



# Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



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## **CHAPTER DUES (\$20.00) were due 01 January 2012**

Four (4) members have not yet paid their dues.

Unless dues are received by 08 May, you will not be in the Chapter Directory.

## **May Program:**

Our guest speaker will be Lawrence Journal-World Sports Columnist Tom Keegan

★★★★★ CHAPTER  
awarded for  
2002 / 2003 / 2005 /  
2008 / 2009 / 2010

★★★ CHAPTER  
awarded for  
2004 / 2006 / 2007

## **President's Message . . .**

Greetings

I would like to give a hardy welcome to our new members Davis and Kimberly McElwain and Frank and Patricia Linseisen.

Cathy Hamilton presented a vibrant presentation about her activities as the Director of Downtown Lawrence, Inc. at our March Dinner meeting. She outlined several programs that the local merchants have developed for the coming year such as the Saint Patrick's Day Parade, the annual Sidewalk Sale, the Christmas Parade and the arrival of Santa Claus atop Weaver's Department Store. The membership was quite pleased by her cheerful approach to her important position in the community. Hooray for Downtown Lawrence.

Please continue to send emails and inserts to your State and National elected officials voicing your opinions about how the Military is being treated by our governing bodies. You can make a difference.

MOAA officials and Council Presidents "Stormed the Hill" on the 18 of April on our behalf. Tricare, RIF's and Retirement changes are the primary areas of concern.

LTC Storm Reynolds' Detachment completed a successful Army Ranger Buddy Competition on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March. Army Cadets from 29 Detachments and 13 states competed in the competition at Clinton Lake. I stopped by the competition and was very impressed.

During the annual spring ROTC awards ceremonies, three highly qualified recipients received General Comfort Scholarships. Thank you for your contributions for this scholarship.

Our guest speaker for our May meeting will be Tom Keegan. Tom is the head sports writer for the Lawrence Journal World. He will provide us with insights into our new football coach Charlie Weis's plans for the upcoming year and Bill Self's highly successful basketball program. Rock Chalk Jayhawk, GO KU.



*Bob*

## **Volume XVII, Issue 3**

**1 May 2012**

### **Staff:**

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**\* Reservations should be sent  
to Jim Cooper by  
10 May**



## JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS

**From Alan Van Loenen:** I took part in the Shiloh 150th Civil War reenactment at Shiloh, TN March 29 - April 1, 2012.



**Jim McMurray** was named the Wallace Galluzzi 2011 Outstanding Volunteer of the Year on Tuesday, 17 April, the highest honor the United Way Roger Hill Volunteer center gives out. Jim was recognized for his work with Habitat for Humanity, where he served as interim director and helped get the organization back on better financial grounds. In receiving the award, Jim recognized the large number of people in Lawrence and Douglas County who give their time and talent to nonprofit organizations.



(From the April 2012 issue of MILITARY OFFICER)

### INCREASING EXPOSURE:

According to the 2010 Census, less than 1 percent of the U.S. population are members of the military and only 7 percent of the country's population are veterans. Not surprisingly, when MOAA members visit area classrooms, many students say they don't know anyone who is a veteran. Others must go back several generations to name someone.

In Lawrence, KS, a university town almost 100 miles from the nearest military base, members of MOAA's Jayhawk Chapter are working to change that by linking veterans with students through their Veterans in the Classroom program. According to chapter member Capt. Tom Arnold, USN-Ret., the program helps students develop an appreciation for veterans and allows them to learn about the military lifestyle.

"I think sharing our experience helps young people realize the opportunities that military affords," says Arnold. "You get to travel, interact with people, work as a team, further your education, and develop good life skills."

The program also gives students an opportunity to learn history from those who have lived it, such as 92-year-old Capt. John "Buck" Newsom, USN-Ret., a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., and veteran of three wars. During a visit to West Middle School in Lawrence, Newsom and fellow chapter member Capt. Jim Cooper, USN-Ret., discussed the use of the atomic bomb during World War II. Many students believed using the atomic bomb was a bad decision. But Newsom told students his take on the event, that although many Japanese lives were lost, he believed using the atomic bomb saved his life, as well as the lives of countless Americans and Japanese who would have been killed if Allied forces had invaded Japan.

"The teachers present thanked us and were emphatic in telling us show valuable it is for students to hear this perspective," says Cooper. "We also received many thank-you cards on that day."

