reservists performed military missions under a wide array of military orders other than Title 10 active duty orders. This practice grew during the Cold War era when discrete funding categories and as many as 28 different types of orders were used to assign reservists for duty with the combatant commands, headquarters staffs and other missions.

Many reservists pulled tours of up to 179 days performing 'real world' missions or mission support, but the orders were "active duty for training", which do not qualify as active duty.

As more and more members of the Guard and Reserve perform homeland defense missions in non-federal status - securing Ground Zero in Manhattan and at the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, conducting counter-drug and border security missions, responding to Katrina and the BP oil spill, and preparing forces for deployment - MOAA maintains that all who served a full Guard or Reserve career should be declared veterans of our nation's Armed Forces.

H.R. 1025 is now likely to clear the House Committee on Veterans Affairs and the House. A companion bill, S. 491 is under consideration in the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.

H.R. 1383 was modified and approved earlier in the Senate and now goes to the President, who is expected to sign it.

MOAA strongly supported both measures and we are pleased to see final passage on the new GI Bill measure and progress on the career reservists' veteran status bill.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for August 12, 2011:

Is Military Retirement on the Cutting Table?

The short answer is: "Definitely."

But the real question asked by most is, "Could this affect me personally?"

The short answer: Changes in future annual cost-of-living adjustments are on the table, and those would affect both currently serving and already retired members. Radical changes in the retirement system for currently serving members are much less likely, but given the uncertainty of upcoming budget-cutting requirements, we can't discount the possibility.

Both former Defense Secretary Gates and new Secretary Panetta have acknowledged that military retirement changes are being considered as part of ongoing budget-cutting game-planning.

The first thing to understand is that this isn't the first time it has happened. Back in 1986, Congress changed the law to cut 20-year retirement value for post-1986 entrants by more than 20 percent - despite Pentagon warnings at the time that it would eventually undermine retention and readiness.

By the late 1990s, that prediction had come true, and Congress had to repeal the so-called "Redux" cut.

The new retirement reform proposals usually envision even more severe cutbacks of guaranteed retired pay amounts, relying more on a contributory Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) system under which services would contribute varying amounts each year depending on service needs for particular skills. Under that system, full retired pay wouldn't start until age 57 and TSP withdrawals wouldn't start until age 60.

Just as the Redux cut was applied prospectively (that is, only to people who entered service after the retirement law was

changed), most who have endorsed major retirement changes envision applying the new rules only to new entrants.

But a recent retirement task force briefing to the Defense Business Board called that a "high-cost option." It also highlighted a "lower-cost option" under which all current members would be converted to the new system as of a specific date - grandfathering only service already rendered as of that date.

It's not clear exactly how that might work. A person with 20 years of service as of the conversion date might have future retired pay capped at 50% of high-three-year average basic pay, even if he or she served another 10 years, with subsequent service earning only some level of TSP deposits. A person with 10 years as of the conversion date who went on to complete a career might end up drawing retired pay capped at 25% of high-three-year average basic pay.

But this is only speculation, because no details or decisions have been offered yet.

Plenty of other options could come up. Last year's Rivlin-Domenici budget plan, for example, recommended military retirement changes that would grandfather only those with 15 or more years of service. Other alternatives could grandfather people with 10 years... or some other number.

One favorable consideration is that the budget-cutting legislation just passed by Congress would exempt military retired pay from sequestration in the event legislators can't agree on a deficit reduction package by the end of the year. In that event, a sequester would impose across-the-board cuts totaling \$1.2 trillion, divided equally between defense and non-defense spending.

But the sequestration rules are designed specifically to be so offensive as to force Congress to make tough choices on the "lesser of the evils." In that scenario, nothing is protected, and legislators forced to choose between multiple large and unpleasant cuts could well decide that military retirement changes are among the lesser evils.

Finally, it's important to keep in mind that we likely have seen only the tip of the budget-cutting iceberg so far.

The first round of cuts already enacted plus the further cuts Congress must make by the end of the year (none of which are fully identified yet) will only save something like \$2 trillion over 10 years.

Most economists have acknowledged that getting the country back on a sound fiscal basis will likely require at least an additional \$2 trillion in spending cuts and/or tax increases beyond that. And some think the number could be much bigger.

So whatever happens this year almost certainly won't be the end of it, and the budget-cutters likely will be coming back for additional pounds of flesh for several years to come.

In that scenario, anyone who claims that any group can expect full protection is going very far out on a very precarious limb.

What can you do?

- Send your elected officials a MOAA-suggested message urging them to ensure that ongoing budget-cutting efforts don't undermine the core pillars that are essential to sustaining a high-quality all-volunteer force.
- Urge all of your friends and relatives to do the same.

<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/12529052:15078023844:m:3:230981068:442EFA49437423FD128F6943D1595CD8>

Administration Pushes Vet Jobs

On August 5th, President Obama addressed a large gathering of veterans, active duty servicemembers, senior service leaders and service organizations, including MOAA, at the Washington Navy Yard to lay out his plan to spur jobs for veterans.

The proposal challenges businesses to commit to hiring and training at least 100,000 veterans and their spouses over the next two years.

The plan creates an administration-led taskforce to work with DoD and the VA in designing a "reverse boot camp" to prepare separating servicemembers to successfully enter the civilian workforce. The initiative would ensure that every servicemember receives the training, education, credentials, supportive guidance and counseling needed to win meaningful civilian employment.