According to Cooper, five chapter members and one student from the Command & General Staff College in Ft. Leavenworth, KS., participated in the Jayhawk Chapter's Veterans in the Classroom program in 2011. This year, he hopes to expand the program so more students can connect with local veterans.

***We need more members to participate in this program this coming Veterans' Day !!!***

**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.**





## *Army News* *LTC Storm Reynolds, USA*

### **Greetings Jayhawk Chapter!**

The 2012 Spring Semester is going strong and the Jayhawk Battalion is bar high for Cadets across the Brigade. Returning from Spring Break, the Jayhawk Battalion dove back into the fray headfirst, hosting the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual KU Ranger Buddy Competition on 31 March. This was a grueling 14 hour test of strength, stamina, mental agility and sheer intestinal fortitude, featuring seven unique and impossibly challenging lanes, each designed in honor of Ranger battles from history, and bookended by a 15K Road March with ruck in the morning and a Final “Mogadishu Mile” 2.5 Mile run to end the day. The event garnered unprecedented attendance with 128 teams from almost 30 schools across 13 states and as far away as University of Las Vegas, Nevada.



CDT Bergman and CDT McConnell



Brigade Commander COL Shultis with  
CDT Wilcox and CDT Meyer

The Jayhawk Battalion not only designed and hosted this event, but also set the standard for all other competitors by taking 1<sup>st</sup> in both the Male and Female categories and earning the prized Overall School winner Trophy. Winners of the Male Category are Cadet John Bergman, Senior from Lawrence, and Cadet Stuart McConnell, Sophomore from Newton. Winners of the Female Category are Cadet Sarah Meyer, Junior from New London, Iowa, and Cadet Madeline Wilcox, Sophomore from Leavenworth.

For their hard work each of the winning Cadets earned trophies, knives, cash prizes and a coveted opportunity to attend the Army Air Assault School this coming summer. Good Work, Jayhawks!!

Most recently, the Jayhawk Battalion attended the Task Force Riley Spring Joint Field Training Exercise from 12-14 April. This event was attended by Cadets from the Jayhawk Battalion as well as the University of Kansas State, Pittsburg State, Western Missouri and Central Missouri ROTC programs. This affords the Cadets an opportunity to interact with new cadets they are unfamiliar with while executing training similar to that Juniors will experience this coming summer at the Leadership Development and Assessment Course at Fort Lewis, Washington. Training included Garrison activities, Confidence Course, Field Leaders Reaction Course, Land Navigation (Day, Night and a Written Test) and Squad Training Exercises.

The Jayhawk Cadets arrived Thursday at Fort Riley’s Combined Arms Collective Training Facility and trained long days and late nights, braving the threat of severe weather and possible tornados, to again show they are the stuff of soldiers, scoring some of the highest of all the Cadets in attendance. All in all everyone, Cadets and Cadre, learned a lot and had a great time training.



As always, thank you for your support in the Jayhawk Battalion. We look forward to continuing our great strides in progress and bringing home even more accolades for the battalion.

Check out our website at [www.armyrotc.ku.edu](http://www.armyrotc.ku.edu) for more details on these events, and take a look here <http://www.armyrotc.ku.edu/#rbc-video> for Videos professionally produced by the 3<sup>rd</sup> BDE ROTC featuring the KU 18<sup>th</sup> Annual RBC. Additionally, find us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/KUArmyROTC> and follow us on Twitter:

[http://twitter.com/KU\\_ArmyROTC](http://twitter.com/KU_ArmyROTC)

**JAYHAWKS LEAD THE WAY!**

**LTC Storm Reynolds**



## *Navy News* **CDR John E. Clark, USN**



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

It was a great day in Kansas as the KU NROTC continued the spring semester in high spirits and eager to participate in various events taking place around campus. MIDN of the Jayhawk Battalion were busy as they pursued excellence both in the classroom and throughout the community.

The entire Jayhawk Battalion gathered to honor the service of CAPT Tom Neal at his retirement ceremony on March 30<sup>th</sup>. CAPT Neal had been the Commanding Officer of the unit for the past year and fittingly asked his MIDN to serve as Sideboys and as part of his flag detail passing “Old Glory.” CAPT

Neal will truly be missed, and we wish him fair winds and following seas in his future endeavors. Taking over as acting Commanding Officer is CDR John Clark, USN.

In other news, the Jayhawk Battalion participated in the annual Relay for Life held at KU’s Recreation Center on the night of April 13<sup>th</sup>. The MIDN raised over \$1,000 for cancer research and showed tremendous support for those cancer survivors in attendance. Over the same weekend, MIDN from KU traveled to participate in the Beale Street Drill Meet held at the University of Memphis. KU’s Color Guard, pictured below, placed third overall among the over 20 teams who participated.

In addition to the Color Guard, the Sailing Team won 2<sup>nd</sup> Place and the Endurance Team competed well in a hybrid half-marathon and obstacle course competition. Best of all, the Rifle and Pistol Team







garnered 1<sup>st</sup> Place honors with MIDN Lucas Frickey being name top individual shooter at the meet. The overall outstanding showing of our KU NROTC unit is a tribute to the many hours of practice and study that our MIDN devote to their professional development.

As graduation and commissioning approaches, you can be sure that the support that MOAA offers to our young men and women is integral to their success.

With that the KU NROTC would like to thank you for your continued support.

*CDR John Clark*



## *Air Force News*

### *LtCol Montague D. Samuel, USAF*

#### **Greeting from Det 280, the Flying Jayhawk Wing,**

It's been a whirlwind year. As this academic year comes to a close, we prepare to commission nine new 2Lts into the Air Force. On Monday, 14 May, we will commission:

- Cadet Cara DiMarco (Intel)
- Cadet Greg Germann (Combat System Officer (CSO/Navigator))
- Cadet Victoria Hagan (Force Support)
- Cadet Rhianna Patrinely (Intel)
- Cadet Renee Ruppel (Logistics Readiness)
- Cadet Justin Sadowski (Project Developmental Engineer)
- Cadet John Sebes (Aeronautical Developmental Engineer)
- Cadet Stephan Thrun (Intel)

Cadet Matt Mecadon (Pilot) will commission later this summer. We are extremely proud of these young men and women and the hard work and dedication they put forth to reach this point. We hope that you will be able to join us for our Joint Service Commissioning Ceremony on 14 May at 1000 in the Kansas Union.

As these seniors prepare for graduation and commissioning we have 14 other cadets that are preparing for Field Training this summer and entry into our Professional Officer Course. In March, we submitted 16 cadets to compete for an Enrollment Allocation (EA) and continuation in our advanced program. The EA process is very competitive and we were extremely fortunate to have 14 of 16 candidates selected.

The Flying Jayhawk Wing has also been very busy this semester. Our detachment, along with the Kansas State AFROTC detachment, had a base visit to Offutt AFB outside of Omaha NE. We received a tour of the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) Global Operations Center, USSTRATCOM Airborne Command Post (ABNCP) trainer, and the Air Force Weather Agency (AFWA). We also visited the Strategic Air and Space (i.e., SAC) museum. Cadets enjoyed the trip and had a renewed enthusiasm and increased morale. It was also beneficial in broadening cadets' understanding of different career fields and inspired some to research areas they had not previously considered.

Additionally, our cadets completed a field leadership exercise (FLX) at Clinton Lake. The FLX gave our cadets an opportunity to experience first-hand what Air Force operations are like in an austere environment. Our cadets also held a course in water survival and visited the University of Kansas Adams campus for a go at the "Ropes" course.

On 24 April, the cadre held the first Air Force, Army and Navy ROTC Open House. The Open House was an opportunity for the units to share information about our programs and what we offer The University of Kansas and the community of Lawrence. Members in attendance also received a tour of our facilities. We hope this will become an annual event.

As you can see, never a dull moment and we have several events still planned. In addition to our Joint

Commissioning Ceremony, we will hold a Combat Dining-In on 27 April, a Spring Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, 1 May at 1600 at the Kansas Union and a Cadet Wing Parade on Saturday, 5 May at 1600. Additionally, the cadre is scheduling High School Scholarship award presentations for next year's incoming freshman class. If you're interested in any of these events, please contact our Operations Officer, Maj Brian Schroeder at 785-864-1216 or via e-mail at [bschroeder@ku.edu](mailto:bschroeder@ku.edu) for more information.