The President called on Congress to pass legislation to extend tax credit incentives for employers who hire unemployed veterans. The credits would provide a \$2,400 credit for hiring vets who have been unemployed for a shorter period, and up to \$4,800 for each long-term unemployed vet hire. It also would increase the tax credit to \$9,600 for firms that hire service-disabled vets.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for August 19, 2011:

Budget Cuts: What's Next?

In last week's Legislative Update and MOAA's new video, we outline how various debt reduction proposals could whack military retirement in the coming months and years as Congress attempts to rein in our national debt.

But that's only the start of what could be at risk in the coming months.

There are so many things going on simultaneously, it's easy to lose track of these multiple challenges and what's likely to happen when.

So let's look at a timeline of expected events for the rest of this year.

September-October: DoD will need to decide on specific initiatives to trim its budget by \$350 billion over the next ten years. The \$350 billion cut was adopted as part of the recent debt ceiling compromise. Possible initiatives include force reductions, pay raise caps, TRICARE and retirement changes, and more.

October 1: That's the first day of the new fiscal year. If Congress hasn't passed all of the various federal departments' appropriations bills by that date (which almost certainly won't happen), Congress will have to pass what's called a "continuing resolution" to avoid a government shutdown. We've seen this scenario before. The last several times it's happened, there's been a big fight over whether to use the risk of a shutdown to impose even bigger spending cuts than already have been approved.

November 23: This deadline for the so-called "Super Committee" - a bipartisan group of 12 legislators from the House and Senate - to put forward a proposal to further reduce the federal deficit by \$1.5 trillion over the next 10 years. This requirement also was part of the recent deficit-reduction legislation. Why November 23? Because that will leave Congress only one month to approve whatever plan the 12 legislators propose.

December 23: The deadline for Congress to review and vote on any proposal agreed to by the "Super Committee."

Congress must conduct an up-or-down vote on the proposal, with no amendments considered. If the committee can't agree on a proposal, or if Congress rejects the proposal without approving some alternative to achieve equal savings, an automatic enforcement mechanism (sequestration) will cut \$1.2 trillion from the budget over the next 10 years.

January 1: In the event of sequestration, the cuts will be effective on the first of the year. The \$1.2 trillion in automatic, across-the-board cuts will be divided evenly between defense and non-defense accounts. Under sequestration, certain programs will be exempt from cuts, including federal civilian and military retirement, Social Security and Medicare beneficiaries.

But cutting an additional \$600 billion from defense spending would require massive cuts to almost all other programs, likely including health care, commissaries, weapons systems, troop levels, and more.

Tough times are ahead and we'll need every member to help remind Congress that programs like military retirement and military health care are unique benefits designed to offset the challenges and sacrifice inherent in a military career. If you haven't already done, so please send your legislators a MOAA-suggested message urging them to protect military people programs that are essential to sustaining a high-quality career force.

<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/12606195:15164543105:m:3:230981068:F585A0EDB1D0AE75F021348327E5FDA9>

Raw Deal for USAF Majors

MOAA recently learned of an Air Force plan to involuntarily separate 157 officers who were twice deferred from promotion to O-5.

MOAA President VADM Norb Ryan, Jr. (USN-Ret), has written the Secretary of the Air Force (with a copy to the Secretary of Defense) to urge reconsideration of this insensitive action. In the past, such officers have been continued until retirement eligibility at 20 years, or at least have been offered voluntary incentives to accept early separation or retirement.

MOAA believes, based on the precedent of the drawdown of the 1990s that officers with at least 15 years of service should not be subject to involuntary separation. DoD actually sought the authority to offer early retirement to these officers, as was the practice in previous reductions, but Congress did not grant the request.

The problem here is the inconsistency of the Air Force policy, under which O-3s who may be subject to a reduction in force (RIF) are being offered a voluntary separation incentive (VSI) opportunity as an alternative. MOAA believes strongly that the Air Force and DoD owe at least that degree of consideration to those with lengthier service and sacrifice for our nation.

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta recently said, "We have a volunteer force that is the heart and soul of our military strength, and we have to do everything possible to protect that volunteer force. I have no higher responsibility as Secretary of Defense but to do everything I can to protect and support them. Every decision I make will be made with them in mind. They put their lives on the line. Too many have made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of this country. We owe it to them to do this right and do this [budget cutting] responsibly."

In MOAA's view, involuntarily separating people with 14-17 years of service without any prior option to accept a voluntary separation incentive falls well short of that standard.



JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 20 September 2011**, at the Lawrence Country Club.
Dinner cost is \$22.00/meal.

The Program: Our guest speaker will be CPT Joshua Mantz, the Aide-de-Camp to the Deputy Commanding General of the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley

Social Hour: 1800 hours **Dinner:** 1845 hours

The Menu: *Chicken, 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, 15 September 2011**, 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 Cooper at 842-7037 or John Halladay at 843-6184.

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

The cost is \$22.00 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.kansasmoaa.org

JAYHAWK CHAPTER WEBSITE: www.jayhawkmoaa.org

*Can you receive the newsletter via e-mail ??
If so, it saves the Chapter for both
printing and postage.*

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

2011 Jayhawk MOAA Calendar:

Tuesday	20 September	MOAA meeting	Tuesday	15 November	MOAA meeting
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2012 Jayhawk MOAA Calendar:

Tuesday	17 January	MOAA meeting	Tuesday	15 May	MOAA meeting
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Tuesday	20 March	MOAA meeting	Tuesday	17 July	MOAA meeting
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*Newsletter Editor
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IN GOD WE TRUST