As for our cadre, TSgt Kip Gomez returned safely from his deployment to Columbia (and no, he was not part of the CIA incident). SSgt George White attended an AFROTC Northwest Region (NWR) NCO at Offutt AFB, where he had the opportunity to participate in "think tank" sessions to make the NWR and AFROTC better. In addition, we welcomed SSgt James Young. SSgt Young is

a Reservist who will be working with us for the next few months. We're also proud to announce Maj Brian Schroeder's selection for Lt Col and Capt Ben Smith's selection for Maj. Please join us in congratulating these worthy individuals.

I want to personally thank the Jayhawk Chapter of MOAA for your support this academic year and I look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

Very Respectfully,

**AIM HIGH – FLY, FIGHT, WIN!**

*Lt Col Montague D. Samuel*

## KANSAS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS

In the "Storming of the Hill", I met with the staffs of our entire Kansas Congressional and with Senator Roberts and Congressman Pompeo to discuss TriCare fee increases, military Force reductions and retired military proposals. The staffs took notes during our discussions and we left behind in-depth papers detailing the issues and our desired actions. They all appeared supportive but must still overcome budget issues. I emphasized that we have more than 20,000 active duty military personnel in Kansas along with more than 20,000 military retirees. I wanted to bring these issues to our local level not just a national problem. I urge you to keep the pressure on and continue writing our leaders.

Very best,

*Tony Pimentel, Council President*

## 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 March 16, 2012:

#### Hill Leaders' Views on Budget, Force Cuts, Fee Hikes

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-CA) took a strong stand for troops, retirees, and families in a March 9 letter to the House Budget Committee asking for additional funds to make up for shortfalls in the FY2013 President's Budget.

"[T]his is a budget-driven strategy rather than a strategy-driven budget," McKeon said in his letter.

Noting that the plan calls for annual force reductions of 10,000 to 17,000 for the Army and up to 5,000 for the Marine Corps, he expressed concern that "If the Administration also decides to accelerate troop withdrawals from Afghanistan...[it could] force the Army and Marine Corps to accelerate manpower reductions or fund the personnel from other accounts which will most certainly break faith with the all volunteer force."

He also objected to statements by Defense Secretary Panetta that defended proposed TRICARE fee hikes as needed to control defense health costs.

"Increasing fees merely funds the increased cost, not controls them," McKeon's letter asserted. "[I]t simply passes costs to others instead of reducing costs from within the system...After ten years of war, our troops...should not have to return home to such significant near-term increases in healthcare costs for their families."

In contrast, a joint letter from Senate Armed Services Chairman Carl Levin (D-MI) and Ranking Minority Member John McCain (R-AZ) to the Senate Budget Committee didn't address specific personnel or health care issues.

Citing the various provisions of the proposed budget, their letter said, "We anticipate that meeting our national security requirements and providing for our men and women in uniform and their families will require these totals" and requested allocation of the budgeted amounts.

The Senate leaders' letter focused on the urgency of avoiding the \$500 billion in further defense budget cuts that current law will impose on the Pentagon as of Jan. 1, 2013.

"The Secretary of Defense has testified that these additional cuts would be catastrophic to defense programs...We agree with the Secretary's assessment and urge the Budget Committee to develop a plan to avoid [the mandated cuts]."

#### Bills of Interest

Here's a quick summary of recently introduced bills of interest to the military and veterans community:

- \* S. 2179 (Sen. Jim Webb, D-VA): Would require schools with GI Bill-funded students to meet the same educational standards currently required for other federal funding. Some institutions are targeting GI Bill-eligibles for high-cost/low-value curricula, and this reform will help both students and the government get appropriate education "bang for the buck."  
<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/15259991:18234227540:m:3:230981068:AB532CD588CB2F63200C260ACC3CA616:r>
- \* H.R. 3895 (Rep. Jeff Miller, R-FL): Would exempt VA health care funding from automatic funding cuts should Congress fail to reach agreement on national debt reduction.  
<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/15259992:18234227540:m:3:230981068:AB532CD588CB2F63200C260ACC3CA616:r>
- \* H.R. 3904 (Rep. Denny Rehberg, R-MT): Would provide retroactive early retirement eligibility to the group of Air Force majors with more than 15 years of service who were involuntarily separated last year.
- \* H.R. 2182 and S. 1734 (Rep. Phil Gingrey, R-GA and Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-CT): Companion House and Senate bills would provide incentives to increase the commercial value of innovative antibiotic drugs and streamline the regulatory process so that pioneering infectious disease products can reach patients more quickly. This would help vulnerable troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, many of whom have been exposed to highly resistant and contagious strains of bacteria.
- \* H.R. 4164 and S. 2112 (Rep. Don Young, R-AK and Sen. Mark Begich, D-AK): Companion House and Senate bills would codify in law space-available travel on military aircraft for all active duty, National Guard, reserve, military retirees - including "gray area" Reserve retirees, and certain survivors. Most Space-A rules presently are governed by DoD regulation.

#### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for March 23, 2012:**

##### MOAA, DoD Witnesses Clash on TRICARE Fees

Wednesday's House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee hearing on defense health programs featured starkly contrasting inputs from DoD and MOAA witnesses.

MOAA Government Relations Director Col. Steve Strobridge (USAF-Ret) was the only association witness called to testify, and he sat on the same panel with Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) Dr. Jonathon Woodson and the Army, Navy and Air Force Surgeons General.

After the Defense witnesses outlined plans for military health programs, including the proposed dramatic increases in TRICARE fees, Strobridge strongly challenged the fee hikes.

Noting defense leaders' pledge not to impose retirement changes for currently serving people, he asserted, "If keeping faith means no changes for today's troops on retirement, it's breaking faith to raise their retirement health fees by \$2,000. It's the same as a \$2,000 retired pay cut. And if it's breaking faith to change the rules for someone with 1 year of service, it's doubly so for those who already completed 20 or 30."

Addressing why military fees are lower than most civilians pay, Strobridge said, "When someone gives me that argument, I ask, 'If the military deal is so great, are you willing to pay what they did to earn it? Would you sign up to spend the next 20 years being deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan or any other garden spot the government wants to send you to?' Military people already pay far steeper premiums for health coverage than any civilian ever has or ever will."

He called the proposed plan to means-test TRICARE fees based on the beneficiary's retired pay patently discriminatory against the military. "No other federal retiree has health benefits means-tested, and it's rare in the civilian world," he said. "Under that perverse system, the longer and more successfully you serve, the lower your health benefit."

Strobridge also challenged Pentagon leaders for failing in their own responsibility to reform the stove-piped military healthcare delivery system to make it more efficient. He said the Defense Department's recent review made minimal changes, in part because the decision process gave heavy weight to how hard a change would be. "So the first choice was to make retirees pay more, because it was easier."

Finally, he expressed MOAA's and The Military Coalition's strong objection to the proposal to index TRICARE fees to some measure of health cost growth. "We believe the percentage increase in any year should not exceed the percentage growth in military retired pay," Strobridge said.

Subcommittee members gave every appearance of sharing MOAA's view.

Subcommittee Chairman Joe Wilson (R-SC) called the Pentagon fee plan "wrong-headed", and noted the unfairness of having an E-7 with 28 years of service pay more for healthcare than an E-7 with 20 years of service.

"Last year, GAO put out a report indicating there's \$200 billion to \$300 billion spent on redundant and duplicative government programs," observed Rep. Allen West (R-FL). "Why don't we look at that before we start penalizing people who have given a lifetime of service to this country?" Speaking to Dr. Woodson, West said, "You've got to tell [Defense] Secretary Panetta, this is FUBAR."

### MOAA Testifies on Vet Issues

MOAA Deputy Director for Government Relations COL Bob Norton (USA-Ret) presented the Association's legislative agenda for VA health care and benefits issues before a joint hearing of the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees on Thursday.

Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Jeff Miller (R-FL), respective Chairs of the Senate and House Committees, welcomed MOAA and other service organization witnesses to take recommendations on a range of issues concerning our nation's military veterans.

The Co-Chairs noted their Committees recent record of bi-partisan, bi-cameral cooperation.

Norton thanked the Committees for the tremendous support for veterans over the past 15 years and urged their support for several priority needs, including:

- \* Establishing a single office to streamline overlapping and confusing DoD and VA full-time caregiver programs for severely disabled veterans
- \* Maintaining vigorous oversight of VA programs for veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress and Traumatic Brain Injury and to meet the unique health care needs of women veterans, the fastest growing group of VA enrollees
- \* Ensuring mandated upgrades to the transition assistance program (TAP) are working as intended for veterans facing a difficult employment market
- \* Protection of GI Bill programs from certain unscrupulous for-profit colleges preying on military and veteran students and upgrade of campus-based support programs
- \* Extending Post-911 GI Bill benefits to surviving spouses of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars (which are currently only available to surviving children)

MOAA's statement also covered needed actions to address the VA claims backlog, vocational rehabilitation, National Guard and Reserve issues - including recognition as veterans of career reservists who performed military duties on other-than-federal active-duty orders.

### **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for March 30, 2012:**

#### Webb Grills DoD on TRICARE Fees

On March 28 the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee conducted a hearing on Pentagon budget proposals to cut 127,000 active-duty personnel by 2017, cap military pay increases after 2014, reform military retirement, and dramatically raise TRICARE fees.

Chairman Jim Webb (D-VA) and Ranking Minority Member Lindsey Graham (R-SC) acknowledged budget realities will require force reductions, to include the elimination of servicemembers with combat experience. They expressed a willingness to assist as long the administration takes measures to protect veterans and their families.

"We want to do this without unfairly hurting the force," Webb said, asserting these proposals will be subject to a lengthy debate on the Hill.

Pentagon Comptroller Robert Hale said all Services are taking cuts and the pay and benefit cutbacks in the plan are being recommended to avoid even deeper force reductions.

Sen. Webb took particular issue with the TRICARE fee hikes, saying the plan would unfairly penalize retired servicemembers who devoted their careers to the military. He asserted these dramatic fee increases would renege on a moral obligation the nation assumed when it induced them to pursue a career.

"You can't renegotiate the front end once the back end is done," Webb said. "You're changing someone's contract after the contract has been signed."

Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) also took issue with the fee hikes, saying DoD comparisons between military health care and civilian health care costs aren't valid. "With all respect to the private sector, they do not endure what our soldiers do...I don't find the comparison a good one," Ayotte said.

MOAA strongly agrees.

### MOAA Contests "Keeping Faith" Report

Earlier this week, the Center for Strategic & International Studies hosted a "public release" of their report titled, "Keeping Faith: Charting a Sustainable Path for Military Compensation," which was originally published last October.

The "re-release" followed a recent dialogue between CSIS and the Pentagon and "just happened to" coincide with a Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee hearing on the Pentagon's proposed health care fee increases the same day.

The CSIS event included a discussion panel comprised of former Deputy Secretary of Defense Rudy deLeon, former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management and Personnel Christopher Jehn, and former Senate Armed Services Committee professional staff members Charles Abell and Patricia Lewis.

The report contrasted military personnel cost growth of nearly 50% between 2000 and 2012 with the 1% force growth over the same period.

CSIS officials said the report doesn't advocate for any specific outcome, but is meant to inform the "ongoing national debate by describing how and why military compensation costs have expanded and what this means for future expenses."

Overall, the report provides three major recommendations:

1. Policy makers should approach any changes to military compensation comprehensively
2. The impacts of and effects on military culture need to be accounted for in any reform initiative
3. DoD should use available tools to gain a better understanding of current and potential members

However, the 96 page report cites option after option to cut personnel and compensation programs.

During the question and answer period MOAA Deputy Director of Government Relations Mike Hayden challenged the panel and CSIS officials, noting that their selective and misleading use of an FY2000 baseline, which implies everything was OK at that point.

In reality, he said, 2000 was anything but a "personnel Nirvana," as retention and readiness were suffering after extended pay-raise caps and dramatic retirement, healthcare and other cutbacks. Hayden asserted that subsequent congressional actions to increase pay, raise housing allowances to cover median expenses, repeal



retirement cuts and restore health coverage for over-65 beneficiaries were important to address serious retention and equity problems. When questioned on the Pentagon's proposal to create a BRAC-like commission to review military retirement, Mr. Abell said the proposal is a "bit short-sighted" (by looking at the retirement benefit alone). He believes Congress won't be willing to abdicate its oversight responsibility by accepting a streamlined, BRAC-like process for considering retirement reform that would bar amendments and limit debate.

The panel observed that changes in this area have historically been extremely difficult, but unanimously agreed that a comprehensive study of all military compensation is needed, to include the retirement and health care benefits.

## **MOAA'S LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FOR APRIL 6, 2012:**

### Base Closures Coming

Defense officials say they'll ask Congress to approve another round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) for 2013 and 2015.

### Bills of Interest

Legislators have introduced several bills of interest to the military and veterans community. MOAA supports the following bills:

- \* S. 2241 (Sen. Murray, D-WA) would require the VA to provide beneficiaries easy-to-understand information about schools approved for GI Bill use so students know in advance a school's record on such things as average student debt incurred, transferability of credits earned, veteran enrollment, and job placement rates.
- \* S. 2149 (Sen. Webb, D-VA) would require schools participating in VA and DoD educational assistance programs to meet the same educational standards currently required for federal Pell Grants. It also would require schools with a minimum number of student veterans to provide counseling and establish a complaint resolution process for them.
- \* H.R. 3279 (Rep. Reyes, D-TX) would make family caregivers of certain veterans with a serious illness eligible for comprehensive assistance and support services from the VA. Current law limits eligibility to caregivers of veterans with a serious "injury".
- \* H.R. 3895 (Rep. Miller, R-FL) would protect VA health care programs from automatic cuts under "sequestration" legislation that could be triggered next January, if Congress fails to reach an agreement to reduce the national deficit.
- \* H.R. 4341 (Rep. Stivers, R-OH) would create a working group to better shape the policies and practices of TRICARE relating to military children.

## **MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for April 13, 2012:**

### White House Touts Joining Forces Campaign

On Wednesday, MOAA attended the one-year anniversary celebration of the Joining Forces campaign at the White House. First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill

Biden joined military, government and community leaders, and servicemembers and their families to mark the day.

The First Lady and Dr. Biden recognized several of the Joining Forces Community Challenge winners for "honoring, celebrating, and supporting military families." Among the winners was the city of Richfield, Utah, an entire community that has supported its local Army National Guard through four deployments in the past ten years. According to Dr. Biden, "These efforts aren't always in the headlines, but they support our military families every single day in real and meaningful ways."

Highlights from the first year of the Joining Forces initiative include: 1,600 businesses hired more than 50,000 veterans and spouses; technology and employment companies connected veterans with jobs; a new law supports license portability for military spouses; professional health care associations worked to improve care for post traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury, and military-impacted high schools worked to add more advanced placement courses to enhance opportunities for college bound military students. The First Lady said her message to military families is, "You do live in a grateful nation."

MOAA was among the organizations named in the Joining Forces one-year update, for our commitment to help 10,000 veterans and military spouses get jobs.

In closing, the First Lady told the audience, "We're going to keep working until all of our veterans know that when they hit the job market, their skills be rewarded. We're not stopping until every military student gets an educational experience that honors their service. We're not calling it a day until all of our military spouses can rest assured that the next time their family is transferred they won't have to leave their job behind."

MOAA Councils and Chapters have been successful advocates on the state level not only for community support, but in winning state legislation promoting service member and spouse licensure and the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.

### TSP Roth Option Coming Soon

Earlier this week, Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) leaders announced they will launch a new Roth option May 7.

The Roth TSP option, which MOAA advocated for, has been in the works for nearly three years after being authorized by Congress in 2009. It will allow TSP members to invest after-tax pay into retirement funds that will grow without any tax liability on future earnings.

The Roth TSP will be available to federal civilian employees and uniformed servicemembers, but it may not be available to all participants on May 7. According to the Thrift Savings Board, that oversees TSP, some agencies or services have yet to completely modify their existing payroll systems to handle two different contributions coming into TSP - pre-tax for the regular TSP and post-tax for the Roth option. According to a Federal Times article, Defense civilian employees and Marine Corps members will be the first in the Defense Department to see the Roth option early this summer. Army, Air Force, and Navy personnel will wait until early fall.

**MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for April 20, 2012:**MOAA Testifies on Veterans' Health Care.

On Monday, MOAA was invited to offer inputs on several VA health care bills at a hearing before a House Veterans' subcommittee.

MOAA Storms The Hill for You

MOAA Council and Chapter Presidents from the 50 states and Puerto Rico, accompanied by members of the national Board of Directors and headquarters staff, plus members of MOAA's active duty, Guard, Reserve, spouse and auxiliary advisory committees swarmed Capitol Hill on April 18 to visit nearly all 535 representatives and senators in support of key legislative priorities.

This year, the "Hill-stormers" met with their legislators to ask them to:

- \* Reject disproportional TRICARE fee hikes
- \* Protect against accelerated force cuts that would worsen "dwell time" between deployments
- \* Resist efforts to "fast-track" military retirement changes

MOAA Hill-stormers received very positive feedback from most legislators. Our hope is that this will translate to support for these goals as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees begin drafting the FY2013 Defense Authorization Bill in the coming weeks.

The Hill-stormers personal efforts were buttressed by MOAA-sponsored full-page ads in The Hill newspaper on Wednesday and Friday.

We're also gratified at members' response to the special alert we sent out Monday asking you to support this effort by emailing your legislators to oppose "taxing military people first." You sent more than 41,000 messages to Capitol Hill, and many legislators and staffers referenced the messages during their meetings with the MOAA stormers.

Military Champions Honored

At a packed-house Capitol Hill ceremony on April 17, MOAA presented its top annual awards to four individuals and organizations for their outstanding support of the military and veterans' community.

MOAA's Arthur T. Marix Award for Congressional Leadership (named in honor of MOAA's founder) was presented to:

Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-CA) for his leadership as Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee in putting language in law to cap TRICARE Prime increases at the retired pay COLA percentage and for championing several MOAA-backed provisions in the FY2012 Defense Authorization Act.

MOAA's Distinguished Service Award was presented to:

- \* CSX Corporation, represented by Lisa Mancini, Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer, for its extraordinary record of hiring veterans, supporting its deployed Guard and Reserve employees and their families, and support for wounded warrior needs.

- \* Jim McLaughlin, Chairman of the Board of the Honor Flight Network, for the organization's inspirational work in flying more than 40,000 veterans of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam free of charge to see their memorials in Washington, D.C., and arranging airport receptions to applaud and thank these veterans for their service.
- \* MOAA's Colonel Paul W. Arcari Meritorious Service Award for congressional staff members was presented to Mr. Bob Simmons, Staff Director of the House Armed Services Committee, for his work with MOAA and the Military Coalition to limit TRICARE fee increases and include language in the defense bill acknowledging career servicemembers' large pre-paid premiums via decades of service and sacrifice.

MOAA Testifies on Veterans' Health Care

On April 16, MOAA Deputy Director of Government Relations CDR Rene' Campos (USN-Ret.) presented MOAA's inputs on several VA health care bills at a hearing before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health.

Access and coordination of care and support services for wounded, ill, injured, and disabled servicemembers and their families were the issues at the top of the list.

Campos focused on three bills in particular:

- \* H.R. 1460 would allow automatic enrollment of combat theater veterans into the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical system. MOAA supports automatic enrollment and urged expanding the bill to authorize enrollment of all Iraq and Afghanistan era veterans.
- \* H.R. 3279 would expand benefits eligibility under the new VA caregiver legislation to include caregivers of veterans with 'serious illnesses' in addition to those with 'serious injuries'. MOAA strongly supports the bill, which is in line with Congress' intent in establishing the benefit for caregivers of vets with severe service-caused conditions.
- \* H.R. 3016 would direct the Departments of Defense and VA to jointly operate the Federal Recovery Coordination Program. The issue of joint care coordination between the two agencies has long been a serious concern of MOAA's and the subcommittee's. Instead of additional legislation to force the agencies to cooperate and collaborate, Campos urged Congress to continue to the keep pressure on the agencies and hold them accountable.

Even after a decade of wartime experience, it's frustrating that much still remains to be done to overcome obstacles to delivering needed care and benefits and eliminate bureaucratic hassles experienced by beneficiaries. MOAA will continue to work with the Congress and the Departments to build upon system improvements.



# JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 15 May 2012**, at the  
Lawrence Country Club  
Dinner cost is \$22.00/meal.

**The Program:** Our guest speaker will be Tom Keegan, lead sports writer  
for the Lawrence Journal-World

**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, 10 May 2012**, 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.

*cut here*

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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).

2012 Jayhawk MOAA Chapter Dues (\$20.00) [Due 01/01/12] \$\_\_\_\_\_

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)

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

### **2012 Jayhawk MOAA Calendar:**

Tuesday 15 May MOAA meeting

Tuesday 17 July MOAA meeting

Tuesday 18 September MOAA meeting

Tuesday 13 November MOAA meeting

Tuesday 22 January 2013 MOAA meeting



*One Association, One Voice. Yours.*

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

**IN GOD WE TRUST**